



Y CABINET

**YN SYTH AR ÔL CYFARFOD
PWYLLGOR CRAFFU'R CABINET
DYDD MERCHER, 29 MEHEFIN 202229 Mehefin 2022**

**CYFARFOD AML-LEOLIAD –
SIAMBR Y CYNGOR - PORT TALBOT
A MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**RHAID GOSOD POB FFÔN SYMUDOL AR Y MODD DISTAW AR
GYFER PARHAD Y CYFARFOD**

Gweddarlledu/Cyfarfodydd Hybrid:

Gellir ffilmio'r cyfarfod hwn i'w ddarlledu'n fyw neu'n ddiweddarach drwy wefan y cyngor. Drwy gymryd rhan, rydych yn cytuno i gael eich ffilmio ac i'r delweddau a'r recordiadau sain hynny gael eu defnyddio at ddibenion gweddarlledu a/neu hyfforddiant o bosib.

Rhan 1

1. Penodi Cadeirydd
2. Cyhoeddiadau'r Cadeiryddion
3. Datganiadau o fuddiannau
4. Blaenraglen Waith 2022/2023 (*Tudalennau 5 - 10*)
5. Cwestiynau gan y cyhoedd
Mae'n rhaid cyflwyno cwestiynau'n ysgrifenedig i'r Gwasanaethau Democrataidd, democratic.services@npt.gov.uk heb fod yn hwyrach na chanol dydd ar y diwrnod gwaith cyn y cyfarfod. Mae'n rhaid i'r cwestiynau ymwneud ag eitemau ar yr agenda. Ymdrinnir â chwestiynau o fewn cyfnod o 10 munud.

6. Datganiad Llywodraethu Blynyddol (*Tudalennau 11 - 92*)
7. Ysgol Cychwyn Cyfrwng Cymraeg - Mynachlog Nedd (*Tudalennau 93 - 228*)
8. Adroddiad Blynyddol Safonau'r Gymraeg (*Tudalennau 229 - 258*)
9. Cynllun Cymorth Disgresiynol Costau Byw Llywodraeth Cymru (*Tudalennau 259 - 268*)
10. Cynllun Cymorth Caledi Castell-nedd Port Talbot (*Tudalennau 269 - 286*)
11. Gorchmynion Traffig - Gorchmynion Rheoleiddio Traffig Terfyn Cyflymder 30MYA Arfaethedig (*Tudalennau 287 - 304*)
12. Gorchmynion Traffig - Amodau Cynllunio ar gyfer y Datblygiad Tai Newydd (*Tudalennau 305 - 318*)
13. Eitemau brys
Unrhyw eitemau brys (boed yn gyhoeddus neu wedi'u heithrio) yn ôl disgresiwn y Cadeirydd yn unol ag Adran 100b (4)(B) o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 1972
14. Mynediad i Gyfarfodydd - Gwahardd y Cyhoedd (*Tudalennau 319 - 324*)

Rhan 2

15. Cynigion ar gyfer Cronfa Codi'r Gwastad (Yn eithriedig dan baragraff 14) (*Tudalennau 325 - 386*)
16. Cyfle Porthladd Rhydd Posib Castell-nedd Port Talbot (Yn eithriedig dan baragraff 14) (*Tudalennau 387 - 448*)

K.Jones
Prif Weithredwr

Canolfan Ddinesig
Port Talbot

Dydd Iau, 23 Mehefin 2022

Aelodau'r Y Cabinet:

Y Cynghorwyr S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, N.Jenkins, D.M.Peters,
J.Hurley, S.Harris, J.Hale, A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths a/ac S.Jones

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

Executive

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

2022 - 2023

Cabinet (All starting 2pm unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Type	Contact Officer
29 th June Tudalen6	Levelling Up Fund Bids	Decision	Simon Brennan
	Potential NPT Free ports	Decision	Andrew Collins
	Hardship Relief Scheme	Decision	Huw Jones
	Annual Governance Statement	Decision	Caryn Furlow
	Welsh Medium Starter School – Neath Abbey	Decision	Rhiannon Crowhurst
	Welsh Language Standards Annual Report	Decision	Rhian Headon/ Caryn Furlow-Harris
	Welsh Government Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme	Decision	Huw Jones
	Proposed 30 mph Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Orders associated with Welsh Government 20 mph Default Speed Limit National Roll Out.	Decision	David Griffiths
	Traffic Orders Associated with the Planning Conditions for the New Housing Development (1 Report)	Decision	David Griffiths

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Type	Contact Officer
Tudalen 7 28 th July	Flying Start Expansion Phase 1	Decision	Angelina Spooner-Cleverly
	Homelessness Strategy	Decision	Angela Thomas
	MREC Relation of Waste Fleet	Decision	Mike Roberts
	Cemetery rules and regulations	Decision	Mike Roberts
	Families First Commissioning	Decision	Angelina Spooner-Cleverly
	Rapid Rehousing Report	Decision	Angela Thomas
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Decision	Simon Brennan
	Celtic Leisure Timetable	Decision	Andrew Thomas
	Panteg/Cyfyng Road Landslip	Decision	Ceri Morris
	Childcare in Schools (Amendment to Rent Arrangements)	Decision	Lisa Clement-Jones/ Hayley Lervy

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Type	Contact Officer
21st September Tudaleng	Corporate Plan 22/23	Decision	Caryn Furlow-Harris
	Draft Workforce Strategy: The Future of Work	Decision	Caryn Furlow-Harris Sheenagh Rees

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Type	Contact Officer
19 th October Tudalen9			
	Public Ombudsman for Wales Annual Report	Information	Craig Griffiths
	Self Assessment	Decision	Caryn Furlow

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

29 June 2022

Report of Chief Finance Officer

H. Jones

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022

Purpose of Report

1. To present to Cabinet the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022 for approval.

Executive Summary

2. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2021-2022 (attached at Appendix 1) has been prepared by the Corporate Governance Group and complies with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework: (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016).
3. The AGS demonstrates the system of internal controls which have been in place within the Council for the year ending 31st March 2022 and provides examples of how the Council demonstrates compliance with good practice and meets the core and sub principles of effective governance. The AGS also provides details on the assurances taken during the year on the effectiveness of our governance arrangements.

Background

4. The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and is used economically, efficiently and effectively.
5. The AGS forms part of the Statement of Accounts and reports on the extent of the Council's compliance with its principles and practices of good governance, including how the Council has monitored the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year ending 31st March 2022.
6. The AGS is prepared under the remit of the Corporate Governance Group, which is chaired by the Chief Finance Officer and is made up of Heads of Service who are directly responsible for governance aspects.
7. The AGS also contains:
 - An update on the progress made during 2021-2022 against the improvement areas that were identified during the development of the 2020-2021 AGS (Table 1 on page 60).
 - Improvement areas proposed for 2022-2023 following the development of 2021-2022 AGS (Table 2 - Governance Improvement Action Plan - on page 72).
8. Table 2 contains a number of improvement areas to be actioned during 2022/2023. The Corporate Governance Group will keep this work under review during 2022/2023.
9. As the Council moves forward in delivering the priorities contained in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027, the Council's governance arrangements will continually be kept under review by the Corporate Governance Group to ensure that they remain effective.

