



## **CABINET**

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**MULTI-LOCATION MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBER PORT TALBOT  
AND MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES TO BE SWITCHED TO SILENT FOR THE  
DURATION OF THE MEETING**

### **Webcasting/Hybrid Meetings:**

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### **Part 1**

1. Appointment of Chairperson
2. Chairpersons Announcement/s
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 12*)
5. Public Question Time  
Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services, [democratic.services@npt.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@npt.gov.uk) no later than noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.

**For Decision:**

6. Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (*Pages 13 - 72*)
7. Public Participation Strategy (*Pages 73 - 172*)
8. Corporate Risk Management Policy (*Pages 173 - 198*)
9. Single Transferable Vote Consultation Response (*Pages 199 - 210*)

**For Monitoring:**

10. Quarter 3 Performance Indicators (*Pages 211 - 232*)

**For Information:**

11. Urgency Action Update (*Pages 233 - 238*)
12. Urgent Items  
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Regulation 5(4)(b) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 (as amended).

**K.Jones**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**Thursday, 30 March 2023**

**Cabinet Members:**

Councillors. S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, N.Jenkins, D.M.Peters, J.Hurley, S.Harris, J.Hale, A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths and S.Jones

## CABINET

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

**Members Present:**

**22 February 2023**

**Councillors:** S.K.Hunt, Chairperson, S.A.Knoyle, N.Jenkins, D.M.Peters, J.Hurley, S.Harris, J.Hale, A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths and S.Jones

**Officers in Attendance:** K.Jones, A.Jarrett, N.Pearce, H.Jones, R.Crowhurst, C.Griffiths, C.Furlow-Harris, N.Blackmore, L.McAndrew and J. Woodman-Ralph

**Invitees:** Cllr.P.Rogers (Chair of Scrutiny)

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1. **Appointment of Chairperson**

It was agreed Cllr. S. Hunt, be appointed Chairperson of the meeting.

2. **Chairpersons Announcement/s**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

That the minutes of the previous Cabinet Board, held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

5. **Forward Work Programme 2022/23**

That the Forward Work Programme 2022/23 be noted.

6. **Public Question Time**

No questions from the public were received.

7. **Self Assessment 2021/2022**

**Decision:**

That the Self Assessment 2021/2022 be approved for publication and submitting to the Welsh Government.

**Reason for Decision:**

To evidence how the Council is meeting the new duty set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, 'for each Council in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the 'performance requirements', that is the extent to which:-

1. it is exercising its functions effectively.
2. it is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively.
3. its governance is effective for securing the above.

**Implementation of Decision:**

That the decision be implemented after the three day calling period, which ends at 9.00am on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

8. **Establishment of a liaison forum in respect of Afan Valley Adventure Resort**

**Decision:**

1. That approval be granted for the Council to participate in the Afan Valley Adventure Resort Liaison Forum;
2. That the Terms of Reference as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.
3. That the Members and Officers as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be appointed to the Afan Valley Adventure Resort Liaison Forum.

**Reason for Decision:**

To establish a liaison forum in participation with the Council as requested by Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited in respect of the development to the Afan Valley Adventure Resort.

**Implementation of Decision:**

That the decision be implemented after the three day calling period which ends at 9.00am, Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

9. **Establishment of an advisory panel in respect of the Global Centre of Rail Excellence**

**Decision:**

1. That the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Panel for the Global Centre of Rail Excellence as established by Global Centre of Rail Excellence Ltd (GCRE) be noted.
2. That the invitation to the Council from GCRE to participate in the work programme be noted.
3. That the Leader of Council be approved as the Council's representative to the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence.
4. That the Leader of Council to nominate an alternative Cabinet Members to attend the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence in the event that the Leader is unable to attend.
5. That the Director of Environment and Regeneration be approved as the Council Lead Official to the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence.
6. That the Director of Environment and Regeneration nominate an alternative officer to attend the Community Committee of the

Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence in the event that the Chief Executive is unable to attend.

7. That the Ward Members for Onllwyn, Crynant and Seven Sisters to be the ward representatives to the Local Liaison Group.

**Reason for Implementation:**

To achieve outcomes and value to the rail and energy industry in formulating Council representatives to the various committees, established by the advisory panel.

**Implementation of decision:**

The decision is to be implemented after the three-day call-in period, which ends at 9.00am, on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

10. **Phase One of the Accommodation Review**

**Decision:**

That having given due regard to the first stage Integrated Impact Assessment.

1. Approval be granted to close five of the Neath Port Talbot Council's operational staff based office accommodation buildings (as identified in this report) and declare those buildings surplus to operational requirements with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Property and Regeneration to serve the appropriate notices surrendering any leasehold interest in such buildings.

**Reason for Decision:**

To ensure greater rationalising of the Councils accommodation for office-based staff and to ensure financial savings are realised.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision will be implemented after the three-day call-in period, which ends at 9.00am on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

11. **Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/2023 - As at end of December 2022**

**Decision:**

1. That the updated proposed 2022/2023 budget totalling £54.122m be approved to commend to Council.
2. That the position in relation to expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 be noted.

**Reason for Decision:**

To comply with the Councils constitution in relation to budget virement, reprofiling between financial years and to also update the Council's Budget projections for 2022/23.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision is to be implemented after the three-day call-in period, which ends at 9.00am, on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

12. **Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2022/2023 - As at end of December 2022.**

**Decision:**

1. That the contents of the report in relation to the current projected budget outturn and reserves be noted.
2. That the virements as detailed in the report be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

To comply with the Councils constitution in relation to budget virements.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision will be implemented after the three-day call-in period, which ends at 9.00am on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

13. **Treasury Management Report 2022/2023**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

14. **Treasury Management Mid Year Review Report 2022/2023**

**Decision:**

That the Treasury Management activities to date this financial year, and how they relate to the proposed activities within the original 2022/2023 Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy Statements be noted.

15. **2022/2023 Risk Register Monitoring Report**

**Decision:**

That the risks as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be noted.

16. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIRPERSON**



**EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD**

**CABINET**

**1 MARCH 2023**

**Cabinet Members:**

Councillors: S.K.Hunt, Chairperson, S.A.Knoyle, N.Jenkins,  
D.M.Peters, J.Hurley, S.Harris, A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths  
and S.Jones

**Officers in Attendance:**

K.Jones, A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, N.Pearce, C.Griffiths, H.Jones, C.Furlow-  
Harris, C.Owen, N.Blackmore, A.James, C.L.John and J.Woodman-Ralph.

**Invitees:**

Cllr.P.Rogers, Scrutiny Chairperson  
Cllr.C.James, Vice Chair Scrutiny

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1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

Agreed that Councillor S.K.Hunt be appointed Chairperson for the meeting.

2. **CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENT/S**

Councillor S.K.Hunt welcomed all to the meeting.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were received.

## 5. **2023/24 REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS**

### **Decisions:**

Having given due regard to the integrated impact assessment:

1. That the revenue budget for 2023 – 2024 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be approved.
2. That Fees and Charges Executive Functions be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, relevant Cabinet Member and Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee and the

Fees and Charges Executive Functions applicable for the financial year 2023/2024 which are applicable in any subsequent financial year and which, in the opinion of the relevant Corporate Director, need to be set in advance of the financial year for operational reasons.

3. That the Fees and Charges for Non Executive Functions be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Chair of the relevant non-executive committee and the

Fees and Charges for Non Executive functions applicable in any subsequent financial year and which, in the opinion of the Corporate Director, need to be set in advance of that financial year for operational reasons.

4. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Social Justice to make any necessary amendment through the general reserves, as a consequence of any variation between the Welsh Governments final settlement and the provisional settlement.

5. That the Council Tax in 2023/2024 increase by 4.5%. Band D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will be £1,737.72 be commended to Council for approval.

**Reason for Decisions**

To fulfil the statutory requirement to determine the budget for 2022/2023.

To provide a mechanism for dealing with any variation between the provisional and final Welsh Government settlements.

To agree arrangements for setting Fees and Charges.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decision will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

6. **CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/2024 TO 2025/2026**

**Decisions:**

That the following be commended to Council for approval:

- The Capital Strategy
- The Capital Programme for 2023/2024 to 2025/2026 as detailed in Appendix 2 to this report.
- The delegation arrangements as detailed in the circulated report.

**Reason for Decisions:**

To approve the Authority's Capital Programme in line with the Constitution.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decision will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY, AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY**

**Decisions:**

That the following Strategies and Policies as detailed in the circulated report be commended to Council for approval:

- Treasury Management Strategy
- Annual Investment Strategy
- Minimum Revenue Provision Policy
- Prudential Indicators

**Reason for Decisions:**

To approve the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy, Capital Strategy and MRP Policy as required by the Local Government Act 2003 and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (2017).

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decision will be implemented after consultation with the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and determination by Council.

8. **URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent Items were received.

**CHAIRPERSON**



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Cabinet**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

### **Report of the Head of People and Organisational Development – Mrs Sheenagh Rees**

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All Wards

#### **Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

1. To provide Cabinet with the draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy as reviewed by the Welsh Language Task and Finish Group and to seek approval from Cabinet to undertake consultation for a 4 week period.

#### **Executive Summary:**

2. The report details the work of the Task and Finish Group (Appendix 1) carried out by members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee in producing the revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (attached at Appendix 2).

3. The Strategy has been developed and has taken into account a number of factors:
  - a. a review of the current strategy (attached at Appendix 2),
  - b. the advice and support of Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot,
  - c. consideration of the content of current and proposed strategies and plans.
4. The action plan contained within the Strategy includes 'potential actions' that have already been identified which is believed will help to realise the vision.

**Background:**

5. Welsh Language Standard 145 (Promotion) states that every Local Authority must produce and publish on their website a 5 year strategy that sets out how they propose to promote the Welsh Language and to facilitate the use of Welsh Language more widely in their area.
6. The Council's first five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was developed by the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group which was produced and endorsed by Council in 2018.
7. It was agreed at Cabinet on 19 October 2022 to re-establish the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group in order to develop the second Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-2028 (attached at Appendix 2). An evaluation of the initial strategy had been undertaken and formed part of the Task and Finish Group's considerations during the development of the revised Strategy. The evaluation report can be found at Appendix 3.

**Financial Impacts:**

8. It is proposed that the strategic themes in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will be met within budgets, with additional external funding sought whenever possible.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

9. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.
10. It is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), which is attached to the report at Appendix 4, for the purposes of the meeting.
11. The IIA will be revisited in light of responses to the consultation and a revised impact assessment will accompany the final decision report in due course.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

12. Implementation of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will contribute to enhancing projects supporting the valley communities.

### **Workforce Impacts:**

13. There are no direct implications associated with this report, however, if the recommendations are agreed and taken forward there potentially could be workforce impacts.

### **Legal Impacts:**

14. There are no legal impacts associated with this report however, the Council has a duty to develop and implement a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

### **Risk Management Impacts:**

15. There are no direct risk management impacts associated with the report however, there may be a reputational as well as financial risk

to the Council for failure to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

**Consultation:**

16. The recommendations included in the report are looking for permission to consult on the draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

**Recommendations:**

17. That the Cabinet approves the following recommendations:
  - a. That approval be granted for a public consultation on the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (attached at Appendix 2) for a 4 week period.
  - b. The Consultation responses are considered by the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group and the final Welsh Language Promotion Strategy be proposed to Cabinet for approval following this.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

18. To ensure that Neath Port Talbot complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No 1) Regulations 2015.

**Implementation of Decision:**

19. The decisions are proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

**Appendices:**

20. Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task & Finish Report
21. Appendix 2 - Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy



22. Appendix 3 - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2018-2022 - Evaluation Report
23. Appendix 4 - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Integrated Impact Assessment

**List of Background Papers:**

24. Not Applicable

**Officer Contact:**

Sheenagh Rees

Head of People & Organisational Development

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Rhian Headon

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Caryn Furlow-Harris

Strategic Manager – Policy and Executive Support

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**Report of the:  
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy  
Task and Finish group**

**Welsh Language Promotion  
Strategy**

**Date: April 2023**



**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Purpose and Background	2
Terms of Reference	3
Recommendations	5
Summary of Discussion	5
Appendix 1 – Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy	
Appendix 2 - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2018- 2022 - Evaluation Report	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee undertook a Task and Finish Group, to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for the County Borough, to enable the Council to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No 1) Regulations and to aim for the Welsh Government's target of achieving 1 million Welsh Speakers by 2050.

The Task and Finish Group commenced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 and met twice to complete this task. A summary of the discussions are included within the report.

## **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The Welsh Strategy was developed and adopted in 2018. In the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 the Members supported the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy to comply with the requirements of Standard 145 (Promotion).

Standard 145 (Promotion) states that every Local Authority must produce, and publish on their website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how they propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in their area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters) - (a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5 year period concerned, and (b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>Task and Finish Objective</b>	To develop a revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
<b>Membership</b>	<p><b><u>Elected Members</u></b></p> <p>Cllr. Phil Rogers (Chair)</p> <p>Cllr. Helen Ceri Clarke  Cllr. James Henton  Cllr. Rhidian Mizen  Cllr. Suzanne Paddison  Cllr. Sheila Penry  Cllr. Sean Pursey  Cllr. Marcia Spooner</p> <p><b><u>Advisors/Support Officers</u></b></p> <p>Charlotte Davies  Alison Thomas  Rhian Headon  Pam Chivers  Bethan Crosby</p>
<b>The main aims of the Project</b>	To revise the Neath Port Talbot CBC's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations.
<b>Scope of the study</b>	To comply with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards 145 and 146, limiting the scope of the Strategy to the Council's responsibilities.
<b>How it will contribute to achieving Corporate/Community</b>	<p>The Strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help the Council comply with the Welsh Language Standards</li> <li>• help meet its Wellbeing Objectives particularly Objectives 1 and 3</li> </ul>

<b>Objectives / Priorities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be developed in line with the sustainable development principle</li> <li>• help the Council comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.</li> <li>• contribute to the public services board Wellbeing Objectives (which will be informed by the Wellbeing assessment)</li> </ul>
<b>Initial list of key officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies to involve</b>	<p>Officers – as stated above</p> <p>Further officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies as required</p>
<b>Key issues to be addressed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy include?</li> <li>• Realistically, how can the Council influence the increase or maintain the numbers of Welsh speakers?</li> <li>• What actions are required?</li> <li>• What targets are required?</li> </ul>
<b>Timescale for completion of the task</b>	<p>Strategy produced by 1 May 2022</p>
<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23<sup>rd</sup> November at 2.00pm – Introduction</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm – Evaluation of Previous Strategy</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm – Workshop Session – discuss amendments to current Strategy</li> <li>• 23<sup>rd</sup> January at 2.00pm – Draft welsh language Promotion Strategy</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> February at 10.00AM – Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (if required)</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the findings of the Task and Finish Group detailed within this report along with the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy be commended to cabinet for consideration.

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The following Members of Cabinet Scrutiny took part in the Task & Finish Group:

- Cllr P. Rogers (Chair)
- Cllr. Helen Ceri Clarke
- Cllr. James Henton
- Cllr. Rhidian Mizen
- Cllr. Suzanne Paddison
- Cllr. Sheila Penry
- Cllr. Sean Pursey
- Cllr. Marcia Spooner

Members were provided with support from the following officers:

Rhian Headon  
Pamela Chivers  
Charlotte John  
Alison Thomas

The Task and Finish Group commenced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 and met twice to consider the review of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in order to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations. Members were also invited to contribute to the review through written submissions via email.

The group understood that the Council is required to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy every 5 years to continue to consider and set out how Welsh Language will be promoted and how it will be further facilitated throughout the Borough.



Members of the Group discussed how the Welsh Language is promoted within the community and how the strategy can encourage the increase of the number of Welsh speakers across the County Borough.

Member referred to the census data provided which indicated that the previous target of a 1% increase in the number of Welsh speaker had not been met. However, an increase in children engaging with Welsh medium education along with the Annual Population Survey data for persons 3years+ indicates to the contrary.

When discussing the two options for consultation purposes, members determined to amalgamate both options presented. Option one to be inserted on page 7 of the draft and Option two to be inserted at the end with the action plan.

Members were in general agreement that the consultation should allow for general comments, in order to glean as much information and ideas as possible.





Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

# Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymraeg  
This document is also available in Welsh

[www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Vision .....	2
Target .....	2
Strategic Themes.....	2
Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Profile.....	5
Council .....	5
Neath Port Talbot Locality .....	6
Policy Context.....	10
Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032.....	11
Working in partnership.....	12
Monitoring.....	13
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan .....	14

## **Introduction**

Our first five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was launched in 2018 and this strategy for 2023-2028 represents the first revision of the Council's strategy to promote and support the Welsh language in Neath Port Talbot.

This revision has taken account of, and builds on, the progress made in the initial strategy, the commitments of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 as well as the work of our partners in promoting the Welsh language locally.

We acknowledge the limitations we have to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot but by working with local organisations, our schools and residents of our many communities we are confident that we will meet the commitments laid out in the strategy.

Although this revised Strategy has been shaped by the feedback received from and discussions with, and between, our many communities, partner organisations, elected members and our senior management team, it is not a 'done deal'. We will revisit the strategy to take into account feedback received during the consultation period to ensure its focus and content along with actions initially identified are appropriate to meet our vision and target.

## Vision

The Welsh language is visible in our communities and used by an increased number of people in their daily lives.

## Target

As a requirement of the promotion standards we must set a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in our area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the area by the end of the 5 year strategy.

Our previous target of an increase of a minimum of 1% appears to not have been met, according to the Census 2021 data. However, an increase in children engaging with Welsh medium education along with the Annual Population Survey data for persons 3years+ indicates to the contrary.

In light of this it is appropriate to continue to use the target of 1% as an interim measure until further analysis of all relevant data can be undertaken.

## Strategic Themes

Our approach set out in this document is structured to reflect the strategic themes outlined in the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy. As these themes reflect our own belief in how the Welsh language can be promoted/facilitated locally we will work toward realising of the themes of

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
- Increasing the use of Welsh
- Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

These themes while not explicitly reflecting the wellbeing objectives in our Corporate Plan 2023-2028 they do permeate/complement each one to as indicated below:

### **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023 - 2028**

Strategic Theme 1  
Increasing the number of Welsh speakers

Strategic Theme 2  
Increasing the use of Welsh

Strategic Theme 3  
Creating favourable conditions - infrastructure  
and context

### **Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028**

Wellbeing Objective 1  
All children get the best start in life.

Wellbeing Objective 2  
All communities are thriving and sustainable.

Wellbeing Objective 3  
Our local environment, culture and heritage  
can be enjoyed by future generations.

Wellbeing Objective 4  
Local people are skilled and access high  
quality, green jobs.



Welsh is more than just the language; it is part of our being, our heritage and culture. It is woven into the fabric of our lives - even if not instantly recognisable; our place names, forenames, colloquialisms, all are rooted in the Welsh language. Our Culture and Heritage Strategy, currently being developed, will further address these links. Actions identified as part of this promotion strategy will help our aim of increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers and the use of the language whilst also complementing the links between language, culture and heritage.

In order to increase the number of Welsh speakers over the life of the strategy we, both individually and with our partners, will prioritise key areas for action:

<b>Strategic Theme 1: Increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers</b>
<b>Vision:</b> More people speak Welsh
<b>Key areas of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032</li> <li>• Language transmission in the home</li> <li>• Support people learning/speaking Welsh</li> </ul>
<b>Potential actions include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote benefits of bilingualism/language awareness to young families and all new comers into NPT</li> <li>• Provide homework support to pupils of non-Welsh speaking families attending Welsh medium schools</li> <li>• Explore reasons for limited take up/access to Welsh language courses/education amongst specific communities</li> <li>• Provide language awareness and training courses for teaching and non-teaching staff</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh</b>
<b>Vision:</b> Welsh is an integral part of people’s everyday life
<b>Key areas of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and promote the use of Welsh in social settings</li> <li>• Expand the use of Welsh in the workplace</li> </ul>
<b>Potential actions include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the instances of using Welsh within the Council</li> <li>• Develop a programme of Welsh language events and activities across NPT</li> <li>• Increased use of Welsh in a social context</li> <li>• Work in partnership to identify good practice and resources to increase the number of welsh speaking staff in all our organisations</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Theme 3: Creating Favourable Conditions: Infrastructure and Context</b>
<b>Vision:</b> We have an environment in which the language thrives
<b>Key areas of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the visibility of the language across the area</li> <li>• Embed Welsh into all our strategies and plans</li> </ul>
<b>Potential actions include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to increase the visibility of Welsh across leisure, business and cultural locations, activities and events</li> <li>• Promote Welsh in all new developments</li> <li>• Work with services to ensure Welsh is a key element of all new strategies and plans</li> </ul>

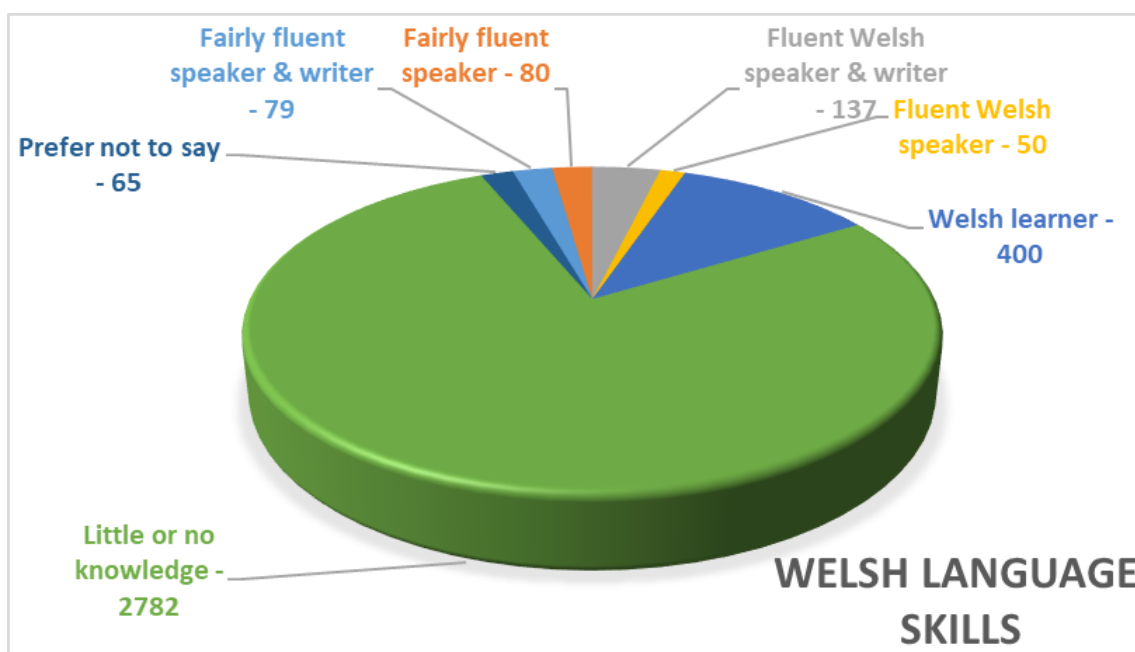


## Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Profile

### Council

Over recent years the number of staff who identified as having Welsh language skills has remained relatively low overall. However, there has been a small increase in the number of staff identifying as fluent speakers and writers, 137 in 2021-2022 compared to 126 during 2020-2021, and the number of Welsh learners within the council has increased by 17.

Directorate/Service	Fairly Fluent Speaker & Writer	Fairly Fluent Speaker	Fluent Speaker & Writer	Fluent Speaker	Welsh Learner	Little or no knowledge	Prefer Not To Say	Total
<b>Chief Officers</b>	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	4
<b>Chief Executive's Office</b>								
Digital Services	4	1	2	-	7	90	1	105
Financial Services	3	3	2	-	10	136	1	155
Human & Organisational Development	2	4	5	1	11	77	1	101
Legal & Democratic Services	5	2	6	1	18	64	-	96
<b>Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning</b>								
Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships	4	3	6	2	31	86	6	138
Education Development	5	4	12	4	38	142	4	209
Support Services & Transformation	11	4	25	10	34	469	29	582
<b>Environment</b>								
Engineering and Transport	4	3	6	2	13	107	1	136
Planning & Public Protection	7	9	12	1	60	146	6	241
Property and Regeneration	-	7	3	2	12	112	2	138
South Wales Trunk Road Agency	2	5	9	6	19	155	1	197
Streetcare Services	9	11	13	7	32	384	6	462
<b>Social Service Health and Housing</b>								
Adult Services	12	12	19	9	50	455	4	561
Business Services	-	4	2	4	9	91	2	112
Children and Young People Services	11	8	15	1	55	265	1	356
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2782</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>3593</b>



## Neath Port Talbot Locality

According to the 2011 Census, almost 21,000 (15%) of Welsh speakers live in Neath Port Talbot.

Ward	Number of people over 3 years of age	Number of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh	% of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh
Neath Port Talbot	135,281	20,698	15.3
Aberavon	5,232	411	7.9
Aberdulais	2,305	311	13.5
Alltwen	2,251	664	29.5
Baglan	6,627	557	8.4
Blaengwrach	1,935	287	14.8
Briton Ferry (East)	2,827	242	8.6
Briton Ferry (West)	2,896	275	9.5
Bryn and Cwmavon	6,330	1,024	16.2
Bryncoch (North)	2,139	297	13.9
Bryncoch (South)	5,706	699	12.3
Cadoxton	1,647	211	12.8
Cimla	3,835	350	9.1
Coedffranc (Central)	3,870	425	11
Coedffranc (North)	2,322	265	11.4
Coedffranc (West)	2,563	316	12.3

Ward	Number of people over 3 years of age	Number of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh	% of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh
Crynant	1,851	465	25.1
Cwmllynfell	1,137	669	58.8
Cymmer	2,714	186	6.9
Dyffryn	3,078	350	11.4
Glyncorrwg	1,054	65	6.2
Glynneath	3,320	689	20.8
Godre'r Graig	1,571	473	30.1
Gwaun-cae-gurwen	2,823	1,576	55.8
Gwynfi	1,314	92	7
Lower Brynamman	1,277	776	60.8
Margam	2,908	295	10.1
Neath (East)	6,137	497	8.1
Neath (North)	3,838	379	9.9
Neath (South)	4,789	440	9.2
Onllwyn	1,161	222	19.1
Pelenna	1,113	178	16
Pontardawe	5,232	1,624	31
Port Talbot	5,457	518	9.5
Resolven	3,044	341	11.2
Rhos	2,382	588	24.7
Sandfields (East)	6,692	504	7.5
Sandfields (West)	6,495	524	8.1
Seven Sisters	2,049	469	22.9
Taibach	4,634	354	7.6
Tonna	2,445	292	11.9
Trebanos	1,367	459	33.6
Ystalyfera	2,911	1,339	46

Source: 2011 Census

The vast majority of Welsh speakers were in the upper Swansea Valley and Amman Valley, with some communities such as Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman among the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales

However, these areas along with Crynant, have seen the greatest decline in the percentage and numbers of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011 (table below).

Community	Number of Welsh speakers (2001)	Number of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change	% of Welsh speakers (2001)	% of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change
Cwmllynfell	741	669	-72	68.2	58.2	-9.4
Lower Brynamman	861	776	-85	68.1	60.8	-7.3
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	1,860	1,5726	-288	67.9	55.8	-12.1
Ystalyfera	1,614	1,339	-275	54.6	46	-8.6
Trebanos	580	459	-121	43.4	33.6	-8.8
Godre'r Graig	580	473	-107	41.5	30.1	-11.4
Pontardawe	1,826	1,624	-202	37.4	31	-6.4
Alltwen	800	664	-136	35.9	29.5	-6.4
Rhos	692	588	-104	28.6	24.7	-3.9
Crynant	699	465	-234	46.53	25.1	-21.43

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

Factors that contribute historically to linguistic erosion include:

- Lack of language transmission at home
- Out-migration / Immigration
- Negative perception of the inherent value of the language
- Lack of awareness of the advantages of bilingualism
- Lack of confidence in speaking Welsh
- The spread of English into traditional Welsh language areas
- Mixed language marriages
- The power of Anglo-American influence on the interests of children and young people
- More deaths than births among Welsh-speaking families

Census 2021 data is currently only available on an authority wide basis and disappointingly indicates a decrease in the numbers of Welsh speakers locally, a picture reflected across most of Wales.

There has been a significant decrease in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers between the 2011 and 2021 Census; 20,698 (15.3%) of the local population were able to speak Welsh in the 2011 Census while only 18,662 (13.5%) indicated having this language skill in 2021:

	Number who can speak Welsh			Percentage who can speak Welsh		
	2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
<b>NPT</b>	23,404	20,698	18,662	18	15.3	13.5
Wales	582,368	562,016	538,296	20.8	19.0	17.3

The decline in numbers across Wales has been attributed primarily to the decrease in percentage of children and young people (the group most likely to report ability) reported as being able to speak Welsh. The Census 2021 was held during the pandemic and followed periods of lockdown which necessitated remote learning for children and many people working from home. It is not known how the pandemic impacted people's reported Welsh language ability, or their perception of the Welsh language ability of others, such as their children.

In addition, mortality rates, immigration/migration and the subjective nature of language skills all are likely to contribute to the decrease in the number of people identifying as able to speak Welsh.

With Census 2021 data still being released the Plan will be reviewed in light of the additional data and insight to ensure it addresses the ongoing position.

Contrary to Census data the Annual Population Survey has historically and continues to indicate figures far above the Census data:

<b>Neath Port Talbot</b>						
	2011	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Population	134,400	136,100	137,800	136,400	135,400	137,900
Can speak Welsh	27,200	30,500	34,600	27,900	31,100	31,400
% who can speak Welsh	20.7%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23%	22.8%

While the Census 2021 data indicates the decrease in the percentage of children and young people reporting the ability of speak Welsh, data from our pupil level annual school census (PLASC), more consistent with the annual population survey data, indicates an increase in the numbers enrolled in Welsh medium education.

<b>PLASC - Years N1-11</b>			
	2011	2021	2023 (projected)
No. in Welsh medium schools	2,993	3,321	3,329
No. in NPT schools	20,399	21,149	20,535
% in Welsh medium schools	14.7%	15.7%	16.2%

Our Welsh medium schools are:

## **Primary**

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Blaendulais  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmnedd  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmllynfell  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Trebannws  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn

## **Middle (ages 3-18)**

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera - Bro Dur

More detailed information about Welsh medium education, including an aim to create a further three Welsh medium primary schools, can be found in our [WESP 2022-2032](#).

## **Policy Context**

### **Welsh Language Measure 2011**

The Measure:

- gave the Welsh Language official status in Wales - meaning that Welsh should be treated no less favourably than the English language;
- established the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner who has responsibility for promoting the Welsh language and improving the opportunities people have to use it;
- created a procedure for introducing duties in the form of language standards that explain how organisations are expected to use the Welsh language and create rights for Welsh speakers;
- made provision regarding promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increasing its use in everyday life;
- made provision regarding investigating an interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language.

### **Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015**

Under the Regulations Welsh language standards have been imposed on the Council which aim to promote and facilitate the Welsh language, and ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.

The Standards, as applied to the Council, and contained in the compliance notice, comprises service delivery, policy making, operational, promotion and record keeping standards. As a consequence of the promotion standards the Council has developed its Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

## **Cymraeg 2050 Strategy**

Published originally in 2017 and more recently updated the strategy illustrates the Welsh Government's vision to see "the Welsh language thrive" by achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Three key strategic themes are identified to realise this ambition:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
- Increasing the use of Welsh
- Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

## **More than just Words**

The Welsh Government's strategic framework to strengthen Welsh language provision in health and social care aims to support Welsh-speakers to receive services in their first language.

Its 5 year plan 2022-2027 is based on and reflects the strategic themes of Cymraeg 2050:

- Culture and Leadership
- Welsh language planning and policies including data
- Supporting and developing the Welsh Language skills of the current and future workforce
- Sharing best practice and an enabling approach

## **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This Act is a means of helping the public bodies that are listed in the Act to think in the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, to try to prevent problems and follow a consistent approach in order to improve the well-being of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

One of the seven Wellbeing goals contained in the Act is a 'Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language - a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.'

## **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032**

Prepared under Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 this latest iteration, Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (WESP), has been developed in the firm belief that education is the vehicle that will produce Welsh speakers of the future.

We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh and so Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. The implementation of the WESP will enable all learners, families and carers to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.

Our WESP is the cornerstone for this vision and its outcomes detail how we plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in our wider communities and how we plan for future growth:

- More nursery children/3 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More reception class children/ 5 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
- More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
- More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
- An increase in Welsh-medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs (in accordance with duties determined by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018)
- Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

With the outcomes and ambitious targets of the WESP relating to the complete education journey it is not appropriate to include similar actions in this revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. However, as both the Plan and Strategy relate to the promotion and facilitation of the Welsh language it is now appropriate for their greater alignment and potential complementary actions to be included in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy as necessary.

## **Working in partnership**

Partners in our journey to promote and facilitate the Welsh language come in all guises from well-established organisations to informal groups, from schools to businesses, from families with babes in arms to those who have lived full and long lives. Welsh speakers or not, young or old we all play our part on this journey. This strategy has the potential to help us make great strides but without the contribution of everyone in Neath Port Talbot it will fall short and not realise its full potential.



Our communities are our greatest partners. We are mindful that any success in this, and any other, strategy is dependent on the investment we all put into it. The investment of our time, our actions and support, finance and commitment to making a difference; for those who already use Welsh daily, who are on the first steps in learning Welsh, those who don't speak it but support the language as well as those who find it all a waste of time, we all have a part to play.

There is an array of local organisations that have the future of the language as a key principle of their work. The significant role they played in the previous strategy is consolidated in this revised iteration. While only those bodies governed by the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations (2015) are subject to promotion standards each organisation has a part to play in ensuring the promotion and the continued use of the language is facilitated in all aspects of daily life.

Local organisations, individually and as constituent members of the Iaith Fforwm Abertawe/Castell-nedd, continue to play a key role in the implementation of the strategy. With the recent restructure of the Fforwm there is greater opportunity to work together in a more structured way and in so doing will address some of the issues highlighted in the evaluation.

We remain conscious of the limitations we as council have in influencing the numbers of Welsh language speakers in the area. Consequently in developing actions we have been mindful of three discrete areas within our responsibility:

- Direct - plans, strategies and internal processes over which the council has sole control.
- Indirect - processes that the council can affect with interventions but does not have outright control
- Partnerships - working with organisations and groups to progress new and established areas of work and creating positive attitudes towards the Welsh language.

## **Monitoring**

We will continue to use existing executive reporting structures to monitor the progress of the Strategy.

Progress will be monitored by the Cabinet and scrutinised by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. Clear monitoring arrangements will be developed with the Language Forum to avoid duplication of effort and ensure alignment with our partners' existing reporting arrangements.

In addition regular progress reports to our internal Welsh Language Officer Group, the WESP Forum and to the Council's Equality and Community Cohesion Group.

The action plan will be reviewed annually and actions revised where appropriate.

Measures will be developed to ensure progress is measured appropriately.

## **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan**

This latest Action Plan builds on progress made during the period of the first strategy, 2018- 2023, while responding to the position facing the Welsh language in Neath Port Talbot today. The actions will help in developing Neath Port Talbot as an area where the language is considered an important and relevant factor in people's everyday lives.

As in our initial strategy the action plan has been developed within current budgetary constraints although opportunities for additional budget/ external funding will be pursued. A number of actions have been included which are already being delivered or currently being developed to promote and facilitate the language locally.

The following draft Action Plan includes 'potential actions' that have already been identified which we believe will help realise our vision. However, these actions are not set in stone and are included here as the beginning of what we hope will be a meaningful conversation; on the vision and strategy and as to what realistic and achievable actions should be included to help ensure a future where the Welsh language is visible and used by more people in their daily lives.

## **Strategic Theme 1: Increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers**

**Vision:** More people speak Welsh

### **Key areas of work**

- Support the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032
- Language transmission in the home
- Support people learning/speaking Welsh

### **Potential Actions**

- Promote the 'Welsh Homework Help' Facebook group to all pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in years 5 and 6 from who attend Welsh medium schools.
- Promote the 'Welsh Homework Help' Facebook group to all pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in years 7 and 8 who attend Welsh medium schools.
- Update and promote the 'Benefits of Bilingualism' booklet.
- Promote Welsh language/Welsh-medium education among non-Welsh speaking families to increase/support language awareness
- Establish and promote Welsh language courses for parents who send their children to Welsh-medium primary schools.
- Develop appropriate courses and support for teaching and non-teaching staff learning Welsh
- Explore potential barriers to and increase the take up of Welsh medium education by children from BME communities and other underrepresented groups.
- Explore potential barriers to and increase the take up of adult Welsh language courses amongst BME communities and other underrepresented groups

## **Strategic Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh**

**Vision:** Welsh is an integral part of people's everyday life

### **Key areas of work**

- Support and promote the use of Welsh in social settings
- Expand the use of Welsh in the workplace

### **Potential Actions**

- Provide opportunities for our staff to access appropriate levels of Welsh language learners/ improvement courses
- Expand the Welsh language leisure programme across Neath Port Talbot.
- Promote the leisure programme to staff and the public through targeted and more general publicity.
- Explore opportunities to increase the visibility of the Welsh language at all leisure facilities
- Promote and embed the Council's Internal use of Welsh Policy
- Explore how Welsh can be used more in a social context
- Work with partners to encourage greater use of the language in all youth clubs
- Welsh language awareness training will be promoted to all staff
- Work with partners to identify opportunities to promote the Welsh language in a variety of social settings

### **Strategic Theme 3: Creating Favourable Conditions: Infrastructure and Context**

**Vision:** We have an environment in which the language thrives

#### **Key areas of work**

- Increase the visibility of the language across the area
- Embed Welsh into all our strategies and plans

#### **Potential Actions**

- Work with the BME Community Association to explore ways in which to increase awareness of the Welsh language and culture within communities
- Develop and implement a new Culture and Heritage Strategy that promotes awareness, use and visibility of the Welsh language within Neath Port Talbot
- Develop and implement our internal language skills policy across our service areas.
- Ensure the Welsh language is central to the design and application of new technologies.
- Work with the business community to explore opportunities to increase the visibility of Welsh.
- Ensure Welsh language, heritage and culture is a key component of the Destination Management Plan currently being developed.
- Ensure Welsh is taken into account during the development of the commemoration of people and events in the public realm policy.
- Include the Welsh language as a key element in all future policies and strategies

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# **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy**

**Review 2022**

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Policy Context .....	1
Aims of the Strategy.....	1
Leadership.....	3
Partnerships .....	3
Governance.....	4
Costs and resources .....	5
Progress assessment.....	6
Conclusions .....	7
Summary of Recommendations.....	7



## Introduction

Neath Port Talbot CBC, along with many other public bodies, was required by the Welsh language standards to produce its first five-year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan in 2016. However, as the Council challenged the application of a number of standards including standards 145 and 146, the Strategy was not produced until October 2018, following the conclusion of the challenge.

Since the publication of the Strategy three progress reports have been published all of which can be found on the Council's website. The progress report for 2021-2022 is due to be published before the end of 2022.

Within the lifetime of the Strategy the Council is required to assess to what extent it has 'followed that Strategy and [has] reached the target set it' (standard 146). This assessment, taking place during the final year of the strategy, will help inform a review of the Strategy which is to take place during winter/spring 2022-2023 ready for publication in April 2023.

## Policy Context

The Strategy recognises the strategic national and local context in which it has been developed; the legislative foundation of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, More than Just Words as well as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The Strategy is further anchored by the promotion and facilitation work undertaken over many years and on which its commitments and principles have been based.

The Strategy has been developed primarily to meet the requirements of the Welsh language standards as applied to the Council and contained in the compliance notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner finalised in April 2018.