Consultation

10. There is no requirement for consultation on this item.

Financial Appraisal

11. The improvement work undertaken during 2021-2022 was delivered within existing resources.

Integrated Impact Assessment

12. There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment on this item.

Workforce Impact

13. The progress set out in Table 1 on page 60 has been delivered during the Council's response to the pandemic and planning for recovery which has been a challenging time for the workforce. During that time the Workforce Planning Group met and a key role of the Group was to review key employment strategies to support the Council's response to the pandemic and recovery.

Legal Impact

14. The Council has a general duty under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to keep its performance under review and the extent to which:
 - a) It is exercising its functions effectively;
 - b) It is using resources economically, effectively and efficiently; and
 - c) Its governance is effective for securing the matters set out in a) and b) above.
15. The Annual Governance Statement explains how the Council has met the requirements of Regulation 5(2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to an annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal control and the preparation and approval of an Annual Governance Statement.

Risk Management

16. An improvement area identified for 2022/2023 is a review of the Council's Risk Management arrangements. Progress on this work will be reported to Cabinet in the autumn as part of the 6 monthly progress monitoring arrangements for the Governance Improvement Action Plan.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that Cabinet :
 - i. Approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022 attached at Appendix 1.
 - iii. Approve the proposed Corporate Governance improvement work to be undertaken during 2022-2023 (Governance Improvement Action Plan – page 72).

Reason for Proposed Decision

18. To ensure the Annual Governance Statement meets the requirements of Regulation 5(2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to an annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal control and the preparation and approval of an Annual Governance Statement.

Appendices

19. Appendix 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022

List of Background Papers

20. None

Officer Contact

21. Huw Jones, Chief Finance Officer Tel: 01639 763575 or e-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk
22. Caryn Furlow-Harris, Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support Tel: 01639 763242 or e-mail: c.furlow@npt.gov.uk

**Neath Port Talbot Council
Annual Governance Statement
2021/2022**



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Introduction

The Council has adopted the 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (the Framework), developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). To comply with the Framework, the Council must publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, cultures and values by which the Council is directed and controlled, and through which we engage with and lead the local community. The framework brings together an underlying set of legal requirements, good practice and management processes.

In preparing the AGS, the Council conducted a self-assessment on the effectiveness of its system of internal control in place for the year ending 31st March 2022 to ensure that:

- Tudalen17
- its business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations;
 - public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for;
 - there is sound and inclusive decision making;
 - resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively; and
 - there is clear accountability for the use of those resources to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people and communities.

This assessment contributes to the self-assessment the Council will be undertaking to meet the requirements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

“Corporate governance is about making sure that the Council is run properly. It is about ensuring the Council does the right things, at the right time and in the right way.”

The Council’s system of internal control are designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. The Council cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The Framework

The Framework comprises two core principles and five supporting principles as illustrated in the diagram.

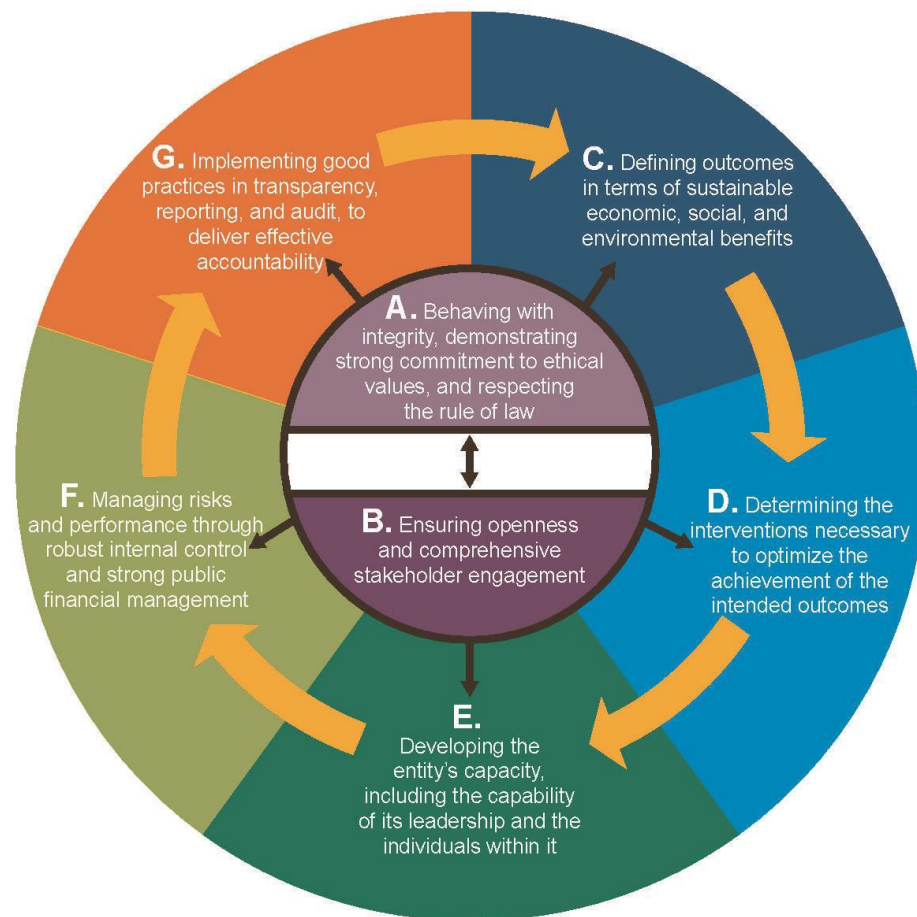
Principles A and B run through principles C to G but good governance is dynamic, and the Council as a whole is committed to improving governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review.

The next section: Putting the Principles into Practice,

illustrates examples of how the Council demonstrates compliance to meet these seven principles and the assurances taken during the year on the effectiveness of our governance arrangements.

Any governance improvement areas identified from undertaking the self-assessment have been included in an action plan set out in **Table 2** on page 72. The Corporate Governance Group, will oversee the action plan and progress will be reported to Corporate Directors Group, Cabinet and Governance & Audit Committee throughout the financial year.

Progress made on improvement work identified during 2020/2021 is contained in **Table 1** on page 60.