## Aims of the Strategy

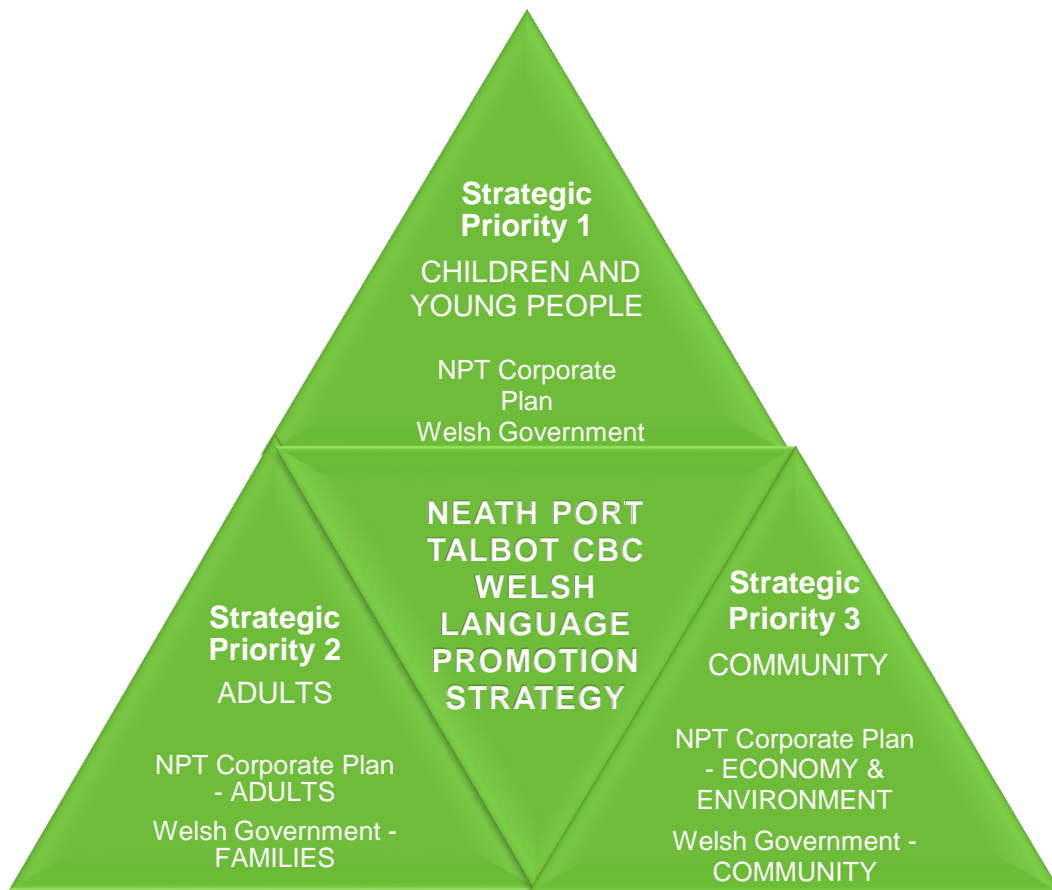
A cross party member Scrutiny Task and Finish Group developed the Strategy, supported by officers of the Council and the local Menter. The Group identified drivers for the development of a strategy; legislative requirements, the contribution to Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 as well as a more instinctive approach to the sensibilities for the language, for example, 'Because it's right to have one...'

The aims of the Strategy reflected these considerations:

- Put steps in place, in the short term, to slow down the percentage decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the usage of the Welsh language in all aspects of life

- Raise awareness of the language as a component of Neath Port Talbot’s heritage, culture, tourism and business sectors
- To drive and support Welsh medium education and the creation of new Welsh medium schools in particular, primary schools through an effective Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Strategic priorities to deliver the aims aligned with the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 and with the Council’s Corporate Plan 2018-2022 as shown in the diagram below (taken from the strategy)



The aims and priorities reflect and complement the strategic and local context of the language in Neath Port Talbot as well as recognising the Council can only play a part in improving the numbers/percentage of Welsh speakers in the area.

There is, however, a lack of clarity as to the vision for Neath Port Talbot although the aims and strategic priorities for the Strategy are clear; even though ‘tucked’ away towards the end of the Strategy along with the vision.

**Recommendation -**

- Consider the order of the sections in the revised strategy. Be clear as to the vision for the Welsh language in NPT, its promotion and facilitation. Ensure the aims and priorities of the Strategy are foremost in the Strategy and ensure the vision is prominent!

## Leadership

The Strategy was developed by elected members, with support of officers of the Council and the local Menter, with its implementation secured through service areas within the Council and in partnership with the Language Forum.

The Strategy states that:

Although overall responsibility for the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy lies with the Council, in accordance with Standard 145 of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015, each partner organisation shares responsibility by virtue of the commitments made in the action plan.

While individual service areas are identified as responsible for progressing actions in section one of the action plan there doesn't appear to be a clearly defined 'lead' for its overall implementation. In addition some actions identify more than one service area as the 'lead' which adds at best to the ambiguity or at worst stymies any potential progress.

### Recommendations

- To address potential confusion over roles and responsibilities for the implementation of actions in the next iteration of the Strategy it is recommended that these roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined.
- To help ensure the successful implementation of future strategies, partners and service areas need to be fully engaged with the process, from development through to implementation, as well as in ongoing assessment.
- Clarity of ownership / leadership to be more clearly defined where partnerships arrangements are in place.

## Partnerships

Working in partnership across the sectors and with a range of organisations has been a key component of the Council's activities over many years; the development and implementation of the Strategy being no exception.

Realising the aims of the Strategy is not in the gift of a single organisation and so contributions made by partner organisations to meet the aims of the Strategy are key. The Strategy states:

'The Council has been conscious of its limitations in influencing the maintenance or increase in the number of Welsh language speakers in the area.'

'Members of the Language Forum have shown their support of the Strategy by agreeing to deliver a range of actions, supported by the Council wherever possible, to help deliver the aims of the Strategy.'

'In implementing the Strategy, the Council, Strategic Forum and individual partners will work together to meet its aims, implement change and work towards the common goal.'

The action plan distinguishes between actions that are primarily the responsibility of the Council (section one of the action plan) as opposed to those actions which fall under the purview of the Language Forum (section two) that comprise of organisations with a remit for Welsh language support and provision.

The Language Forum and its individual members are listed as contributors to 39 of the actions in section one of the action plan as well as being responsible for all 20 actions in section two.

Progress in section two of the action plan is noticeably more limited; in a couple of annual reports there appears to be limited information although contributions from the partner organisations are evident within section 1.

### **Recommendations**

- Continue to build on the progress made by partnership working and continue to work in partnership to deliver the next iteration of the Strategy.
- Although partners were identified to help progress many of the actions there isn't always a clear lead or focus on how the partners would work together. This may have inhibited progress. Clearer lines of responsibility and some detail on how partners will work together to progress actions could be considered.
- The implementation and progress of the Strategy would benefit from the Council being represented on the Forum. This would not only show commitment and leadership in relation to the Strategy but help reinforce the wider partnership approach to promoting the language going forward.

### **Governance**

Progress on the actions in the Strategy is reported annually to Cabinet Board and is scrutinised by the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. There is an additional element of scrutiny by the internal Welsh Language Officer Group (WLOG) and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group, whose members include representatives from local equality/community groups.

Monitoring arrangements, as identified in the Strategy, fall to Members of relevant Scrutiny Committees for actions in section one and to the chair of the Language Forum for actions in section two with progress to be reported annually to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

However, the reality is somewhat different; the assessment has identified that monitoring of progress has been confined to an annual report to Cabinet and scrutinised by Cabinet Scrutiny Committee (as is the case with other strategic plans).

Information on progress from partners in the Language Forum in relation to section two of the action plan has been limited over the period - the pandemic being a significant factor in this. However, information as to the contribution of partners to actions in section one is more evident; potentially due to services driving monitoring arrangements.

Although arrangements are not as originally envisaged there is a degree of monitoring and reporting of progress in line with other corporate strategies and plans. However, there are significant gaps in monitoring such the lack of quantitative/qualitative measures to indicate direction of travel. With such arrangements any concerns or good practice could be identified/addressed in a more timely manner.

### **Recommendation**

- Consideration to be given to more effective arrangements to ensure responsibilities and accountability is clear both internally and amongst partner organisations.
- Consider the role of WLOG and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group in scrutinising progress, for example receiving quarterly reports on progress.
- So that the implementation of the Strategy can be effectively monitored while at the same time not being too onerous on partner organisations/Language Forum it is recommended that current practices for partner organisations are accommodated as far as possible. This will help streamline and encourage monitoring of progress. It is suggested that progress against any future actions is reported regularly for example via the chair of the Forum to ensure actions are progressing and to help enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- To help ensure progress is monitored throughout the year performance management arrangements to be put in place to enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.

### **Costs and resources**

The Strategy was developed against a backdrop of austerity and actions were developed in light of resources available at the time. The action plan includes actions that had already been identified or had little or no cost attached to them as well as more aspirational actions to be progressed should circumstances allow.

At the outset staffing capacity was considered sufficient to progress the commitments of the strategy. However, the pandemic and the resulting changes to staffing arrangements, working practices as well as restrictions to service provision, has had a limiting effect over the last two years of the strategy.

The need to refocus and reprioritise services, along with their methods of delivery, and resources (budget and staff) has been a major factor in the implementation of the Strategy during the height of the pandemic. Consequently, progress was paused or limited in some areas, for example, encouraging businesses to promote Welsh as well as education related actions, albeit work to progress actions have since recommenced.

### **Recommendations**

- Consideration to be given to identify external funding for projects/specific events or activities to enable promotion of the language more widely.

- In light of the new WESP and Corporate Plan, consideration to be given to sharing resources across service areas to achieve a better take up/promotion/publicity of the language.

## Progress assessment

Each annual report provides an insight into not only the progress made in meeting the aims of the Strategy but also records the journey of a strategy, and all involved, from taking a tentative dip and trying to stay afloat to striking out for distant shores.

### 2018-2019

The rate of progress has been mixed in respect of the short term actions due to a number of reasons including, potentially over ambitious target dates, increased officer workloads, sickness/maternity leave, the underestimation of the level of complexity in the implementation of some actions.

In some areas, including early years' provision, significant progress has been made in promoting the Welsh language to parents and childcare providers. This activity is borne out with the rise in the number of children accessing Welsh Flying Start child care during 2018-2019, 135 compared to 104 in 2017-2018.

### 2020-2022

Progress during this period was hit significantly by the outbreak of the pandemic and its resulting ongoing impacts. The unprecedented situation brought with it challenges and impacts for communities, partner organisations and the Council which had never been experienced before. With the resulting necessary changes in service delivery, working practices as well as a refocusing of priorities, activity on the Strategy was suspended. Maintaining services, in what was a very different environment, took precedence and any progress against actions was limited.

While the closure of leisure facilities for a significant period hampered actions to promote the language in these areas, there was some progress in relation to Welsh medium education for example provision of new/additional childcare spaces and additional Foundation Phase classrooms at five Welsh-medium schools. This has been due to the increase in the numbers of children accessing Welsh language flying start childcare places and reception age Welsh language education.

The Strategy anticipates that by 2023 'the Council will have contributed to a minimum increase of 1% in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough within the current financial plan, and current levels of funding and resources'. It is difficult to confidently assess progress made against this figure as the data currently available is extrapolated from information gathered as part of the annual population survey. This has been made more difficult with a recent revision of the 2020-and 2021 data. 'This planned reweight (using updated Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) data) as well as to correct an error affecting grossing factors for some age groups for the annual periods between April 2019 to March 2020 and July 2020 to June 2021' (source Stats Wales).

	31 March 2018	31 March 2019	31 March 2020	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
% of persons (aged 3 and over) who say they can speak Welsh	22.4%	25.3%	20.5%*	23%*	22.8%
% of persons (aged 3 and over) who say they speak Welsh daily	9.3%	12.5%	10%*	10.6%*	10.1%
% of adults who say they speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words (FG36)	11%	10%	10%	12%	N/A
% of adults who say they speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words (FG37)	18%	16%	-	19%	N/A

\* Revised data

Based on the above data the Council would have made significant progress in increasing the number of people who can speak Welsh (an increase of 2.3%, based on the revised 2020 figure) however this is not seem to be translated into the frequency of use.

However, a clearer and more reliable indicator will be the Census 2021 which is due for release in December 2022.

## Conclusions

Overall the development and implementation of the Strategy has been positive.

The strategic priorities identified correspond with the national vision and take into the local policy and language context with the resulting target mindful of current provision and financial constraints.

While there is an element of strong leadership this is tempered with ambiguity in certain areas of the action plan and in aspects of governance.

## Summary of Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been identified to address some of the issues highlighted as well as strengthening areas of good practice.

- Consider the order of the sections in the revised strategy. Be clear as to the vision for the Welsh language in NPT, its promotion and facilitation. Ensure the aims and priorities of the Strategy are foremost in the Strategy and ensure the vision is prominent!
- To address potential confusion over roles and responsibilities for the implementation of actions in the next iteration of the Strategy it is recommended that these roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined.

- To help ensure the implementation of future strategies, partners and service areas need to be fully engaged with the process, from development through to implementation, as well as in ongoing assessment.
- Clarity of ownership/leadership to be defined where partnership arrangements are in place.
- Continue to build on the progress made by partnership working and continue to work in partnership to deliver the next iteration of the Strategy.
- Although partners were identified to help progress many of the actions there isn't always a clear lead or focus on how the partners would work together. This may have inhibited progress. Clearer lines of responsibility and some detail on how partners will work together to progress actions could be considered.
- The implementation and progress of the Strategy would benefit from the Council being represented on the Language Forum. This would not only show commitment and leadership in relation to the Strategy but help reinforce the wider partnership approach to the promoting the language going forward
- Consideration to be given to more effective arrangements to ensure responsibilities and accountability is clear both internally and amongst partner organisations.
- WLOG and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group to play a greater role in scrutinising progress, for example receiving quarterly reports on progress.
- So that the implementation of the Strategy can be effectively monitored while at the same time not being too onerous on partner organisations/Language Forum it is recommended that current practices for partner organisations are accommodated as far as possible. This will help streamline and encourage monitoring of progress. It is suggested that progress against any future actions is reported regularly via the chair of the Forum to ensure actions are progressing and to help enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- To help ensure progress is monitored throughout the year performance management arrangements to be put in place to enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- Consideration to be given to identify external funding for projects/specific events or activities to enable promotion of the language more widely.
- In light of the new Welsh Education Strategic Plan and corporate plan consideration to be given to sharing resources across service areas to achieve a better take up/promotion/publicity of the language.



## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment considers the duties and requirements of the following legislation in order to inform and ensure effective decision making and compliance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

### Version Control

Version	Author	Job title	Date
e.g. Version 1	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Officer	

### 1. Details of the initiative

	<b>Title of the Initiative: Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (WLPS)</b>
<b>1a</b>	<b>Service Area:</b> Corporate
<b>1b</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>
<b>1c</b>	<b>Summary of the initiative:</b>  This second iteration of the WLPS has been developed by a Cabinet Scrutiny Task and Finish Group with advice and support from Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot. The strategy has taken into account a number of factors: a review of the current strategy (2018-2023); the advice and support of Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot; consideration of content of current and proposed strategies and plans.  The Strategy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• facilitate an increase in the number of people who speak Welsh in Neath Port Talbot</li><li>• establish the Welsh language as an integral part of people's everyday life in Neath Port Talbot</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitate an environment in which the Welsh language thrives</li> </ul> <p>The WLPS is developed under the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015.</p>								
<b>1d</b>	<b>Is this a 'strategic decision'?</b> Yes								
<b>1e</b>	<p><b>Who will be directly affected by this initiative?</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Residents of Neath Port Talbot</td> <td>Employees of the Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools – pupils and staff</td> <td>Visitors to Neath Port Talbot</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third sector organisations</td> <td>Elected Members</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Businesses</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Residents of Neath Port Talbot	Employees of the Council	Schools – pupils and staff	Visitors to Neath Port Talbot	Third sector organisations	Elected Members	Businesses	
Residents of Neath Port Talbot	Employees of the Council								
Schools – pupils and staff	Visitors to Neath Port Talbot								
Third sector organisations	Elected Members								
Businesses									
<b>1f</b>	<p><b>When and how were people consulted?</b></p> <p>Feedback from a range of consultation exercises undertaken during the last two years has helped inform the strategy; including the Let's Talk engagement, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Public Service Board's Wellbeing Assessment.</p> <p>The consultation exercises consisted of online questionnaires, hard copies of questionnaires distributed to libraries etc., as well as face to face engagement with local groups and organisations.</p> <p>Further consultation on the draft strategy is to be undertaken during April/May 2023</p>								
<b>1g</b>	<p><b>What were the outcomes of the consultation?</b></p> <p>Feedback from previous consultation exercises helped inform the strategy and identified the language as something that was close to people's hearts, that it was inextricably linked to the culture and heritage of NPT and the nation, but although something to be proud of, was also a cause of irritation/annoyance as to its use in correspondence, signage and to a degree in education.</p> <p><b>Feedback post April/May 2023 - TBC</b></p>								

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## 2. Evidence

### What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?

#### Census 2011

Language profile of the area - according to the 2011 Census, around 15.3% of the county borough's population speak Welsh 20,698 individuals. Communities such as Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman are amongst the highest percentage of Welsh speaking areas in Wales.

There has been a significant drop in the number of people speaking Welsh in these, and other areas in the county borough, between the 2001 and 2011 Census. Trebanos and Crynant have seen the largest percentage comparable change, - 20.86% and -33.47% respectively.

#### Census 2021

While comprehensive Census 2021 data has yet to be released initial indications show a significant decrease in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot since the Census 2011:

Number who can speak Welsh			Percentage who can speak Welsh		
2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
23,404	20,698	18,662	18	15.3	13.5

#### Annual Population Survey

Contrary to Census data the Annual Population Survey has historically and continues to indicate figures far above the Census data:

Neath Port Talbot						
	2011	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Population	134,400	136,100	137,800	136,400	135,400	137,900

Can speak Welsh	27,200	30,500	34,600	27,900	31,100	31,400
% who can speak Welsh	20.7%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23%	22.8%

### Let's Talk consultation responses (2021)

Responses included many comments on Welsh language, culture and heritage including:

- Love for the 'Welshness' of their community.
- The presence of the Welsh language was a very positive attribute that Welsh speakers appreciate,
- General sense of Welsh culture and heritage.
- Welsh language alongside English is beneficial for their children's learning.

### Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

While the Census 2021 data indicates the decrease in the percentage of children and young people reporting the ability to speak Welsh, data from our pupil level annual school census (PLASC), more consistent with the annual population survey data, indicates an increase in the numbers enrolled in Welsh medium education.

PLASC - Years N1-11			
	2011	2021	2023 (projected)
No. in Welsh medium schools	2,993	3,321	3,329
No. in NPT schools	20,399	21,149	20,535
% in Welsh medium schools	14.7%	15.7%	16.2%

### 3. Equalities

a) How does the initiative impact on people who share a **protected characteristic**?

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age	✓			<p>It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact for adults and children and young people with increased opportunities to learn Welsh; opportunities to use Welsh in more social settings and provision of help and support to non-Welsh speaking families whose children are in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>Census 2021 data would suggest that there is a decrease in Welsh speakers particularly among school age children. The strategy aims to help address this in its support of the WESP and by enabling learners and speakers.</p> <p>In supporting the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032 and working with employers, organisations and the community, the strategy will help increase the awareness, knowledge, and Welsh language skills of people of all age groups.</p>
Disability	✓			<p>In supporting the implementation of the WESP and or teaching and non-teaching staff in learning Welsh there is likely to be a positive impact for children and young people in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>However, more generally it is considered there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>
Gender reassignment			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Marriage & civil partnership			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Pregnancy and maternity	✓			While the strategy aims to encourage the use of Welsh generally, raising awareness of bilingualism amongst young families is a key element. With increases in numbers

				attending early years provision there is likely to be an ongoing positive impact for people who share this characteristic.
Race	✓			<p>It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact with the aim to raise awareness of the language as a component of the area's heritage and culture. It is possible that pride in the language and identity will be regenerated even if not a Welsh speaker.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that promoting the Welsh language, culture and heritage could generate negative impacts, particularly from those who do not have a Welsh background, are non- Welsh speakers and/or those who perceive the strategy and action plan to be attracting limited resources for the benefit of a 'minority'.</p> <p>Working with our BME communities to better understand real or perceived barriers to learning Welsh will have a positive impact. There is a potential positive impact with increased understanding/take up of Welsh language training/education amongst members from our more diverse communities.</p>
Religion or belief			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Sex			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Sexual orientation			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic

### What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation to be undertaken which will help confirm/identify alternative impacts.

b) How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**?

<b>Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>Why will it have this impact?</b>
To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	✓			The Strategy is clear in its aims to promote the Welsh language and is likely to help eliminate historic 'discrimination' due to Welsh language services not being fully recognised as equal to English services, etc.
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	✓			The Strategy is clear in its aims to promote the Welsh language and in so doing it is anticipated that the strategy will increase opportunities for Welsh speakers.
To foster good relations between different groups	✓			The Strategy is designed to benefit everyone, non-Welsh speakers, learners or fluent Welsh speakers. However, it is possible that the strategy could result in some resentment from non-Welsh speakers/supporters, although this should be minimal.

#### **What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

Publicity of the strategy will be undertaken to raise its profile.

Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. will be produced to promote activities etc., when appropriate, throughout the life of the strategy.

#### **4. Socio Economic Duty**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Details of the impact/advantage/disadvantage</b>
Positive/Advantage	There is potential for the strategy to help address socio-economic disadvantage within Neath Port Talbot. Greater opportunities and support to learn and use Welsh will help provide a greater awareness of the language itself while increasing individuals' skill levels. With complementary actions to support the outcomes in the WESP, children and young people and

	<p>their families' improvement in language skills, increased attainment and involvement in the education journey will be maximised. This will help ensure increased opportunities in further education and accessing employment.</p> <p>Greater opportunities to improve/use language skills with activities and events accessible for all skill levels. Participation by all communities in celebrating/learning/using the language will potentially help improve wellbeing and so impact positively on health in the short and in the longer term.</p> <p>Cultural and heritage activities/events will help increase participation by those members of our communities who struggle to do so currently, due to lack of confidence, ability, opportunity or financial constraints.</p>
Negative/Disadvantage	N/A
Neutral	N/A

#### What action will be taken to reduce inequality of outcome

This will be revisited following the consultation period.

#### 5. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	✓			The strategy aims to promote the Welsh language, culture and heritage and as a result it is anticipated that this would have a positive impact, especially in instilling (greater) pride in the area and Wales as a whole. The various actions would help



				<p>encourage participation and so bring about a new sense of belonging and community spirit.</p> <p>However, there is a danger that the proposal could trigger disharmony and resentment amongst those non Welsh speakers who do not support the aims of the strategy, etc.</p>
Social Exclusion			✓	<p>Little impact on either of these is anticipated however the implementation of the strategy and associated actions could lead to more involvement of those socially excluded due to lack of Welsh language activities/opportunities.</p>
Poverty				

**What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

Ensure that the strategy and actions are as inclusive as possible. Use publicity judiciously to promote Welsh and dispel any potential negative perceptions.

**6. Welsh**

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?
<p>What effect does the initiative have on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language</li> </ul>	✓			<p>The aims of the strategy and the action plan will help provide more opportunities to use Welsh, more activities and events held in Welsh thereby increasing the number of participants. The strategy will also help ensure that Welsh is a key element in policies/strategies as well as being more visible across the whole of the area.</p> <p>Implementation of the strategy will help all Welsh speakers within Neath Port Talbot regardless of their skills level, their location or community.</p>

<p>- treating the Welsh and English languages equally</p>	✓			<p>By implementing the strategy it is likely that the profile of Welsh language will be raised and become more visible throughout the area. The fulfilment of the strategy will help raise the profile of the language, secure its place and promote its equal status within Neath Port Talbot. Treating both languages equally is a legislative requirement and the strategy and associated actions aim to help establish this.</p>
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### What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Publicity of the strategy and its action plan will be undertaken.  
 Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. will be produced to promote activities/events etc. as and when appropriate.  
 Further consideration will be given to this during and following the consultation period.

## 7. Biodiversity

How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Biodiversity Duty**?

Biodiversity Duty	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity			✓	There is no impact on biodiversity as a result of the strategy and potential actions at this time.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.			✓	However, as time goes on there may be impacts, Welsh medium school extensions/new builds, etc., and these will be considered as part of the individual project.

**What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

No action at this time although this will be kept under review

**8. Well-being of Future Generations**

How have the five ways of working been applied in the development of the initiative?

Ways of Working	Details
i. <b>Long term</b> – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	The strategy is the Council’s response to the Welsh Government’s commitment to increase the number of Welsh speakers by 2050. This is a long term aim and the strategy is a step on the road to achieve this.
ii. <b>Prevention</b> – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	<p>The strategy and its actions have been developed with the aim to ultimately facilitate an increase in the number of Welsh speakers; increase the use of Welsh and ensure the language has greater visibility in the area.</p> <p>By supporting parents, particularly non-Welsh speakers, throughout the educational journey (preschool to college), providing increased opportunities to learn and use Welsh as well as increasing understanding and knowledge of the culture and heritage, the strategy and actions aim to ‘change’ attitudes as well as increase the number of Welsh speakers.</p>
iii. <b>Collaboration</b> – working with other services internal or external	<p>It is not in the Council’s gift to singlehandedly influence the increase in the number of Welsh speakers nor be in a position to solely promote the language and the strategy has been developed accordingly.</p> <p>A number of council services as well as partners in the voluntary sector will help deliver the aims of the strategy. Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot has supported the development of the strategy with the Language Forum also lending its support.</p>

iv. <b>Involvement</b> – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the population	The strategy and action plan were developed by a cross party elected Member Task and Finish Group with advice and support from officers of the Council and Menter Iaith CnPT. Members were able to use their personal and ward knowledge in developing the strategy.
v. <b>Integration</b> – making connections to maximise contribution to:	Links to other Council initiatives and strategies have been identified and applied wherever possible. In addition to those identified below there are particular links to the WESP and the draft Culture and Heritage Strategy.
<b>Council’s well-being objectives</b>	<p>The strategy supports and complements the council’s purpose, vision, values as stated in the Corporate Plan:</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help Neath Port Talbot residents live good lives</li> </ul> <p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children get the best start in life</li> <li>• All communities are thriving and sustainable.</li> <li>• Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations.</li> <li>• Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs.</li> </ul> <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connected</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Confident</li> </ul>
<b>Other public bodies objectives</b>	<p>The strategy supports and complements the Public Services Board’s Wellbeing Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children have the best start in life</li> <li>• All our communities will be thriving and sustainable</li> <li>• Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations</li> <li>• There are more green, secure and well-paid jobs and skills across the area are improved</li> </ul>

## 9. Monitoring Arrangements

Provide information on the monitoring arrangements to:

Monitor the impact of the initiative on Equalities, Community Cohesion, the Welsh Measure, Biodiversity Duty and the Wellbeing Objectives.

The Welsh Language Officer Group and Equality and Community Cohesion Group will have a key role in monitoring progress.

Progress will be monitored by Cabinet and scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The impact of the strategy and progress against actions will be reported in an annual report presented to Cabinet/ Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

## 10. Assessment Conclusions

Please provide details of the conclusions reached in relation to each element of the assessment:

	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Equalities</b>	
<b>Socio Economic Disadvantage</b>	
<b>Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty</b>	
<b>Welsh</b>	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
<b>Well-being of Future Generations</b>	

## Overall Conclusion

Please indicate the conclusion reached:

- **Continue** - as planned as no problems and all opportunities have been maximised
- **Make adjustments** - as potential problems/missed opportunities/negative impacts have been identified along with mitigating actions
- **Justification** - for continuing with the initiative even though there is a potential for negative impacts or missed opportunities
- **STOP** - redraft the initiative as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified

Please provide details of the overall conclusion reached in relation to the initiative

## 11. Actions

What actions are required in relation to obtaining further data/information, to reduce or remove negative impacts or improve positive impacts?

Action	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Undertake consultation on the draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team	12 April - 10 May 2023	Consultation responses received

Publicise the Strategy and Action Plan during the consultation period and beyond	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team/ Communications & Digital Services	12 April - 10 May 2023 As and when required following adoption of the Strategy and Action Plan	Communication plan developed and actioned Press release issued and other media activities undertaken
Ensure that the Strategy and Action Plan are as inclusive as possible.	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Relevant Service Areas	Following consideration of responses received during the consultation	Strategy and Action Plan revised in light of responses received during the consultation
Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. to be produced to promote activities	Relevant services / Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Communications & Digital Services	When appropriate throughout the life of the Strategy	Articles, etc. are published in a timely manner
Measures to be developed to ensure progress is measured appropriately	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Relevant Service Areas	July 2023	Data is available for and reported in annual reports

## 12. Sign off

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
<b>Completed by</b>				
<b>Signed off by</b>				

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## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Cabinet

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

### Report of the Head of People and Organisational Development

#### Matter for Decision

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028

#### Purpose of Report

1. To present the draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028 for consideration and approval prior to the strategy being referred to Council for formal adoption on the 26th April 2023.

#### Executive Summary

2. The draft Public Participation Strategy for 2023-2028 (attached at Appendix 1) outlines the council's objectives, approach and mechanisms for encouraging and enabling public participation, together with information on how local people can influence decision-making.

It has been developed following the Statutory Guidance on Public Participation Strategies, made under section 44 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, and informed by the NPT Citizens' Panel, the NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement and public consultation.

#### Background

3. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires councils to encourage local people to participate in their decision making. This includes where councils are making decisions in partnership with another principal council or in conjunction with another individual or body such as a local health board.
4. The Act requires local authorities to publish, consult on, and regularly review a public participation strategy. These strategies are required to set out:
  - i. ways of promoting awareness among local people of the principal council's functions;
  - ii. ways of promoting awareness among local people of how to become a member of the principal council, and what membership entails;
  - iii. ways of facilitating access for local people to information about decisions made, or to be made, by the principal council;

- iv. ways of promoting and facilitating processes by which local people may make representations to the principal council about a decision before, and after, it is made;
- v. arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty in section 62 of the 2011 Measure (bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees);
- vi. ways of promoting awareness among members of the principal council of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

5. In line with the Statutory Guidance on Public Participation Strategies, made under section 44 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the draft Strategy has been informed by stakeholder groups including residents, employees and elected members.

6. Prior to formal consultation

The initial scoping, mapping of existing participation pathways and drafting of key information for the strategy was undertaken by an officer working group, including representation from Legal Services, Corporate Policy, Communications, Democratic Services, Digital Services and Electoral Services.

The working group worked with the NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement (NPT CoP) to further develop the baseline of what is already in place, what works well and where the gaps are and identify potential gaps and aspirations for 'what we could do better'. The NPT CoP also contributed to the overarching objective and approach for the strategy.

In October 2022, the NPT Citizens' Panel were asked to complete a questionnaire to provide an indication of how much residents currently participate in the council's decision-making process; which mechanisms for participation they are aware of; the level of interest in participation opportunities; to what extent those who have participated feel their involvement allowed them to have a genuine impact on the decision(s) made; and provide on what the council could do more to improve public involvement in our decision-making processes. The feedback from this informed the action plan for the draft strategy.

7. Consultation

Following approval by Cabinet on Wednesday 30 November 2022, the public consultation ran from 5th December 2022 until Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Activities included:

- Online questionnaire - a self-completion questionnaire was published online.
- Offline – paper questionnaires, and reference copies of the Draft Public Participation Strategy, together with feedback boxes for completed questionnaires were made available in public buildings across the

county borough. These included Civic Centres, council run and community libraries, and Celtic Leisure venues amongst others. The questionnaire was a replica of the online version and responses were entered into the survey software for analysis.

- The Draft Public Participation Strategy was also discussed at Democratic Services Committee on Monday 13th February 2022 and NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement on 15th February.

The consultation was promoted via:

- the council's website on the consultation pages [www.npt.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.npt.gov.uk/consultations)
- posters and at libraries, Celtic Leisure venues, civic centres and other public buildings across the county borough
- the council's corporate social media accounts
- press coverage generated by cabinet reports and press releases

### **Consultation Responses - Summary:**

8. Fifty one people responded to the consultation, in addition to the 71 responses from the Citizens' Panel to the initial questionnaire in October 2022.

- Most of the respondents (86%/42) strongly agreed / agreed with the overarching objective  
*"to encourage and support people to participate in the council's decision-making by undertaking our activities in ways that are inclusive and accessible, reflect the diversity of our communities, are responsive and meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and guidance (The Equalities Act 2010; The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014); The Welsh Language Standards; The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021."*
- 74%(36) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote awareness among local people of the council's functions (12%/6 didn't know)
- 65% (32) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote awareness among local people of how to become a member of the council, and what membership entails (16%/8 didn't know)
- 82% (40) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote access for local people to information about council decision (8%/4 didn't know)
- 74% (36) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote processes so that local people can make representations to the council about a decision before, and after, it is made (12%/6 didn't know)
- 74% (36) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (10%/5 didn't know)
- 77% (38) strongly agreed / agreed the strategy will help the council to promote awareness among the benefits of councillors using social media to communicate with local people (10%/5 didn't know)

There was a high level of agreement from respondents that the activities set out in the action plan were the right things to focus on to achieve the six requirements set out in section 4 of this report. The only area where less than 60% agreed or strongly agreed was in relation to support the Welsh Government's and Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) commitment to explore Resettlement grants or 'parachute payments' payments for Members who lose their seats at election (38% agreed or strongly agreed).

68% (26) of respondents think the council could do more to improve public involvement in our decision-making processes.

Recurring themes in the open text responses included:

- the need for information to be accessible (both in terms of being easy to understand and accessible formats)
- the need to close the loop in terms of letting people know how their feedback has influenced decisions
- the need to make provision for people who are not online
- the need to review the Citizens' Panel and the effectiveness of this
- the need to avoid jargon
- suggestions that the council should consider setting up people's assemblies
- the need to include some face-to-face engagement

All of the above points have been addressed in the action plan of the strategy.

The discussion with the NPT CoP highlighted that some stakeholder groups with protected characteristics would be interested in becoming more involved in decision-making, e.g. as members of the Citizens' Panel, and specific arrangements would need to be put in place to enable them to do this. In response, the action plan has been amended under requirement 3 to include an action to *review and further develop the Neath Port Talbot Citizens' Panel, and in conjunction with the relevant stakeholder groups, identify appropriate arrangements to enable members of stakeholder groups with protected characteristics to participate.*

A consultation report outlining the findings from the consultation is attached at Appendix 3.

## **Financial Appraisal**

9. The cost of developing and implementing the Strategy will be met from existing service budgets and resources.
10. An enhanced approach may require the commitment of resources and officer time from other service areas in future.
11. The Strategy will ensure that the council complies with legislation avoiding a potential adverse cost implication for non-compliance or retrospective challenges to council decisions

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

12. The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to “pay due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a
  - relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; *and*
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.”

Section 1 of the Equality Act requires that public bodies when making strategic decisions, have due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.

An in-depth Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was undertaken to accompany the draft Public Participation Strategy when Cabinet was asked for permission to consult. This has been updated in light of responses to the consultation. It is essential that Members read the IIA which is appended to this report (Appendix 2).

### **Valleys Communities Impact:**

13. There are no impacts in respect of this item.

### **Workforce Impact**

14. The Public Participation Strategy will support officers involved in the decision-making process by ensuring a corporate and coordinated approach to participation, involvement and engagement.

By working towards shared objectives and embedding a consistent approach, we aim to ensure our public participation activities are of a consistently high standard, leading to more robust decisions that have considered the needs and interests of stakeholders.

### **Legal Impact**

15. The publication of the final strategy will meet the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 by setting out how the council encourages local people to participate in its decision making, the steps we will take to improve public participation, and how we will measure progress.

### **Risk Management**

16. The council’s Corporate Risk Register will be updated with any risks associated with the delivery of the work outlined in the Strategy following its approval and adoption by council.

## **Recommendations**

17. Having had due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment it is recommended that:
  - i. Cabinet approve the Public Participation Strategy for the period 2023-2028.
  - ii. Members refer this Strategy to Council for formal adoption at its meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

## **Reason for Proposed Decision**

18. To ensure the Council meets legal duties set out in The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) as they relate to council participation activities.

## **Implementation of Decision**

19. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three-day call in period.

## **Appendices**

20. Appendix 1 – Neath Port Talbot Council Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-28
21. Appendix 2 – Integrated Impact Assessment
22. Appendix 3 – Consultation Report

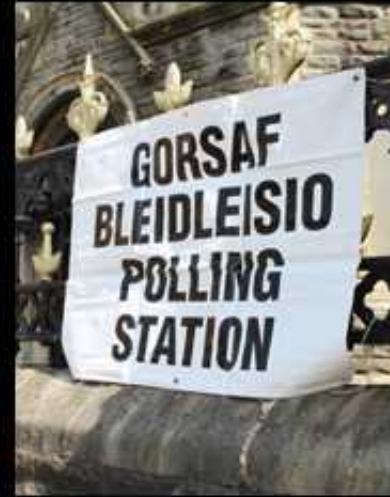
## **List of Background Papers**

23. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (the 2021 Act)
24. The Equalities Act 2010
25. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
26. The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014)
27. The Welsh Language Standards
28. Report of the Head of People and Organisational Development to Neath Port Talbot Cabinet - Wednesday 30 November 2022 - Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028

## **Officer Reporting:**

Sheenagh Rees, Head of People and Organisational Development, Tel no: 01639 763315, Email: [s.rees5@npt.gov.uk](mailto:s.rees5@npt.gov.uk)

Anita James, Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Manager. Tel: 01639 763842, Email [a.james6@npt.gov.uk](mailto:a.james6@npt.gov.uk)



# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

2023-2028

This document is also available in Welsh and Easy Read.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## Contents

### Part A - Context

1. Introduction
2. What is the Public Participation Strategy?
3. Why is Participation important?
4. How we developed the strategy

### Part B – Draft Public Participation Strategy

5. Our Objectives and Approach
6. How the council operates
7. How can you influence decision-making?
8. Mechanisms to encourage and support local people to participate in our decision making?
9. The NPT Council Public Participation Strategy Action Plan - Building on our existing mechanisms for public participation
10. Monitoring and evaluation





# Part A - Context

## 1. Introduction

**Democracy is something to be valued and nurtured. At a local government level this means a commitment to listen to all voices, for those voices to be heard and to work together with our communities to explore and resolve issues of concern, promote and recognise achievements and face new challenges together.**

Our council is strongly committed to fostering a culture of partnership with local people and communities, encouraging and supporting them to participate in our decision making, and keeping them informed about how their participation has influenced decisions.

We already have a strong record of working in partnership, often in challenging circumstances, demonstrating the benefits of close collaboration, and focusing on achieving long-term improvements in the well-being of our communities.

In 2021 we ran a campaign to help us understand how the pandemic has impacted on different parts of our county borough and what matters most to local people as we take forward our recovery work.

Almost 1,800 people from all backgrounds and ages engaged with the campaign, with a mix of on-line and off-line surveys, supplemented by focus groups in our five valleys.

Capturing stakeholders' views and opinions at a very early stage in our planning enabled us to shape our well-being objectives and associated actions on what matters locally. It is our firm intention to continue to engage with people as we implement, review and refine the plan over the coming years.

Public Participation is, however, much wider reaching than engagement and consultations activities alone.

There are many ways for individuals, groups and organisations to participate in decision-making, for example formal consultations, public meetings, petitions, standing for council and citizens panels etc.

No single mechanism is the key to developing a partnership approach between communities and the council that serves them.

This strategy sets out how we will encourage and support people to participate in our decision-making.

We appreciate that participation is a voluntary activity and not everyone will want to be involved, but we hope you find this strategy informative in terms of the processes behind our decision-making, where to find information, how you can get involved and the benefits of doing so, enabling you to have a say in what we do and how we do it.



Cllr Steve Hunt  
Leader of Council



Mrs K Jones Chief  
Executive

## 2. What is the Public Participation Strategy?

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“the Act”) requires local authorities to publish, consult on, and regularly review a public participation strategy to encourage local people to participate in their decision making. This includes where councils make decisions in partnership with another council or in conjunction with another individual or body such as a local health board.

This Public Participation Strategy supports the priorities in our Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and reflects our values by setting out how we will encourage and enable local people and communities in Neath Port Talbot to be actively involved in decisions that affect them.

It is a four year strategy, from 2023 to 2027, that outlines the council’s objectives, approach and mechanisms for encouraging and enabling public participation, together with information on how local people can influence decision-making. These are set in the context of six requirements identified in the Statutory Guidance on Public Participation Strategies, to demonstrate how we currently or plan to:

1. promote awareness among local people of the council's functions;
2. promote awareness among local people of how to become a member of the council, and what membership entails;
3. facilitate access for local people to information about council decisions;
4. promote and facilitate processes so that local people can make representations to the council about a decision before, and after, it is made;
5. provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees;
6. promote awareness among councillors of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people

Page 82



**Our Values**

**Connected**  
what matters to you matters to us

**Caring**  
we care about you, your life and the future of our county borough

**Collaborative**  
we work with our citizens and our partners because together we can achieve more

**Confident**  
we are optimistic and confident about the future



### 3. Why is Participation important

Informed decision-making comes about when we engage with people and communities, rather than making assumptions about what people think, want and feel.

Therefore, whilst the council has a legal duty to encourage and facilitate participation, our commitment goes beyond this as we recognise that effective public participation plays a key role in providing better outcomes - both for the council and the people we serve.

#### **Benefits of participation for people and our communities:**

- an opportunity to influence and shape policy and services
- making a contribution to better decisions because decision-makers have more complete information
- being heard and valued as citizens
- better awareness and understanding of the decision-making process, decisions and outcomes
- supports people to be actively involved with policy making and service planning from an early stage

#### **Benefits of participation for the council:**

- Learning from people and communities about their attitudes, needs, and what matters to them
- Fulfilling our 'connected', 'caring', 'collaborative', and 'confident' values
- Services and policies informed by actual need and/or demand
- Different ideas and perspectives
- More robust decisions that have considered the needs and interests of stakeholders
- Stakeholders have a better awareness and understanding of the decision-making process, decisions and outcomes
- Opportunity to build trust between the council and local communities
- Demonstrating a commitment to public participation in line with the relevant legislation and guidance

Achieving the above relies on participation being an integral part of our work across the council. By working towards shared objectives and embedding a consistent approach we aim to ensure our public participation activities are of a consistently high standard.

## 4. How we developed the strategy?

Following the Statutory Guidance on Public Participation Strategies, made under section 44 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, we involved a number of stakeholders in developing the draft strategy.

### Officer working group

The initial scoping, mapping of existing participation pathways and drafting of key information for the strategy was undertaken by an officer working group, including representation from Legal Services, Corporate Policy, Communications, Democratic Services, Digital Services and Electoral Services.

### NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement

Page 84 We worked with the NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement (NPT CoP) to further develop the baseline of what is already in place, what works well and where the gaps are and identify potential gaps and aspirations for 'what we could do better'. The CoP also contributed to the overarching objective and approach for the strategy.

The NPT CoP was established in 2019 and membership has grown to 60+ council officers and representatives from partner organisations who regularly engage with specific stakeholder groups as part of their work. The purpose of the CoP is to provide a vehicle for members to work more smartly and in a more collaborative way to ensure that everyone in our communities can have the opportunity to have their say on the decisions that affect them. It is intended to provide a professional and respectful forum for members to share experiences and knowledge on involvement and engagement issues in a spirit of mutual learning and peer support.

### NPT Citizens' Panel

We circulated a questionnaire to the NPT Citizens' Panel. Launched in January 2020, the panel is made up of more than 500 residents from across the county borough and actively involves them in decision making at a very early stage, so they help shape proposals before these go out to wider public consultation.

The aim of the questionnaire was to get an indication of how much residents currently participate in the council's decision-making process; which mechanisms for participation they are aware of; the level of interest in participation opportunities; to what extent those

who have participated feel their involvement allowed them to have a genuine impact on the decision(s) made; and listen to any suggestions as to what the council could do more to improve public involvement in our decision-making processes.

There were 71 people responses and the themes from these have helped to inform the Action Plan for this strategy. Themes included:

- Most respondents don't know that they can get involved in decision making (or that we want them to), not all of those who do know that they can get involved know how to go about doing this
- Some feel that council engagement is just box ticking/lip service and we're not really interested in engaging (there is a perception that decisions have already been made)
- We don't 'close the loop', so for those who have completed surveys/engaged previously they don't see the outcomes of that engagement (there is a mixed response with regards to this, some think that if we don't do what they want/suggest then we haven't listened - perhaps because we aren't explaining why we make certain decisions; others seem keen to see survey reports, but don't know where to find them)
- There are a number of comments to indicate that respondents don't feel that our decision making is transparent
- Some people don't know who their councillor is, or where to find out – the same goes for council meetings, respondents aren't aware that papers are public and/or that members of the public are able to attend meetings
- Most are aware of the website, but there are a few comments that mention we don't do enough for people who are not online.

## Part B - Draft Public Participation Strategy

### 5. Our Objectives and Approach

We aim to be open and responsive to the needs of local people and communities. This includes engaging them in participative processes by which they can influence and help shape policy and services. That said, all decision making is subject to constraints, so it is important to manage expectations. To help achieve this we will aim to **inform** people about how our decision-making process works, **engage** them to participate and provide **feedback** on how their participation influences our decision(s).

**Our Overarching Objective** is to encourage and support people to participate in the council's decision-making by undertaking our activities in ways that are inclusive and accessible, reflect the diversity of our communities, are responsive and meet the requirements

of the relevant legislation and guidance (The Equalities Act 2010; The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014); The Welsh Language Standards; The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021).

**Our Approach** - in keeping with the council's commitment to a rights-based approach to participation, involvement and engagement, we will follow the principles of:

- **Accessibility** – we will adapt what we do for different audiences, ensuring that our activities are made available in the formats and language(s) that people need. In addition, we will make the most of the opportunities that digital technology presents to enable our communities to participate in decision making, but equally, we are aware that digital technology is not available to or the preference of everyone and we will make provision for this.
- **Inclusivity and Non-discrimination** - We will be sensitive to the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 - age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
- **Empowerment** – we will endeavour to make sure our communities can be part of our decision making process, enable them to influence meaningful change, and demonstrate back to them that their voices have been heard.

Page 86

In line with the National Principles for Engagement produced by Participation Cymru, our participation, involvement and engagement activities will also be:

- **Sustainable** – not just based on 'one-off' meetings
- **Practical** – not too bureaucratic
- **Honest** – so people can give their feedback about their experiences and share ideas
- **Responsive** – so people will know they have been listened to and taken seriously
- **Creative** – so people can help design improvements to services our participation, involvement and engagement activities will be:
- **Transparent and well communicated** – to help build a trusting environment

To ensure our consultation and engagement activities are fair and lawful, they will be designed to reflect the four Gunning Principles:

- Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage
- Sufficient reasons must be put forward for any proposal to permit “intelligent consideration” and response
- Adequate time is given for consideration and response
- The product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account by the decision maker(s)

## 6. How the Council Operates

The council delivers a wide range of services to a population of 144,386. It has 60 Councillors (or Members) elected every five years. Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their electoral divisions. The overriding duty of councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

Councillors follow a code of conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. Their key roles are:

- **Cabinet decision-making:** councillors attend full meetings of the council, and some may have specific roles in relation to policy making, delivery of services and use of resources
- **Scrutiny of decisions:** councillors may serve on scrutiny panels, or committees which scrutinise existing policies and service delivery
- **Regulatory functions:** some council committees, such as those that deal with planning and licensing applications, have a quasi-judicial role
- **Representing their ward:** representing and meeting with the residents and interest groups within their ward and dealing with issues that they raise. In addition, councillors may attend community council meetings and serve on forums through which local issues can be discussed between elected members, council officers and the wider community

Councillors may also be involved in other areas, such as the development of new policies for the council

The council has officers working for it to give advice, implement decisions and manage the day-to-day delivery of its services. Some officers have a specific duty to ensure that the council acts within the law and uses its resources wisely. A code of practice governs the relationships between officers and members of the council.

### Meetings Overview

The Council operates under the executive council system. This is where fellow councillors elect a Leader of the Council at every annual general meeting (AGM) and up to 9 fellow County Borough Councillors to sit on the Cabinet. The majority of the decisions of the Council will be taken by either Full Council, Cabinet or at a Cabinet Board which will have decision making responsibility in a number of specific areas.

More information on the committee structure can be found at [www.npt.gov.uk/cabinetboards](http://www.npt.gov.uk/cabinetboards)

### **Council or “Full Council”**

Council is a meeting of all 60 elected members, chaired by the Mayor with the Deputy Mayor as Vice Chair. It has responsibility for the council’s functions which are not covered by the Cabinet. The Council decides upon the political management framework and how councillors should be allocated to other committees both internally and externally.

It is also the role of Council to agree the council budget for the forthcoming year and agree policy framework, appoint the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive and agree any changes to the constitution which the council must abide by.

### **The Executive or Cabinet**

The Executive is another name for the 10 Cabinet Members of Neath Port Talbot Council. It includes the Leader and 9 other councillors, all appointed annually by Council. The Cabinet meet as a whole to make decisions as well each Cabinet Member having their own portfolio of services.

Page 8

Cabinet make the main, overarching decisions for the council. In addition to Cabinet, there are 3 Cabinet Boards:

- Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board
- Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board
- Social Care, Housing and Community Safety Cabinet Board

Cabinet has to make decisions which are in line with the council’s overall policies and budget. Any decision which is outside the budget or policy framework must usually be referred to Full Council.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

Scrutiny Committees were introduced to ensure a greater number of Councillors were involved in influencing Council policy and service improvements, and provided checks and balances on the decisions taken by the Cabinet. In Neath Port Talbot there are four Scrutiny Committees – one for each Cabinet Board above. Their role is to scrutinise decisions or to present new ideas to the Cabinet and Cabinet Boards for them to make decisions on. There is also currently 1 Scrutiny Sub Committee - Cabinet (Policy and Resources) Sub Committee, which has been established to scrutinise our policy and resources functions



Each Scrutiny Committee is made up of up to 16 councillors from political parties within the council membership, which mirrors the overall political composition of the council. The Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee also includes Co-opted Parent Governors and two Co-opted Representatives of the Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Dioceses.

Scrutiny Committees work together to ensure accountability, openness and transparency – their main roles are:

- Pre Scrutiny (this involves considering decisions to be taken by Cabinet and Cabinet Boards before they are made)
- Performance (this involves monitoring how services are performing)
- Policy and Partnership (this involves considering the impact of policies and holding partners of the Council to account)
- Post Scrutiny (this involves considering the impact of decisions after they have been made)

Scrutiny Committees usually hold their meetings on a 4 or 6 weekly basis. The meetings are open to the public except when private items are being discussed (e.g. where individual personal or financial information is being considered).

## Regulatory Committees

There are a number of Regulatory Committees which are decision making forums that the council has to have by law. These include:

- Appeals Panel
- Democratic Services Committee
- Governance and Audit Committee
- Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee
- Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Planning Committee
- Registration and Licensing Committee
- Special Appointments Committee
- Standards Committee

### How do committees decide what issues to consider?

The majority of committees have a forward work programme, which is publicly available [[www.npt.gov.uk/26159](http://www.npt.gov.uk/26159)]. The forward work programmes are developed in a number of ways:

- Officers of the council will populate them with issues that arise, are scheduled for completion or because there is a legislative requirement to review the current policy.
- The chair of the committee will also include items that they consider important to the committee or have been brought to their attention, e.g. items that members of the public have asked the committee to consider.

## How can you see what is to be debated at a meeting?

Meeting papers are published on the council website [link] at least three clear working days before every meeting of the Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny. A small number of paper copies of the agenda and reports will be made available at the meeting for members of the public. These include:

- An agenda with the location, date and time of the meeting as well as a list of items that the committee is to debate.
- Reports giving details as to why each decision needs to be made, background information relating to the issues of the topic and a recommendation as to what decision should be taken.

For every meeting of the Council a set of minutes will be prepared and agreed at the next meeting of that particular committee. The minutes will act as a true record of the proceedings at a particular meeting. The council will make available for inspection for a period of 6 years any agendas, minutes and reports of a committee of the council.

Most Council meetings are also recorded and published in an archive for residents to watch at a later date on the Council's YouTube page. More information and recording of meetings is available on our website [[www.npt.gov.uk/24746](http://www.npt.gov.uk/24746)].

## 7. How can you influence decision-making?

### Voting

Voting in elections is an important way to make your voice heard. Local Government Elections take place every five years and by voting you can effect change on a local level and have your say on who represents you and the area in which you live on the council.

The relationship between a councillor and their electorate is two way – in return for your vote, they must try to represent you in the best way possible.

To vote in elections you need to be over the age of 16 and your name must be on the Electoral Register. You can register online at [www.gov.uk/registertovote](http://www.gov.uk/registertovote)

## Stand as a councillor

There are many reasons why you might decide to stand as a councillor – you may already be active in your community, be committed to a particular political party or want to influence change in your community and the county borough.

To stand for election to the county borough council you must be over 18, be a British, Commonwealth or European citizen and meet one of the following four criteria:

- You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector within the local authority area.
- Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises within the local authority for the whole 12 months previous to the day of nomination and election.
- Your main or only place of work has been within the local authority area for the whole 12 months previous to the day of nomination and election.
- You have lived within the local authority area for the whole 12 months previous to the day of nomination and election.

**P**age 10  
**O**rduring the term of office for all councils and these are promoted on the NPT Council website [www.npt.gov.uk/elections](http://www.npt.gov.uk/elections) as well as in the local area.

You can also stand for election to community and town councils in Neath Port Talbot.

## Attend a meeting

Most of the meetings of Council, together with the Cabinet, Cabinet Boards and other Committee meetings, are open to members of the public to attend and observe the proceedings and debate taking place, except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed.

Most meetings are held in Port Talbot Civic Centre, but you can also observe meetings live via Microsoft Teams. You will need to pre-register to be part of the virtual public gallery and can do this by emailing [democratic.services@npt.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@npt.gov.uk) by 12 noon the day before the meeting. Committee dates and times of forthcoming meetings can be found on our website [www.npt.gov.uk/democraticprocess](http://www.npt.gov.uk/democraticprocess).

## Add an item to an agenda for discussion

There are two ways that a member of the public can encourage a committee to consider an item and have it added to the agenda of a future meeting.

- Any member of the public can contact the chair of a committee and request that they add an item to the forward work programme for future discussion
- Attend a meeting of the relevant committee and request at the meeting under the item forward work programmes that an item is added for future consideration.

## Submit a question to Council

Under the council's Protocol for Speaking at Council Meetings [\[link\]](#), a period of up to 15 minutes in each meeting is allowed for public questions.

Page  
92

Any person (other than Members or employees of the Council) who lives or works in Neath Port Talbot may ask questions of Cabinet Members or of the chairs of committees of the Council.

To ask a question, notice must be given in writing or via email [\[Democratic.Services@npt.gov.uk\]](mailto:Democratic.Services@npt.gov.uk) no later than 5pm, two working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must specify the person to whom it is to be put (by name or title).

Where the questioner indicates that they wish to ask their questions in Welsh, Welsh translation will be sought for that particular question and answer. In the event that Welsh language translation is not available, this will be discussed with the questioner and alternative arrangements will be considered/sought.

The number of questions an individual can ask in a municipal year is limited to two (to ensure that all individuals have an opportunity to attend such meetings). In the event though that a person wishes to attend a meeting to ask a question over and above these two occasions, they are entitled to request it.

An answer may take the form of:

- a verbal answer given by the person to whom the question is addressed or another person nominated by them;
- where the desired information is in a publication of the council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or

- where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to Members of the Council.

## Submit views to scrutiny committees

Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the Scrutiny Committees. If you have a particular interest in a topic, you can contact your local councillor or the Scrutiny Team on 01639 763194 or [democratic.services@npt.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@npt.gov.uk)

Members of the public may also be invited to inform and provide information to specific inquiry groups. More information can be found at [www.npt.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.npt.gov.uk/scrutiny)

## Contact your local councillor

**P** You can contact your local councillor to discuss issues within your ward. If you are not sure who your councillor is, a list of the county  
**9** borough councillors and their contact details is available on the council's website [www.npt.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.npt.gov.uk/councillors), alternatively you can get  
**9** this information by contacting the council on 01639 686868.

## Submit a comment or complaint

Neath Port Talbot Council considers all comments, compliments and complaints as an invaluable source of information about the services we provide. If you want to tell us about something we have done well, if there's something you want to feedback about or if you would like to make a complaint we are always glad to hear from you.

You can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- On our website [www.npt.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.npt.gov.uk/complaints)
- Email: [contactus@npt.gov.uk](mailto:contactus@npt.gov.uk)
- By letter - Neath Port Talbot Council, Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA12 1PJ
- Phone: 01639 686868 - ask to be transferred to the service your feedback

You can give us feedback in whatever format (large print, Braille, on tape or disc) or language you wish.

## Petitions

Creating or taking part in a petition is one way individuals, community groups and organisations can influence the council's decision making. We welcome petitions as a way in which our residents can make their views known and request that action be taken. The Council has a petition scheme which sets out the procedures in respect of petitions and how they will be considered. This is available online at <https://www.npt.gov.uk/media/17201/petition-scheme.pdf?v=20220330120728> .

Petitions are documents (digital or physical) that contain details of issues of importance to communities and/or the county borough as a whole, outline for a proposed course of action and are signed by people who are in support of this.

A petition has the ability to:

- Raise awareness of an issue;
- Bring about a change in Council Policy or a different way of delivering services
- Prompt members of the Council to take further action, for example asking questions at Full Council
- Lead to, or influence, a debate at a meeting of the Council

Before submitting a petition you should first check with you local councillor to see if the council is already acting on your concerns and whether the council is the most appropriate body to receive your petition.

The Council's response may also depend on the number of people who have signed the petition. The table below sets out the thresholds:

Number of Signatories	Response
20-100	Response from the relevant director/head of service (treated as standard correspondence)
101-500	Response from the relevant Cabinet Member
500+	Referred for debate at a meeting of Full Council or the relevant Cabinet/Cabinet Board/Committee

## Public Consultation and Engagement

The council has always consulted with local people on a wide range of policies and proposals, but our ‘Let’s Talk’ campaign in 2021 represented a fundamental shift from our traditional approach to engagement.

Instead of presenting a draft proposal for comments, we posed a series of questions designed to help us properly understand the impact of Covid-19 on our communities, what matters to people today and for the future, and how we can continue the spirit of collaboration that developed through the pandemic.

We developed a draft recovery plan based on the responses, then consulted on this to ensure that we had properly understood and reflected what people told us. Capturing the views and opinions of local businesses and residents at a very early stage in our planning enabled us to shape our well-being objectives and associated actions on what matters locally.

We will further develop ‘Let’s Talk’, so that we have continuous feedback from our residents, our staff, our businesses and partners and increase participation in the council’s work.

Information on current and future consultations is available on our website at [www.npt.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.npt.gov.uk/consultations)

## NPT Citizens’ Panel

The Council values the views of all residents in the county borough and wants them to be able to contribute to policy and service development. The Citizens’ panel will make it easier for our residents to give us feedback on our work and contribute in our decision making at a very early stage.

You can join the Citizens' Panel if you are over 16 years old and live in Neath Port Talbot County Borough.

As a member of the Citizens' Panel you will receive emails where you will be invited to participate in online surveys. There will be no more than 12 surveys per year on a range of issues affecting people and services in Neath Port Talbot County Borough. If you are interested in joining we’d love to hear from you. More information can be found at [www.npt.gov.uk/citizenspanel](http://www.npt.gov.uk/citizenspanel).

## NPT Council Employees and Trade Unions

Neath Port Talbot Council Employees and Trade Unions are key stakeholders in terms of how we deliver services. Our work in social partnership with the Trade Unions is a reflection of our fair working practices, inclusivity and diversity.

A high percentage of our employees live in the county borough (around 70%) and our front line employees are our closest link with members of the public, so their participation in decision making is important.

We regularly engage with employees, through both employee focussed consultation and engagement campaigns and by encouraging them to participating in our public consultation and engagement exercises (which always include provision for them to indicate their status as an employee of the council).

A new Employee Communications and Engagement Strategy is being developed. This will provide a framework for employee participation, involvement and engagement, ensuring a corporate and coordinated approach.

Page 96  
**Public Services Board**

The Welsh Government passed a law in 2015 called the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The Act requires a Public Services Board to be set up in each local authority area in Wales.

The Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board (PSB) was established in May 2016 to bring together local organisations and strengthen the way they work together to improve the well-being of the people who live in our county borough.

The PSB is a partnership of local public and voluntary organisations from across the area, including:

- **Statutory partners:** Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council; Swansea Bay University Health Board; Mid and West Wales Fire; Natural Resources Wales
- **Invited participants:** NPT Council for Voluntary Service; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; South Wales Police; University of Wales Trinity St David; Tai Tarian; Welsh Government; National Probation Service; Public Health Wales; Wales Community Rehabilitation Company; Community Councils and Town Councils; Job Centre Plus; Police and Crime Commissioner; NPT Group of Colleges



In line with the Act, the Board assessed the social, economic, environmental and cultural state of well-being across the area. To understand how well-being could be affected, the PSB collects a large amount of information about the strengths of people and communities and described the challenges and opportunities Neath Port Talbot faces now and in the future. This information was used in the Well-being Assessment, which was published in May 2017.

The Board is committed to actively seeking the views and opinions of residents about all policies and decisions made, and about how we can make improvements in the future.

The Board wants to create a Neath Port Talbot where people will have the best chance to get on in life. There many things we can be proud of in Neath Port Talbot, but they recognise there are big challenges too. The Board has explored where they can make the biggest difference and have consulted local people and have now settled on six priorities that they will work on over the next couple of years. The local Well-being Plan explains what these priorities are, how work will start on these priorities and how local people and organisations can get involved with this work.

More information can be found at [www.npt.gov.uk/psb](http://www.npt.gov.uk/psb).

## Youth Council

NPT Youth Council is a group of young people from the county borough aged between 11 and 25 who go that extra mile to champion Children's Rights by empowering young people to have a say and influence change in decisions affecting their lives.

The Youth Council meets with decision-makers at a local level to amplify their voices, enrich decision-making processes, share perspectives and participate as active citizens, volunteers, campaigners, and facilitators of change. As part of its work, the Youth Council meets with elected members every three months and petitions councillors effectively on behalf of young people living in Neath Port Talbot.

Youth Council members also get involved in their communities and in democratic processes regionally and nationally. They have representation on BAYouth (Swansea Bay University Health Board Youth Advisory Panel), the UK Youth Parliament and are Young Ambassadors with Public Health Wales and the British Youth Council.

They have made a measurable impact over the years as passionate advocates for those who are vulnerable or less able to speak for themselves through creating opportunities for young people to participate as elected members and have a voice e.g. LGBTQ+, BAME, Looked after Children and Young Carers.

Democratic Youth Council Elections are held every two years. Creating opportunities for special interest groups to participate is key, and the 2019 - 2021 youth council maintains a vibrant, inclusive and representative body within NPTCBC.

If you are interested in joining then please contact NPT Youth Service on 01639 763030 or [youth.service@npt.gov.uk](mailto:youth.service@npt.gov.uk)

## Social Media

Social media has become a mainstream tool for councils and councillors to inform and engage with the communities they serve.

Page 98  
The council has a number of corporate and service specific social media accounts. These provide valuable insight from our communities, but going forward, we need to consider how we develop these as a participation mechanism for the online community to participate in consultations and engagement campaigns.

You can follow the council on:

- Twitter - @NPTCouncil; @CyngorCnPT
- Facebook - @NPTCouncil; @CyngorCnPT
- Instagram - NPT Council
- LinkedIn - Neath Port Talbot CBC
- YouTube - Neath Port Talbot CBC

The number of councillors with a presence on social media is growing. As a councillor, there are additional things to consider when using it, including the Code of Conduct, managing expectations and workload. The council provides training and guidance to councillors in how to use social media to their advantage when councillors are first elected and provide ongoing update to various issues throughout the year.

## 8. Mechanisms to encourage and support local people to participate in our decision making?

There are already a number of mechanisms the council currently has in place to encourage and support local people to participate in its decision making. These have been set out under each of the six requirements listed on page 3:

### **Requirement 1: Promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors**

<b>purpose</b>	To share information about the council’s functions and services so that residents are informed about how the council works so that when they participate, they can give informed opinions
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan and associated strategies that are publicly available <a href="http://www.npt.gov.uk/corporateplan">www.npt.gov.uk/corporateplan</a></li> <li>• Council Website <a href="http://www.npt.gov.uk">www.npt.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Modern.Gov</a> – Democracy Section of website where residents can access the agenda and minutes of meetings or look up decisions</li> <li>• Live streaming of some meetings and access to recorded footage of meetings that can be viewed by the public online</li> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• Meetings of the Council, Cabinet and the various committees.</li> <li>• Utilising the opportunities for engagement and awareness raising and the educating of a ‘role of a Councillor’ through Key Stage 3, the Welsh baccalaureate and citizenship lessons within schools and linking in with any new curriculum provided</li> <li>• NPTCBC Social Services’ Co-production Statement of Intent – links to the West Glamorgan Co-production Strategy</li> </ul>

### **Requirement 2: Share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves**

<b>purpose</b>	To enable and encourage people to stand for council, representing the people in their own communities and across the county borough.
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website, <a href="#">Council and Democracy Pages</a></li> <li>• Become a Councillor Page</li> <li>• Full training and induction programme to support members and ongoing training and support</li> <li>• Regular member seminars to ensure members are updated and engaged on developments</li> <li>• Allowance for members posted on Council website</li> <li>• Strategic Equality Plan and Well Being Objectives – Neath Port Talbot Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>• NPT Youth Mayor</li> <li>• NPT Youth Council</li> </ul>

Page 100

**Requirement 3: Provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council**

<b>purpose</b>	To help build on the culture of partnership by ensuring people are aware of forthcoming decisions, opportunities to participate in these and how their participation influences our decision-making
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website <a href="http://www.npt.gov.uk">www.npt.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Modern.Gov</a> - democracy section of website where residents can access the agendas and minutes of meetings, or look up decisions</li> <li>• Consultation and surveys</li> <li>• The Council uses data to inform proposals, including data from external sources and partners where appropriate.</li> <li>• The Council works closely with partners to share information about decisions and engage with residents more effectively.</li> <li>• The Council works with community groups to ensure that information about decisions is shared, and a range of viewpoints are heard.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council uses mechanisms to engage with disadvantaged groups and equalities interests e.g. Youth Council, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic forums, disability groups etc.</li> <li>• The Council routinely engages with citizens on key corporate decisions e.g. the budget and medium term financial plan</li> <li>• The Council has regular mechanisms to engage with the public including the citizens panel</li> <li>• NPTCBC Social Services’ Co-production Statement of Intent – links to the West Glamorgan Co-production Strategy</li> </ul>
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**Requirement 4: Provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the Council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations**

Page 101

<b>purpose</b>	To encourage people to participate by making sure they are aware of the different ways they can provide their views, so that they can choose the mechanism which most suits them.
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website <a href="http://www.npt.gov.uk">www.npt.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• Digital forms</li> <li>• Comments, Compliments and Complaints policy and regular reporting of comments received</li> <li>• Consultation and surveys</li> <li>• <a href="http://Modern.Gov">Modern.Gov</a> - democracy section of website where residents can access the agendas and minutes of meetings, or look up decisions</li> <li>• The Council works with community groups to ensure that information about decisions is shared, and a range of viewpoints are heard.</li> <li>• Petition Scheme</li> <li>• Public Speaking at Council Meetings</li> <li>• Scrutiny Public Engagement opportunities</li> <li>• NPTCBC Social Services’ Co-production Statement of Intent – links to the West Glamorgan Co-production Strategy</li> </ul>

**Requirement 5: Arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty of bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees**

<b>purpose</b>	To inform people about the role of scrutiny and how they can get involved
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the public are welcome to attend Scrutiny Committees.</li> <li>• If members of the public have a particular interest in a topic, they can contact their local councillor or contact the Scrutiny Team</li> <li>• Members of the public may also be invited to inform and provide information to specific inquiry groups.</li> <li>• The Scrutiny committees set a forward work programme as to when they meet and what they will be considering</li> </ul>

**Requirement 6: Promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to Councillors**

Page 102

<b>purpose</b>	to encourage councillors to use social media to inform and engage with their communities by making them aware of the benefits of using, whilst supporting them to use it as effectively as possible, and in a way that does not leave them open to legal challenge, personal risk or reputational risk
<b>what we already have in place to fulfil this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media channels (corporate and service specific)</li> <li>• Welsh Local Government Association - Guidance for New Councillors - ‘Improving Digital Citizenship – Research and Best Practice’</li> <li>• Social Media Training for elected members</li> </ul>

**9. The NPT Council Public Participation Strategy Action Plan**  
**Building on our existing mechanisms for public participation**

<b>Requirement 1: Promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors</b>
<b>Actions</b>

Publish a final version of the Public Participation Strategy
Publish a Guide to the Democratic Process and how the Council makes decisions
Ensuring the Council's forward plan supports public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly
Promote Welsh Government's Guidance / materials for 16 and 17 year olds regarding Democracy in Wales. Explore Web-based platforms.
Elections and Education Directorate to explore other potential avenues through school forums / youth councils / career fairs.
Continue to engage with schools (subject to pandemic), including links with school councils and youth councils
Liaise with local community groups, school governors and other such organisations to ensure links with 'Becoming a Councillor page' are promoted.
Meet with stakeholders face to face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and the issues that matter to them.
Continue webcasting of meetings as specified under the 2021 Act and develop a hybrid meeting policy and ensure availability of translation facilities for Full Council meetings to be conducted bilingually and any other meetings required in legislation.
Further promote the development of members' annual reports under section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as a means of promoting awareness of the council's functions and the role of elected members

**Requirement 2: Share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves**

<b>Actions</b>
Continue with hybrid meetings that allow Councillors to attend and participate in meetings from any location with an internet connection
Ensure that information for potential councillors is available and fit for purpose
Ongoing review of the effectiveness of the voting awareness raising campaigns elections and to build upon these campaigns ahead of the Local Government Elections 2022, ensuring wider partnerships arrangements are taken forward to allow engagement with wider audiences
Liaise with Group Leaders to suggest they appoint Diversity Champions for each political group
Review areas of training and development which can be made available online, core set of training materials which can be used for all Members
Promote job-sharing by executive leaders and other office holders
Ensure that members undertake health and safety training, lone working training and other personal safety measures
Promote the remunerations that are available to Members on the Council website and to candidates standing for Election

Support the Welsh Government’s and IRPW’s commitment to explore Resettlement grants or ‘parachute payments’ payments for Members who lose their seats at election
Reviewing meeting times to have more flexibility to suit the committee Members
Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with Members which will provide a benchmark for future elections and allow the feedback to be reviewed to support / barriers that may have been experienced by a Member during their term of office. The survey feedback will help to deliver a positive and diverse environment for future Members to undertake their roles
Explore feasibility of workshops in schools on this to raise aspirations and educate on the role of elected members
Explore feasibility of 'Member for a day' experience (like work experience) and/or some case studies on the role of elected members and what the impact they can have – perhaps linked to Local Democracy Week

Page 104

<b>Requirement 3: Provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council</b>
<b>Actions</b>
Continue to move towards participative approaches to engagement which empower citizens and place decision making in the hands of communities and individuals
Build on the use of technology to increase the reach of engagement activity
Have due regard for Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board Citizen Engagement Scheme in all of our consultation and engagement activities
Campaign to raise awareness of the mechanisms in place for local people to get involved in decision making (including how to where to find out who your local councillor is, how to view papers for council meetings, how to attend council meetings etc.)
Develop effective and inclusive consultation and engagement exercises that set reasonable expectations about what can and cannot be changed as a result
Review and further develop the Neath Port Talbot Citizens’ Panel, and in conjunction with the relevant stakeholder groups, identify appropriate arrangements to enable members of stakeholder groups with protected characteristics to participate
Let people know how their feedback helped influence decisions e.g. ‘You said...we did’
Identify opportunities to increase our reach into communities through partnership working
Ensure that when important decisions are made, robust and reliable information and stakeholders’ feedback is made available to decision makers
Explore the views of the public about which of the council’s committees they consider should be broadcast live



Further develop the NPT Community of Practice on involvement and Engagement to ensure a coordinated approach to consultation and engagement
Ensure officers are adequately equipped with the necessary skills and tools to design consultations, collect feedback in a timely way and accurately interpret the results
Develop a Consultation and Engagement Toolkit to ensure a corporate and consistent approach to all activities
Develop systems and processes for collating all consultation and engagement feedback from across the Council in a central resource, to form a reliable, robust and more comprehensive picture of what people in Neath Port Talbot think, need and want
Develop a forward planning process/consultation calendar
Improve analysis, interpretation and sharing of information to inform decision making, utilising the agreed technology (i.e. Snap Software)
Keep up-to-date with any relevant changes in legislation and exploring examples of innovation and good practice
A Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model
Ensure that information is accessible to all – e.g. friendly tone, easy read etc.

**Requirement 4: Provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations**

<b>Action</b>
Further develop ‘Let’s Talk’ so that we have continuous feedback from our residents, our staff, our businesses and partners and increase participation in the council’s work
Develop a better understanding of the demographics of residents who regularly provide feedback, so that any gaps in representation can be identified.
Consider how we develop these as a more formal mechanism for the online community to participate in consultations and engagement campaigns
Embrace the use of digital discussions
Meet with stakeholders face-to-face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and issues that matter to them
Review and update the Scrutiny Public Engagement Strategy particularly with respect to hybrid meetings
Review and update the council’s Consultation and Engagement Strategy
Implement the council’s duty under section 90 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to consult local people on performance

A Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model
Continue to develop more meaningful and innovative forms of engagement to allow residents to participate and be involved in co-production.
Provide training for staff so that they understand what effective participation looks like. Provide a framework or model - e.g. Lundy and raise awareness of the Gunning Principles.
Develop a framework for how we monitor participation opportunities to ensure quality, consistency and measure the impact they have.

**Requirement 5: Arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty of bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees**

<b>Actions</b>
Publish a Guide to the Democratic Process and how the council makes decisions
Ensure information on the council website is accessible
Ensure the council’s forward plan supports public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly
Continue the webcasting of meetings as specified under the 2021 Act and develop a hybrid meeting policy and ensure availability of translation facilities for Full Council meetings to be conducted bilingually and any other meetings required in legislation
Provide detailed training to chairs of scrutiny committee on ways in which they can engage the community in the scrutiny process
Promote the use of scrutiny on social media channels
A Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model

Page 106

**Requirement 6: Promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors**

<b>Actions</b>
Member Induction and Training
Social media safety training to be delivered to members through the Member Induction Programme and built upon during their term of office
Develop our social media channels as a platform to ask questions and share views
Embrace the use of digital discussions

Member Seminars
The Education Participation and Engagement Strategy will include information and processes for digital engagement

## 10. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will continually monitor our progress against the actions in the strategy against the following measures:

<b>Requirement 1: Promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of views of meetings</li> <li>Website traffic data</li> <li>Satisfaction surveys on the Council website.</li> </ul>
<b>Requirement 2: Share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality and diversity data for elected members</li> </ul>
<b>Requirement 3: Provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of people on the Citizens’ Panel, and how accurately this represents the profile of residents in the county borough in terms of protected characteristics</li> <li>The number of responses per consultation</li> <li>The number of hits to the ‘have your say’ webpage</li> <li>Percentage of people who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local area (National Survey for Wales and local data)</li> </ul>
<b>Requirement 4: Provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the Council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of comments, compliments and complaints received</li> <li>Participation rates in consultations and surveys</li> <li>No. of viewers of online meetings</li> <li>Monitor equalities and diversity data concerning residents who have provided feedback</li> <li>Level of participation and engagement in the scrutiny process;</li> <li>levels of responses to consultation</li> </ul>

<p><b>Requirement 5: Arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty of bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of views of meetings including live and YouTube</li> <li>• Records of the number of the public attending scrutiny committees</li> <li>• Records of the members of the public invited to attend and make representations to scrutiny committees</li> <li>• Number gaining access to scrutiny papers and online recordings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Requirement 6: Promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % completion of training modules</li> <li>• % attendance at Members Seminars</li> </ul>

Progress against the Strategy will be reported through our Annual Self-Assessment Report.

This strategy will be reviewed and subject to formal consultation by the council following local government ordinary elections, however this document is a living document and will be reviewed by council officers on a regular basis to establish how the council can further enhance its participation programme.

## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment considers the duties and requirements of the following legislation in order to inform and ensure effective decision making and compliance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

### Version Control

Version	Author	Job title	Date
Version 2	Anita James	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Manager	13.3.23

### 1. Details of the initiative

	<b>Title of the Initiative: Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028</b>
<b>1a</b>	<b>Service Area:</b> Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement
<b>1b</b>	<b>Directorate:</b> Chief Executive's
<b>1c</b>	<b>Summary of the initiative:</b> The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the Act") requires councils to encourage local people to participate in their decision making. This includes where councils are making decisions in partnership with another principal council or in conjunction with another individual or body such as a local health board. The Act requires local authorities to publish, consult on, and regularly review a public participation strategy. These strategies are required to set out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. ways of promoting awareness among local people of the principal council's functions;</li><li>II. ways of promoting awareness among local people of how to become a member of the principal council, and what membership entails;</li></ul>

	<p>III. ways of facilitating access for local people to information about decisions made, or to be made, by the principal council;</p> <p>IV. ways of promoting and facilitating processes by which local people may make representations to the principal council about a decision before, and after, it is made;</p> <p>V. arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty in section 62 of the 2011 Measure (bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees);</p> <p>VI. ways of promoting awareness among members of the principal council of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people. The draft Public Participation Strategy for 2023-2028 outlines the council's objectives, approach and mechanisms for encouraging and enabling public participation, together with information on how local people can influence decision-making</p> <p>Neath Port Talbot Council's Draft Public Participation Strategy has been developed in line with our wellbeing objectives, as well as the legislation set out in the Act. It supports the priorities in our Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and reflects our values by setting out how we will encourage and enable local people and communities in Neath Port Talbot to be actively involved in decisions that affect them. It outlines how people can influence the council's decision-making, the mechanisms already in place to encourage and support local people to participate in our decision making and an action plan to build on these.</p> <p>Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council exists to serve and represent the interests of its citizens and communities and is strongly committed to fostering a culture of partnership with local people and communities, encouraging and supporting them to participate in our decision making, and keeping them informed about how their participation has influenced decisions.</p>
<b>1d</b>	<p><b>Is this a 'strategic decision'?</b> Yes, the draft strategy sets out the Council's approach to public participation</p>
<b>1e</b>	<p><b>Who will be directly affected by this initiative?</b> Everyone who lives, works in and/or visits Neath Port Talbot</p>
<b>1f</b>	<p><b>When and how were people consulted?</b> Following the Statutory Guidance on Public Participation Strategies, made under section 44 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, we involved a number of stakeholders in developing the draft strategy, including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An officer working group – for initial scoping, mapping of existing participation pathways and drafting key information for the strategy</li> <li>• NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement (NPT CoP) to further develop the baseline, identify what works well, gaps and aspirations for ‘what we could do better’. The NPT CoP also contributed to the overarching objective and approach for the strategy.</li> <li>• The NPT Citizens’ Panel were asked to complete a questionnaire to provide an indication of how much residents currently participate in the council’s decision-making process; which mechanisms for participation they are aware of; the level of interest in participation opportunities; to what extent those who have participated feel their involvement allowed them to have a genuine impact on the decision(s) made; and listen to any suggestions as to what the council could do more to improve public involvement in our decision-making processes. The feedback from this informed the action plan for the strategy</li> <li>• Public consultation - December 2022 to March 2023</li> </ul>
1g	<p><b>What were the outcomes of the consultation?</b></p> <p><b>NPT Citizens’ Panel Questionnaire – Oct/Nov 2022</b></p> <p>The questionnaire received 71 responses. Themes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most respondents don’t know that they can get involved in decision making (or that we want them to), not all of those who do know that they can get involved know how to go about doing this</li> <li>• Some feel that council engagement is just box ticking/lip service and we're not really interested in engaging (there is a perception that decisions have already been made)</li> <li>• We don't ‘close the loop’, so for those who have completed surveys/engaged previously they don't see the outcomes of that engagement (there is a mixture with regards to this, some seem to think if we don't do what they want then we haven't listened, maybe because we aren't explaining why we make certain decisions; others seem keen to see survey reports, but don't know where to find them)</li> <li>• There are a number of comments to indicate that respondents don’t feel that our decision making is transparent</li> <li>• Some people don't know who their councillor is, or where to find out – the same goes for council meetings, respondents aren't aware that papers are public and/or that members of the public are able to attend meetings</li> <li>• Most are aware of the website, but there are a few comments that mention we don't do enough for people who are not online.</li> </ul>

This feedback, along with information from the NPT CoP and Officer Working Group was used to help develop the overarching objective and the action plan

### **Public consultation**

The questionnaire received 50 responses. Themes included:

- the need for information to be accessible (both in terms of being easy to understand and accessible formats)
- the need to close the loop in terms of letting people know how their feedback has influenced decisions
- the need to make provision for people who are not online
- the need to review the Citizens' Panel and the effectiveness of this
- the need to avoid jargon
- suggestions that the council should consider setting up people's assemblies
- the need to include some face-to-face engagement

## **2. Evidence**

### **What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?**

The draft plan was informed at an early stage by:

- Officer working group - including representation from Legal Services, Corporate Policy, Communications, Democratic Services, Digital Services and Electoral Services.
- NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement (NPT CoP) - the NPT CoP was established in 2019 and membership has grown to 60+ council officers and representatives from partner organisations who regularly engage with specific stakeholder groups as part of their work. The purpose of the CoP is to provide a vehicle for members to work more smartly and in a more collaborative way to ensure that everyone in our communities can have the opportunity to have their say on the decisions that affect them. It is intended to provide a professional and respectful forum for members to share experiences and knowledge on involvement and engagement issues in a spirit of mutual learning and peer support.
- NPT Citizens' Panel - launched in January 2020, the panel is made up of more than 500 residents from across the county borough and actively involves them in decision making at a very early stage, so they help shape proposals before these go out to wider public consultation.