Putting the Principles into Practice

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law				
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action	
Tudalen19	1.1 Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation	1.1.1 Employee Code of Conduct	In November 2020 an Internal Audit review was published of the compliance with the need to make the necessary declarations re interests, gifts and hospitality accepted/rejected. The recommendations made were taken into account and the Code was updated in January 2021.	None identified
	1.1.2 Member Code of Conduct	<p>Monitored by the Standards Committee and Corporate Governance Group.</p> <p>On signing their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Members are required to give an undertaking to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Code of Conduct training took place on the 8th April 2021 relating to the member code of conduct, social media issues, gifts and hospitality and officer/member protocols. Further training took place in Autumn 2021 on officer/member relationships and will be undertaken biannually thereafter to enhance member's compliance with the Members Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Further training was developed to be embedded in the Member Induction process</p>	None identified	

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen20		<p>for May 2022 onwards to ensure members are aware of the responsibility to act ethically and with integrity throughout the year, with advice provided on a variety of matters throughout year on interests and predetermination matters.</p> <p>The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 will provide an additional duty on group leaders to ensure members within their political group also comply with the Members Code of Conduct and ongoing support will be provided on this function via the Standards Committee.</p>	
	<p>1.1.3 Members: An induction programme for Members was published on the Council website in 2017.</p>	<p>The induction programme forms part of the Authority’s Strategy and Charter for Member Development and is structured for both new and returning members. The aim is to provide a supportive and structured development framework to enable Members perform their duties. Members elected through by-elections receive a tailored induction.</p> <p>A review of the programme took place during 2021 in readiness for the Member Induction following the Local Government Elections in May 2022.</p>	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen21	1.1.4 Staff: an Induction Checklist, (which contains information about the expected standards of behaviour) must be signed by managers and their employees.	<p>The corporate Induction Checklist is emailed to recruiting managers in advance of when a new starter is due to commence employment and is signed by both manager and employee.</p> <p>In 2022, the HR team and Learning, Training and Development Team will progress with the implementation of the iTrent HR / Payroll Database in Phase 2 of the Project. In phase 2, employee self-serve will mean the development of resources such as the 'onboarding' module, which will replace the Induction Checklist and facilitate more effective recording of induction arrangements and therefore provide much greater assurance.</p>	None identified
	1.1.5 Performance Appraisal Process	<p>In 2022, the Learning, Training & Development Team will continue with progress in relation to the implementation of the iTrent HR / Payroll Database in Phase 2 of the Project, launching the Development module, which will facilitate more effective recording of the appraisal process and provide greater assurance. We will be able to report against the number of appraisals carried out to conclusion.</p>	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
<p>1.2 Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalen22</p>	<p>1.2.1 A recently updated vision and set of values have been published in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027</p>	<p>The Vision and Values are incorporated into recruitment processes (written into job descriptions and person specifications of senior posts in the organisation).</p>	<p>None identified</p>
	<p>1.2.2 The vision and priorities for staff are contained within the Workforce Plan 2018-2022</p>	<p>A review of the Workforce Plan was carried out in December 2019 to review the actions taken to date and ensure future actions remain fit for purpose moving forward. A framework Future of Work strategy has been developed with the support of the Corporate Recovery Board. Additional resources are currently being recruited to support the development and implementation of this strategy early in 2022/2023, to replace the current Workforce Plan.</p> <p>Audit Wales have supported the Council to learn workforce planning lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, and to strengthen workforce planning arrangements as we move into recovery and developing the Council's workforce into the future, embracing opportunities linked to new ways of providing services and working. Feedback from Audit Wales was largely positive with constructive suggestions for</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
		improvement, particularly in relation to succession planning.	
	See also 1.1.2 Member Code of Conduct - The Standards Framework for Members (Section 1, Ethical framework)	As 1.1.2	
<p>1.3 Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">1606223</p>	<p>1.3.1 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)</p> <p>The tool assesses the impact of proposed initiatives (e.g. policy, service, procedures, strategies, projects etc.) relating to key legislation (i.e. equality, sustainable development, the Welsh language etc.). It is applied to decisions relating to the initiative and to consider whether the initiative will have a positive, negative or neutral impact on the community.</p>	<p>Three separate reviews of the IIA process have been undertaken to determine how well the IIA tool is embedded into the decision making process, its effectiveness and the quality of the IIAs. Two of the reviews were completed by March 2022 (Internal Audit / external consultant) with the last (Audit Wales) due to be completed by July 2022.</p> <p>The recommendations from the reviews undertaken will be implemented to further improve the embedding of the IIA process into decision making.</p> <p>Training to address the recommendations will be part of the New Member Induction Programme following the Local Government Elections in May 2022) for Members. Training will also be arranged for officers.</p>	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen24	1.3.2 Declarations of Interest	These are made by Members at the beginning of Committee meetings and recorded in the meeting minutes.	None identified
	1.3.3 The Standards Committee	<p>The Committee meet on a quarterly basis (or more frequently where referrals from the Ombudsman are considered).</p> <p>Reports are regularly presented to the Standards Committee and any recommendations arising.</p> <p>The Committee also has delegated authority to discharge a number of functions. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 will provide an additional duty on group leaders to ensure members within their political group also comply with the Members Code of Conduct and ongoing support will be provided on this function via the Standards Committee.</p> <p>An annual report of the Standards Committee will also be presented to full Council highlighting the work of the Standards Committee.</p>	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen25	1.3.4 Member and Officer Relations Protocol	<p>A protocol is in place as part of the Council's Constitution and Employee Code of Conduct.</p> <p>A review of the Protocol was undertaken in Autumn 2021 as part of the wider review of the Council's Constitution and subsequently a slightly revised version was taken to Full Council in Autumn 2021 for approval. Copies of which have been distributed to officers.</p> <p>Further training took place in Autumn 2021 on officer/member relationships and will be undertaken biannually thereafter to enhance member's compliance with the Members Code of Conduct. Detailed training on the protocol will be embedded in training from May 2022 onwards.</p> <p>The protocol is monitored by the Standards Committee</p>	None identified
1.4 Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	1.4.1 The Anti-fraud, Corruption and Malpractice Strategy	An updated Fraud Strategy has been prepared by the Internal Audit team (March 2022). This will be the subject of review internally before being presented to Members after the May 2022 election.	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen26	1.4.2 Member Interests are shown by individual Members on the Council website.	Declarations of Interest for Members is a standing item on all meeting agendas and recorded in minutes of meetings.	None identified
	1.4.3 Staff Interests	An up-to-date register is held by each Director and is subject to Internal Audit review annually.	None identified
	1.4.4 Members: The Constitution	The Council’s Monitoring Officer is required, by law, to keep a Register of all notifications made by Members. The Register is open to public inspection during normal office hours.	None identified
	1.4.5 Staff Gifts & Hospitality	An up-to-date register is held by each Director and is subject to Internal Audit review annually.	None identified
	1.4.6 Whistleblowing Policy	Policy approved by Personnel Committee in August 2015 and reviewed in January 2020.	None identified
	1.4.7 Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy	The Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy was revised in March 2021 to meet the requirements set out in the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales Model Complaints Policy. The Local Government & Elections Wales Act 2021 sets out the following functions for the Governance & Audit Committee (from 1 st April 2021):	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen27		<p>‘to review and assess the authority’s ability to handle complaints effectively’ and ‘to make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority’s ability to handle complaints effectively’.</p> <p>A report to meet the above requirement was presented to the Committee on 18th February 2022</p>	
	<p>1.4.8 Social Services Compliments and Complaints</p>	<p>The latest Social Services Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2020/2021 was prepared and reported to Social Care, Health & Wellbeing Cabinet on 21st October 2021. No systemic issues were identified.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
	<p>1.4.9 Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints and responses</p>	<p>The latest Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2020/2021 was reported to Cabinet on 15th December 2021. No systemic issues were identified. During 2021/2022 quarterly complaints and compliments data has been reported to relevant Cabinet Boards on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
	<p>See also 1.4.4 Members: The Constitution, Part 5, Section 3 ‘Personal Interests’ addresses this.</p>	<p>Member’s interests are published on the NPT Council website for each meeting throughout the year.</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudal Prin St</p>	<p>See also 1.1.1 Officers: Employee Code of Conduct (Section 9, 2017).</p>	<p>The Council’s Contract Procedure Rules, Employee Code of Conduct and the Public Contract Regulations (2015) require officers and members not to have any involvement in a tender process where they have a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>They should have no role whatsoever which should negate the need for any declarations of interest to be made.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>2.1.6 Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation’s ethical standards and performance</p>	<p>2.1.1. The Corporate Procurement Team</p>	<p>This is acknowledged by the team when undertaking tender work for other sections when developing and evaluating procurement process. The team also monitor and evaluate compliance looking at what approach sections adopt. The Ethical Employment Code of Practice and Modern Slavery Statement issued to all sections sets out processes that should be valued.</p>	<p>A2.1.1: Corporate Procurement to monitor and evaluate compliance looking at what approach sections adopt. Head of Legal & Democratic Services to report annually to the Corporate Governance Group.</p>

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
<p>2.2 Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation’s culture and operation</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalen 2020</p>	<p>2.2.1 Member training</p> <p>See also 1.1.2 Member Code of Conduct)</p> <p>See also 1.3.3 Standards Committee – special dispensation to vote</p>	<p>Through the year, Members receive training on the Code of Conduct (& refresher training).</p> <p>Annual reports are presented to Standards Committee.</p> <p>Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office – undertaken given to abide by the Members’ Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Leading in the Welsh Public Service Behaviours Framework.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>2.3 Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p>	<p>2.3.1 Recruitment and Selection Policy 2018</p>	<p>Recruitment arrangements have been reviewed in line with the implementation of a new online Recruitment service (as part of the iTrent HR / Payroll system). This presents opportunities to introduce evidence based equality and diversity practices into our recruitment process which will be taken forward under Phase 2 implementation. This will also be considered as part of the review of our Recruitment Policy, a key action for the Recruitment Taskforce by March 2023.</p> <p>Training is provided to recruiting managers and courses in relation to Recruitment and</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen30		Selection and Safe Recruitment and other Employment Policies and Procedures to be delivered in 2022/2023.	
	2.3.2 Pay Policy Statement	The 2022/2023 review has taken place and the revised Pay Policy Statement was presented to Council on 16 th March 2022.	None identified
	2.3.3 Contract Procedure Rules	Training is available to staff and advice booklets are provided. Ongoing support is provided to sections in complying with procurement rules and processes. A dedicated section of the Council's intranet has provided standard documents and processes for officers to follow.	None identified
2.4 Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation	2.4.1 Ethical Employment in Supply Chain Policy 2019	Policy introduced in 2019 and annual reports brought to Cabinet and Cabinet Scrutiny setting out how the Council complies with the arrangements set out in the policy.	None identified
	2.4.2 We continue to participate in a number of partnerships. Governance arrangements are in place for each for partnership which:	Given the importance of collaboration to this Council, in early 2020 (pre Covid-19) each scrutiny committee was due to review existing collaborations to make sure they were all on a strong footing and productive to enable the Council's Cabinet to be confident that those arrangements are	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalens31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the roles of members both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the Council; • Clearly set out the legal status of the partnership; and • Make clear the extent to which representatives or organisations both understand and make clear to all other partners the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions. 	<p>working in the best interest of citizens and also, that there is clear and effective democratic oversight of those arrangements. The focus of this work was reviewed in 2021/2022 as part of the Council’s recovery, reset and renew work.</p> <p>To ensure that a copy of all partnership agreements are logged centrally with the Head of Legal & Democratic Services. This work is ongoing and has proved complex whilst officers have been required to work from home. As colleagues return to the office, further work will be undertaken to fully gather this list (given it requires access to the Council’s Archives in Port Talbot Civic Centre). The work is due to be completed in Spring 2022.</p>	
3.1 Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	3.1.1 Cabinet and Committee Reports contain a section entitled “Legal Impacts” so that legal obligations are placed at the forefront of decision making. See also 1.4.4 The Constitution	<p>Safe and Legal Decision Making Training is available for relevant officers and is provided on an annual basis by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council officers.</p> <p>Democratic Services Officers and Legal Services monitor reports to ensure legal compliance.</p>	None identified

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
<p>3.2 Creating the conditions to ensure that statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalen32</p>	<p>3.2.1 Financial management arrangements</p>	<p>We have a range of policies and procedures (such as financial regulations, financial procedures, contract standing orders, accounting instructions and officer delegations) that conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement of the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010).</p>	<p>A3.2.1: To complete the review of Accounting Instructions</p>
	<p>3.2.2 Democratic Services - support function.</p>	<p>The Head of Democratic Services presents an annual report to Democratic Services Committee and Council, outlining the resource requirements to enable the Council, Cabinet and Committee to receive high level support and discharge of its democratic functions. The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee presents an Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee to full Council updating Members on the work that has been undertaken by the Committee during the previous civic year.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
	<p>See also 1.4.4 The Council's Constitution sets out the different responsibilities of Members and Officers. Clear job descriptions for all staff, which highlight</p>	<p>The Monitoring Officer oversees the Council's Constitution and ensures it is kept up to date. A review of the Constitution has taken place throughout 2021 and annual reports will be produced to the Democratic Services Committee on any updates required to the</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	their roles and responsibilities.	Constitution and to seek Members views on constitutional provisions	
3.3 Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	3.3.1 Cabinet and Committee Reports contain a section entitled “Legal Impacts” so that legal obligations are placed at the forefront of decision making.	<p>Legal Enterprise Case Management Software providing audit trails of legal advice given and time spent providing legal advice on all matters.</p> <p>Transaction documentation and hard copies of Legal Advice provided are stored by the Council.</p> <p>Legal training provided to officers on regular basis to ensure they are up to date with recent legal developments and powers available.</p>	None identified
3.4 Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	3.4.1 Data Protection Breaches Panel review cases.	Head of Legal & Democratic Services reports annually to the Corporate Governance Group to give an assurance that the current system for dealing with data protection breaches is fit for purpose. The authority retains a breach register and 3 referrals were made to the Information Commissioner’s Office who directed that no further action was necessary on the part of the Council.	None identified