Public consultation was undertaken from December 2022 – March 2023. The draft strategy was amended in light of the consultation feedback.



### 3. Equalities

a) How does the initiative impact on people who share a **protected characteristic**?

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age			+/-	<p>The questionnaire used during the public consultation specifically asked respondents to indicate whether they felt the Draft Public Participation Strategy would have an impact on them and/or their family because of any of the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Of those that responded, the numbers indicated that the proposals would have an impact were as follows (although very few gave reasons for their responses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age – 24% (9). One respondent said that they are not on any social media sites and have very limited digital knowledge / experience.</li> <li>• Disability – 17% (6).</li> <li>• Race – 9% (3).</li> <li>• Sex – 6% (2). There were reasons given for the responses relating to sex</li> <li>• Sexual orientation – 9% (9).</li> <li>• Religion or belief – 11% (4). One respondent expressed the need to maintain their Christian belief whilst respecting other religions</li> </ul> <p>No respondents indicated that they felt the Draft Public Participation Strategy would have an impact on them and/or their family because of gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.</p>
Disability			+/-	
Gender reassignment			+/-	
Marriage & civil partnership			+/-	
Pregnancy and maternity			+/-	
Race			+/-	
Religion or belief			+/-	
Sex			+/-	
Sexual orientation			+/-	

**What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

The action plan in the strategy includes a number of actions which will contribute towards improving positive or mitigating negative impacts on people who share a protected characteristic. These include:

- Ensuring the Council's forward plan supports public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly
- Promote Welsh Government's Guidance / materials for 16 and 17 year olds regarding Democracy in Wales. Explore Web-based platforms.
- Elections and Education Directorate to explore other potential avenues through school forums / youth councils / career fairs.
- Continue to engage with schools (subject to pandemic), including links with school councils and youth councils
- Meet with stakeholders face to face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and the issues that matter to them
- Liaise with Group Leaders to suggest they appoint Diversity Champions for each political group
- Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with Members which will provide a benchmark for future elections and allow the feedback to be reviewed to support / barriers that may have been experienced by a Member during their term of office. The survey feedback will help to deliver a positive and diverse environment for future Members to undertake their roles
- Explore feasibility of workshops in schools on this to raise aspirations and educate on the role of elected members
- Explore feasibility of 'Member for a day' experience (like work experience) and/or some case studies on the role of elected members and what the impact they can have – perhaps linked to Local Democracy Week
- Review and further develop the Neath Port Talbot Citizens' Panel, and in conjunction with the relevant stakeholder groups, identify appropriate arrangements to enable members of stakeholder groups with protected characteristics to participate
- A Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model
- Ensure that information is accessible to all – e.g. friendly tone, easy read etc.
- Develop a better understanding of the demographics of residents who regularly provide feedback, so that any gaps in representation can be identified
- Continue to develop more meaningful and innovative forms of engagement to allow residents to participate and be involved in co-production
- Ensure information on the council website is accessible

b) How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**?

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	+			<p>Through the development of the draft Public Participation Strategy we are aiming to embed a consistent approach to participation, involvement and engagement, we will follow the principles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility – we will adapt what we do for different audiences, ensuring that our activities are made available in the formats and language(s) that people need. In addition, we will make the most of the opportunities that digital technology presents to enable our communities to participate in decision making, but equally, we are aware that digital technology is not available to or the preference of everyone and we will make provision for this.</li> <li>• Inclusivity and Non-discrimination - We will be sensitive to the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 - age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.</li> <li>• Empowerment – we will endeavour to make sure our communities can be part of our decision making process, enable them to influence meaningful change, and demonstrate back to them that their voices have been heard</li> </ul> <p>This approach will help to work to reduce inequalities across a range of different groups, not just in relation to protected characteristics.</p>
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	+			
To foster good relations between different groups	+			

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

#### 4. Socio Economic Duty

What is the impact	Why will it have this impact?
Positive	<p>The aim of the plan is to have a positive effect by encouraging and enabling local people and communities in Neath Port Talbot to be actively involved in decisions that affect them.</p> <p>One of the 3 key principles for how we will approach participation, involvement and engagement is accessibility – we will adapt what we do for different audiences, ensuring that our activities are made available in the formats and language(s) that people need. In addition, we will make the most of the opportunities that digital technology presents to enable our communities to participate in decision making, but equally, we are aware that digital technology is not available to or the preference of everyone and we will make provision for this.</p>
Negative	<p>The cost of travel in order to participate in council meetings may disadvantage some residents, likewise online meetings and other online mechanisms may disadvantage digitally excluded residents</p>
Neutral	

#### What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

The action plan in the strategy includes a number of actions which will contribute towards improving positive or mitigating negative impacts on Socio Economic Duty. These include:

- Meet with stakeholders face to face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and the issues that matter to them (this will also make provision for those who are not online)
- Promote job-sharing by executive leaders and other office holders
- Promote the remunerations that are available to Members on the Council website and to candidates standing for Election
- Support the Welsh Government's and IRPW's commitment to explore Resettlement grants or 'parachute payments' payments for Members who lose their seats at election

- Reviewing meeting times to have more flexibility to suit the committee Members

### 5. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	+			Robust, consistent and effective public participation will help the council to understand our local communities and identify issues relating to Community Cohesion, Social Exclusion and Poverty. It will be vital in helping to inform and shape strategies, plans and activities to address these.
Social Exclusion	+			
Poverty	+			

**What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

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### 6. Welsh

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?

<p>What effect does the initiative have on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language</li> </ul>	+		<p>During the consultation the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate what effect they think the Draft Public Participation Strategy will have on people's opportunities to use the Welsh Language. Of those that responded to this question, 51% (19) thought they would have no effect, 19% (7) thought they would have a positive effect, no respondents thought they would have a negative effect and 30% (11) didn't know.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– treating the Welsh and English languages equally</li> </ul>	+		<p>During the consultation the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate what effect they think the Draft Public Participation Strategy will have on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. Of those that responded to this question, 51% (19) thought they would have no effect, 14% (5) thought they would have a positive effect, 3% (1) thought they would have a negative effect and 32% (12) didn't know.</p>

### What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

The Strategy has been developed in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011), to ensure that every opportunity is taken to promote opportunities for participation in the Welsh language and that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language in our participation activities and mechanisms.

The action plan in the strategy includes a number of actions which will contribute towards improving positive or mitigating negative impacts on the Welsh language. These include:

## 7. Biodiversity

How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Biodiversity Duty**?

Biodiversity Duty	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity	+			The Public Participation Strategy will support the decision-making process by ensuring a corporate and coordinated approach to participation, involvement and

To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.	+			engagement. By working towards shared objectives and embedding a consistent approach, we aim to ensure our public participation activities are of a consistently high standard, leading to more robust decisions that have considered the needs and interests of stakeholders – including decisions that have an impact on biodiversity and/or promoting the resilience of ecosystems
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**What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?**

**8. Well-being of Future Generations**

How have the five ways of working been applied in the development of the initiative?

Ways of Working	Details
i. <b>Long term</b> – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	The Public Participation Strategy will be reviewed and subject to formal consultation by the council following local government ordinary elections – the next due to take place in 2027.
ii. <b>Prevention</b> – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The Public Participation Strategy will support the decision-making process by ensuring a corporate and coordinated approach to participation, involvement and engagement. By working towards shared objectives and embedding a consistent approach, we aim to ensure our public

	<p>participation activities are of a consistently high standard and involve as many local people as possible.</p> <p>Greater public participation can help prevent problems occurring or getting worse by building trust and leading to more robust decisions that have considered the needs and interests of stakeholders.</p>
<p>iii. <b>Collaboration</b> – working with other services internal or external</p>	<p>The Council will be unable to implement the Public Participation Strategy without collaboration. The NPT Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement (60+ council officers and representatives from partner organisations who regularly engage with specific stakeholder groups as part of their work) has played a key role in shaping the draft strategy and will be key in its roll out.</p> <p>The Council is also statutory partner of a number of multi-agency partnerships locally, regionally and across Wales including: the Public Services Board, Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum, Regional Partnership Board and West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board and these are key stakeholder groups for public participation.</p>
<p>iv. <b>Involvement</b> – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the population</p>	<p>The strategy aims to encourage local people to participate in the making of decisions by the Council and sets out how we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote awareness of the Council’s functions and how to become a Member of the authority;</li> <li>• Facilitate access to information about decisions made, or to be made by the Council;</li> <li>• Promote and facilitate processes by which local people may make representations to the Council about a decision before, and after, it is made;</li> <li>• Set out the arrangements for bringing views of the public to the attention of scrutiny committees; and</li> <li>• Promote awareness among Members of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people.</li> </ul>
<p>v. <b>Integration</b> – making connections to maximise contribution to:</p>	



<b>Council's draft well-being objectives</b>	<p>This Public Participation Strategy reflects the values in our Corporate Plan 2022-2027 by setting out how we will encourage and enable local people and communities in Neath Port Talbot to be actively involved in decisions that affect them, including decisions relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Communities are thriving and sustainable</li> <li>• Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations</li> <li>• Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs</li> </ul>
<b>Other public bodies objectives</b>	

## 9. Monitoring Arrangements

Provide information on the monitoring arrangements to:

Monitor the impact of the initiative on Equalities, Community Cohesion, the Welsh Measure, Biodiversity Duty and the Wellbeing Objectives.

Progress against the Strategy will be reported through our Annual Self-Assessment Report

This strategy will be reviewed and subject to formal consultation by the council following local government ordinary elections, however this document is a living document and will be reviewed by council officers on a regular basis to establish how the council can further enhance its participation programme.

## 10. Assessment Conclusions

Please provide details of the conclusions reached in relation to each element of the assessment:

	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Equalities</b>	The IIA will be revisited in light of responses to the consultation in March 2023, conclusions to the assessment will be reached and included in the next version of the IIA.
<b>Socio Economic Disadvantage</b>	
<b>Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty</b>	
<b>Welsh</b>	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
<b>Well-being of Future Generations</b>	

**Overall Conclusion**

Please indicate the conclusion reached:

- **Continue** - as planned as no problems and all opportunities have been maximised
- **Make adjustments** - as potential problems/missed opportunities/negative impacts have been identified along with mitigating actions
- **Justification** - for continuing with the initiative even though there is a potential for negative impacts or missed opportunities
- **STOP** - redraft the initiative as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified

Please provide details of the overall conclusion reached in relation to the initiative

## 11. Actions

What actions are required in relation to obtaining further data/information, to reduce or remove negative impacts or improve positive impacts?

Action	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Ongoing work with the NPT CoP and their stakeholder groups to identify appropriate arrangements to enable members of stakeholder groups with protected characteristics to participate.	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Manager and the NPT CoP	Ongoing	The NPT Citizens' Panel membership will be representative of the profile of residents in the county borough in terms of protected characteristics.
Monitor equalities and diversity data concerning residents who have provided feedback	NPT CoP and complaints officers	Ongoing	

## 12. Sign off

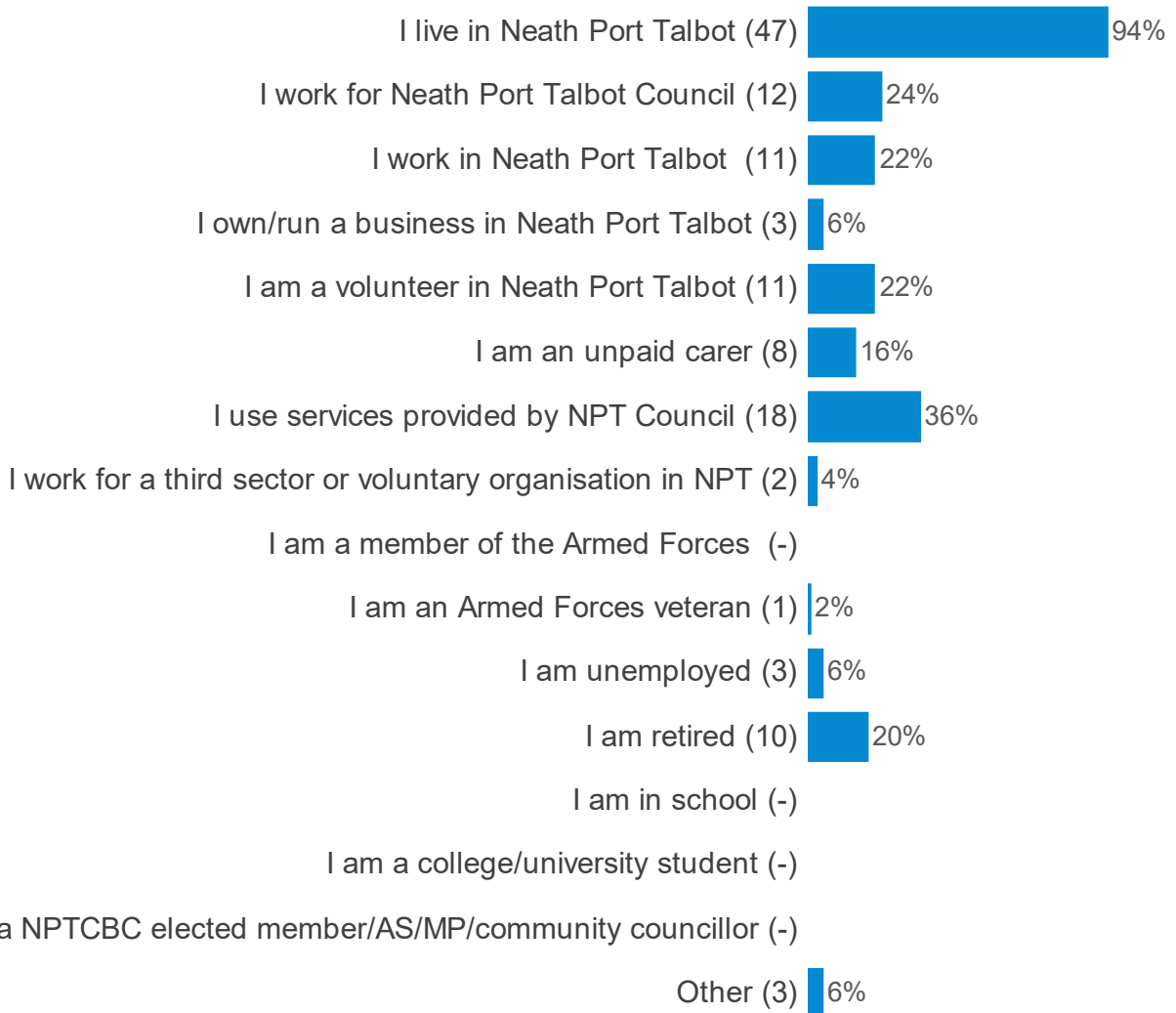
	Name	Position	Signature	Date
<b>Completed by</b>	Anita James	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Manager		13.3.23
<b>Signed off by</b>		Head of Service/Director		

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# Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028

This report was generated on 13/03/23. Overall 50 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

**Please indicate which of the following describes you (please select all that apply)  
(Please indicate which of the following describes you (ple...))**



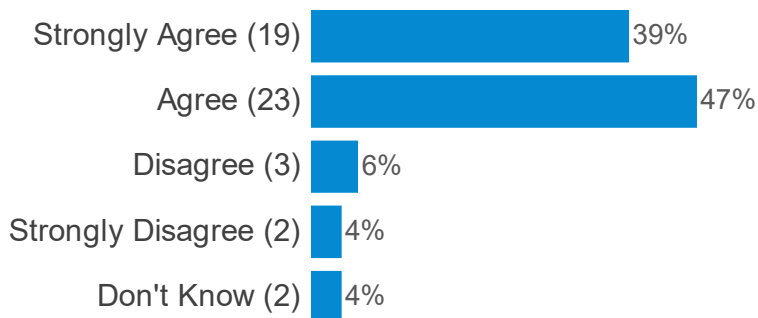
## Other - please specify

I live in Cymer specifically

I was born in Neath and brought up in Port Talbot. Currently living in Dublin Ireland but visit family in Port Talbot in a regular basis.

Unable to work due to illness

**Our Overarching Objective is to encourage and support people to participate in the council’s decision-making by undertaking our activities in ways that are inclusive and accessible, reflect the diversity of our communities, are responsive and meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and guidance (The Equalities Act 2010; The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014); The Welsh Language Standards; The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. (Please indicate how you feel about this)**



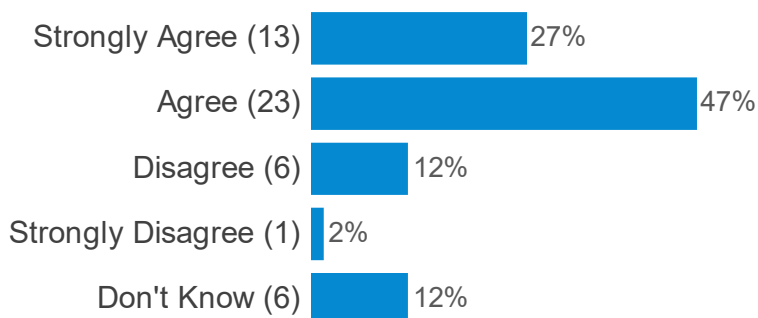
**If you answered 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

Because Easy Read information is not always available or has less time to respond, also they dont make it easy for some people to take part

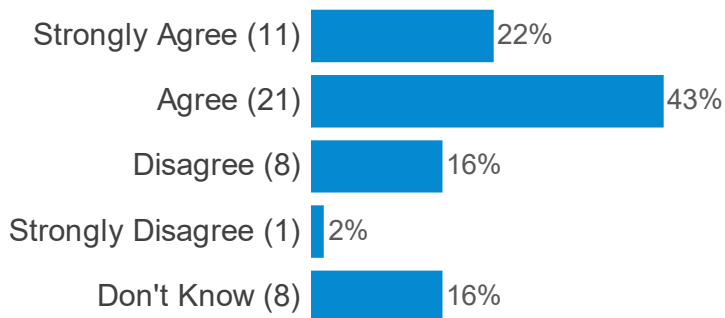
I'm unsure what the question is asking; whether I agree with this as an aspiration or whether I agree that this is being achieved. If an aspiration I think the council should have as it's overarching objective the reduction of inequality and poverty, if the latter then I can't really comment

Services are not comprehensive and difficult to get hold of

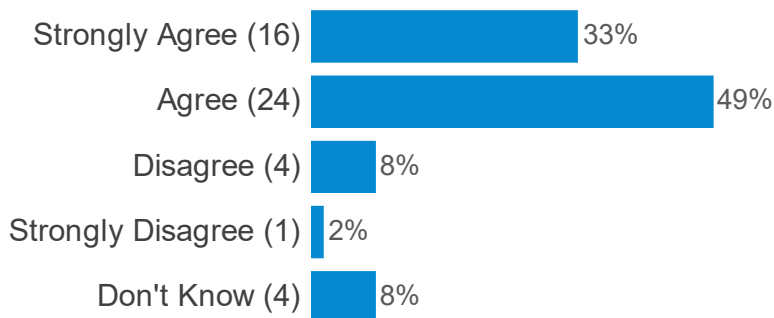
**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (awareness among local people of the council's functions)**



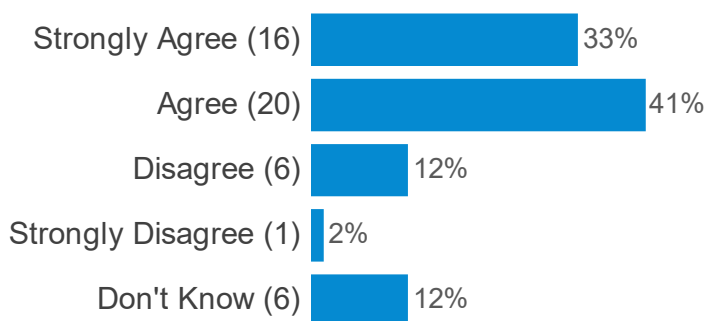
**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (awareness among local people of how to become a member of the council, and what membership entails)**



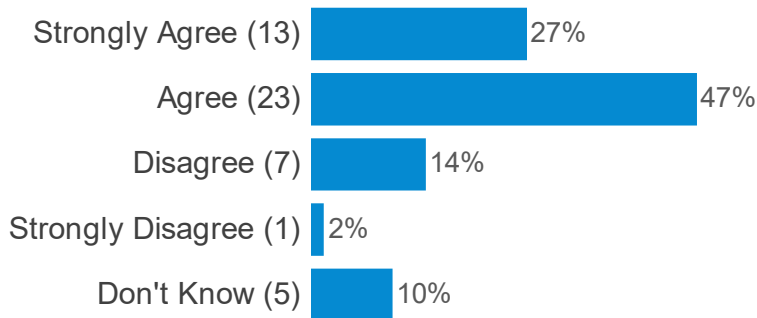
**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (access for local people to information about council decision)**



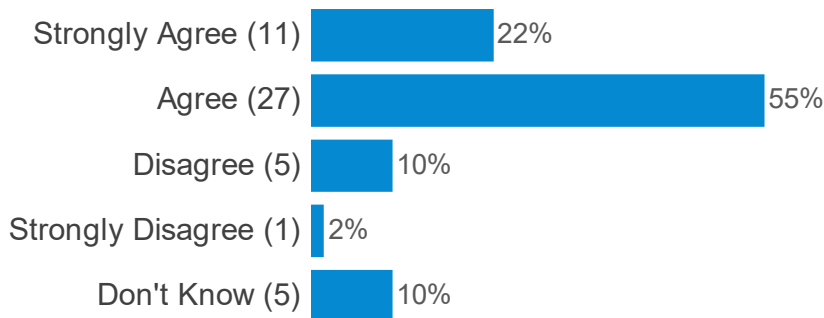
**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (processes so that local people can make representations to the council about a decision before, and after, it is made)**



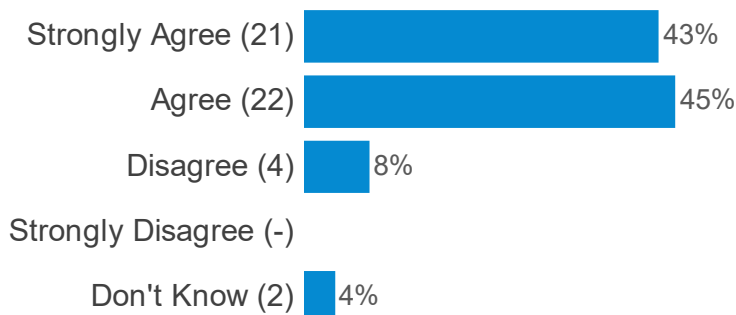
**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees)**



**How strongly do you agree or disagree that the strategy will help the council to promote the following: (awareness among the benefits of councillors using social media to communicate with local people)**

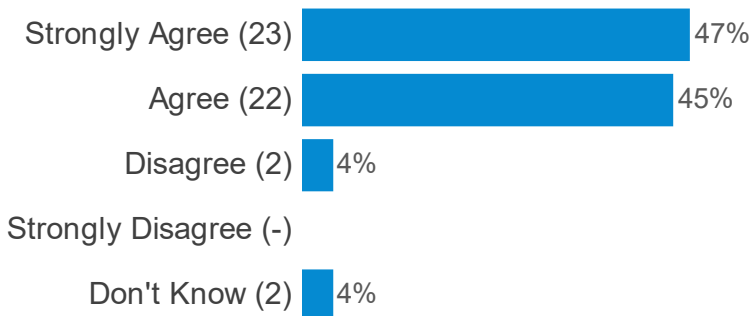


**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Publish a final version of the Public Participation Strategy)**

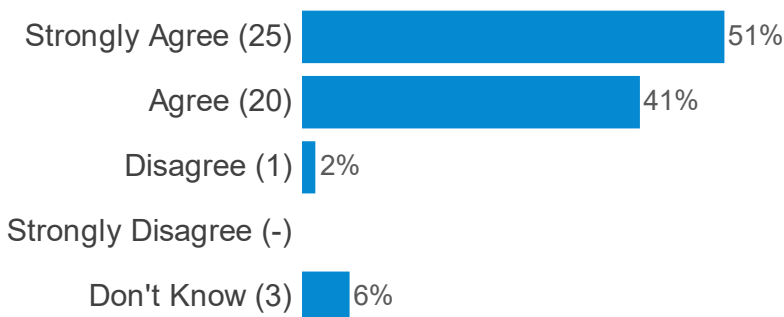




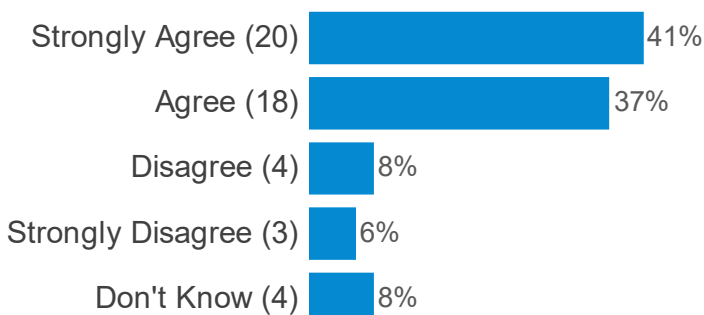
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Publish a Guide to the Democratic Process and how the Council makes decisions)**



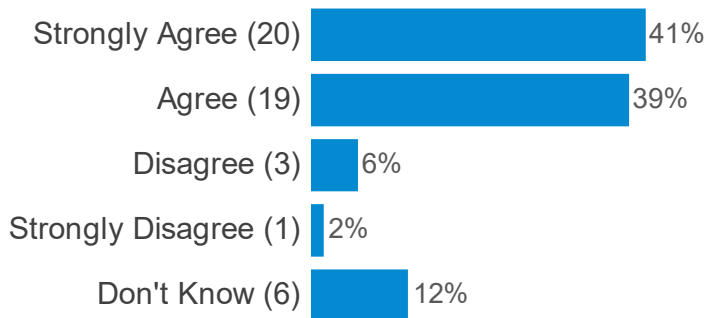
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Ensure the Council’s forward plan support public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly)**



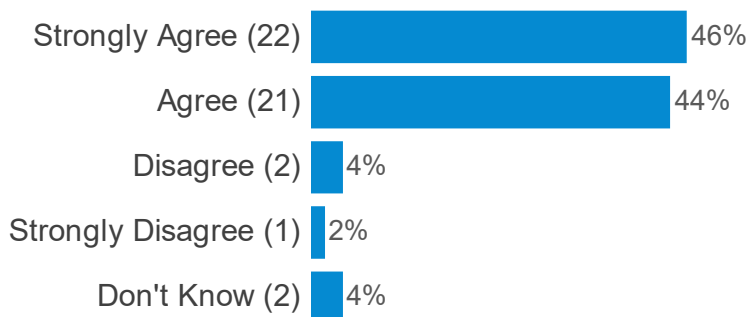
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Promote Welsh Government’s Guidance / materials for 16 and 17 year olds regarding Democracy in Wales - explore Web-based platforms)**



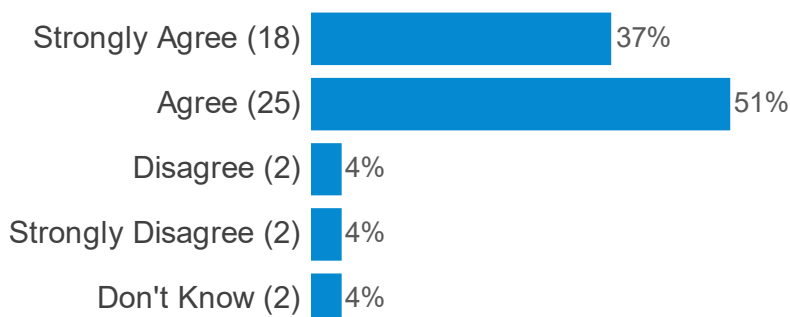
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Elections and Education Directorate to explore other potential avenues through school forums / youth councils / career fairs)**



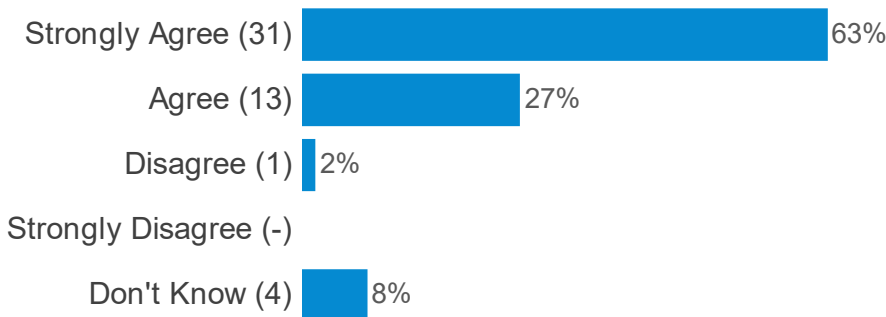
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Continue to engage with schools (subject to pandemic), including links with school councils and youth councils)**



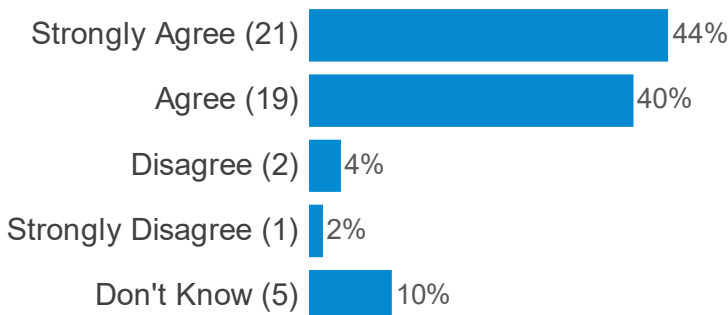
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Liaise with local community groups, school governors and other such organisations to ensure links with 'Becoming a Councillor page' are promoted)**



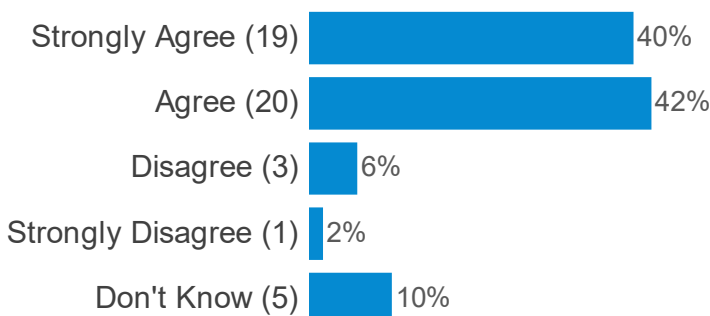
**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Meet with stakeholders face to face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and the issues that matter to them)**



**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Continue webcasting of meetings as specified under the 2021 Act and develop a hybrid meeting policy and ensure availability of translation facilities for Full Council meetings to be conducted bilingually and any other meetings required in legislation)**



**Requirement 1: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors (Further promote the development of members' annual reports under section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as a means of promoting awareness of the council's functions and the role of elected members)**



**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors?**

You need better general management practices

Can't put my finger on it but possibly complex. Is ther accountability and inspection ?

Publish an easily accessible newsletter

The above should be available for scrutiny on request. Many documents are distributed and not read by public

**PUBLISH AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE NEWSLETTER**

1. Use large TV's/Screens placed in prominent places in local libraries, community centres (town centres) to promote awareness of the council functions, events etc. 2. Quarterly newsletters to all households (could be delivered by refuse collection teams)

It may also be beneficial to reinforce what the Council is not able to do (i.e. making the distinction between the functions of a MP and/or MS). In some instances, residents believe the local MP has "authority" over the Council.

Could accessing local democracy be a part of the education programme maybe as part of assemblies etc. and linked into a strategy to promote good citizenship from an early age? This should include all of the participation functions in addition to promoting responsible dog management (ownership), noise awareness, litter awareness etc.. Obviously this would need to be aimed at different age groups in different ways but promoting 'we' rather than 'me' in society.

Be more visible in the community. Be seen to be tackling issues.

Set up 'open days' at Council facilities, head office etc for people to see how the council works and how it puts the views, needs etc into practice. To also show how the decisions taken at council meetings are implemented.

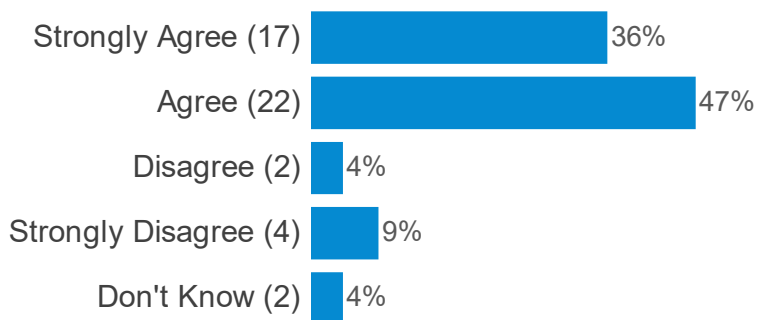
No

How are you going to get it out there?

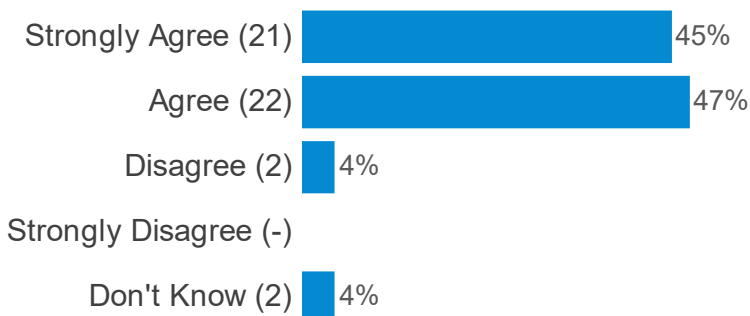
Consistent methods of promoting this other than online

I complete all the surveys, but rarely if ever do I get final feedback, this leaves me with a strong belief that this is merely a box ticking exercise by the council, and that absolutely no notice or consideration of public feeling is taken into consideration when decision making.

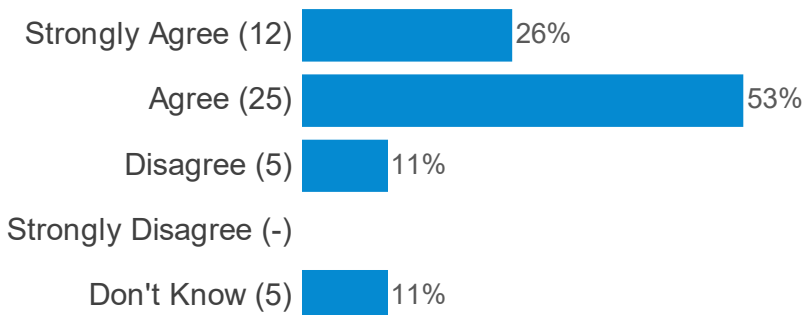
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Continue with hybrid meetings that allow Councillors to attend and participate in meetings from any location with an internet connection)**



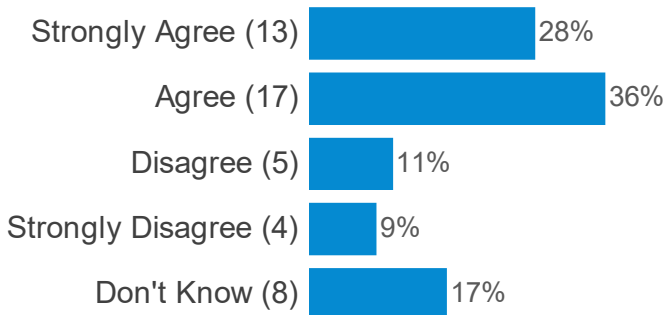
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Ensure that information for potential councillors is available and fit for purpose)**



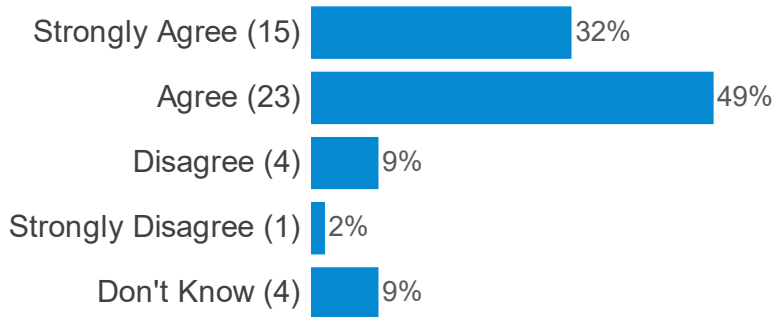
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Ongoing review of the effectiveness of the voting awareness raising campaigns elections and to build upon these campaigns ahead of the Local Government Elections 2022, ensuring wider partnerships arrangements are taken forward to allow engagement with wider audiences)**



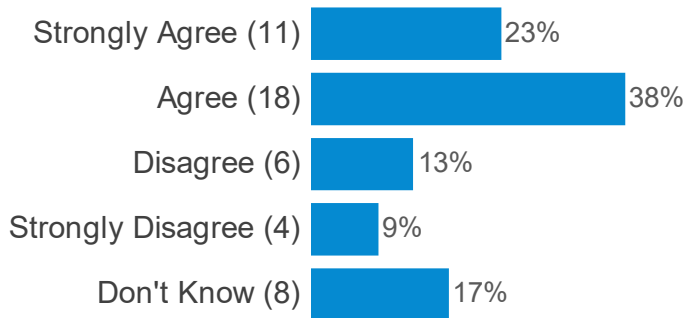
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Liaise with Group Leaders to suggest they appoint Diversity Champions for each political group)**



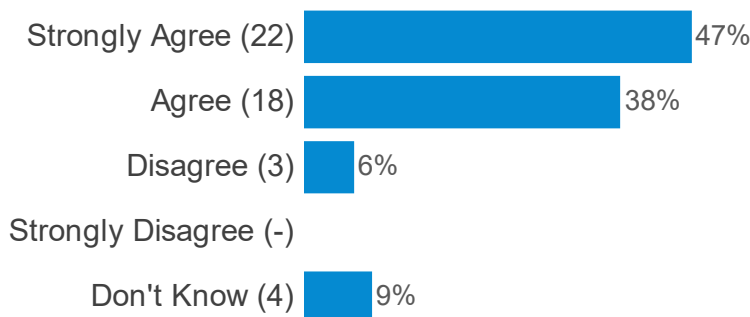
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Review areas of training and development which can be made available online, core set of training materials which can be used for all Members)**



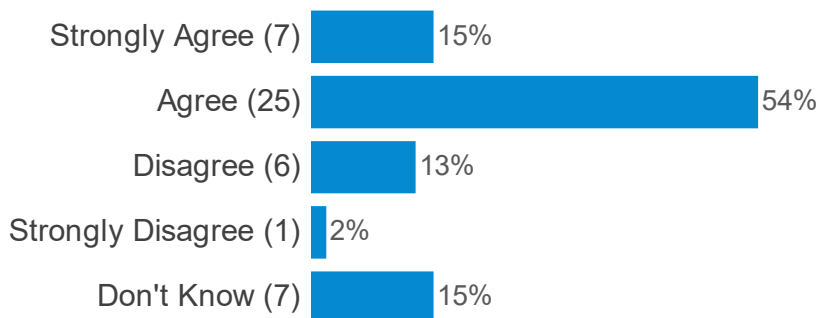
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Promote job-sharing by executive leaders and other office holders)**



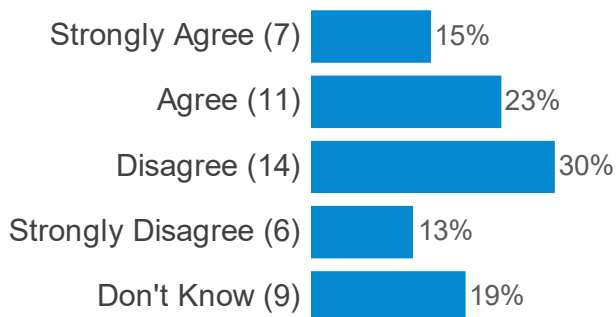
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Ensure that members undertake health and safety training, lone working training and other personal safety measures)**



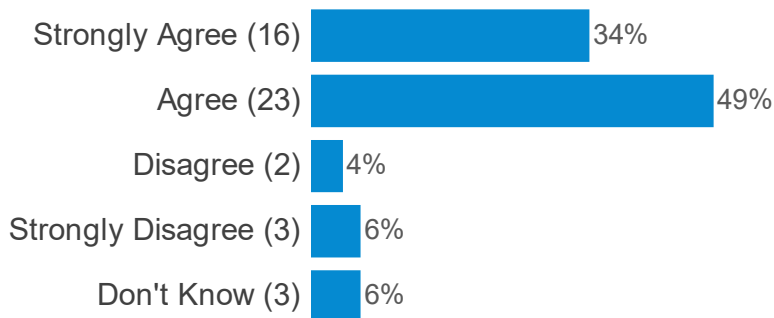
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Promote the remunerations that are available to Members on the Council website and to candidates standing for Election)**



**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Support the Welsh Government’s and Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) commitment to explore Resettlement grants or ‘parachute payments’ payments for Members who lose their seats at election)**

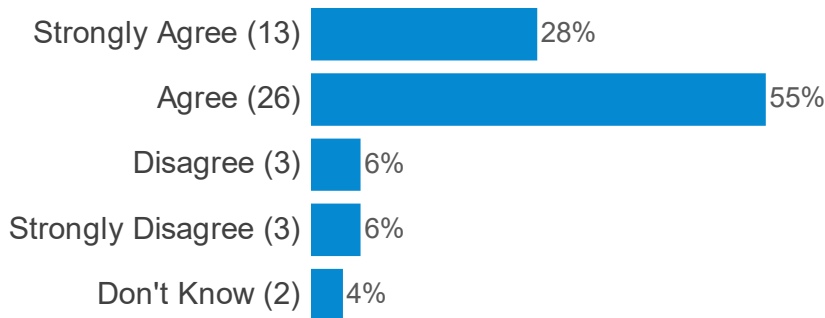


**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Reviewing meeting times to have more flexibility to suit the committee Members)**

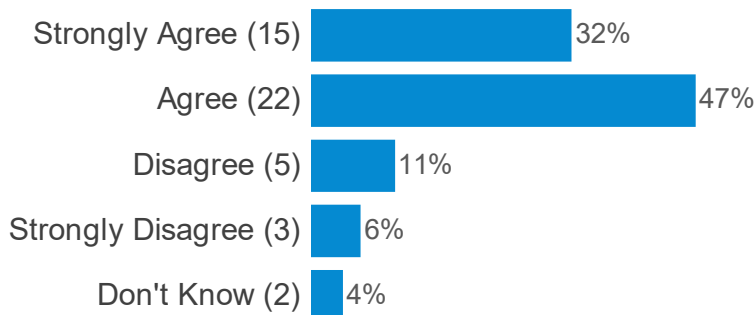


Draft Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028

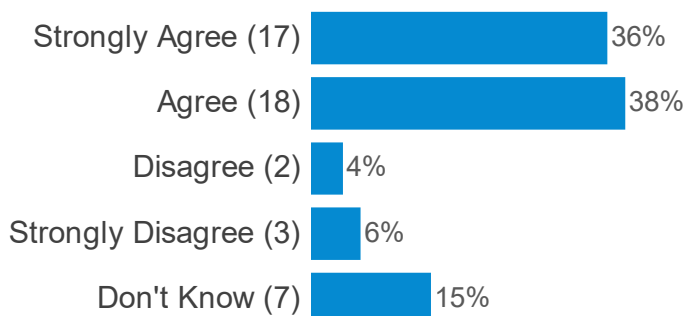
**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with Members which will provide a benchmark for future elections and allow the feedback to be reviewed to support / barriers that may have been experienced by a Member during their term of office. The survey feedback will help to deliver a positive and diverse environment for future Members to undertake their roles)**



**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Explore feasibility of workshops in schools on this to raise aspirations and educate on the role of elected members)**



**Requirement 2: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves (Explore feasibility of 'Member for a day' experience (like work experience) and/or some case studies on the role of elected members and what the impact they can have – perhaps linked to Local Democracy Week)**





**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to share information about how to go about becoming an elected member, or councillor, and what the role of the council involves?**

Better management practices are necessary

Outside help maybe?

No

Note that not everyone has access to new technology

NO

Greater focus on the role, activities and achievements of the various member committees

I'm not keen on promoting the remunerations available. Whilst I accept that allowances will be paid, I feel this should be a secondary benefit. I would hope prospective candidates are driven by an intrinsic need to make their communities better through their contributions.

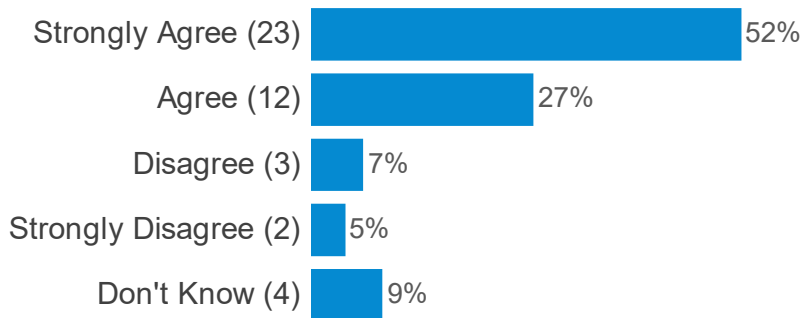
ALL training for Members should be made available to anyone with an aspiration to become a politician and the processes involved in becoming a Member From idea to election should be laid out in an ultra simple way so that it is accessible to all (without council 'jargon') providing clear detailed information as part of a roadmap to becoming an elected Member.

N/A

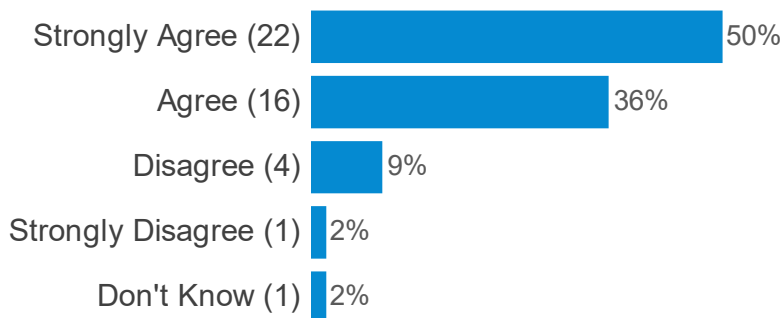
No

No

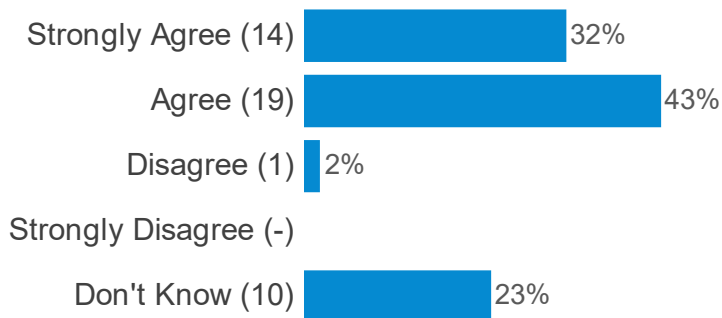
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Continue to move towards participative approaches to engagement which empower citizens and place decision making in the hands of communities and individuals)**



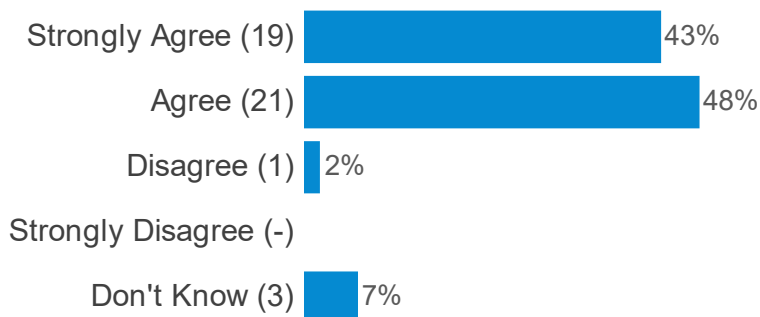
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Build on the use of technology to increase the reach of engagement activity)**



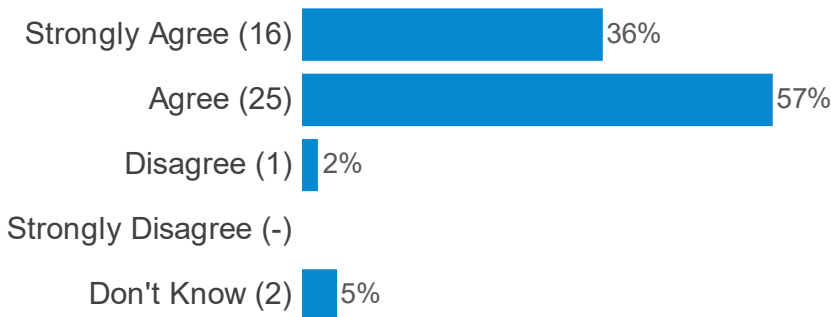
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Have due regard for Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board Citizen Engagement Scheme in all of our consultation and engagement activities)**



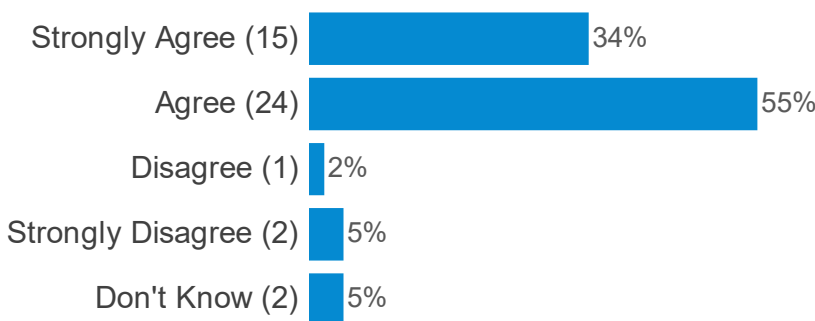
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Campaign to raise awareness of the mechanisms in place for local people to get involved in decision making )**



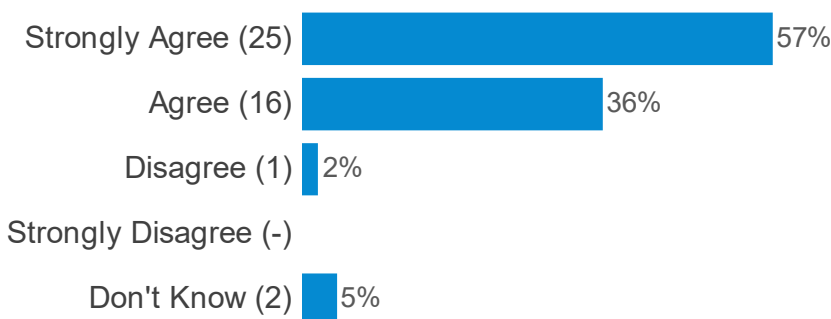
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Develop effective and inclusive consultation and engagement exercises that set reasonable expectations about what can and cannot be changed as a result)**



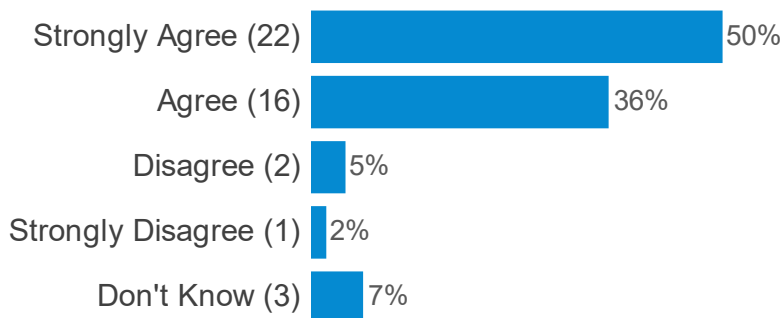
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Review and further develop the Neath Port Talbot Citizens' Panel)**



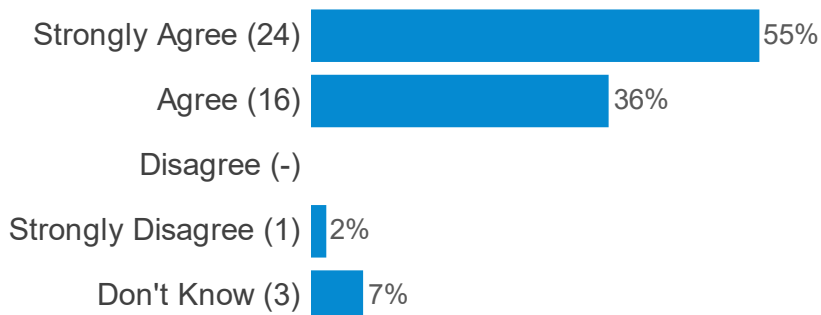
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Let people know how their feedback helped influence decisions e.g. 'You said...we did')**



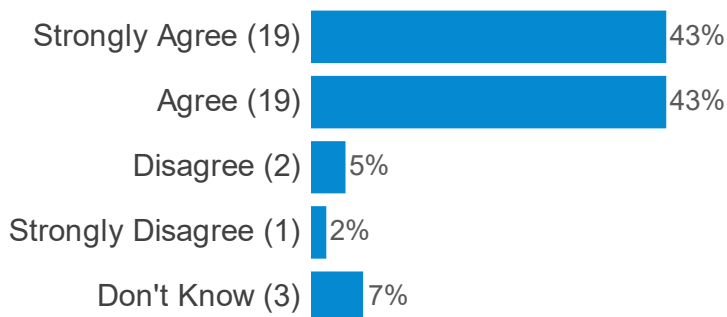
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Identify opportunities to increase our reach into communities through partnership working)**



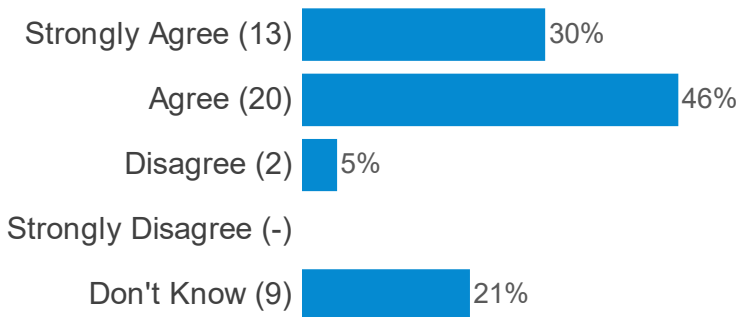
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Ensure that when important decisions are made, robust and reliable information and stakeholders' feedback is made available to decision makers)**



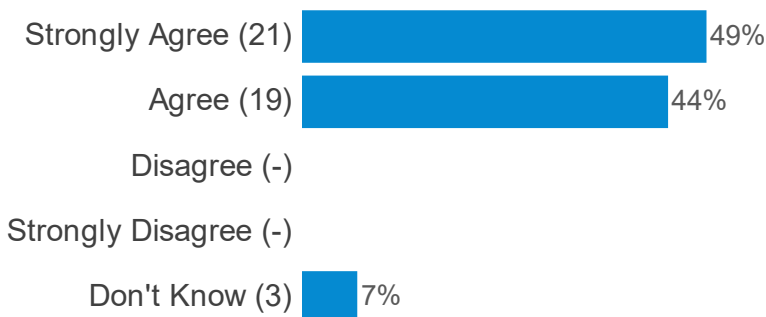
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Explore the views of the public about which of the council's committees they consider should be broadcast live)**



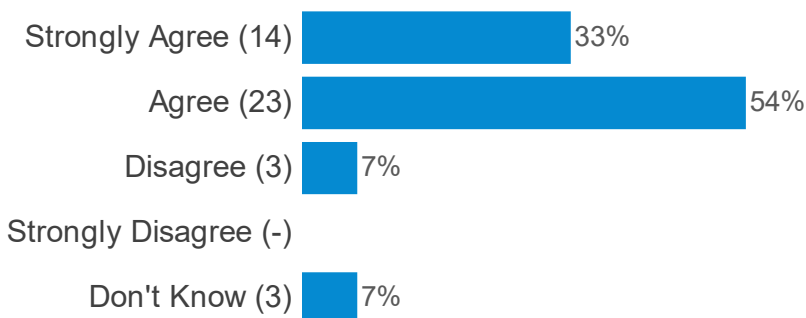
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Further develop the NPT Community of Practice on involvement and Engagement to ensure a coordinated approach to consultation and engagement)**



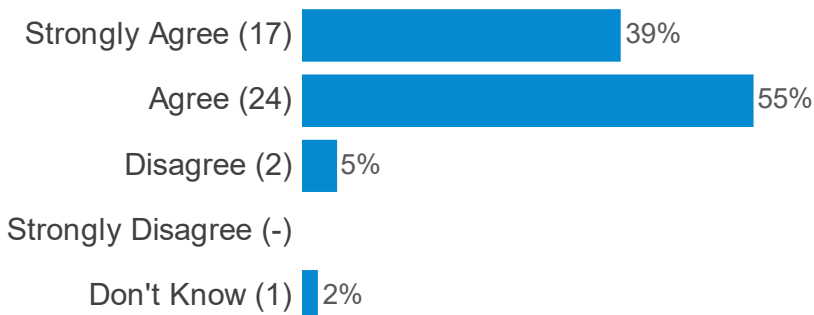
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Ensure officers are adequately equipped with the necessary skills and tools to design consultations, collect feedback in a timely way and accurately interpret the results)**



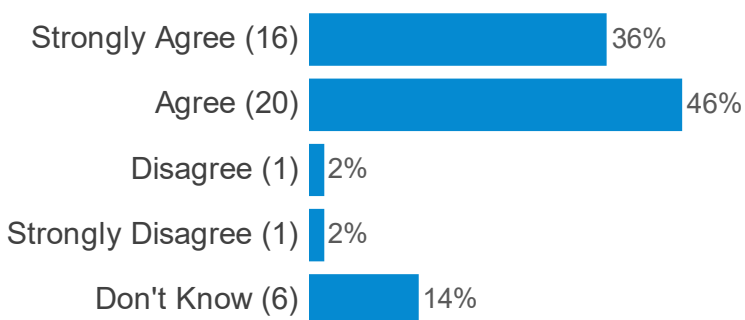
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Develop a Consultation and Engagement Toolkit to ensure a corporate and consistent approach to all activities)**



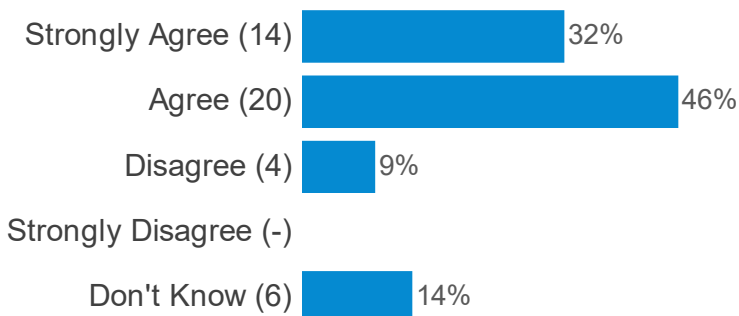
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Develop systems and processes for collating all consultation and engagement feedback from across the Council in a central resource, to form a reliable, robust and more comprehensive picture of what people in Neath Port Talbot think, need and want)**



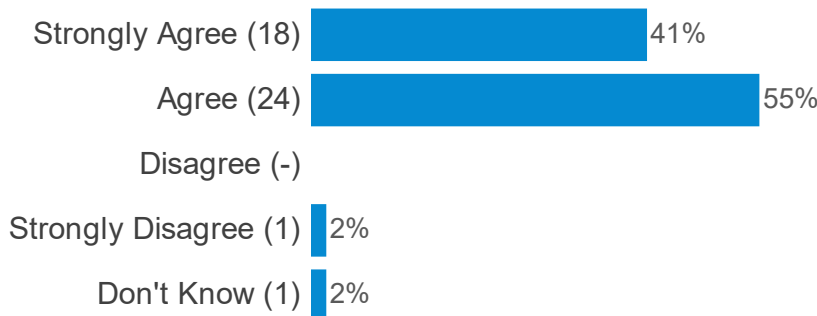
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Develop a forward planning process/consultation calendar)**



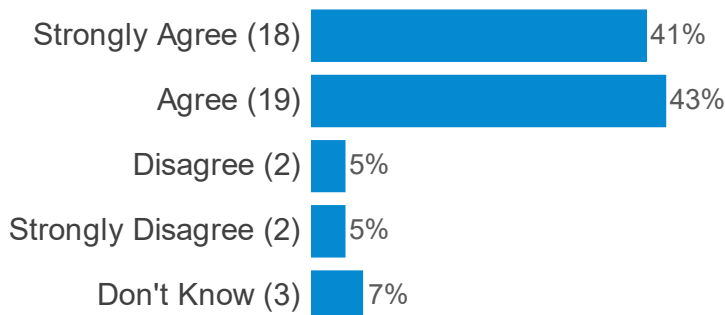
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Improve analysis, interpretation and sharing of information to inform decision making, utilising the agreed technology (i.e. Snap Software))**



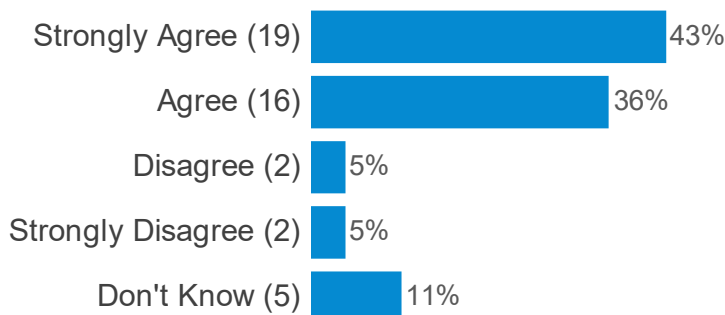
**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Keep up-to-date with any relevant changes in legislation and exploring examples of innovation and good practice)**



**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (A Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model)**



**Requirement 3: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council (Ensure that information is accessible to all Children and Young People – e.g. friendly tone, easy read etc)**



**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council?**

Improved practice in management are needef

Don't know

No

The ideas are good but the practicality of implementing the above cost

NO

Improved consultation, engagement and communication with carers of children and adults regarding help, support, advice available and how to access it. One central point of contact that can help to signpost /co-ordinate across the various depts. e.g. education, social services & health

Making better use of community based workers such as Local Area Co-Ordinators as not only case workers but with a wider brief to provide information about the council, consultations etc and also to be able to receive feedback on behalf of the council and to record this feedback formally.

Engage with senior citizens and older people more. Improve services to retired people and pensioners.

As there are 500+ members of the Citizen’s Panel and just 70 responses to surveys, we need to consider how a campaign is going to engage with those members who are not responding to surveys and identify their reasons. Is it lack of confidence, or skills required and perhaps a need for training? Are we reaching enough people by using current communication models? Is there a need for identifying panel members interests in subject matter?

Info to be accessible to all, including those with learning disabilities or who may not be active digitally. Need to avoid by giving impression consultation is a referendum: Council are responsible for taking decisions, some which may be right but not popular.

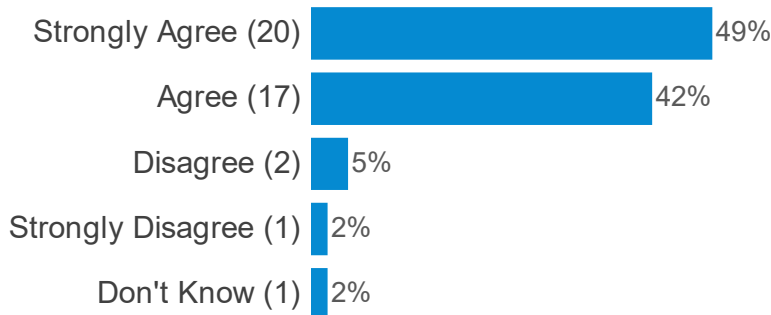
Not all individuals have access to IT equipment

The Citizens' Panel should be scrapped. 71 respondents from 500 residents? That's 14% involvement! This is a very poor level of interaction and shows the Panel is not functioning at all. NPTCBC should introduce a Citizens' Assembly, e.g. 101 residents called up akin to jury service in order to help council make necessary policy decisions. With a citizens' assembly, interaction is 100% and would allow for more cohesive and definite strategies. More, here: <https://citizensassembly.co.uk>

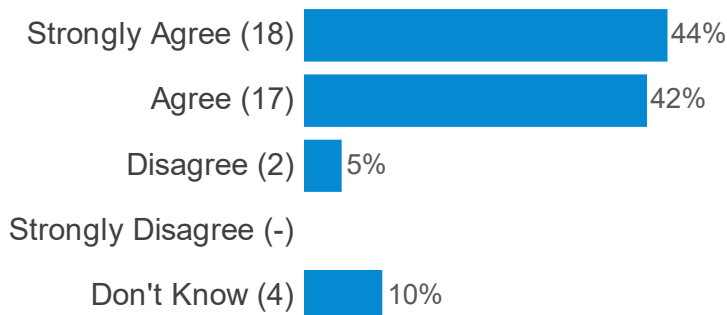
NPT Citizens panel should be reviewed, not sure about developing it or whether it should be scrapped for something else. As a member I am losing interest as there is no interaction with others - just giving your thoughts in your own personal bubble without the opportunity to discuss issues and ideas with others makes you feel like you aren't really part of the process. In-community and virtual workshops on important issues (similar to what I believe was done with the budget) where anyone with an interest can join in would be more beneficial ALL committees should be broadcast live Key discussion topics in council meetings should be shared across social media so public knows what is being discussed when without having to think about it and look for it. Likewise, meeting recordings should be times stamped according to the agenda items so people can easily find the parts they are interested in Consider citizen's assemblies for important (potentially controversial) topics - demographically selected people from across the borough being asked to participate



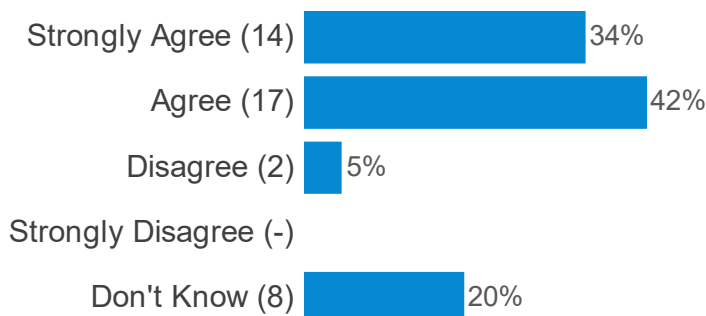
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Further develop our engagement campaign ('Let's Talk') so that we have continuous feedback from our residents, our staff, our businesses and partners and increase participation in the council's work )**



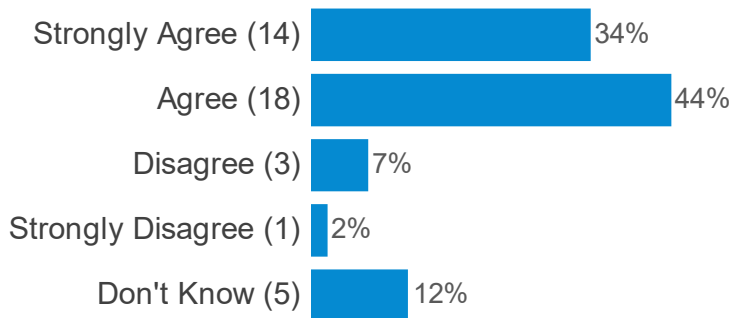
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Develop a better understanding of the demographics of residents who regularly provide feedback, so that any gaps in representation can be identified)**



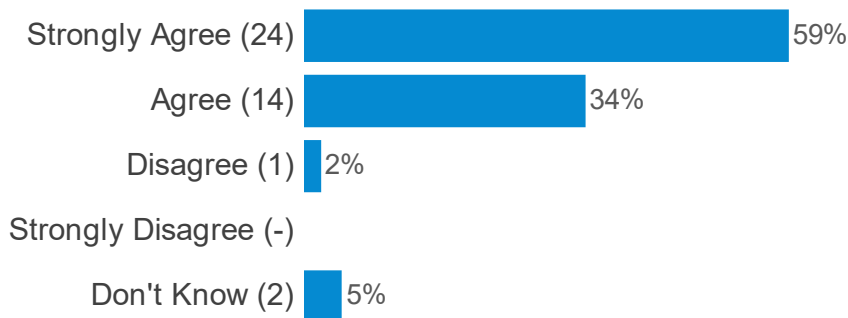
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Consider how we develop these as a more formal mechanism for the online community to participate in consultations and engagement campaigns )**



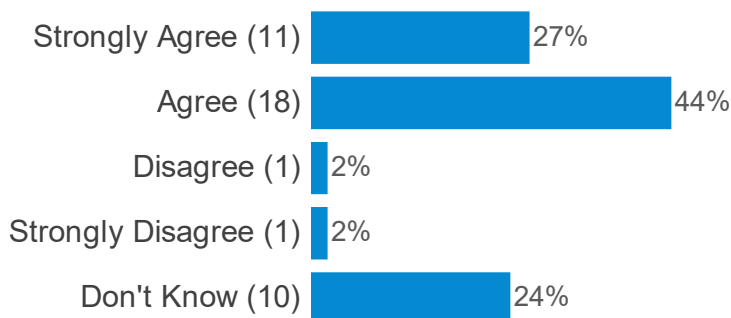
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Embrace the use of digital discussions )**



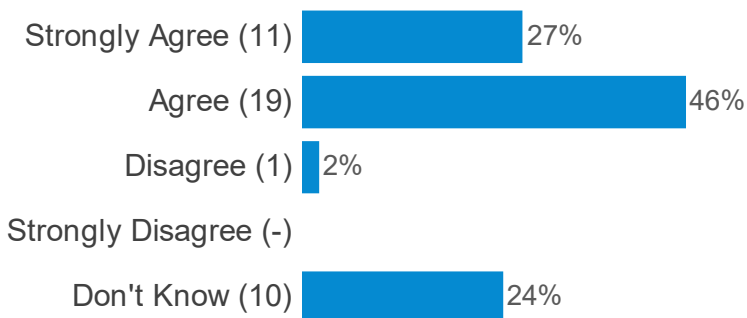
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Meet with stakeholders face-to-face within their own communities and groups so we can better get to know them and issues that matter to them)**



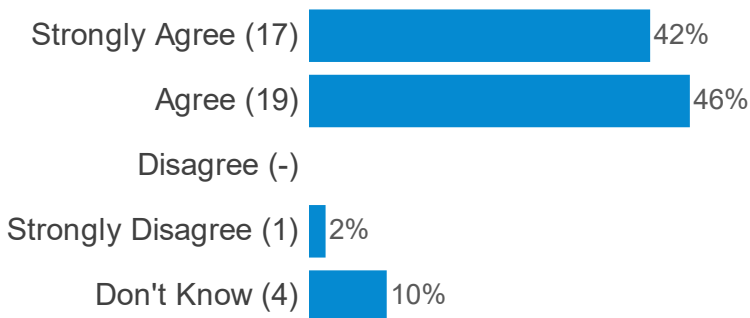
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Review and update the Scrutiny Public Engagement Strategy particularly with respect to hybrid meetings )**



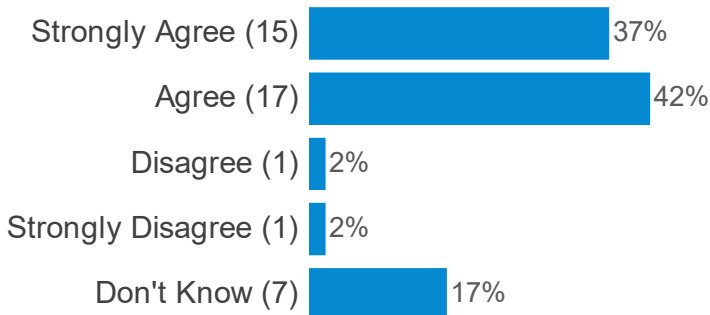
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Review and update the council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy )**



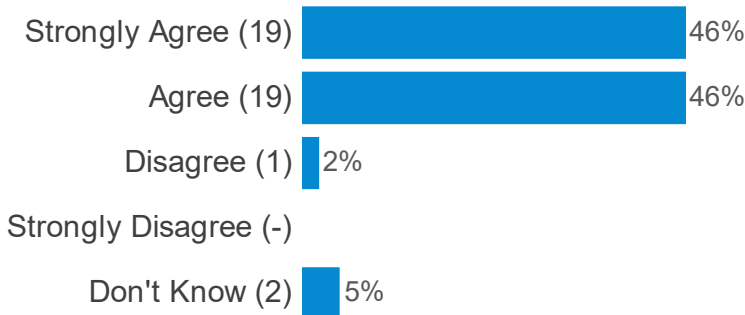
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Implement the council's duty under section 90 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to consult local people on performance)**



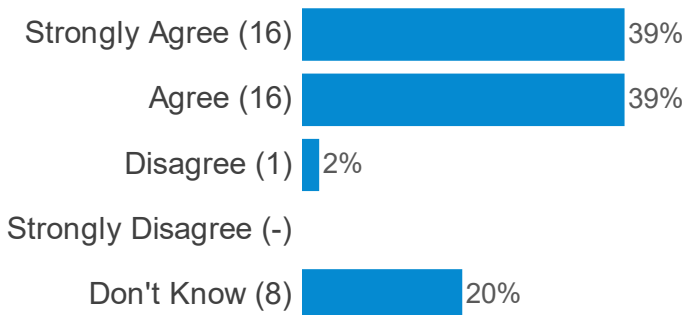
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (A Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model )**



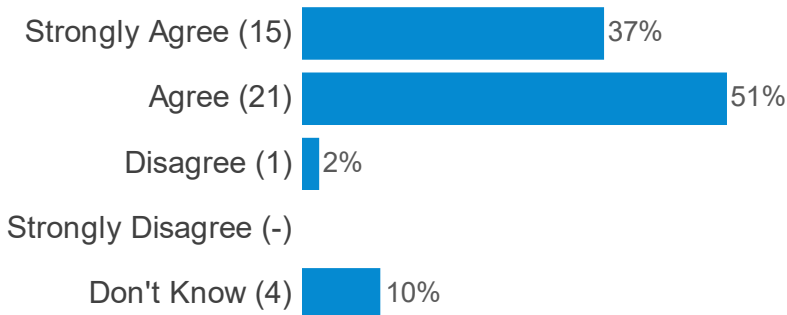
**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Continue to develop more meaningful and innovative forms of engagement to allow residents to participate and be involved in co-production. )**



**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Provide training for staff so that they understand what effective participation looks like. Provide a framework or model - e.g. Lundy and raise awareness of the Gunning Principles. )**



**Requirement 4: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations (Develop a framework for how we monitor participation opportunities to ensure quality, consistency and measure the impact they have)**



**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations?**

Practices in management that are better

Involve a Private company?

No

No

NO

1) Ensure a balance of on-line, digital discussions and face-to-face / stakeholder meetings to accomodate those that are not computer literate or do not have internet access. 2) Ensure communication/consultation mechanisms are in place for people who are housebound e.g. via carers

All complaints about service, performance and other general issues should be published with the outcome. Develop a resolution driven strategy to address complaints and recognise complaints as an honest reflection of how council services are perceived and are therefore an essential and highly valued part of the participation process.

Avoid words like co-production without being clear what the jargon means

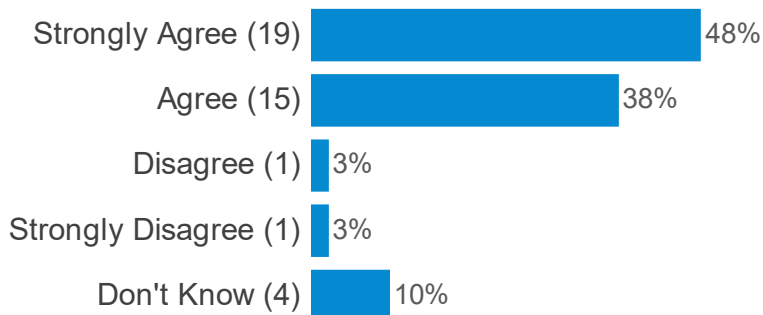
N/A

I think Cymer is viewed by NPT as an outpost. We were not consulted or even told when a small bridge over the Corrwg river was removed a few years ago. This was used frequently by local people including a partially disabled resident. So your consultation proposals need more work!!