Tudalens33

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	<p>3.4.2 Internal Audit Special Investigations / Disciplinary Cases</p> <p>See also 3.3.1 Cabinet and Committee Reports</p>	<p>The Council requires that all officers who carry out disciplinary investigations have undertaken the ACAS Investigation Officers training. In addition, Heads of Service who are the decision makers in disciplinary investigations must have attended the ACAS Decision Maker training.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>3.5 Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tidalen34</p>	<p>See 1.4.1 Anti-fraud, Corruption and Malpractice Policy</p> <p>See 1.4.6 Whistle Blowing Policy</p>	<p>Cases are monitored by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and the Council's Standards Committee in relation to members conduct. During the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, the Monitoring Officer was notified of a total of 2 complaints made against County Borough Councillors alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct. Both were dismissed by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales as not being appropriate for investigation.</p> <p>For the civic year: 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, the Standards Committee received 0 referrals from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales stemming from the previous civic year (2020/2021) relating to the Code of Conduct of Town and Community Councils only.</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen 35 4.1 Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	4.1.1 The Council produces a number of annual reports throughout the year to give assurances about our governance arrangements.	The reports are available to the public and the Corporate Governance Group oversee any risks identified to governance arrangements, arising from these annual reports. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Plan Annual Report 2. Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report 3. PSB Well-being Plan Annual Report 4. Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 5. Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 6. Internal Audit Report 2020/2021 7. Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report 8. Ombudsman Annual Report 9. The Pay Policy Statement is published annually in line with the Localism Act 2011 and to ensure transparency in the Council's pay arrangements. 	None identified
	4.1.2 FOI Policy / FOI Publication Scheme	Published in March 2014. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been a delay during 2021/2022 in undertaking a review of the Scheme. It is	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen36		<p>planned to conclude the review early 2022/2023 with a report to Cabinet for approval in Autumn 2022.</p> <p>The revised version of the Publication Scheme will then be considered as part of a review on the Constitution to ensure it is fully up to date.</p>	
	4.1.3 The Council's strategic purpose, vision and values are set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027	Set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022/2027. The emerging Future of Work Strategy will embed the Council's vision, values and priorities in everything we do.	
	4.1.4 Council Meeting Cycle	The Council agrees its meeting cycle at its Annual Meeting and this is published on the Council's website. Meetings are supported with forward work programmes detailing items for the next 3 meetings.	None identified
	<p>4.1.5 Corporate Communications and Community Relations Strategy 2018-2020</p> <p>This includes new 'Brand' guidelines to create consistency and increase visibility and</p>	<p>The review of the 2018/2020 Strategy has been delayed due to the pandemic. Work is now underway to align the revised Strategy with the Council's Corporate Plan 2022/2027 and will be completed in early 2022/2023.</p> <p>We have improved the accessibility of information to better engage all stakeholders in the Council's work, with the intention that there will be a continuous flow of information</p>	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	understanding about what the Council does.	about how the Council is delivering on its well-being objectives and to keep stakeholders up-to-date. Council Website (www.npt.gov.uk) performance is monitored using Google analytics to see how our website is being used. We also carry out an annual website survey to measure our effectiveness and ensure the website is performing as expected.	
4.2 Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case the justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided	4.2.1 Executive and non-executive and regulatory report guidance and report template	The guidance was developed and circulated to reporting officers in May 2019. As and when changes arise the guidance is updated and circulated to report authors/officers. Report templates ensure the relevant information and advice is presented to substantiate recommendations.	None identified
	4.2.2 Safe and Legal Decision Making	Training is available for relevant officers.	None identified
4.3 Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and	4.3.1 Modern.gov system See also 1.3.1 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)	All publically accessible reports are published on the Council website via Modern.gov system showing the decisions taken at each meeting.	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
consequences of those decisions are clear.			
4.4 Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions / courses of action Tudalen38	4.4.1 Neath Port Talbot Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2018/2020	<p>The review of the 2018/2020 Strategy has been delayed due to the pandemic. Work is now underway to align the revised Strategy with the Council's Corporate Plan 2022/2027 and will be completed in early 2022/2023.</p> <p>The Council uses Snap Survey software for corporate consultations for both internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>The Planning Policy Service use Objective consultation software for the Local Development Plan.</p> <p>These arrangements are regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective and value for money when reviewing budget for the forthcoming financial year.</p>	None identified
	4.4.2 Community of Practice	<p>First launched in September 2019, to improve the way we consult and involve our communities and partner agencies in the work we do from the outset. The aim being to get early feedback that helps shape proposals before the Council goes out to wider public consultation. The Community of Practice undertook a key role during 2021/2022 in supporting the Lets Talk</p>	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudale 3		campaign which informed the priorities contained in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027.	
	4.4.3 Citizens Panel	The NPT Citizens Panel was launched in January 2020 enabling residents to express their views and opinions about the Council's work and feel that their voices are listened to. This will strengthen the Council's approach to consultation and engagement and also help us to meet our obligations under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	None identified
4.5 Effectively engaging to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably	4.5.1 Corporate Communications and Community Relations Strategy 2018-2020 4.5.2 Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2018-2020	See 4.1.5 and 4.4.1 above	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen40	4.5.3 Key Stakeholder List	We have a list of key stakeholders that we engage with on major policies and plans. These include: Youth Council; Black Minority Ethnic Community Association; and consultee database for the Local Development Plan.	None identified
	4.5.4 Youth Mayor	First established in September 2019 and elected by the young people of the borough. The role involves representing the voice of all children and young people across the borough at a number of pre-determined civic duties.	None identified
	4.5.5 Partnership working with our trade unions and teaching associations	This is a major feature of the Council's culture in relation to workforce engagement. It involves elected Members, managers, employees and trade unions developing and implementing a way of working based on mutual respect and trust, shared objectives and joint ownership of problem solving.	None identified
4.6 Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	4.6.1 Third Sector Partnerships	The Council has a long and productive relationship with Third Sector organisations and awards grant funding to organisations so they can support our communities in a wide range of ways. The Council recognises and values the contribution the organisations make to help us deliver on some of our services (e.g. supporting the wellbeing of local people and communities). The Partnership	4.6.1 To review the Partnership Agreement (Compact) between the Council and the Voluntary Sector

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen41		Agreement (Compact) between the Council and the Voluntary Sector in Neath Port Talbot formally recognises the contribution of voluntary work to local people and communities. It provides a framework for further developing the many years of partnership working in the county borough in pursuit of our shared interest to build strong communities where everyone has an equal chance to lead a fulfilled life. It sets out the responsibilities and expectations on both the Council and the Voluntary Sector in working together.	
	4.6.2 Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum	The Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum meets on a quarterly basis and is regularly consulted on key Council policies e.g. budget and Corporate Plan.	None identified
	4.6.3 County Borough Council / Community Councils Liaison Forum	The Council meets with the Town and Community Councils throughout the year to discuss a wide number of issues. Meetings were held throughout 2021/2022 to discuss issues of concern to the Town and Community Councils and also to update them on the Council's approach to recovery. Ongoing training was also provided to Town and Community Councils by the Monitoring Officer on the Member's Code of Conduct.	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	4.6.4 Informal partnerships	There are a number of informal partnerships in place, e.g. Equality and Community Cohesion Group which is made up of both officers from across the Council and representatives of external organisations.	None identified
	4.6.5 Public Services Board (PSB)	PSB members work together to deliver the objectives set out in the PSB Well-being Plan and monitor progress on delivery of work.	None identified
4.7 Ensuring that partnerships are based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust A shared commitment to change A culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners; and that the added value of partnership working is explicit 	See 2.4.2 and 4.5.4	<p>The Council plays an active role in collaborative arrangements to ensure the best return for our citizens and other stakeholders.</p> <p>These arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet required needs of the Council and where they do not reports are brought to members highlighting various risks and concerns for the decisions to be made on future actions.</p>	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	4.7.1 Staff Council (Consists of: LGS Green Book Negotiating Forum, LSPG (Schools trade union partnership forum), Service Joint Consultative Groups, and the Corporate Health & Safety Trade Union forum).	All of these groups meet regularly. These meetings are an opportunity for two-way information sharing, consultation and where necessary, negotiation. As part of our approach to partnership working, trade unions have representation in other forums; so for example, trade unions sit as an integral part of the Heads of Service Workforce Planning Group.	None identified
4.8 Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users - establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes	See 1.3.1 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)	The IIA assesses the need for consultation with stakeholders to consider whether 'initiatives' (e.g. policy, service, procedures, strategies, projects etc.) will have a positive, negative or neutral impact on the community.	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
<p>4.9 Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalen44</p>	<p>See 4.5.1 Corporate Communications and Community Relations Strategy 2018/2020</p>	<p>Clear strategies are in place to ensure members and officers communicate effectively in relation to community engagement.</p> <p>See 1.1.1 Employee Code of Conduct</p> <p>See 1.1.2 Member Code of Conduct - monitored by the Standards Committee</p> <p>See 4.1.5</p> <p>See 4.5.1</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>4.10 Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs</p>	<p>See section 4.4 and 4.5</p>		
<p>4.11 Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account</p>	<p>See section 4.5</p>		
<p>4.12 Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity</p>	<p>4.12.1 Council has a number of duties through the following legislation to ensure inclusivity of feedback from all stakeholder groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Act 2010 	<p>See 1.3.1</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, • Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 • Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 • Environment (Wales) Act 2016) 		
4. Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users	4.13.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.	The Corporate Plan 2022-2027 sets out the council's revised purpose, vision, values and wellbeing objectives and shows how the council contributes to the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Neath Port Talbot and to the seven national wellbeing goals contained in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The priorities under each wellbeing objective in the short and medium term demonstrate how the Council intends to maximise its contribution to the seven wellbeing goals set by Welsh Government.	None identified
	4.13.2 The Council's four Well-being Objectives and statement are published in	Audit Wales has issued certificates confirming that the council has discharged its duties under relevant legislation for both the Council's Corporate Plan and our Annual Report .	None identified

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	the Corporate Plan 2022-2027		

Tudalen 4

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvements / action
5.1 Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	See 4.1.4 - The Council's Corporate Plan. The Council's vision is set out in the Corporate Plan	The Council's revised vision is set out in the recently published Corporate Plan 2022-2027.	None identified
	5.1.1 Corporate Performance and Risk Management system (CPMS)	CPMS enables the integration of the Council's strategic planning, business planning, performance management and risk management arrangements.	5.1.1 To develop a revised Corporate Performance Management Framework

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvements / action
Tudalen47		<p>During 2021/22 work began to incorporate the findings (opportunities for improvement) from the Audit Wales review of our performance, risk and business planning arrangements (undertaken in 2020/2021) into the corporate review of the Council's corporate planning, financial planning, risk management and performance management arrangements.</p> <p><u>Service Recovery Plans (SRPs)</u> Whilst requirements of the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 require self-assessment to be undertaken at corporate level, the council has developed a new Service Recovery Plan process (effective from April 2022) for accountable managers to help services recover from the pandemic. The new process has the principles of self-assessment at its core and will help embed self-assessment across the organisation. At operational level, SRPs will integrate planning, performance, risk and budget management.</p>	
5.2 Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be	5.2.1 Commissioning	The Council delivers or commissions an enormous range of services and functions that affect the day to day life of everyone who lives in the county borough.	None identified

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvements / action
immediately or over the course of a year or longer		Service user questionnaires are undertaken as part of contract monitoring; contracts require processes to be in place to ensure providers actively engage with service users, informing service and feedback on proposed changes. Contract Monitoring Officers review practice, including interviewing service users.	
5.3 Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	See section 4.1	We examine the progress made in achieving our well-being objectives set out in the Corporate Plan, including the key performance indicators. On an annual basis progress is summarised in our Annual Report which includes data on key areas of performance.	None identified
5.4 Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	5.4.1 Corporate Risk Management Policy	The risks arising from the pandemic were managed via the establishment of a Corporate Incident Management Team chaired by the Council's Chief Executive. The Council's current Risk Management Policy is under review and will be reported to Members following the May 2022 elections.	5.4.1 To review the Council's Risk Management Policy
	5.4.2 Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)	In January 2021 the Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Services took over the role of SIRO, which was subsequently passed to	None identified

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvements / action
		<p>the newly appointed Chief Digital Officer in July 2021.</p> <p>The SIRO reports directly to the Corporate Directors Group and Corporate Governance Group on information security matters.</p> <p>The SIRO is accountable for information risk throughout the Authority and ensures that information risks are treated as a priority across all service areas.</p>	
5.5 Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	<p>The priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 were informed by an extensive engagement exercise "Let's Talk". This was undertaken in two phases between July 2021 and January 2022.</p> <p>See also 1.3.1 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)</p>		
5.6 Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits - considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision	<p>See 4.13.1 The Council's strategic vision and priorities (set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027)</p>		
5.7 Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	5.7.1 Welsh Government Procurement Policy	<p>Complying with the policy, by ensuring that contracts over the value of £1,000,000 include community benefits clauses and contracts split into "Lots" or smaller arrangements – allowing smaller organisations to bid for elements of contracts if they are unable to bid for larger packages.</p>	None identified

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvements / action
	See also 2.4.1 Ethical Employment in Supply Chain Policy 2019	The Council has made a commitment to actively examine where it sources its goods and services from to ensure those arrangements are ethical.	
5.8 Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social, and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	See section 5.7 / 4.3 / 4.4		
5.9 Ensuring fair access to services	5.9 Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)	The Council's equality objectives were revised and published as part of the SEP 2020-2024 in October 2020. Actions to meet the equality objectives address the impact of the outbreak of COVID-19 on our communities as well as issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement. The actions are to be reviewed during 2022-2023 to ensure they remain fit for purpose and aligned to the Council's revised Corporate Plan 2022-2027	None identified

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
6.1 Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	See 1.4.4 The Council's Constitution sets out the different responsibilities of Members and Officers. Clear job descriptions for all staff highlight roles and responsibilities.	The Monitoring Officer oversees the Council's Constitution and ensure it is kept up to date. The Report Guidance for both Executive and Non-Executive reports requires report authors to describe all options that have been considered, not just any preferred option.	None identified
6.2 Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts	<u>See sections 4.4.4.5 / 4.10 / 4.11 / 4.12</u>		
6.3 Planning Interventions - establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	See 5.1.1	See 5.1.1	None identified
6.4 Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	See also section 6.2		

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
6.5 Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks	See 2.4.2 See 5.4.1 Risk Management Policy		
6.6 Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances	See 4.13.1 Corporate Plan 2022-2027		
6.7 Establishing appropriate local performance indicators (as well as relevant statutory or other national performance indicators) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	See 5.1.1 Corporate Performance and Risk Management System (CPMS)	<p>There is a clear structure in place for delivering the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan, which includes a basket of key performance indicators.</p> <p>At the service level, Service Recovery Plans require the inclusion of key service recovery key performance indicators that are linked to service priorities and outcomes and improvements and changes that the service wants to achieve. Key business as usual service performance indicators can be included as well. Officers are encouraged to include qualitative measures of success (inspection/reviews or feedback results/what the aim is/what you want to achieve/ what does good look like?) as well as KPIs.</p> <p>On a quarterly basis Cabinet and relevant Cabinet Boards, receive a report on progress</p>	None identified