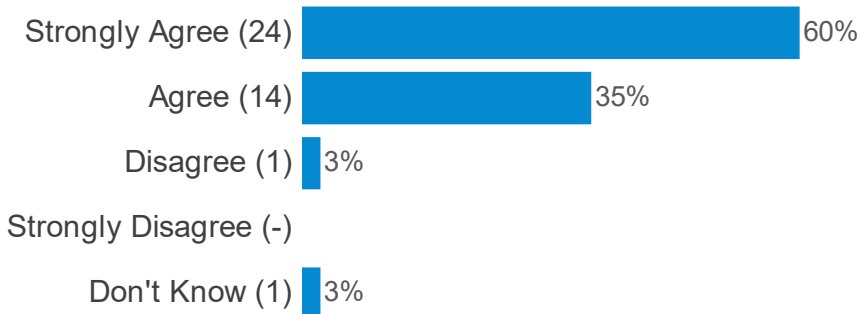
I agree that developing "more meaningful and innovative forms of engagement to allow residents to participate and be involved in co-production" is essential, but disagree that 'Let's Talk' strategy is the answer. NPTCBC should consider setting up People's Assemblies throughout each community. People's assemblies are a way for local residents and communities to direct policy and initiate research into new strategies for consideration by the Council and a Citizens' Assembly. More, here: [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/2497271/How-to-run-a-Peoples-Assembly.pdf](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/2497271/How-to-run-a-Peoples-Assembly.pdf)

develop "let's talk" to include regular on-street forums (people's assemblies) on current questions the council faces in high footfall areas so people who would not normally engage in consultations etc can stumble across them and join in through curiosity consider consultations that could be less formal / structured, not more

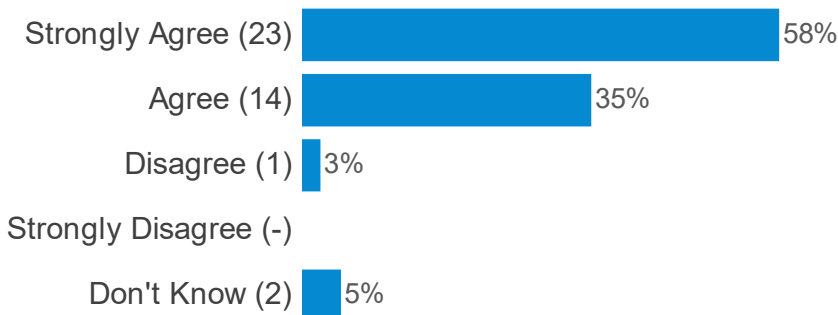
**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Publish a Guide to the Democratic Process and how the council makes decisions )**



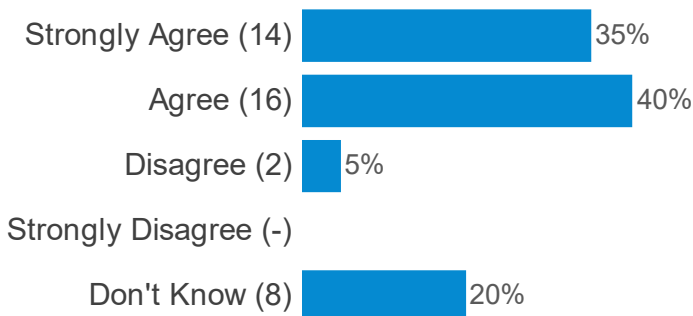
**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Ensure information on the council website is accessible )**



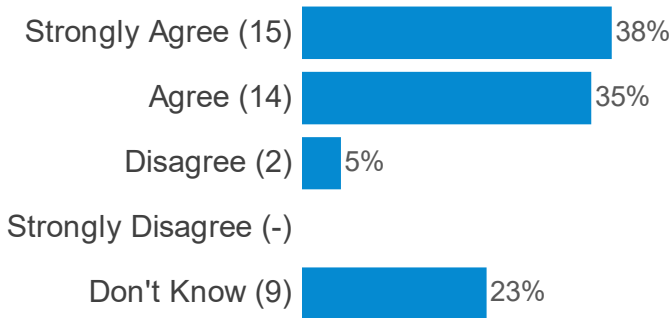
**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Ensure the council’s forward plan supports public engagement by being accessible, timely and user friendly )**



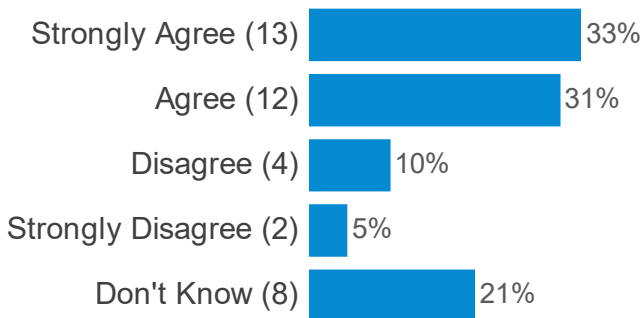
**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Continue the webcasting of meetings as specified under the 2021 Act and develop a hybrid meeting policy and ensure availability of translation facilities for Full Council meetings to be conducted bilingually and any other meetings required in legislation)**



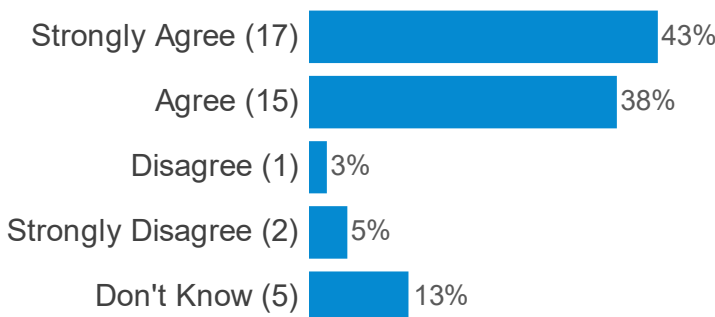
**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Provide detailed training to chairs of scrutiny committee on ways in which they can engage the community in the scrutiny process)**



**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (Promote the use of scrutiny on social media channels )**



**Requirement 5: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees (A Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy is being developed. The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and will include an engagement model)**



**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to provide arrangements to bring views of the public to the attention of overview and scrutiny committees?**

Yes as before re management practices

Don't know

No

No

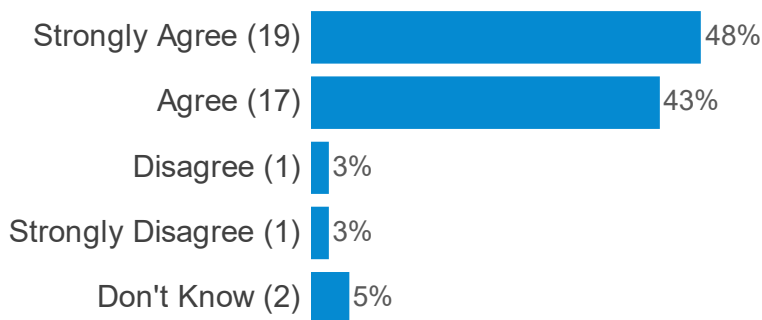
NO

I totally agree with the publication of a guide to he democratic process and how decisions are made. I hope it shall be in a readable format that is accessible to all and not exclude those who may have sight problems

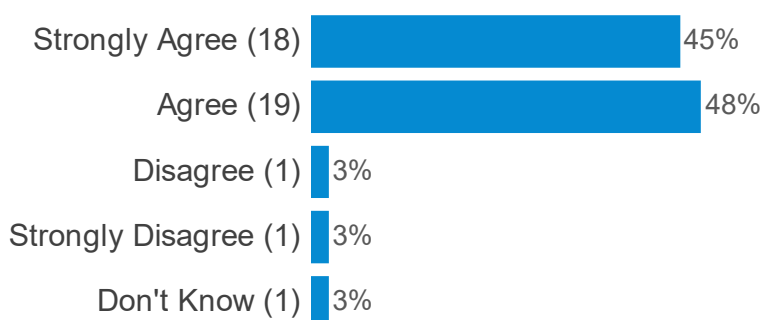
N/A

How will you communicate to people with out IT equipment

**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (Member Induction and Training )**

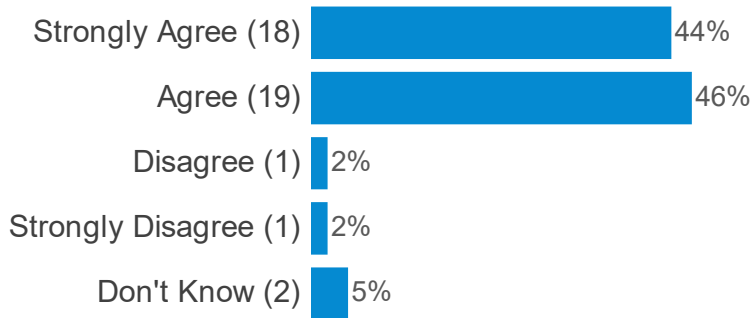


**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (Social media safety training to be delivered to members through the Member Induction Programme and built upon during their term of office )**

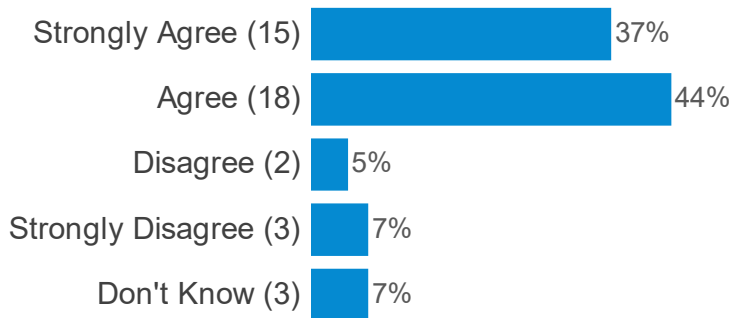




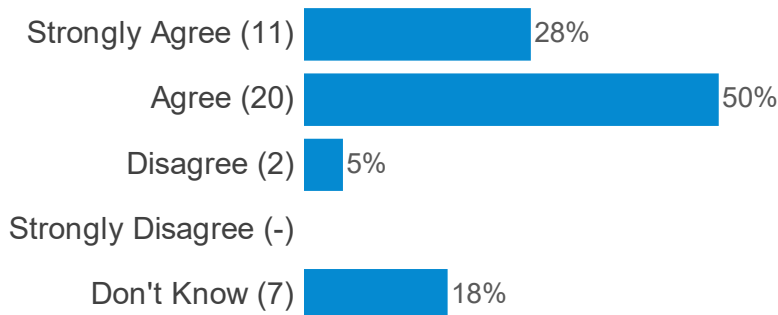
**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (Develop our social media channels as a platform to ask questions and share views)**



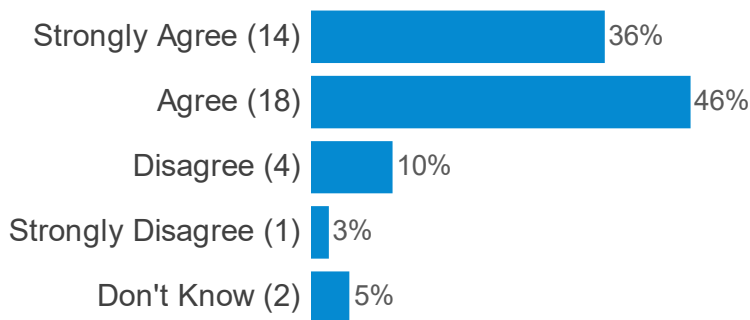
**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (Embrace the use of digital discussions)**



**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (Member Seminars )**



**Requirement 6: please indicate how far you agree that these are the things we should focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors (The Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy will include information and processes for digital engagement)**



**Is there anything you think is missing from what we are proposing to focus on to promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors?**

- Councillor should be meeting residents face to face not everyone has access to social media

---

- Don't know

---

- no

---

- No

---

- NO

---

- \*\* more investment in local libraries to further develop / maintain the wonderful and crucial role they are playing in connecting with our local communities and encouraging communication and the wellbeing of residents with each other through the various wide ranging activities and services

---

- Older residents need help to access it

---

- Social media debates open to abuse and hijacking, bullying, intimidation.

---

- N/A

---

- No

---

- As long as councillors remain professional at all times I feel this is a great way to communicate with communities especially those who struggle to get out.

### Do you have any other views on our Draft Public Participation Strategy that you would like to share with us?

The council needs to adopt better practices as before

Its not all about a digital world. Councillors should be more visible as they are when seeking votes

Looking at this is I'd say you need professional help

none

No

NO

a typical dichotomous survey

Not enough focus on older people, retired and pensioners. There is a lack of provision for older people who want housing that meets their needs.

It's an excellent strategy and well thought out. I have made some comments and hope they're useful suggestions, they're not meant as a criticism in any way to those responsible for development of the strategy

Councillors need to be given best advice in coming to decisions: informed by but not dictated by views, else can lead to short term please social media decisions, which may not be the same as the best decision

Please remember people in Cymer would like to be consulted.

No

Could the use of 'council' language be clearer/more user friendly e.g. what does 'Lundy' and 'Gunning' mean?

It is important that people know how the council has used the feedback that they have given

No

### Have you voted in a local election in the last five years?



### Please give your reasons for your response

It's very important to vote

No

Because it is my right to do so.

Stupid question. Why does anyone vote

why would I vote?

I believe that all those eligible to vote should do so.

Important to maintain democracy

I BELIEVE THAT ALL THOSE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE SHOULD DO SO.

Because I have?

I believe participation in democracy is extremely important. I feel it is unfair to comment or criticise if you have not voted (in other words, you get what you deserve if you do not vote).

### Please give your reasons for your response

Don't vote don't have a say

have voted in all elections.

I want things to improve where I live and in the wider NPT community.

If I don't let me local councillor know my concerns, how will they be addressed.

Democracy is important in our society and gives us the opportunity to make informed choices and decisions

Voting is a hard won democratic right and it is duty to vote.

To have my voice heard

Democracy

N/A

I have always voted. sometimes it's to keep someone out rather than to let someone in.

Because I had to.

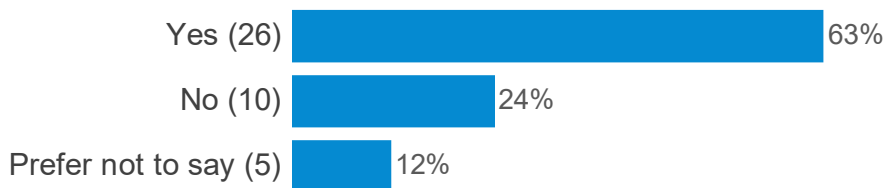
AS I HAVE VOTED????

We are lucky to live in a democracy and I think it is important to use your vote

I want to influence how we are governed locally. It needs to change.

I always vote

### Have you taken part in any other activities to influence NPT Council's decision making in the last 12 months (e.g. surveys, focus groups, submitted a comment or complaint, signed a petition etc.)?



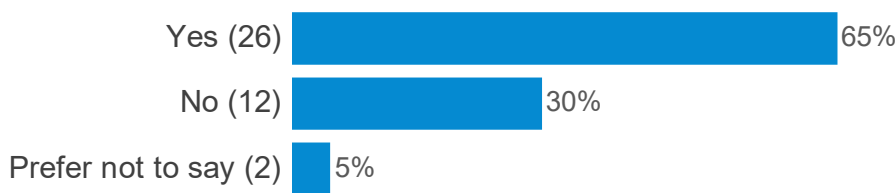
**If yes, please tell us how and which decision(s) this/these were related to**

- Can't remember
- Never had any feedback outcomes to any activities
- All surveys/information that I get made aware of.
- Refuse collection
- REFUSE COLLECTION
- Signed the Fair Funding petition (Unison campaign) Responded to the recent Culture and Heritage consultation
- Culture strategy consultation
- survey, complaint
- Destruction of wild flowers, poorly maintained pathways, litter, speeding on the 30mph roads. I'm not sure if any were taken seriously
- Planning objections
- the surveys sent via email to NPT email. Same as this survey.
- Let's Talk survey
- I don't keep a list
- Citizens' Panel

**If no, please tell us why not**

- I didn't know I could
- Not been aware of any focus groups etc but we are extremely lucky and appreciative of the caring, supportive and helpful staff in Cwmavon Library who are actively involved in connecting with the community and providing a wide range of support and social activities to help the young and elderly and vulnerable members of our local community.
- No reason
- N/A

**Have you interacted with your local councillor/s in the last twelve months?**



**Please give your reasons for your response**

- To actively promote charitable causes
- Can't remember
- Email due to dangerous trees in park, although still not sorted and fly tipping
- Because 1 lives next door, others sit on panels that I sit on, because there are issues that need addressing.
- A concern regarding refuse collection
- On facebook - following activity and involvement in community of the local councillors
- A CONCERN REGARDING REFUSE COLLECTION

### Please give your reasons for your response

(1) Provided views and major concerns over the proposed wind farm in Cwmavon

No issues encountered.

Busy caring for elderly parent

Discussing third sector grants

I have been poorly

flooding

Attended ward meetings and asked advice too

N/A

No cause to.

No reason to.

Planning concerns

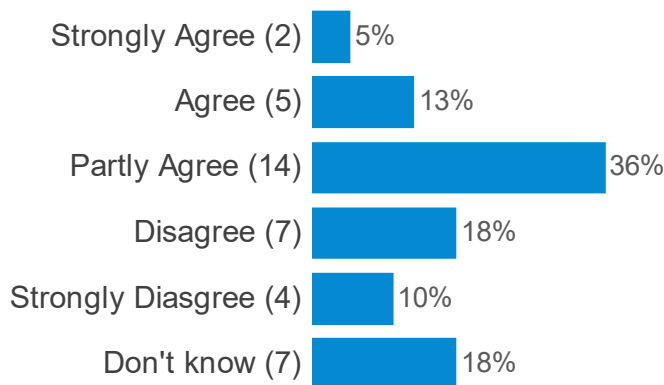
Never see them or hear from them. Taibach/Margam area by the way.

Complaints about our local environment

I've recently moved house

I have found the councillor to be helpful, considerate and supportive.

### NPT Council always seeks to involve members of the public in decision-making



**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

- I didn't know I could have a voice

---

- Impossible to do

---

- Good idea just doesn't work due to the council's poor management practices

---

- Never see a Councillor once they are voted in

---

- Because they like to hide things or make it difficult for people

---

- There seems to be more engagement during this new coalition than there was with the previous administration

---

- I have seen little evidence of this or the communication mechanisms have been inadequate. I am not on any social media site. All my information is gained from our local library in Cwmavon, which has very proactive and supportive staff.

---

- Sometimes it appears to be a ticking the box exercise.

---

- Little attempt to hold physical events/ meetings outside the main settlements.

---

- NPT seems to be a closed book when it comes to openness unless you are 'in the know'.

---

- But they don't take notice of what we say

---

- The proposed Pontardawe Superschool is a prime example of how historically the council did not involve the local community and abused their perceived power to ridiculous and ultimately ILLEGAL levels.

---

- No

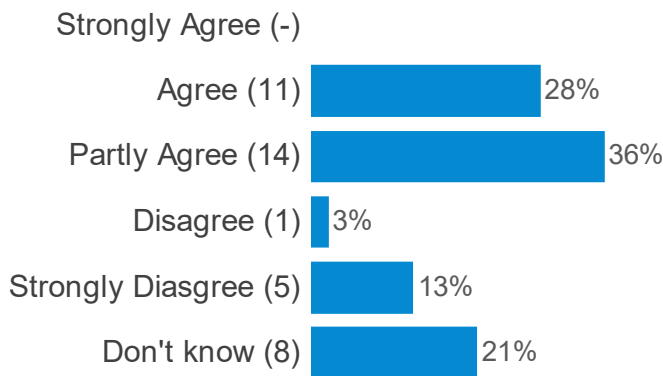
---

- N/A

---

- If NPTCBC does involve members of the public, then it appears to always be the same members of the public.

**All residents are able to get involved in NPT Council's decision-making if they choose**



**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

I don't feel there is an opportunity

As above

We can comment but never get any feedback and Councillors do want they want not the community they serve

Only if you are aware of the activities / consultation?

It isn't clear what the council is planning and how to feed back responses.

Ask yourself, how did you invite me to participate in this consultation?

I'm unsure as to whether we're reaching all residents by current methods or whether they're are not getting involve because that is their wish

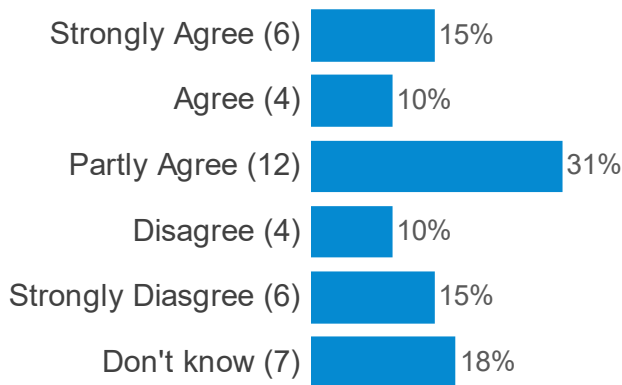
How would I find out about when the decisions are made

I think that people may be afraid of the (necessary) bureaucracy, systems etc within the Council

Residents are not fully aware of restrictions and decision making should be made.

More can be done to proactively involve residents by way of 1. people's assemblies in each community; and 2. a citizens' assembly that feeds into the main Council.

**Public involvement has a genuine impact on NPT Council's decision-making**

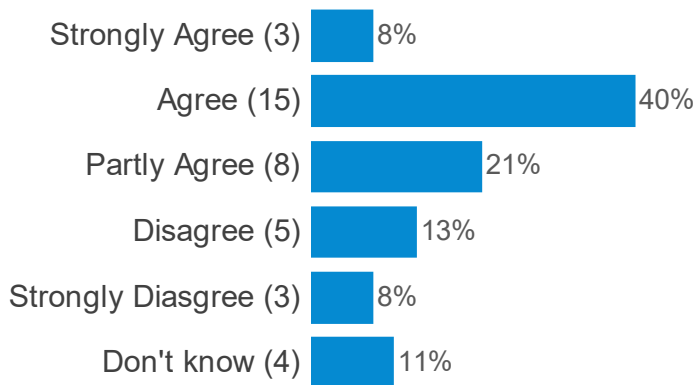




**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

- I have never had an opportunity
- As above
- They may ask but don't act
- I don't think NPT listen or care
- Some evidence of public changing NPT decision
- We do not receive any feedback on the outcome or impact of public involvement in the decision making process
- The biggest challenge is engaging "hard to reach" residents (especially those who appear apathetic)
- It is sometimes thought that the decisions are made before consultation so what's the point
- Some consultation at policy level but many key decisions are not consulted on. Not clear whether the results of consultation is considered binding or advisory - suspect in many cases it is used mainly as an awareness- raising tool rather than actually affecting decisions.
- Don't trust your processes.
- They don't listen
- For the public to have a say
- N/A
- Do not believe public concerns are considered
- we don't always know what the feedback has been on something and how it has been used

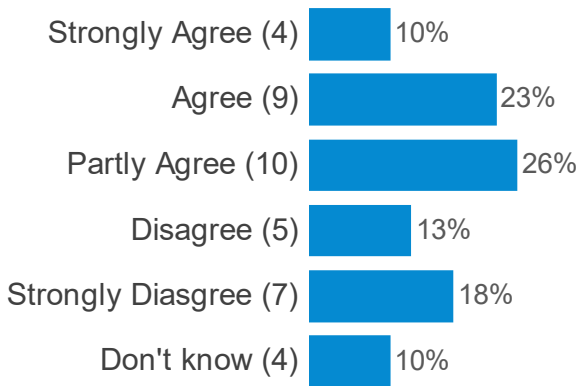
**I know about the council's decision-making processes**



**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

- As above
- Not on public domain
- As above - no feedback / info received
- The committee structure is opaque and it is difficult to find current information on the website.
- N/A
- Where?

### I understand the council’s decision-making processes



### If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why

- Do t know about how to access the info

---

- As above

---

- Not in public domain

---

- It doesn't always make sense then you discover little things like corrupt officers..

---

- Aware of council members meetings but no specific information of various committee meetings or decisions

---

- Committee structure is complex.

---

- Some decisions taken don't appear to be logical

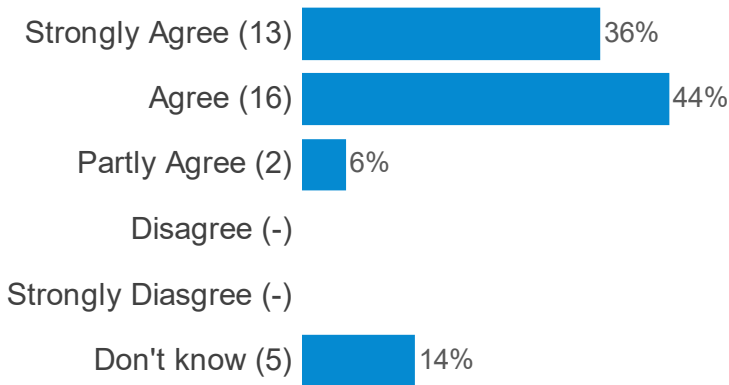
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- Where?

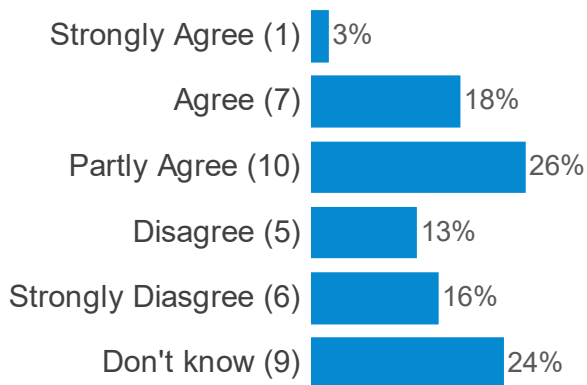
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- It's quite complicated

### I am interested in how and why the council makes decisions



### The council is open and transparent about its decision making



### If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why

Poor management practices

Never hear see decisions made

Because getting information is hard, and different outcomes for similar issues depending on who is asking

Communication mechanisms need greatly improving

Some decisions are transparent; others just seem to happen.

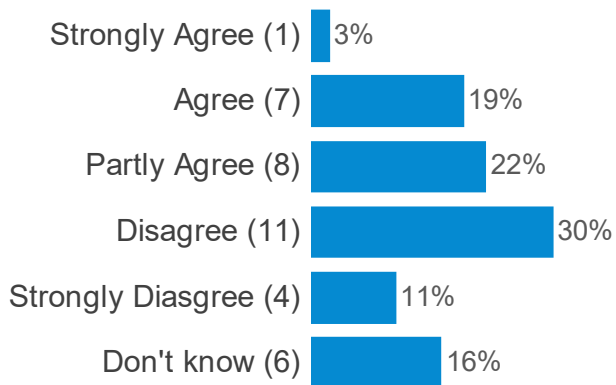
The dark art of NPT decision making is hard to navigate.

Don't justify just make excuses.

Under the Rainbow Coalition that would be a definite AGREE but due to the despotic nature of the previous regime, bad memories linger

Planning decisions

### It is easy and straightforward to find information about council decisions



**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

As above

Unless you have internet access get seen to get hold of information, not told when decisions are being made

Because it is often hidden in long consultation documents or titles making it hard to find.

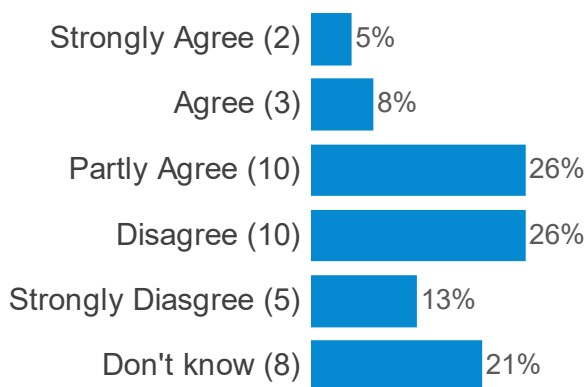
Communication mechanisms need greatly improving

Not clear where these are announced.

I find it easy to access information as I have access to broadband/internet though I'm not sure others would have that same fortune

Don't know where.

**It is easy and straightforward to participate in the council decisions making**



**If you answered 'partly agree', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' please tell us why**

Over complicated methods due to bad practices in management

Not told when how decisions are being made

because things like this are difficult for many to understand with very tight deadlines.

As above

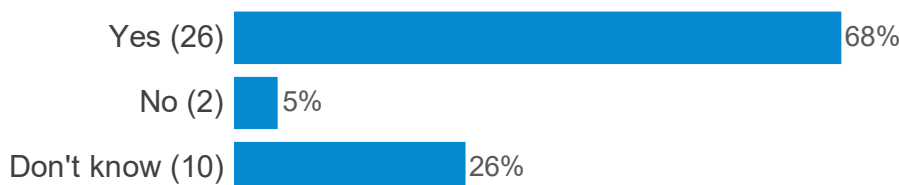
Can sometime feel as complaining rather than proactive inputting

Several possible pathways (via councillor, direct submissions, consultations) but not clear what is being discussed and how best to respond.

wouldnt know how to start on this participation.

If it were that 'easy and straightforward' I'm fairly sure there would be more involvement.

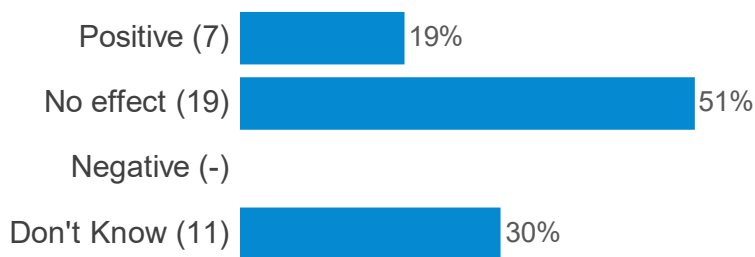
**Could NPT Council do more to improve public involvement in our decision-making processes?**



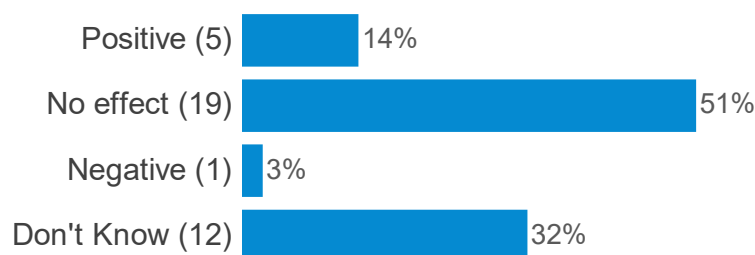
**If you answered 'yes' please give us your suggestions**

- Advertise where to find this information
- Improve your general management practices
- Be open, honest, transparent, use other media to notify community's
- Allow more time for people to become aware and allow them to do research. Have information available in Easy read for everything
- Outside help
- This document is a typical example of Local Authority jargon - repetitive. An attempt should be made to communicate in a concise and user friendly manner.
- See previous comments. Better use of library and community centre facilities to host / publicise council meetings / consultation events
- Always difficult to get public involved. Needs a lot of effort for little/no input
- Provide an easy-to-find forward plan of meetings and topics written in a way that outsiders can understand.
- Listen and feedback
- I have made comments on previous pages
- Get Councillors to lead local conversations with officer support to report back.
- Send letters/ Questionnaires
- Councillors should hold more published meetings
- Give more information on how to access this on social media and through posters:flyers
- give more information on how to do this.
- 1. One people's assembly in each electoral ward; and 2. One overarching Citizens' Assembly to recommend policy to Council

**What effect do you think Draft Public Participation Strategy will have on: (People's opportunities to use the Welsh Language)**



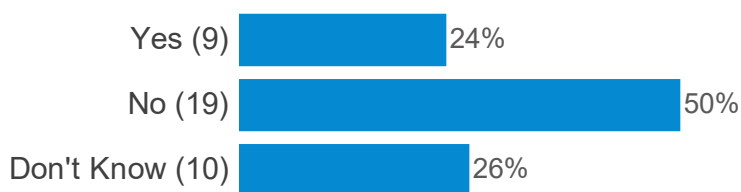
**What effect do you think Draft Public Participation Strategy will have on: (Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language)**



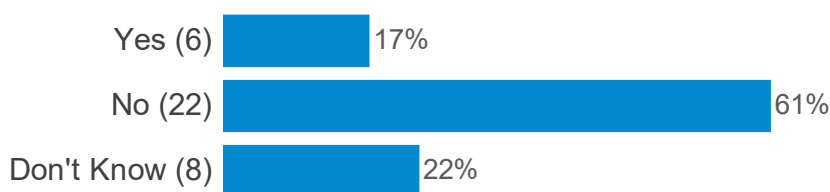
**Please give reasons for your response**

- Welsh is the first language of this country
- Most in NPT don't speak Welsh, sadly and the opportunities to use it are very sparse. Which is a shame.
- Seems waste of money
- Welsh language promotion already supported by other authorities
- none
- Don't know
- I DON'T KNOW
- only issued English language version of this consultation document. I thought that it should be bi-lingual (or there may be a Welsh language version available but it was not communicated)
- Os ydych chi'n gwybod Cymraeg rydych chi'n fwy tebygol o siarad/defnyddio'r Gymraeg.
- I believe offers Welsh language communciatiосn already/.
- The fact that this survey is in English and I'd have to click on a link to go to the welsh version, should be other way around
- So many non Welsh speaking diehards love to block increased use of the Welsh language
- It's about being inclusive in all strategies being made public
- Can't see why it would have any effect
- What are the benifits of speaking welsh
- I do not believe this will affect the welsh language
- Meeting papers aren't available in Welsh
- This is an educational issue. I've made my thoughts clear to MS Jeremy Mile in his role as Education Minister, that the only thing that will change the landscape regarding the use of Welsh is that every school in Wales should be bilingual, and that all pupils should be fluent in Welsh AND English by age 16 years.

**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Age)**



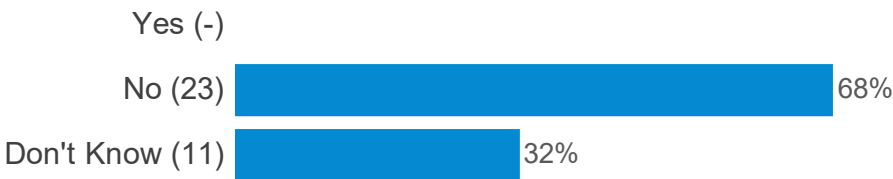
**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Disability)**



**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Gender reassignment)**



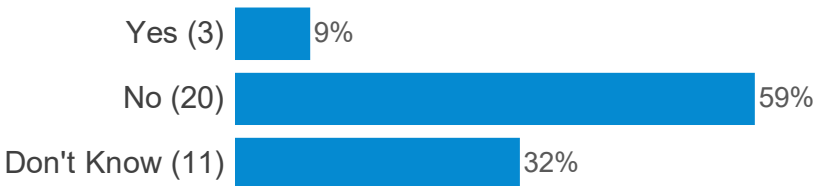
**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Marriage or civil partnership)**



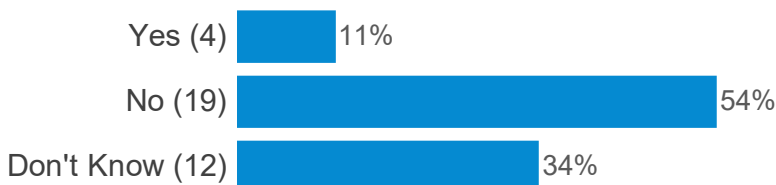
**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Pregnancy and maternity)**



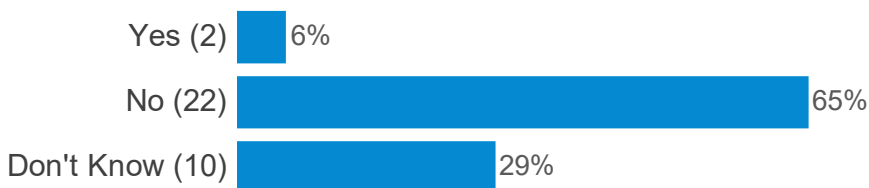
**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Race)**



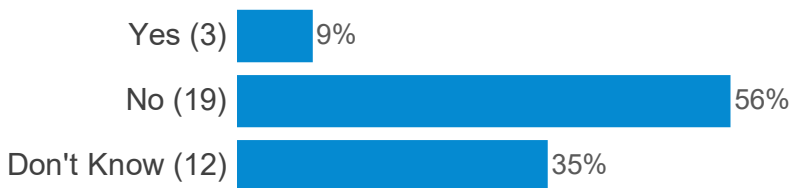
**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Religion or belief)**



**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Sex)**



**Would our Draft Public Participation Strategy have an impact on you and/or your family because of (your and /or their): (Sexual orientation)**



**If yes, please explain why**

I am over 80 years old and strongly feel that we need to maintain our Christian belief although respecting other religions

Not on any social media sites. Very limited digital knowledge / experience

It's inclusive of age and disability.

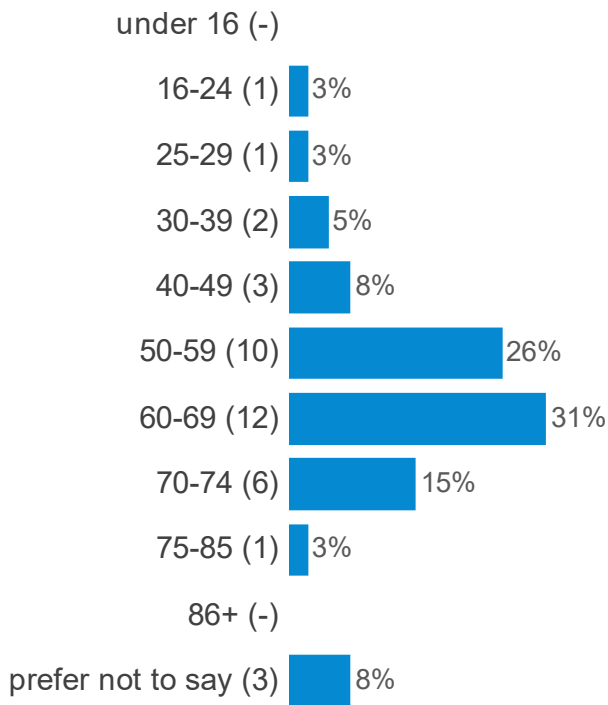
N/A

**Please provide your full postcode below (e.g. SA13 1PJ). This allows us to more accurately pinpoint respondents' views and needs by area, and to make sure we've heard from people in all parts of the county borough:-**

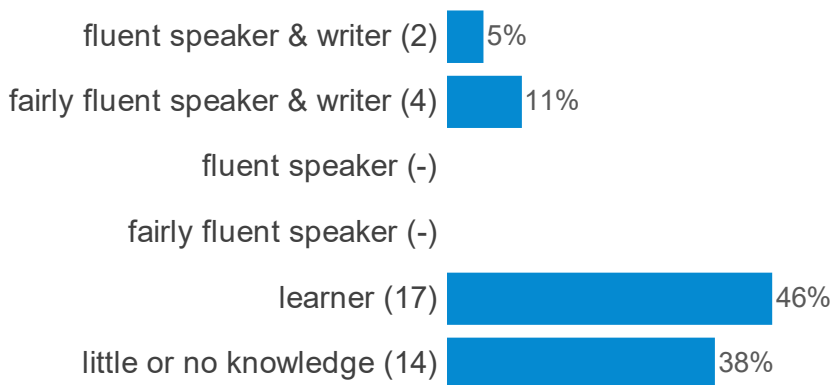
5	SA11 5TA	SA12	Sa18 1UN	SA12 6SR	SA109BT	SA11 2TJ
SA12 8EF	Sa13 1pj	SA12 9YD	SA13 3EY	Sa8 3bp	SA10 9BT	SA13 2LH
SA12 9TB	SA12	SA10 1BT	sa10 6up	SA18 1EL	SA10 9BT	SA10 8LN
SA12 9gh	SA13	SA11 1HE	SA13 1ET	SA13 3EW	SA13 1es	SA11 1BB
Sa131th	SA12 9EJ	SA12 6RP	Sa8 3ax	SA13 3LY	Sa12 6be	



### What is your age?



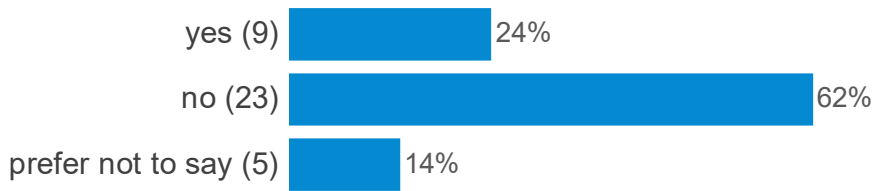
### Welsh Language - are you:



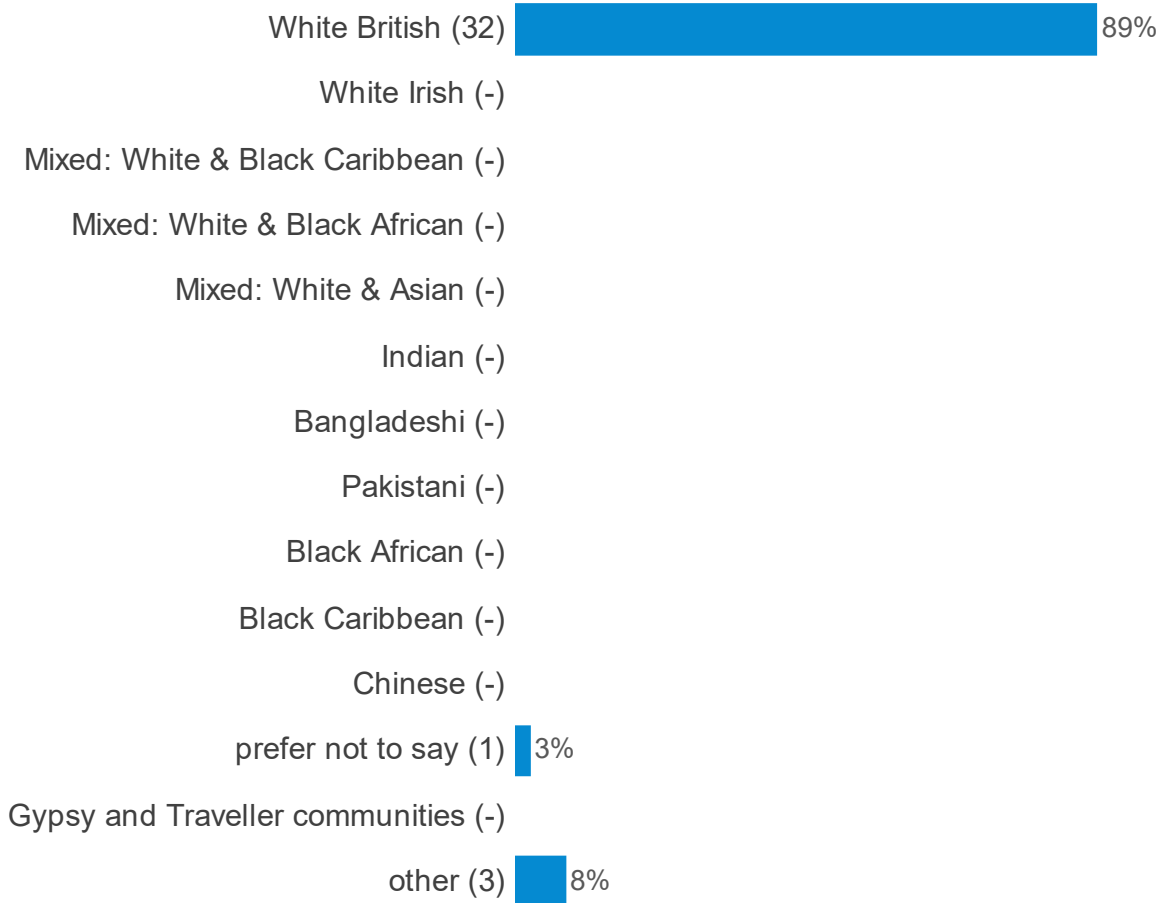
### Are are you pregnant or on maternity leave?



### Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



### Ethnic origin



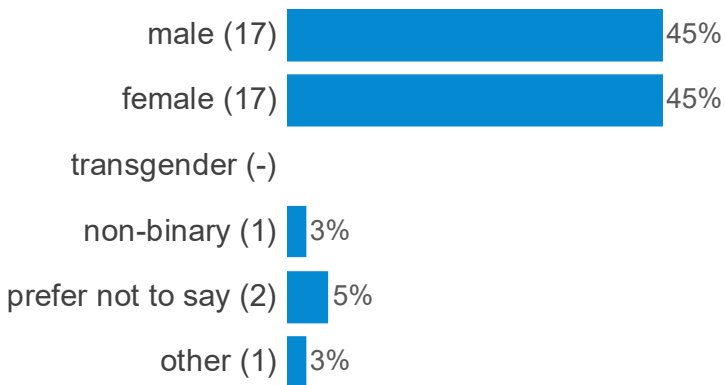
### other - please specify (Other ethnic group - please specify)

White Welsh  
Welsh

### Gypsy and Traveller communities - please specify

- Irish Traveller (-)
- New Traveller (-)
- Roma (-)
- Romani Gypsy (-)
- Showperson (-)
- Other (-)

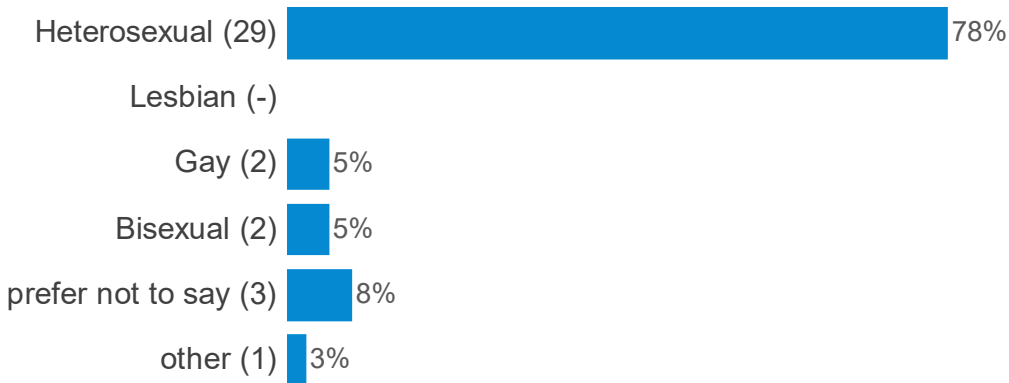
#### Sex:



#### other - please specify

This question does not conform to best practice as set out by the Office for National Statistics as it will result in answers which are impossible to rely on. The question should ask simply about sex recorded at birth.

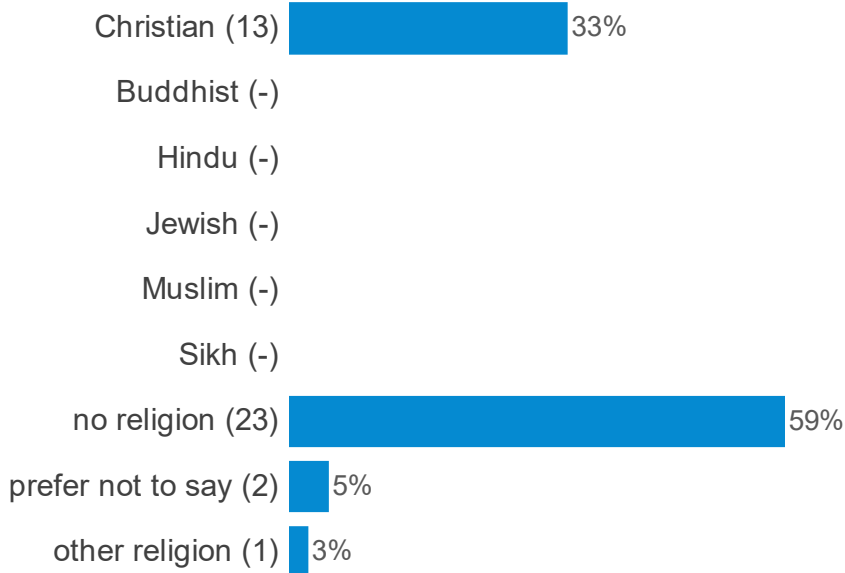
#### Sexual orientation:



**other - please specify**

You will need to define Lesbian here as transwomen attracted to ciswomen may describe themselves as Lesbian.

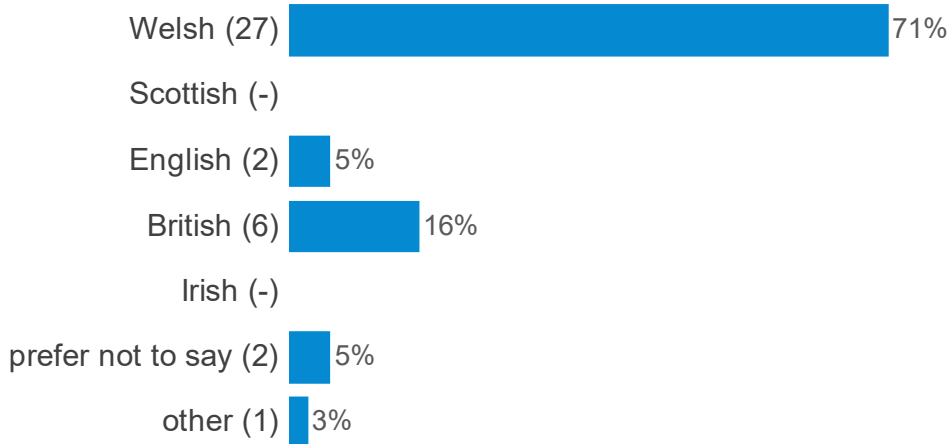
**Religion / belief:**



**other religion - please specify (other - please specify)**

climate concerned

**Nationality:**





## **CABINET**

### **JOINT REPORT OF**

#### **CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER – H JONES**

#### **HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – S REES**

**5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023**

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected - All**

#### **Corporate Risk Management Policy**

#### **Purpose of the report**

1. To present Cabinet with an updated Corporate Risk Management Policy for approval.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The council's Corporate Risk Management Policy, which was previously approved by Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018, has been updated to reflect recent changes in both legislation and internal performance management arrangements. Risk management is a key component of the council's corporate governance arrangements in supporting and maintaining a strong control environment.

#### **Background**

3. The council has a duty to be efficient, transparent and accountable to local people and to observe high standards of management and corporate governance when responding to current and future economic challenges.

As part of the work to produce the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/2022, the council's Corporate Governance Group identified the need to undertake a review of the Corporate Risk Management Policy during 2022/2023 and take forward the necessary improvement work needed to provide and sustain effective corporate risk management.

The revised Corporate Risk Management Policy, contained in Appendix 1 provides a structured and focussed approach to managing corporate risks.

The policy does not aim to bring about a one-size-fits-all approach to managing risks across the council, but it does aim to provide a broad and high level approach by

providing a framework of good practice, and ensures the management of risk is structured and comprehensive.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

4. There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts**

5. No impacts arising from this report.

### **Workforce Impacts**

6. There are no workforce impacts arising from this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

7. There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

### **Risk Management Impact**

8. Risk management is a key component of the council's corporate governance arrangements in supporting and maintaining a strong control environment.

### **Consultation**

9. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

### **Recommendations**

10. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the revised Corporate Risk Management Policy.

### **Reason for Proposed Decision**

11. To support the council in discharging its duty to be efficient, transparent and accountable to local people and to observe high standards of corporate governance.

### **Implementation of Decisions**

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period.

### **Appendices**

12. Appendix 1 – Corporate Risk Management Policy

## Background Papers

13. None

## Officer Contact

14. For further information on this report item, please contact:

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Caryn Furlow-Harris – Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support

E-mail: [c.furlow@npt.gov.uk](mailto:c.furlow@npt.gov.uk)

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**NEATH PORT TALBOT  
COUNTY BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE RISK  
MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**March 2023**

## **Statement of Intent**

We have a duty to be efficient, transparent and accountable to local people and to observe high standards of corporate governance and management when responding to current and future challenges.

Risk management is an important aspect of corporate governance and the key to successful risk management is the provision and co-ordination of appropriate resources to enable risk management decisions to be made which are appropriate and commensurate to the level of risk.

This policy provides a systematic and focussed approach to corporate risk management which, if used effectively, will identify, manage, mitigate any potential risks and enable opportunities to be confidently explored, promoting and supporting improvement and innovation.

Whilst I have ultimate responsibility for risk management within Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council by virtue of my position as Chief Executive, the Corporate Directors and their Heads of Service will ensure that their areas of responsibility are managed and resourced appropriately commensurate to the level of risk

.....

**Karen Jones**  
**Chief Executive**

## **Contents**

- 1.0 Introduction
  - 2.0 Scope
  - 3.0 Definition of Risk
  - 4.0 What is risk management and why do we need arrangements in place to manage risk
  - 5.0 Aims of the Policy
  - 6.0 Objectives of the Policy
  - 7.0 The Corporate Performance Management Framework and Corporate Risk Management
  - 8.0 The Corporate Risk Management Framework
  - 9.0 The Corporate Risk Management Process
  - 10.0 Review
- Appendix 1 – Roles and Responsibilities
- Appendix 2 – Template for Directorate / Strategic Risk Registers

## **1. Introduction**

The council is committed to a proactive approach to risk management and recognises risk management is an essential part of delivering good governance and reduces the uncertainty of achieving the council's vision, purpose and priorities, as set out in the Corporate Plan.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all of the activities of the council and builds on existing operational risk management practices within the council and complements the other systems of governance which form the Council's internal systems of control.

## **3. Definition of Risk**

For the purpose of this policy, strategic risk is defined as:

*“The threat that an event, action or inaction will adversely affect the council's ability to successfully achieve its vision, purpose and priorities”*

## **4. What is risk management and why do we need arrangements in place to manage risk?**

Risk management is the process followed to control the level of risk in decision making, functions and service activities which could impact on the achievement of the council's vision, purpose and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

The council recognises that an effective system of corporate governance leads to good management, good performance good stewardship of public funds, good public engagement and ultimately is essential for the council to demonstrate that it is acting in the best interests of the communities across Neath Port Talbot.

Risk management is a key component of corporate governance in maintaining a strong control environment. It can help prioritise attention and ensure considered decision making.

## **5. Aims of the Policy:**

- to promote an open, consistent and proactive risk management attitude which encourages the taking of opportunities to better serve the needs of our communities within the resources available to the council
- to recognise that understanding, assessing and managing risk is part of good management and shows we are risk aware not averse.

The council is committed to the management of risk in order to:

- Support the delivery of the council's vision, purpose and priorities;
- Ensure statutory obligations are met;
- Ensure effective stewardship of public funds, efficient deployment and use of resources and securing value for money for the public purse;
- Safeguard all stakeholders to whom the council has a duty of care;
- Protect physical and information assets and identify and manage potential liabilities;
- Learn from previous threats, opportunities, successes and failures;
- Preserve promote and protect the reputation of the council; and
- Build a workforce where improvement, innovation and a responsible approach to risk taking is part of its culture.

The policy does not aim to bring about a one-size-fits-all approach to managing risks, but it does aim to provide a broad and high level approach by providing a framework of good practice and ensures the management of risk is structured and comprehensive.

## 6. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Integrate and embed risk management into the culture of the council;
- Assign risk management roles, responsibilities and accountability;
- Ensure risk awareness and proportionate and consistent management of risk;
- Prevent injury, damage, breaches and losses; and
- Enhance realisation of opportunities and resulting benefits.

The aim and objectives will be achieved by:

- Training and developing relevant managers, officers and members
- Timely risk identification, mitigation, monitoring, reporting, ownership and oversight
- Application of risk management in service planning, corporate/strategic planning, decision making, programme, project, partnership and collaborative activities.

Measurable outcomes will be:

- Officers and members to be appropriately aware and trained;
- Officers to proactively, identify, assess and manage risks within their service area taking action where appropriate;
- For the council's Risk Management Framework to be embedded, with standardised effective risk identification, controls, actions and escalation processes across all services, functions, projects, programmes, partnerships, contracts and decision making arrangements
- Members and officers receive appropriate information in relation to risk appropriate to their role in effective risk management

- Independent assurance that the council’s Risk Management Policy and Framework is followed and is effective.

## **7. The Council’s Corporate Performance Management Framework and Corporate Risk Management**

The infographic over page provides a visual of the council’s revised Interim Corporate Performance Management Framework (CPMF).

The framework is made up of a number of core activities that all fit together to ensure that the council has, not only fit for purpose performance management arrangements, but a mechanism that helps to further improve the performance management culture across the organisation.

The CPMF has a clear line (golden thread) linking up all council business from employee level to council level and is aligned to achieving our vision, purpose and priorities.

The framework has a continuous cycle of Evaluate, Plan, Do and Check. This cycle ensures the council is self-aware through evaluation and performance monitoring to identify:

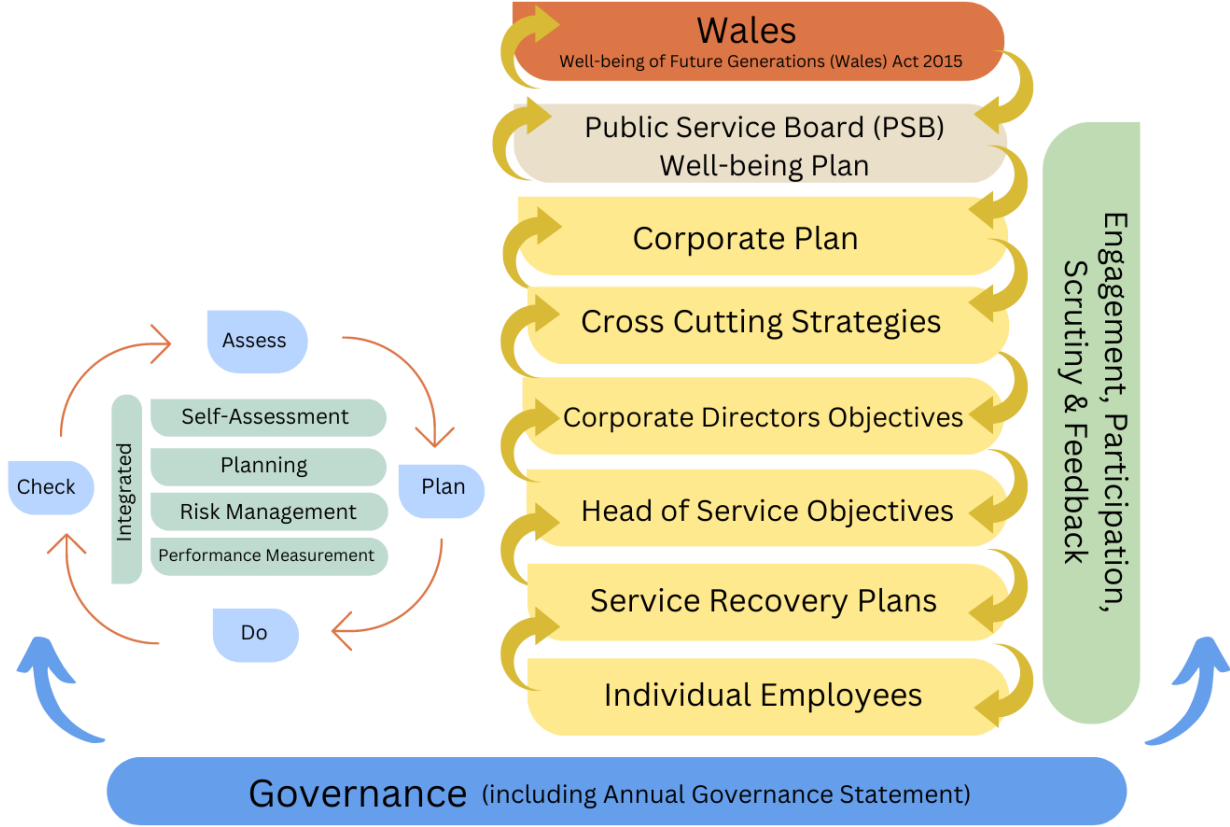
- How well we are doing?
- Are we are making an impact?
- Areas of concern that need further work
- If we need to change the way we do things

It is imperative that our planning, performance and risk processes are robust and interwoven into our decision making at every level of the organisation.

In addition, public sector spending decisions, coupled with increasing demands on major services such as social services and education following the pandemic combine to place severe pressures on the council’s resources.

This requires an unprecedented scale of change in the way the council functions and delivers services in order to deliver the required savings in future years.

Risk management has a strong link to performance management. If risks are not managed effectively then it is unlikely the council will deliver its vision, purpose and priorities as planned.





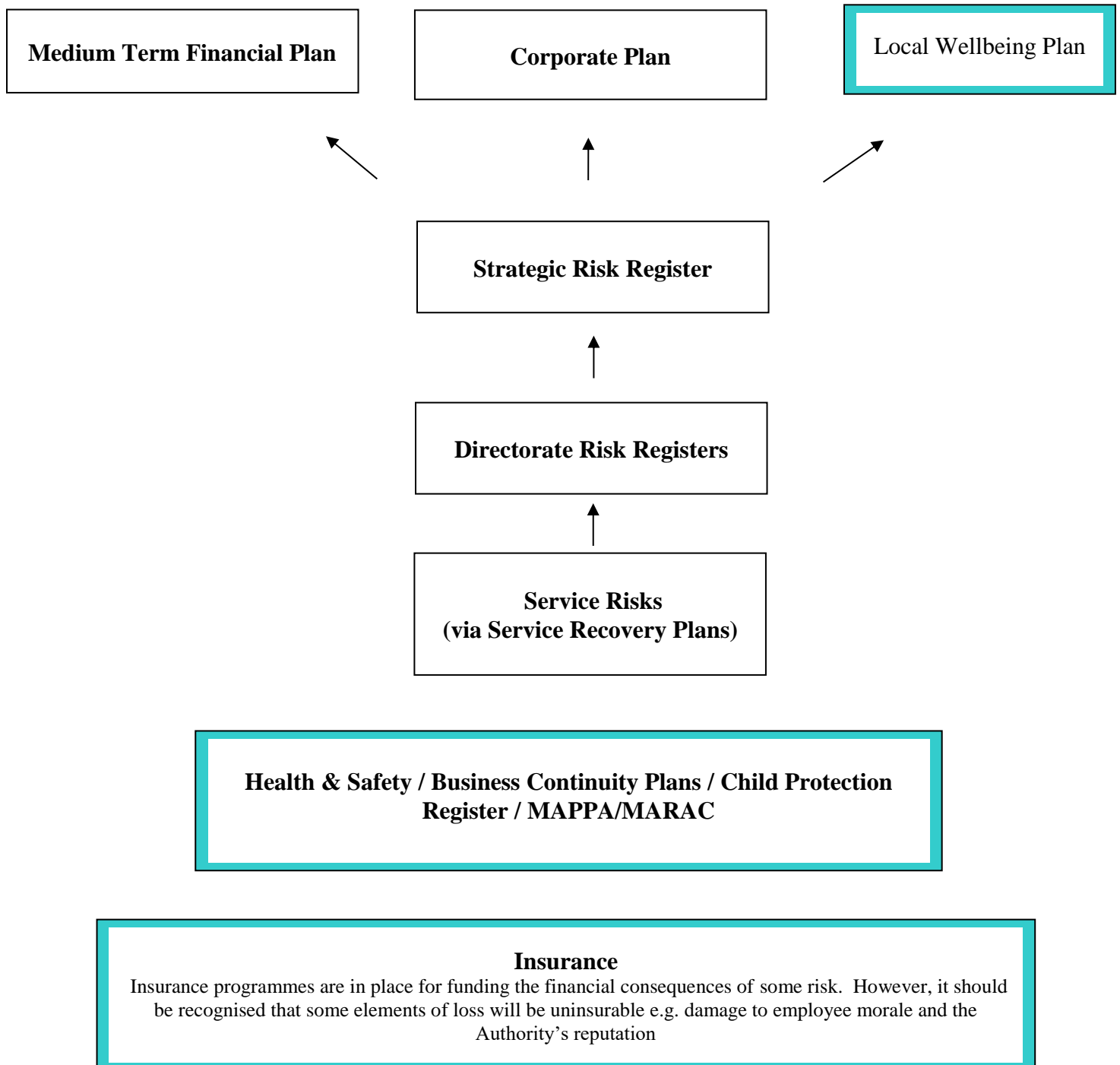
## **8. The Corporate Risk Management Framework**

The council's Corporate Risk Management Framework set out in this policy is designed to ensure risk management is effective.

Roles and responsibilities for managing risk are clearly assigned (see Appendix 1 – page 17) and the key risk management business processes are aligned in a framework to form a coherent, corporate risk management system.

The framework (overleaf) illustrates how risk will be managed at different levels and how that information will be used to influence the council's priorities (Corporate Plan), the allocation of resources (Medium Term Financial Plan) along with sharing of relevant risks with partners (Local Well-being Plan).

# The Corporate Risk Management Framework



# The Corporate Risk Management Framework

## Escalation / Reporting / Monitoring

### Governance & Audit Committee

- Review and assess the Council's Corporate Risk Management arrangements and to make reports and recommendations to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements
- Ensure the annual internal audit plan takes account of the contents of the Strategic Risk Register.
- Review the outcomes of audits, highlighted risks and officer responses

### Internal Audit

- Strategic / Directorate Risk Registers and risks identified at the service level (via Service Recovery Plans) to inform the Internal Audit Action Plan.

### Cabinet

- Approve the Corporate Risk Management Policy and review on a 3 yearly basis (at a minimum)
- Review the content and effective management and monitoring of risks on the Strategic Risk register on a six monthly basis
- Ensure relevant risks are considered as part of every Cabinet report decision

### Corporate Directors Group

- Agree risks and mitigating actions to be included on the Strategic risk register (including those escalated from Directorate Risk Registers)
- Manage, monitor and review the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis (at a minimum)
- Provide assurance to Cabinet on a six monthly basis (at a minimum) that Strategic Risks are being actively managed and monitored.
- Take assurance from Heads of Service that medium and high risks identified at the Directorate level are being managed appropriately by receiving Directorate Risk Registers on a six monthly basis (at a minimum)

### Senior Management Teams

- Agree Directorate risks for inclusion on the Directorate Risk Register (to be informed by those risks identified in Service Recovery Plans) and any others identified
- Manage, monitor and review the Directorate Risk Register on a quarterly basis (at a minimum) to ensure risks are being managed appropriately
- Identify Directorate risks for escalation to the Strategic Risk Register
- Present Directorate Risk Registers to Corporate Directors Group on a six monthly basis (at a minimum)

### Accountable Managers

- Identify risks at the service level and include in relevant Service Recovery Plan
- Manage, monitor and review service level risks (ongoing)
- Escalate high level risks to Senior Management Team for consideration of inclusion on Directorate Risk Register

## **9. The Corporate Risk Management Process**

### **Step 1 - Risk Identification**

The council's established key risk management processes for identifying risk are as follows:

#### **i) The Council's Wellbeing Objectives**

Corporate Directors Group actively identify risks associated with the delivery of the vision, purpose, well-being objectives and associated priorities as set out in the council's Corporate Plan. Those risks will be recorded on the Strategic Risk Register.

#### **ii) The Council's wider business**

At the Directorate level, a Directorate risk register will be populated by Senior Management Teams with the risks identified via the service recovery planning process and any additional risks requiring inclusion on the Directorate risk register.

Corporate Directors will present their Directorate Risk Registers to Corporate Directors Group (on a six monthly basis – at a minimum) highlighting those risks that have been identified for escalation to the Strategic Risk Register and also to provide assurance to Corporate Directors Group that Directorate and significant service risks are being managed, monitored and reviewed appropriately.

The template for both Directorate and Strategic Risk Registers is contained in Appendix 2 (page 21).

#### **ii) Service Delivery**

At the service level, Accountable Managers identify service risks and manage, monitor and review them in their respective Service Recovery Plans. The format of the service level risk register is contained within the Service Recovery Plan template.

### **iii) Operational Risk Management**

In addition to the above there are a number of service / operational risk systems e.g. Child Protection Register / MAPP/MARAC which should inform the Strategic Risk Register and Directorate Risk Registers.

### **iv) Business Continuity**

Business continuity management is a process which analyses the impact on a business which directly affects the services provided by the council. Its purpose is to identify critical activities and functions that have to continue at a minimum during a disruption of service delivery or when responding to an emergency.

### **v) Health & Safety**

Processes for evaluating the risk arising from a hazard(s), taking into account the adequacy of any existing controls, and deciding whether or not the risk(s) is acceptable, are now well-embedded across the council. External quality assurance of the council's risk management arrangements is in place and there is clear evidence of risk being prioritised, resourced and evaluated at operational, service and corporate levels.

## **Step 2 – Risk Assessment**

### **i) Assessment**

This involves an assessment of the likelihood and impact of the risks that have been identified. This assessment is undertaken utilising the following 5x5 risk evaluation matrix.

## 5 x 5 Risk Matrix

Key								
Likelihood	Impact*							
1. Very Unlikely	1. Low	Likelihood	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Unlikely	2. Low / Medium		4	3	2	1	0	
3. Likely	3. Medium		3	2	1	0		
4. Very Likely	4. Medium / High		2	1	0			
5. Certainty	5. High		1	0				
			Impact					
			1	2	3	4	5	



Low Risk



Medium Risk



High Risk

\*The impact of the risk should be assessed on the basis of:

- Reputation
- Finances
- Significant service / operational change

### Step 3 – Monitoring, Reviewing and Escalation of Risks

#### a) Service level risks – Service Recovery Plan

For those risks at the service level Accountable Managers are responsible for managing, monitoring and reviewing those risks. Significant risks should be escalated to Senior Management Teams for consideration for inclusion on the relevant Directorate Risk Register.

## **b) Directorate Risk Register**

For those risks on the Directorate Risk Register the process of managing, monitoring and reviewing those risks remains the responsibility of Senior Management Teams.

Directorate risk registers should be regularly reviewed and monitored on a quarterly basis (at a minimum).

Reviews shall include evidence so as to accurately determine and measure the Directorate's performance in mitigating / controlling the identified risks.

Typical inputs include the following although this list must not be considered exhaustive:

- the extent to which the risk being controlled / mitigated
- follow-up actions from previous Senior Management Team reviews of the Directorate Risk Register.

Information shall be collated by the Senior Management Team in advance of each review to enable the Team to address the need, if appropriate, for changes to the way in which the Directorate risks are being controlled / mitigated, the resources allocated, whether any risks require escalation to the Strategic Risk Register, if any risks can be removed from the Register or new risks have been identified to be added to the Register.

Directorate Risk Registers will be reported to Corporate Directors Group on a six monthly basis (at a minimum) to provide assurance to Corporate Directors Group that Directorate Risks and significant service risks are being effectively managed and mitigated and will provide the opportunity for the identification of significant Directorate Risks to be escalated to the Strategic Risk Register.

## **b) Strategic Risk Register**

Once Corporate Directors Group have agreed which risks are to be included on the Strategic Risk Register the process of managing, monitoring and reviewing those risks will be at the corporate level.

The Strategic Risk Register will be reviewed and monitored quarterly (at a minimum) by Corporate Directors Group. The review shall include the production of evidence so as to accurately determine and measure performance in managing the Strategic Risk Register. Typical inputs include the following although this list must not be considered exhaustive:

- the extent to which the risk is being controlled / mitigated
- follow – up actions from previous reviews

Information shall be collated by Corporate Directors in advance of each review to enable the Group to address the need, if appropriate for changes to the way in which the strategic risk is being controlled / mitigated, the resources allocated, whether any risks can be removed or given back to the appropriate Directorate Risk Register for monitoring and review or new risks have been identified to be added to the Register.

The Strategic Risk Register will be reported to Cabinet on a 6 monthly basis (at a minimum).



## **10. Review**

This Policy will be reviewed by Cabinet on a 3 yearly (at a minimum) basis.

This review will be informed by any independent assurance reports provided by the Governance & Audit Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's corporate risk management arrangements. The Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) will also provide input to this review in respect of any changes to legislation and the working practices of the council.

### **Roles and Responsibilities within the Corporate Risk Management Policy**

High standards of risk management shall be achieved through proactive and positive leadership. To achieve this it is necessary to detail the organisational arrangements within which risk can be managed and to specify the roles and responsibilities for the identification, monitoring, mitigation and review of risks.

#### **The role of the Chief Executive is to:**

- i) Lead on the implementation of this Policy at the strategic level.
- ii) Ensure Corporate Directors establish and maintain effective risk management systems and ensure the arrangements are followed as appropriate.
- iii) Keep the council's arrangements for Risk Management under review and where appropriate to do so, make a report to council setting out proposals in respect of Risk Management.

#### **The role of the Chief Finance officer (S151 Officer) is to:**

- i) Provide corporate leadership on Risk Management ensuring the policy and associated procedures provide good governance.
- ii) Be responsible for risk profiling and management and maintaining the internal control environment and associate controls.

#### **The role of Corporate Directors' Group is to:**

- i) Monitor and review on a quarterly basis (at a minimum) the Strategic Risk Register.
- ii) Identify any emerging strategic risks and identify mitigating actions.
- iii) Allocate sufficient resources to address strategic risks.
- iv) Utilise the Strategic Risk Register when setting the council's priorities and updating the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- v) Report on a 6 monthly basis (at a minimum) to Cabinet on the progress made in controlling and mitigating strategic risks.

- vi) Create an environment and culture where risk management is promoted, facilitated and appropriately undertaken within the council.
- vii) Promote and embed the Corporate Risk Management Policy into the day to day decision making process and culture within the council.

**The role of Senior Management Teams is to:**

- i) Identify any emerging directorate risks and address them by identifying future mitigating actions.
- ii) Monitor and review respective Directorate Risk Registers on a quarterly basis.
- iii) Utilise the Directorate Risk Registers in the planning of future service delivery.
- iv) Report Directorate Risk Registers to Corporate Directors Group on a six monthly basis (at a minimum), identifying any significant Directorate risks to be escalated up to the Strategic Risk Register.
- v) Consider any significant service risks for inclusion on the Directorate Risk Register.
- vi) Promote and embed the Corporate Risk Management Policy into the day to day decision making process and culture within the council.

**The role of accountable managers is to:**

- i) Identify any emerging service risks and address them by identifying future mitigating actions
- ii) Monitor and review service risks via the Service Recovery Planning process
- iii) Escalate significant risks to Senior Management Teams for consideration for inclusion on the relevant Directorate Risk Register.

**The role of all staff:**

- i) To manage risk effectively in their job.

**The role of Internal Audit is to:**

- i) Function as “an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity” designed to add value and improve the council’s corporate risk management arrangements.
- ii) Assist the council to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.
- iii) Utilise the Strategic Risk Register, the Directorate Risk Registers and risks identified at the service level (via Service Recovery Plans) to inform the Internal Audit Action Plan

**The role of Cabinet is to:**

- i) Approve the Corporate Risk Management Policy and its review on a 3 yearly basis (at a minimum).
- ii) Monitor and review the Council’s Corporate Risk Register on a six monthly basis.

**The role of Governance and Audit Committee is to:**

- i) Review and assess the Council’s corporate risk management arrangements
- ii) Report and make recommendations to the Cabinet on the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements.
- iii) Ensure the Internal Audit Action plan reflects the corporate risks identified.

**The role of all Members is to:**

- i) Promote and embed the Corporate Risk Management Policy into the day to day decision making process and culture within the council.

## Appendix 2

### Directorate / Strategic Risk Register Template:

Risk Ref	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Mitigation Plan	Progress of each item Complete – in progress – not started	Responsible Person	Inherent		Revised		Risk Rating	Please indicate whether there has been any change in risk rating since last report	Risk Owner Comment
						Impact	Likelihood	Impact	Likelihood			
R1												
R2												



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

5 April 2023

### **Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

#### **Matter for Decision**

**Wards Affected:** All

#### **Consultation on draft rules for local government (principal council) elections using the single transferable vote system**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To seek approval from members on the submission of a response to the Welsh Government's consultation on the draft rules for local government (principal council) elections using the single transferable vote system.

#### **Background**

The Senedd has legislated via the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to allow local authorities in Wales to potentially choose the type of electoral system to be used for principal council elections.

At present, the First Past the Post System (FPTP) is used for county or county borough council elections in all 22 local authorities in Wales.

The 2021 Act enables councils to consider holding future elections using the Single Transferable Vote system (STV). However, principal councils will continue to use FPTP unless there is any determination to change.

Currently the Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Wales) Rules 2021 sets out how elections to principal councils must be conducted only where FPTP (or simple majority system) is used. They do not make provision for the conduct of elections where the STV system may be in use.

As such, revised draft STV Rules have been prepared informed by research commissioned by the Welsh Government, broadly based on election rules in force in Northern Ireland where STV is used for local elections.

In drafting the STV Rules, particular consideration was made as to whether the legislation should include provision regarding electronic as well as manual counting.

The consultation also seeks views on a variety of other areas including:-

- ballot papers; the layout of the ballot paper and how this might affect the way people vote in a poll using STV.
- changes to prescribed forms giving the voter instructions about how to cast their vote; whether these instructions are sufficiently clear.
- quota: the method to be used when calculating the quota.
- surplus transfer: how voters' preference are transferred once a candidate with the fewest votes has been eliminated or has reached the quota and is elected.
- exclusion of candidates: the rules which will apply when a candidate with the lowest number of votes is excluded.
- non-transferable ballot papers: when ballot papers are to be considered non-transferable.
- last vacancies: the provision for filling of last vacancies.
- recounts: the provision made for candidates or election agents to request a recount of votes.

### **Power to Change the Voting System**

A change to the Council's voting system would require a resolution supported by at least a two-thirds majority of the full council (i.e. 40 out of 60 Members).



Such a resolution must be considered at a meeting specifically convened for the purpose, with written notice given to all members at least 21 days before the meetings (beginning with the day on which the notice is given).

A resolution to change the voting system would need to be passed by 15 November in the year three years before the next ordinary elections are due. To change the system for the next local government elections in 2027, this would be by 15 November 2024.

It is important to note that before a Council can exercise its power to change its voting system, it would have to consult locally. This would include people entitled to vote at the local government elections, each town/community council in the area and any other persons it considers appropriate.

It should be noted that, the election rules that govern the conduct and operations of elections that use the STV system have yet to be finalised by Welsh Government and, as such, any consultation exercise could not commence until the draft rules have been made.

Council opting to change their voting system would be required to use the new system for the next two rounds of ordinary elections. In the case of a by-election for a casual vacancy that arises in the period following the passing of resolution to change the voting system and the next ordinary local government elections, the voting method used at the previous ordinary elections would be used.

After two rounds of ordinary elections, the Council could decide whether to return to the previous voting system.

### **Boundary Changes**

In the event of a resolution to change the voting method, the Council would have to notify Welsh Ministers and the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission of the change.

Following notification, Welsh Ministers may direct the Commission to conduct an initial review of the Council's electoral ward boundaries.

Provisions for initial reviews are set out in the 2021 Act, and include a requirement that if a Council adopts STV, the number of councillors for each electoral ward is to be no less than three, but no more than six.

## **The Single Transferable Vote Method (STV)**

In a poll which uses FPTP, if 1 representative is to be elected for an elector ward, voters place a mark on the ballot papers (usually an X) next to the name of the candidate they wish to vote for.

A candidate is elected if they receive 1 or more votes than the other candidates.

In a multi member ward, where more than 1 candidate is to be elected, voters place a mark next to the names of however many candidates are to be elected and the appropriate number who receive the most votes are elected.

In STV systems, more than 1 representative is elected in each electoral ward and voters rank candidates in order of preference.

Voters will place "1" next to the name of their preferred candidate "2" next to their second choice and so forth. They can make as many or as few choices as they wish.

Counting votes using this method is highly complex and there is evidence that the number of spoilt votes increase in STV elections. Although it is difficult to explain and may result in voter confusion, it can allow a more proportionate weighting to an individual's vote.

While electronic counting methods have been ruled out by the Welsh Government due to the significant costs involved, there would still remain significant cost implications attributable to administering any manual STV count process.

### **Other considerations**

The Welsh Government are conscious that a manual STV count can be a lengthy process and experiences in other areas of the UK where STV is currently used indicate that it is not unusual for counts to last 2-3 days as a minimum.

This means that count venues will need to be accessible for at least 2 days from when ballot boxes are open, with mitigations in place for longer.