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
		being made in relation to the well-being objectives and priorities.	
6.8 Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	See also 5.1.1 Corporate Performance and Risk Management System (CPMS)	The system generates a number of performance reports to support the above quarterly reporting cycle.	None identified
6.9 Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan	6.9.1 Budget setting process	On 1 st March 2022, Council approved the 2022/2023 budget following stakeholder consultation. No new savings proposals were made and a balanced budget was set.	6.9 Development of a medium term financial strategy during the Spring of 2022.
6.10 Informing medium and long-term planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	See above 6.9.1 Budget setting process		
6.11 Optimising achievement of intended outcomes - ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	See above 6.9.1 Budget setting process		

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
6.12 Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	See above 6.9.1 Budget setting process		
6.13 Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage	See A6.9.1		
6.14 Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community....over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes"	See 2.4.1 Ethical Employment in Supply Chain Policy 2019		

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
<p>7.1 Developing the entity’s capacity - reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalen55</p>	<p>See 1.2.2 The purpose, vision and values of the council are contained within the Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027, along with key objectives and priority actions for the next twelve months. The Workforce Plan 2018 – 2022 will be replaced by a Workforce Strategy 2022 – 2027 building on the Future of Work framework strategy developed under the Corporate Recover Board.</p>	<p>The Workforce Strategy will seek to identify the key challenges and priorities for our employees over the next 5 year period, as set out in the Corporate Plan objectives and priorities, Medium Term Financial Plan, Digital Strategy and the Risk Register.</p> <p>An action plan will be developed alongside this to address these challenges, and to ensure that the Council has the right number of people, with the right skills and attitudes, in the right place, at the right time, and in order to deliver its services and functions.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>7.2 Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority’s resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently</p>	<p>7.2.1 There are a number of examples of research and benchmarking exercises undertaken across the Council:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Policy Team work collaboratively with a number of other Welsh Councils in relation to our corporate performance management system to share best practice. • Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) – National data set - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 2019/20 and 2021/22 PAM data set was not published by Data Cymru. Data Cymru have recently put arrangements in place so that local authorities can share and benchmark their PAM performance for 	<p>None identified</p>

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
Tudalen56		<p>both 2019/20 and 2020/21 and NPT signed up to this process. However, not all authorities will be providing data, not all PAMs will have data or full data due to the pandemic. Officers are currently working with Data Cymru and other local authorities on developing performance related data in the form of the self-assessment performance dataset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of services benchmark via APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). • The Council’s Electoral Services officers participate in the Association of Electoral Administrators network to benchmark electoral administration. • Participation by Officers and Members in networks facilitated by the WLGA to benchmark and research out best practice across Democratic Services functions in other Councils • Some service areas benchmark data with other services from other local authorities which also includes using benchmarking data available on the Welsh Government STATS Wales website. 	

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Tudalec 55</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From April 2022, where benchmarking data is available, all services will be required to use benchmarking to inform their self-assessment of performance when they complete their Service Recovery Plans (SRPs). All services through self-assessment will also have to demonstrate if they are achieving their intended outcomes and delivering value for money. The SRP process will help services reflect on and challenge what they do to help them continuously improve. 	
<p>7.3 Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved</p>	<p>See 2.4.2 / section 4.6 and 4.7</p>		
<p>7.4 Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources</p>	<p>7.4.1 Social Care Workforce Development Partnership (SCWDP)</p> <p>See also section 7.1 Workforce Plan 2018-2022</p>	<p>The broad aim of the SCWDP is to improve the quality and management of social services provision through a planned approach to training and to increase the proportion of staff across the whole social care sector with the qualifications, skills and knowledge they need for the work they do and to achieve this through Social Care Development Partnerships led by local authorities.</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
7.5 Developing the capability of the entity’s leadership and other individuals - developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained	See 1.4.4 The Council’s Constitution (different responsibilities of Members and Officers / clear job descriptions for all staff).		
7.6 Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	7.6.1 List of officer delegation	<p>The Constitution requires the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to keep a list of all officer delegations made in accordance with the Constitution.</p> <p>The work to review all proposals and to keep a central electronic list of delegations is ongoing. Work with individual Directorates to gather evidence of delegations is continuing with the aim of a report to Corporate Governance Group on methods of record keeping in Spring/Summer 2022.</p>	None identified
7.7 Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure, whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by	7.7.1 Cross party panel	The panel which is made up elected Members (and chaired by the Leader) undertakes the Chief Executive’s appraisal and agrees the objectives for year ahead and personal learning.	None identified
	See 1.4.4 The Council’s Constitution sets out the different responsibilities of	The Monitoring Officer oversees the Council’s Constitution and ensures it is kept up to date.	None identified

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
members and each provides a check and a balance for each other’s authority	Members and Officers. Clear job descriptions for all staff highlight roles and responsibilities.		
<p>7.8 Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged • Ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis • Ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons 	7.8.1 Member support and development.	<p>Each year a schedule of Member Seminars is delivered over the Civic year. Some topics are standard items such as: Committee Procedures, Code of Conduct, Council Budget and Corporate Safeguarding. However, as the year evolves new topics are added. There was a full programme of Seminars scheduled for 2021/2022 however this was disrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The following are examples of seminars that were held during 2021/2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Safeguarding • Invest in NPT • Draft Corporate Recovery Plan • Budget • Replacement LDP • Allergens in Food • Swansea Bay University Health Board • Service Pressures • Recovery Planning • Officer/Member Relationships • South Wales Trunk Road 	None identified

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
Tudalen60 learnt from both internal and external governance weaknesses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20mph speed limit • Destination Marketing • Recover, Reset and Renew – Let’s Talk • Biodiversity • Partnership and Community Cohesion • Trading Standards • Learning and Teaching in Wales <p>Members are also encouraged to participate in the Annual Development Review (ADR) Process, and the Annual Survey of Members which highlights development and training needs.</p>	
	7.8.2 Reviewing individual member performance	This is done on a regular basis taking account of their attendance and considering any training or development needs.	None identified
	7.8.3 Officer support and development	The training available for officers is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis to ensure they can fulfil their roles and responsibilities.	None identified
	7.8.4 Reviewing individual officer performance	See below	None identified

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
	See also 1.1.3 An induction programme for Members / 1.1.4 Staff: the Induction Checklist, (which contains information about the expected standards of) / 1.1.5 Performance Appraisal Process 1.2.2 The vision and priorities for staff		
7.9 Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	See section 4.5		
7.10 Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	7.10.1 External regulator inspections	In September 2021, the Council invited an LGA Recovery & Renewal Panel to hold facilitated workshops with senior officers and a cross party representation of Members (Coronavirus Member Panel) to help the Council take stock of and reflect upon the period since the pandemic first impacted and to look at the challenges that lie ahead as the Council was setting out its plans for recovery. Both Estyn and CIW have a programme of inspections based on their annual performance evaluation. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 contains a requirement for Peer reviews to be undertaken once every electoral (ordinary) cycle.	None identified
7.11 Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	See 1.1.5 Performance Appraisal Process	The majority of employees within the Council have regular 1:1s or supervision sessions with their manager to address their	None identified