Appropriate staffing levels will also be key, particularly for the verification and the first stage of the count significantly increasing the overall cost of administering a STV count process as compared to the relatively swift count processes using FPTP.

STV counts also require regular movement of large volumes of ballot papers and it is important to ensure that this can be done in a safe and transparent manner.

### **Town and Community Councils**

A further consideration is the handling of ordinary town/community council elections that coincide and are invariably “combined” with ordinary principal council elections.

The 2 sets of ordinary elections are combined because of the significant savings to town/community councils and the convenience of voters.

The STV voting option in the 2021 Act does not apply to town/community councils, whose elections will continue to use FPTP.

As such a council which opted for STV counting would in effect have to operate a separate counting model for both principal council and town/community council elections.

This would result in the loss of combination cost savings in administering local polls and significant potential for elector confusion.

### **Financial Impacts**

Members are advised that the implementation of new voting arrangements would require additional financial resources to enable electoral services to implement this significant change in election arrangements. These are not quantified at this present time but any future reports will contain financial impacts associated with any proposal.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations in this report. However, should Council determine at some future point to progress any changes to local election arrangements, a full equality and diversity impact screening exercise would be required.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts**

There are no direct valley community impacts as a result of the recommendations set out in this report which relate to a response to a consultation only.

## **Workforce Impacts**

There are no direct work force impacts as a result of the recommendations set out in this report. However, should Council determine at some future point to progress any changes to local election arrangements a full assessment of the capacity demands on implementing of such a decision would be required.

## **Legal Impacts**

There are no direct legal impacts as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

## **Risk Management Impacts**

There are no direct implications from the recommendations in this report. However, should Council determine at some future point to progress any changes to local election arrangements a full risk assessment of such a decision would be required.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement to externally consult in preparing the draft response to the Welsh Government's consultation exercise.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members approve the draft response included at Appendix 1 and delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to submit this response on the part of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

To respond to the Welsh Government's open consultation on the draft Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Single Transferable Vote) (Wales) Rules 2023.

## **Implementation of Decision**

In consultation with the scrutiny chairperson it is requested that the implementation be for immediate effect.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft response in relation to proposed rules for local government (principal council) elections using the single transferable vote system.

## List of Background Papers

[Welsh Government Consultation Documents](#)

[Draft Welsh Statutory Instruments](#)

### Officer Contacts

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Draft rules for local government (principal council) elections using the single transferable vote system**

#### **CONSULTATION RESPONSE – DRAFT**

**Q1a.** Do you agree that the draft STV Rules should only include the option of manual counting, omitting the option of electronic counting?

**Comments:**

In terms of practical electoral administration implementing a counting method such as STV should only realistically be considered when used in conjunction with a bespoke electronic count system due to the complexity of calculating first preference and transferred votes.

Nevertheless, as such a system is not being rolled out on an all-Wales basis and would likely result in exceptionally high costs to implement, coupled with the fact that the 2021 Act does not apply to Town and Community Council elections, we concur that manual counting would be the only practicable solution, but would still result in severe administrative and logistic difficulties for any council looking to implement.

**Q1b.** Should the rules that allow for electronic counting be prepared for future elections, in time for local elections held after 2027?

**Comments:**

Agree, if a solution such as STV is to be progressed as a realistic and successful count method alternative after 2027 then the option to introduce a possible electronic counting solution needs to be available as a potential option for Returning Officers.

**Q2.** Do you agree that the current requirement to list candidates alphabetically by surname should not be changed?

**Comments:**

This is a matter for Welsh Government and we offer no specific comment other than to confirm that the current requirement to list candidates in alphabetical surname order remains straightforward to administer and is clearly understood by candidates, agents and electors.

## APPENDIX 1

**Q3. Do you agree that the guidance to voters explains clearly how they should mark the ballot paper in an election under STV? If no, please suggest improvements.**

**Comments:**

Agree, although we would encourage that any such new guidance is thoroughly evaluated by the Electoral Commission and appropriately focus group tested.

**Q4a. Do you agree with our choice of the Droop quota?**

**Comments:**

This is a matter for Welsh Government and we offer no specific comment.

**Q4b. Do you agree that the steps for calculating the quota as set out in Rule 60H and 64L sufficiently clear?**

**Comments:**

We agree that the relevant steps for calculating the quota as set out in Rule 60H and 64L appear sufficiently clear.

**Q5. Do you agree that the rules about the transfer of surplus votes are sufficiently clear?**

**Comments:**

We agree that the relevant rules around the transfer of surplus votes appear sufficiently clear and understandable.

**Q6. Do you agree the transfer of surplus votes should not take place where it cannot make any material difference to the prospects of the continuing candidate with the lowest number of votes?**

**Comments:**

Yes, we agree with this common sense principle.



## **APPENDIX 1**

**Q7. Do you agree that the rules about the exclusion of candidates and the subsequent transfer of votes are sufficiently clear?**

**Comments:**

Yes, we agree that the rules around the exclusion of candidates and the subsequent transfer of votes based on the draft regulation text are sufficiently clear.

**Q8. Do you agree that the draft STV Rules are sufficiently clear about the circumstances under which a ballot paper becomes non-transferable?**

**Comments:**

We agree that the draft STV rules are sufficiently clear in relation to the circumstances under which a ballot paper becomes non-transferable.

**Q9. Do you agree that the draft STV Rules are sufficiently clear about the provision for filling last vacancies?**

**Comments:**

We agree that the draft STV rules are clear in relation to the provision for filling casual vacancies.

**Q10. Do you agree that in elections conducted using STV, a re-count may be requested in respect of the last completed stage of the count only?**

**Comments:**

We agree with this common sense principle.

## **APPENDIX 1**

**Q11. We would like to know your views on the effects that the draft STV rules would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?**

**Comments:**

We believe the relevant rules would likely have neutral impacts in relation to the Welsh language.

**Q12. Please also explain how you believe the rules could be changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.**

**Comments:**

We believe the relevant rules would likely have neutral effects in relation to the Welsh language.

**Q13. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.**

**Comments:**

We have no additional comments to make at this time in relation to this consultation exercise.

**Organisation:**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

**Point of Contact:**

Rhys George (Electoral Services Manager)

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

05 April 2023

Report of  
Head of People and Organisational Development  
S.Rees

#### Matter for Monitoring

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### Report Title:

1. Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022) Corporate Indicators and Chief Executive's Directorate Service Level Key Performance Indicators 2022/23

#### Purpose of the Report:

2. For Cabinet to receive quarter 3 service performance information for KPIs and compliments and complaints data within Cabinet's purview (Appendix 2 & 3). In addition to receive quarter 3 2022/23 information in relation to a set of Corporate Indicators (Appendix 1).

#### Executive Summary:

3. Summary performance information is drawn out for Members below relating to information within Appendix 1, 2 & 3 with more detailed information available within each Appendix.
4. The Corporate Indicators are a new set of cross cutting indicators providing Council level detail.

### **Appendix 1 – Corporate Indicators - Quarter 3 - 2022/2023**

5. 16 indicators are reported in the period and 15 have quarter 3 data. Data is not available for one indicator until early 2023.
6. Two indicators are just off target relate to invoices paid within 30 days and the number of apprenticeships across the council, although apprenticeships are continuing to increase in number.
7. Average working days lost to sickness per employee has risen slightly by 1.4% compared to the previous year's nine month quarter 3 period. However, 14.9% of overall sickness is covid related, which has increased from 12.3% the previous year.
8. Information is also provided on the number of Welsh speakers across the council and data relating to employee turnover. More employees have started with the council in the first 9 months of 2022/23 than have left, 639 starters compared to 497 leavers.

### **Appendix 2 – Chief Executive's Directorate Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 3 - 2022/2023**

9. 15 indicators are reported in the period and all 15 report quarter 3 data, of which 14 have a target.
10. Of the 14 that report data against a target, 8 have achieved or exceeded the quarter 3 target, 3 are within 5% of the target and 3 indicators are 5% or more below target.
11. The 8 indicators achieving or exceeding target include a number of digital services indicators relating to system availability and our website, CCTV police requests, land charges standard searches, employees completing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy training, and council tax and business rates recovery rates.
12. Three indicators are 5% or more below target. These indicators are the two customer services average times to answer telephone calls in Welsh and in

English and completion by employees of the mandatory Group A safeguarding training module.

### **Appendix 3 – Chief Executive’s Directorate - Compliments and Complaints Quarter 3 - 2022/23**

13. **Stage 1 complaints** - There has been an increase in Stage 1 complaints compared to this same period last year. Sixteen stage 1 complaints were closed in quarter 3 (April to December) 2022/23 of which three were upheld. The three upheld complaints in this period are council tax, elections and registrars related. Last year (2021/22) there were nine stage 1 complaints closed in quarter 3, of which one was upheld.

Seventeen stage 1 complaints were received in quarter 3 2022/23 compared to 9 received in quarter 3 2021/22.

14. **Stage 2 complaints** - Four stage 2 complaints were closed in quarter 3 2022/23 which were not upheld. Last year (2021/22) there were three stage 2 complaints closed in quarter 3 which were not upheld.

Three stage 2 complaints were received in quarter 3 2022/23 and three in quarter 3 2021/22.

15. No ombudsman complaints have been received following a stage 1 and stage 2 for quarter 3 2022/23. One was received in 2021/22.

16. There has been an increase by 15 compliments received compared to the same period last year. 76 compliments received in this quarter 3 period (April to December) compared to 61 received in the same period last year. Compliments are for a number of services including council tax, corporate policy and engagement, business support, registration service, mayoral service, benefits, human resources, health and safety team and customer services. Most of the compliments are for help and support provided and some relating to organising events such as the Armed Forces event.

**Background:**

17. The key performance indicators (KPIs) in Appendix 2 are all selected from service recovery plans (SRPs).
18. Where possible, each KPI will show a link how it contributes to at least one of the council's well-being objectives. Some KPIs will link directly to the Governance and Resource theme.
19. Where available, Appendix 1, 2 & 3 provides performance data for quarter 3 performance for 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and a quarter 3 target for 2022/23.
20. KPIs that are collected on an annual basis are not included in Appendix 1 & 2. Those KPIs will be included in the full year performance report after the end of the quarter 4 period.

**Financial Impacts:**

21. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

22. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring purposes.

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

23. No implications.

**Workforce Impacts:**

24. The progress described in this report was achieved whilst the workforce continued to respond to and continue to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

## **Legal Impacts:**

25. This Report is prepared under:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021
- The Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Constitution requires each Cabinet Committee to monitor quarterly budgets and performance in securing continuous improvement of all the functions within its purview.

## **Risk Management Impacts:**

26. Failure to provide a suitable monitoring report within the timescales could lead to non-compliance with our Constitution. Also, failure to have robust performance monitoring arrangements in place could result in poor performance going undetected.

## **Consultation:**

27. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations:**

28. For Members to monitor performance contained within this report.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

29. Matter for monitoring. No decision required.

## **Implementation of Decision:**

30. Matter for monitoring. No decision required.

## **Appendices:**

31. Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 - Corporate Indicators - 2022/2023, period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.
32. Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 – Chief Executive’s Directorate Service Level Key Performance Indicators - 2022/2023, period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.
33. Appendix 3 – Quarter 3 – Chief Executive’s Directorate Compliments and Complaints information 2022/2023, period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

## **List of Background Papers:**

34. [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#)

## **Officer Contact:**

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

Page 217

# Performance Indicators

## Neath Port Talbot Council

### Appendix 1 - Cabinet - Corporate Indicators - Quarter 3 (1st April - 31st December) - 2022/23


Performance RAG (Red, Amber Green) key:

- **Green:** achieved quarter 3 target for 2022/23
- **Amber:** Within 5% of target
- **Red:** 5% or more below target
- N/a or blank column – no comparable data or no target set




**How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?**

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>1.2.3 SRP - Wellbeing Objective 3 – Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations</b>					
CHEX - HR - PI/954 - Welsh Language: Number of employees who report as fluent or fairly fluent, speaker/writer			625.00		
<p>The Welsh Language Officers' Group continues to support the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards, review compliance of the Standards and promote and raise the profile of the Welsh language. As part of the action plan, the group continues to work to enhance the number of Welsh speaking employees through a number of initiatives.</p> <p>Examples include the creation of two Yammer groups - one to enable Welsh speakers to chat and provide peer support and another for all employees to access information, help and support as well as promotional material; publicising Welsh Language Rights Day; availability of language courses along with help and support for learners and those looking to increase confidence in using their language skills.</p> <p>This performance comment covers PI/954 to PI/958. This data is reported quarterly from 2022/23.</p>					
CHEX - HR - PI/955 - Welsh Language: Number of employees who report as fluent or fairly fluent, speaker			210.00		
CHEX - HR - PI/956 - Welsh Language: Number of employees who report as a learner			826.00		
CHEX - HR - PI/957 - Welsh Language: Number of employees who report as little/no knowledge			3987.00		
CHEX - HR - PI/958 - Welsh Language: Number of employees who report as prefer not to say or unknown			801.00		

## How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>1.2.4 SRP - Wellbeing Objective 4 – Jobs and Skills</b>					
CHEX - Learning Training & Development - PI/576 - Number of apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes per 1,000 employees	7.80	14.16	21.05	25.00	 Red
<p>109 employees on schemes in Quarter 3 (April - December 2022). Between April to December 2022 there have been 31 new starts, of which 19 are employed staff upskilling and 12 new apprentices.</p> <p>Breakdown of new starts below: 12 new Modern Apprentices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x Level 4 HNC in Construction and Built Environment – Environment;</li> <li>• 2 x Level 4 HNC in Construction &amp; Built Environment (Site Supervision) – Environment;</li> <li>• 1 x Painter and Decorator Foundation Apprenticeship – Environment;</li> <li>• 1 x Level 3 Construction and Built Environment – Environment;</li> <li>• 1 x Level 2 Business Administration – Environment;</li> <li>• 4 x Business Administration Level 2 – Education;</li> <li>• 1 x Business Administration Level 2 – SSHH.</li> </ul> <p>19 new employed staff upskilling using apprentice funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x Customer Service Level 3 – Digital Services;</li> <li>• 1 x Level 4 Business Administration – People &amp; OD ;</li> <li>• 5 x Level 4 Management – 3 from SSHH &amp; 2 from Environment;</li> <li>• 3 x Level 4 Project Management – Environment;</li> <li>• 1 x Level 3 Business Administration – SSHH;</li> <li>• 2 x Level 5 Management – SWTRA;</li> <li>• 4 x Data Analytics Level 4 – 3 employees from CHEX &amp; 1 from Digital Services;</li> <li>• 1x Project Management L4 - CHEX.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes: 19 achievers between April – December 2022.</b> Breakdown of achievers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 employees achieving Business Admin Level 2 - 2 from Education, 1 from CHEX, 7 from SSHH and 1 from Environment;</li> <li>• 3 employees achieving Business Admin Level 3 – 2 from CHEX and 1 from SSHH;</li> <li>• 1 employee from Environment achieving Electrical Technical Cert/Dip;</li> <li>• 2 employees from SWTRA achieving Construction Civil Engineering and 1 from Environment;</li> <li>• 1 employee from Environment achieving Construction Building qualification.</li> </ul> <p>The number of Modern Apprenticeships is currently below target. Funding for Apprentice salary continues to be a barrier to creating apprenticeship opportunities across all directorates.</p>					

## How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>1.2.5 SRP - Governance and Resource (cross-cutting) - including Planning &amp; Performance, Workforce Management, Financial Resources, Democracy, Community Relations, Asset Management and Commissioning &amp; Procurement.</b>					
CHEX - Corporate Policy, Performance & Engagement - PI/567 - Number of statutory recommendations made by the Council's external auditors on strategic and operational planning arrangements	0.00	0.00		0.00	 NA
Data for 2022/23 will not be available until early 2023. The Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary Report for 2021 was received in early March 2022 (2021/22 reported data). There were no statutory recommendations relating to the Council's external auditors on strategic and operational planning arrangements.					
CHEX - Corporate Policy, Performance & Engagement - PI/812 - Number of Welsh Language Complaints received by the Council via the Welsh Language Commissioner			1.00		
For the 9 month quarter 3 period we have received 1 complaint. The complaint received in quarter 1 related to the treatment of the Welsh language by Neath Port Talbot Council Elections Department. The complainant alleged that instructions on how to vote in the local elections contained errors and was difficult to understand. Neath Port Talbot Council is not responsible for the paperwork included in the postal vote package for local elections. The paperwork (which includes prescribed text) is issued by the Returning Officer who is independent of the Council and consequently not subject to the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.					
CHEX - Financial Planning - PI/573 - Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days	93.28	94.04	94.36	95.00	 Amber
The total number of invoices paid up to the end of the 3rd quarter 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022 was 75,796. The total paid within 30 days was 71,523. This is slightly outside of our target of 95%					
CHEX - HR - PI/566 - Number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee - Sickness FTE days lost across the Council	6.76	9.32	9.45		 Amber
Covid-19 related sickness absence has had a significant impact on absence rates in quarter 3, and perhaps not surprisingly, front-line services have been the most badly affected – this includes employees in schools, streetcare services and adult social care. For the nine months April to December 2022, 14.9% of sickness is Covid related compared to 12.3% for the same period in 2021.  A target has not been set for 2022/23, however this indicator has been provided with an AMBER status as overall sickness rates have increased slightly (1.4%) compared to the same period last year.					

CHEX - HR - PI/948 - Percentage of staff who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis, during the year			7.71		
Breakdown of 7.71%: 497 (headcount) of 6,449 employees. Data is for information only. Reported quarterly from 2022/2023.					
Breakdown of leavers by service area (NB actual headcount of leavers may vary from the total below as some employees had multiple posts in multiple service areas when they left):					
Chief Executives Digital Services - 6					
Chief Executives Financial Services - 5					
Chief Executives People & Organisational Development - 6					
Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Early Years Inclusion & Partnerships - 8					
Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Education Development - 14					
Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Schools - 174					
Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Schools - Teachers - 90					
Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Support Services & Transformation - 41					
Environment & Regeneration Engineering & Transport - 6					
Environment & Regeneration Planning & Public Protection - 9					
Environment & Regeneration Property & Regeneration - 10					
Environment & Regeneration South Wales Trunk Road Agency - 9					
Environment & Regeneration Streetcare Services - 34					
Social Services Health & Housing Adult Services - 45					
Social Services Health & Housing Business Services - 8					
Social Services Health & Housing Children & Young People Services - 36					
<b>Total 501</b>					
In addition to the 497 council leavers during the quarter 3 2022/23 period, there were 110 leavers who worked for the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) Service, which closed on 30th June 2022.					
CHEX - HR - PI/949 - % of permanent staff exiting the organisation during the year: initiated by the employer			0.40		
Breakdown of 0.40%: 26 of 6,449 employees.					
Data does not include leavers who worked for the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) Service.					
Data is for information only. Reported quarterly from 2022/2023.					
CHEX - HR - PI/950 - % of temporary staff exiting the organisation during the year: initiated by the employer			1.10		
Breakdown of 1.10%: 71 of 6,449 employees					
Data does not include leavers who worked for the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) Service.					
Data is for information only. Reported quarterly from 2022/23.					
CHEX - HR - PI/951 - % of permanent staff exiting the organisation during the year: initiated by the employee			4.87		
Breakdown of 4.87%: 314 of 6,449 employees					

Data is for information only. Reported quarterly from 2022/23.					
CHEx - HR - PI/952 - % of temporary staff exiting the organisation during the year: initiated by the employee			1.44		
Breakdown of 1.44%: 93 of 6,449 employees Data does not include leavers who worked for the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) Service. Data is for information only. Reported quarterly from 2022/23.					
CHEx - HR - PI/953 - Number of new starters joining the local authority			639.00		
Breakdown of 639 new starters (headcount) by Service Area:  <b>(NB actual headcount of new starters may vary from the total below as some employees have multiple posts in multiple service areas):</b>  Chief Executives Digital Services - 7 Chief Executives Financial Services - 7 Chief Executives Legal & Democratic Services - 8 Chief Executives People & Organisational Development - 11 Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Early Years Inclusion & Partnerships - 30 Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Education Development - 26 Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Schools - 214 Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Schools - Teachers - 88 Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning Support Services & Transformation - 57 Environment & Regeneration Engineering & Transport - 11 Environment & Regeneration Planning & Public Protection - 8 Environment & Regeneration Property & Regeneration - 11 Environment & Regeneration South Wales Trunk Road Agency - 6 Environment & Regeneration Streetcare Services - 44 Social Services Health & Housing Adult Services - 66 Social Services Health & Housing Business Services - 9 Social Services Health & Housing Children & Young People Services - 39 <b>Total 642</b>					



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

Page 223

# Performance Indicators




## Neath Port Talbot Council

### Appendix 2 - Cabinet – Chief Executive’s Directorate Service Level Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 3 (1st April - 31st December) - 2022/23

Performance RAG (Red, Amber Green) key:

- **Green:** achieved quarter 3 target for 2022/23
- **Amber:** Within 5% of target
- **Red:** 5% or more below target
- N/a or blank column – no comparable data or no target set

## How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>1.2.2 SRP - Wellbeing Objective 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable</b>					
CHEX - CCTV - PI/682 - Police disk request to be completed within 24 hours.			100.00	100.00	 Green
<p>A number of major incidents have taken place which have required the CCTV department to provide urgent footage to assist Police in dealing with the investigation of these serious incidents. There have been a total of 63 requests between April and December 2022 for a disk recording which have been dealt with promptly for collection by Police officers. Of these requests all have been dealt with within a 24 hour window.</p> <p>This performance indicator is reported quarterly from 2022/23.</p>					
CHEX - Customer Services - PI/570 - Average time (seconds) to answer telephone calls in Welsh	54.00	63.00	80.00	40.00	 Red
<p>The increase in the time taken to answer calls in Welsh is due to a number of issues including an increase in administrative duties, the reopening of civic centres, long term sickness, and training for new Welsh speaking staff impacting on capacity. Some of these also affect English calls performance and are outlined in more detail below.</p> <p>As well as answering telephones, customer services also provide reception duties on a rota basis; this reduces the availability of Welsh speaking staff answering telephone calls. In quarter 1 we identified a need for further Welsh speakers covering both telephone and face to face. We have now employed a new Welsh speaker (currently in training) which will increase our Welsh speaking capacity, and we will continue to explore ways of increasing this capacity.</p>					
CHEX - Customer Services - PI/571 - Average time (seconds) to answer telephone calls in English	47.00	51.00	72.00	40.00	 Red
<p>During quarter 3 the contact centre has been particularly affected by an increase in calls reporting severe weather issues e.g. gritting, flooding and damage caused by high winds. This high demand, coupled with difficulties in getting calls through to dedicated services/numbers in order to resolve the customer's requirement resulted in delays in answering further calls.</p> <p>The (new) Open Scape Fusion telephony system continues to result in increased demand for the customer services switchboard function i.e. calls bouncing back or repeat calls if there is no answer. Work is under way with services and digital services team to ensure a consistent implementation of the telephony system with voicemail facilities etc.</p> <p>As mentioned in PI/570 above, the reopening of the civic centres has impacted on the resources available to take calls in the contact centre, as the team now provide reception support again, as well as a range of administrative functions in the 'back office'. They include Blue Badge and bus pass administration work and dealing with email contacts. Since Covid 19 email contact has seen a large increase of nearly 60% - from 13,384 in 2019/20 to 21,405 in 2021/22.</p>					







Resource issues in waste and recycling are resulting in increased call demand, reporting non-collections, chasing recycling kit orders etc. and up until the beginning of October, customers had to call the contact centre to change/amend/cancel bookings for recycling centre slots. This is now self-serve and should, in time, reduce calls.



A review of concessionary bus passes by 'Transport for Wales' has increased the workload for the customer services team. One team member is now working full time on eligibility assessments on behalf of our passenger transport section.






Other 'events' have resulted in spikes of call demand during this year including:

- Mass mailings to residents - 30,000 cost of living letters sent to residents in May and 16,000 letters sent out for the Fuel Payment scheme in September. Both resulting in unprecedented demand on the main switchboard.
- Long term sickness of two members of staff and maternity leave have impacted on performance, starting in the Quarter 1 and ongoing until last month, exacerbated by staff holidays during the summer months.
- Summer has also seen the launch of the new nappy collection scheme at a time of reduced staffing levels due to holidays.
- The National Day of Mourning had serious repercussions on the contact centre as the usual Refuse and Recycling bank holiday arrangements residents are used to were not in operation for this occasion which has left contact centre staff dealing with high volumes of confused and irate residents.

CHEX - Housing Benefit & Financial Assessments - PI/413 - Percentage of correctly granted benefit against total granted	99.98	99.98	99.95	99.98	 Amber
Percentage marginally outside target, but still remains close to 100% - this indicator continues to be monitored, and with refresher training to be provided by our Training Officers relating to categorisation of benefit awards.					
CHEX - Housing Benefit & Financial Assessments - PI/584 - Benefits - Average days taken to action new benefit clients and changes of circumstances – application to assessment	3.97	3.97	6.23	6.00	 Amber
Percentage marginally outside target, due to requirement to administer in excess of 20,000 Welsh Government Fuel Support Scheme claims since Sept 2022. This is in addition to previously administering Self-Isolation grants (8,977 claims processed of which 5,567 paid) and Unpaid Carer grants (3,571 claims processed of which 2,929 paid) schemes in this financial year.					
CHEX - HR, Learning & Training - PI/798 - Percentage of employees completing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy training group 1 by 31st March 2023			31.49	30.00	 Green
Since April 2020 and to the end of Quarter 3 2022/23, 31.49% (2,031 of 6,449 employees) have completed the training. This figure includes 650 employees who completed the training in the first nine months of 2022/23. Target by the end of Quarter 3 is 30%. Target by the 31st March 2023 is 35%.					
CHEX - HR, Learning & Training - PI/799 - Completion of mandatory Group A safeguarding training module for all staff			40.41	60.00	 Red
40.41% (2,606 of 6,449 employees) have completed Group A training up to the end of Quarter 3 2022/23. This figure includes 1,020 employees who completed the training in the first nine months of 2022/23. Target by the end of Quarter 3 is 60%. Target by the 31st March 2023 is 75%. Reported quarterly from 2022/23.					

## How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>1.2.5 Governance and Resource (cross-cutting) - including Planning &amp; Performance, Workforce Management, Financial Resources, Democracy, Community Relations, Asset Management and Commissioning &amp; Procurement.</b>					
CHEX - Communications and Marketing - PI/665- Combined reach for the council's corporate social media channels			4944613.00		
<p>This is a new performance indicator which gives a total number of views of posts from our social media channels, using the following metrics:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total number of Tweet impressions from the English and Welsh corporate Twitter accounts.</li> <li>The 'Reach' of posts from the English and Welsh corporate Facebook pages.</li> <li>The 'Reach' of posts from the corporate Instagram page.</li> <li>The 'Reach' of posts from the corporate LinkedIn page.</li> <li>The number of video views on the corporate Youtube account.</li> </ul> <p>The aim is to increase the number of people seeing our content by ensuring it is engaging and relevant.</p> <p>Total social media reach in Quarter 3 improved on Quarter 2 but still less than the strong performance in Quarter 1 following the elections in May. Breakdown below:                      April to June 2022: <b>1,810,170</b>                      July to September 2022: <b>1,541,034</b>                      October to December 2022: <b>1,593,409</b></p> <p>The number of Tweet impressions can have a significant impact on the overall total for this indicator and there has been a lot of volatility on the platform following its recent change of ownership. Reduced social media activity/engagement over the Christmas period would also have impacted December's totals in comparison to other months. This balanced out a very strong November in which updates about the Wildfox resort were amongst our all-time top performing posts across all platforms.</p>					
CHEX - Business Support - PI/417 - Legal Services - 7.7(L) - Percentage of standard searches carried out within 10 working days	99.04	98.99	97.92	96.00	 Green
Percentage of official searches completed within 10 working days for quarter 3 2022/23 is 97.9% (989 of 1010), compared to 99% (1178 of 1190) for the same reporting period last year. Whilst down a little we are still keeping above and maintaining our excellent performance, in an extremely busy market post Covid-19.					
CHEX - Council Tax/Business Rates - PI/572 - Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the local authority	70.84	86.75	87.21	87.00	 Green
Currently on track to meet 2022/23 collection rate target of 98%.					
£37,774,704 collected up to the end of quarter 3 against a collectable debit for the year 2022/23 of £43,315,289					

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
CHEX - Council Tax/Business Rates - PI/574 - Percentage of council tax due for the financial year which was received by the authority	84.62	85.44	85.09	85.00	 Green
<p>Currently on track to achieve targeted collection rate of 97.5%, however, we will monitor this closely due to the ongoing cost of living crisis which may impact the council tax collection.</p> <p>£69,253,629 collected up to the end of quarter 3 against a collectable debit for the year 2022/23 of £81,384,719</p> <p>In 2021/22 we achieved the best collection rate in Wales with 98.01%.</p>					
CHEX - Digital Services - PI/329 - System availability	99.90	99.90	99.90	99.90	 Green
The digital infrastructure as a whole has operated within tolerance. There have been occasional "outages" but that relates to planned maintenance, whereby all staff been made aware.					
CHEX - Digital Services - PI/540 - Digital Services - NPT corporate Website User Satisfaction score		88.00	91.00	75.00	 Green
As part of our digital transformation we continue to embed best practice set by UK Government to ensure our content and digital services meet user needs and engage with users in the development of new digital services and monitor feedback to ensure continuous improvement takes place.					
CHEX - Digital Services - PI/541 - WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) accessibility compliance score against 'AA' standard		95.30	96.10	80.00	 Green
<p>New public sector accessibility regulations mean that all public sector websites must meet the 'AA standard'. We have continually improved our website to ensure it meets this AA standard and currently score 96% which ranks us at 27th place for accessibility across all UK councils (approximately 400 councils).</p> <p>The AA standard is part of the internationally recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (known as WCAG 2.1) which sets recommendations for improving web accessibility.</p> <p>We use best practice accessibility tools such as Silktide to monitor our website for accessibility issues and continue to iterate our website to ensure it meets this standard. Further work is being undertaken to remove non structured documents such as PDF's off our website to ensure compliance with the AA standard.</p>					
CHEX - Legal and Regulatory Services - PI/820 - Percentage of Licensing Act 2003 applications completed within statutory timescales.			97.30	100.00	 Amber
<p>72 of 74 applications received in 9 month period (April to December 202), which is broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 new;</li> </ul>					

- 1 to vary the premises licence;
- 3 minor variations;
- 19 transfers;
- 35 to vary the DPS; and
- 1 to review premises licence.

There were 2 applications dealt with outside of the statutory timescales - 1 application was delayed due to the National period of mourning following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. This application went to Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub Committee on October 17th 2022. The other delayed application went to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub Committee on November 14th 2022 with the agreement of all parties involved.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

Page 229

# Performance Indicators

Neath Port Talbot Council

Appendix 3 - Chief Executive's Directorate - Compliments and Complaints - Quarter 3 ( 1st April - 31st December) - 2022/23

## How will we know we are making a difference (01/04/2022 to 31/12/2022)?

PI Title	Qtr.3 Actual 20/21	Qtr.3 Actual 21/22	Qtr.3 Actual 22/23	Qtr.3 Target 22/23	Perf. RAG
<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVES</b>					
PI/252 - Chief Executive's Directorate - % of closed stage 1 complaints upheld/partially upheld in the financial year	20.00	10.00	18.75	N/a	
<p>Sixteen stage 1 complaints were closed in Quarter 3 2022/23 (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> December) of which three were upheld. Ten stage 1 complaints were closed in Quarter 3 2021/22 of which one was upheld.</p> <p>Seventeen stage 1 complaints were received in quarter 3 2022/23 (one carried forward to quarter 4), compared to nine received in quarter 3 2021/22.</p> <p>The three complaints upheld in this period are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Tax – a resident had contacted the office at the end of March to pay his first instalment of council tax for April 2022. He then contacted the office at the end of April to set up a direct debit to be taken on 28th of each month (from May) and so on. During this phone call the officer took another payment by card, which was taken in error as the direct debit was due to be taken at the end of May, this resulted in him paying twice. The officer during that call, should have amended the direct debit to commence on 28th June. This error also corrupted the payment profile and no further payments were taken. An offer of apology and options were given which included refunding the overpaid amounts or paying less going forward.</li> <li>2. Elections – A resident attended to vote to find she was not on the register and unable to vote at the election. On further investigation it appears that correspondence had been received in relation to her being removed, however the Registration Officer had made an error by not performing secondary checks before removing her off the register, therefore an apology was given and additional training for staff put in place.</li> <li>3. Registrars – Incorrect issue of a Marriage certificate, issued as a 'Draft' record which was not valid. An apology was given and the couple were reimbursed associated costs resulting in the resubmission of application including postage costs, to the sum of £74.20.</li> </ol>					
PI/253 -Chief Executive's Directorate - % of closed complaints at stage 2 that were upheld/partially upheld in the financial year	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/a	
<p>Four stage 2 complaints were closed in Quarter 3 2022/2023 which were not upheld. One closed complaint was received and carried forward from quarter 4 2021/2022. Three stage 2 complaints were closed in Quarter 3 2021/2022 which were not upheld.</p> <p>Three stage 2 complaints were received in quarter 3 2022/23 and three were received in quarter 3 2021/22.</p>					
PI/254 - Chief Executive's Directorate - % of closed complaints dealt with by the Public Services Ombudsman (following Stage 1 and Stage 2 process) that were upheld/partially upheld		0.00		N/a	
No ombudsman complaints have been received following a stage 1 and stage 2 for quarter 3 2022/23. One was received in 2021/22.					
PI/255 - Chief Executive's Directorate - Number of compliments received from the public	87.00	61.00	76.00	N/a	
76 compliments received for quarter 3 2022/23 as opposed to 61 received for quarter 3 2021/22.					
<b>Business Support</b> - 3 compliments received thanking the Land Charges Team for help with local searches, providing a helpful, knowledgeable and efficient service.					

**Council Tax** – 14 compliments received, thanks for assistance with disabled reduction fee (1), cost of living grant (3), assistance during COVID (1), Winter/Fuel Allowance (4), assistance with overpayments (1), providing copy of bill (1), assistance with a query on class J exemption (1) and praise for response time on an appeal with the Valuation Office Agency (1). Personal thanks from the Police Online Investigative Team (POLIT) for continued support and assistance, results have made job easier for which they are extremely grateful (1).

**Benefits** – 1 Compliment received – excellent help and attention, treated with kindness since the death of customer’s husband. “Cannot praise staff enough, help was much appreciated.”

**Human Resources** – 9 : 7 Compliments received for Health and Safety Team from Outdoor event organisers (April – June) giving thanks for the huge success of the Safety Advisory Group supporting various event registrations and / or applications to use Council land. Careers Wales gave praise and thanks for swift response for work experience placements relating to Government projects (1) and Social Care Wales gave praise regarding the content and delivery of the Children’s Services conference (1)

**Mayoral Service** – 9 compliments received – 5 from volunteer groups who attended afternoon tea at Margam Orangery on 30th August and 4 from volunteer culture and heritage groups who attended afternoon tea on 22nd September. The events were organised to recognise and bring together volunteers working in our communities. Compliments included how well run the event was, location, catering, the ability to network with other groups and for officers of the Council.

**Communications Team** – 1 compliment from officer of Welsh Government stating that our ‘Help with the cost of living website’ was a good example of work we are doing to help with cost of living crisis.

**Corporate Policy and Engagement team** - 7 Compliments received, 5 were relating to Armed Forces Day event which was overseen by the Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer. Three compliments said that it was a great event. 1 compliment from Bethel Trust food bank for help and support provided and 1 from the WLGA complimenting a member of the team after working together, that she was ‘fab’ to work with and hopes to work with her again in the future

**Registration Service** – 19 compliments including thanks for an excellent service whilst registering a death, being both empathetic, kind and respectful during a difficult time, and making it as easy as it could possibly be (x9) and for help and support when death was registered in another district. Thanks for help with obtaining copy certificate (1) Thanks for being so helpful and making the difficult ‘Tell Us Once’ service as simple as can be (1). Thanks received for excellent service before and during wedding service which was delivered beautifully (x8)

**Customer / Digital Services** – 13 Compliments received including thanks of assistance with blue badge applications (x5) – One commented it was a first class service. The speed of which a Customer Services Officer reported needles found at a children’s bus stop which were cleared by the Council within 15 minutes (1). Provision of an update to a customer with regards to ‘Tell us Once’ (1), Assistance with booking a slot at the Recycling Centre (1) and for the service of delivery of recycling and food bags as well as help putting them in contact with the service (x3). Thanks for pleasant phone manner, stated customer advisor was excellent at their job, professionalism personified and a shining light (x2).

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## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

5 April 2022

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services-  
C.Griffiths

### **Matter for Information**

**Ward Affected:** All

### **Officer Urgency Actions**

Details of the Urgency Actions taken since 21 March 2022, by the relevant Heads of Service in consultation with the requisite Members, for immediate implementation, can be seen Appendix A.

### **Financial Impacts**

There is no financial impact associated with this report

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

Not Required.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts**

There are no impacts associated with this report

### **Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

Ensuring adherence to the Council's constitutional requirements.

### **Risk Management Impacts**

No impact.

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

**Recommendations**

That Members note the schedule of Urgency Actions taken.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To ensure the Council adheres to the rules set out in the Constitution.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The report is for noting.

**Officer Contact**

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Stacy Curran, Democratic Services Manager Tel: 01639 763194, email [s.curran@npt.gov.uk](mailto:s.curran@npt.gov.uk)

5 April 2023. Completed Executive Urgency Actions:

- Cabinet Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Private - Home to School Transport Fuel Costs	108TD	8 April 2022
S101 of the Local Government Act 1972 - Carmarthenshire County Council.	16052022JWR	16 May 2022
Private - Stonework Repairs at Margam Park	114TD	4 January 2023

- Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Private - Baglan Energy Park Appeal	106TD	24 March 2022
LDP – Submission of Council Owned Sites as Part of the Call for Candidate Sites	310522JWR	31 May 2022
Authorisation to enter into a Legal Indemnity	112TD	25 August 2022
Proposed Individual Disabled Parking Place.	SM001	15 September 2022
Swansea Bay City Deal – Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth programme – South Wales Industrial Transition from Carbon Hub (SWITCH) Project – Procurement Strategy	1CLP	16 September 2022
Proposed Temporary Licence to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for part of Milland Road Car Park, Neath for use as a Local Covid 19 Test & Vaccination Centre.	SM004	16 September 2022

Greenwood Drive, Cimla, Neath Prohibition of Waiting, Loading and Unloading At Any Time - Traffic Regulation Order 2022.	SM002	16 September 2022
Private - The Transfer of Land and Construction of a Commercial Unit at Burrows Yard	NJ005	20 September 2022
Patrons Car Parking Scheme Neath Leisure Centre and Gwyn Hall	210922JWR	21 September 2022

- Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Cabinet Board Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Fee Uplifts for Care Home Services and Specialist Day Opportunity Services	105TD	23 March 2022
Ukrainian Crisis: Humanitarian response	003NJ	25 March 2022
Private - Lease Agreements For Interim Accommodation for Homelessness	107TD	7 April 2022
Waiver of Disabled Facility Grant Monies	260522JWR	26 May 2022
Housing Renewal and Adaptation Service – Extension of Contracts	111TD	13 June 2022
Private - Procurement Exercise For a Social Care Case Management Platform	113TD	22 November 2022

- Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Leases of 3 separate premises for Employability, Skills and Outreach	280322(1)JWR	28 March 2022
Strategic School Improvement Programme - Proposal To Establish A New Welsh-Medium Primary School In Neath Abbey And To Establish A Temporary Governing Body	SM003	15 September 2022

Completed Regulatory Committee Urgency Actions:

- Registration and Licensing Committee Urgency Action

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Hackney Carriage Licence Renewal	110TD	13 June 2022

- Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub Committee Urgency Action

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence	004NJ	4 May 2022

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