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
Tudalen62		<p>performance and to discuss training and development needs.</p> <p>In 2022, the Learning, Training & Development Team will continue with progress in relation to the implementation of the iTrent HR / Payroll Database in Phase 2 of the Project, launching the Development module, which will facilitate more effective recording of the appraisal process and provide greater assurance. We will be able to report against the number of appraisals carried out to conclusion.</p>	
7.12 Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing	See 1.2.2 Workforce Plan 2018-2022	<p>The Council has signed the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge. We have in place an action plan which contains initiatives to support employees across the Council with mental ill health. Progress on the action plan is reported annually to Personnel Committee.</p> <p>A wide range of tools and resources have been developed to support our employees during Covid-19. We have developed different ways of communicating with and reaching out to our employees, and we are developing a training plan to support managers managing virtually and remotely, which require different skill sets and include</p>	None identified

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement /action
		<p>an emphasis on supporting the health and well-being of remote workers.</p> <p>As part of the Future of Work Strategy we have set out an intention to develop a Wellbeing Strategy.</p>	

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
8.1 Managing risk - recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making		See 5.4.1 / 5.4.2 and section 6.5	
8.2 Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively			
8.3 Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated			

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
8.4 Managing Performance - monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post-implementation review	8.4.1 Corporate Performance Management Framework See also 5.1.1 Corporate Performance and Risk Management system (CPMS)	We have a range of performance indicators that enable the Council to measure performance of services. To support the delivery of the framework, there is a corporate performance management team as well as directorate performance management teams.	None identified
8.5 Making decisions based on relevant, clear, objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	See also 1.4.4 The Council's Constitution The Constitution sets out how the Council operates and the process for policy and decision-making. Within this framework all the decisions are taken by Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Boards. The decisions are presented in a comprehensive written format in a standard template. The Cabinet Scrutiny Committee considers any decisions directly before the Cabinet meets. This is referred to as contemporaneous scrutiny. A record of decision-making and supporting materials are published (publically accessible reports only) on the Council's website via Modern.gov.		
8.6 Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made, thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible	8.6.1 Scrutiny Committees	The role and responsibility for scrutiny has been established and is clear. Annual forward work programme sessions are arranged to identify items for the committees to focus on in the new civic year. Throughout the year scrutiny Members also undertake specific training to enhance their skills (e.g. Chair and Vice Chair training).	None identified

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
8.7 Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	See 4.1.4 Council Meeting Cycle	The cycle of meetings sets out a calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely performance reports.	
8.8 Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post-implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements) Tudaleng65	8.8.1 Financial standards, guidance and regulations	The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for ensuring there are proper arrangements in place for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council. Corporate Directors are responsible for the financial management of their respective services and are supported by regular financial management information, which includes monthly financial monitoring reports.	None identified
8.9 Robust internal control - aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives	See also 5.4.1 Corporate Risk Management Policy		
8.10 Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis	See 5.4.1 Corporate Risk Management Policy		
8.11 Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	See 1.4.1 The Anti-fraud, Corruption and Malpractice Strategy		
8.12 Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	8.12.1 Annual Governance Statement	The Annual Governance Statement reports on the extent of the Council's compliance with its principles and practices of good governance, including how the Council has monitored the	None identified

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
	See also 9.9.1 Internal audit service	effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year. The Annual Governance Statement is reviewed every year and updated to reflect the improvement work undertaken during the year.	
8.13 Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment and that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	Governance and Audit Committee (Terms of reference, Membership and Training)	Governance and Audit committee complies with best practice (Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2013) Three new external Lay Members have been appointed to the Committee and will take up their roles at the first meeting following the May 2022 elections.	A8.13: New responsibilities for the renamed Governance and Audit Committee to be adopted during 2022/2023
8.14 Managing Data - ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	8.14.1: Data management framework and procedures / data protection officer / policies and procedures	The Head of Legal & Democratic Services is the Council's Data Protection Officer (DPO) and has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The DPO will report directly to the Corporate Directors Group on information security matters.	A8.14.1: A review of Data Processing, Data Protection and Data Sharing work to be undertaken by the Information Governance team.

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
8.15 Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	See 8.14.1		
8.16 Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	See 9.9.1 Internal audit service		
8.17 Strong public financial management - ensuring financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	See 3.2.1	The CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019 (FM Code) was introduced during 2020/2021, to improve the financial resilience of organisations by embedding enhanced standards of financial management. Compliance with the code was not mandatory during 2020/2021 but became mandatory for 2021/2022.	The Council will assess its financial position during 2021/2022 in line with the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code.
8.18 Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	See 3.2.1		

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
9.1 Implementing good practice in transparency - writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	See 4.3.1 Modern.gov system		
9.2 Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand	See 4.1.1 The Council produces a number of annual reports throughout the year to give assurances to our governance arrangements.		
9.3 Implementing good practices in reporting - reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources			
9.4 Ensuring members and senior management own the results	See 1.4.4 The Constitution		
9.5 Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good	9.5 Corporate Governance Group	The Corporate Governance Group ensure that the governance arrangements of the Council are robust and fit for purpose. The Group oversee any risks identified to governance arrangements and meet on a regular basis and have terms of reference to fulfil their role.	A9.5.1: Work to deliver governance awareness training across the Council is ongoing and will continue to ensure appropriate training takes place with Council

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability			
Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
governance (annual governance statement)			officers. Training continued throughout 2021/2022.
9.6 Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	See 8.12.1 Annual Governance Statement		
9.7 Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statement is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations	See 8.12.1 Annual Governance Statement		
9.8 Assurance and effective accountability - ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	9.8 External audit / regulatory reports		
9.9 Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon	9.9.1 Internal audit service	<p>The annual Internal Audit Plan was approved by the Governance & Audit Committee in April 2021.</p> <p>Due to sickness experienced within the team and a vacancy coupled with absences of staff across the council it was necessary to revise the original audit plan and as such a revised Internal Audit Plan was approved by the Governance & Audit Committee in November 2021.</p>	None identified

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
Tudalen70		<p>At the meeting in November 2021 the Governance & Audit Committee approved the revised Internal Audit Charter to reflect the changes in relation to the Head of Internal Audit.</p> <p>The Governance & Audit Committee received quarterly updates of progress against the Internal Audit Plan and details of any factors affecting achievement of the plan.</p> <p>Members were provided with the assurance rating of each completed audit.</p> <p>All recommendations made by auditors were accepted by the service managers and implementation will be confirmed during the post audit review process.</p> <p>Compliance with CIPFA’s Statement on the Role of the Head of internal Audit (2010).</p> <p>Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.</p>	

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Behaviours and actions that demonstrate good governance in practice	Evidence of key systems, documents and processes	Assurance of arrangements in place	Suggested improvement / action
9.10 Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	See 9.8		
9.11 Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	See 8.12.1 Annual Governance Statement		
9.12 Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	See 2.4.2 Governance arrangements are in place for each partnership we are involved in.		

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Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Chief Officers and the Internal Audit Service who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. A Corporate Governance Group, reporting to the Corporate Directors Group ensures that improvement work is scheduled, resourced and monitored. The Council uses a number of ways to review and assess the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, the table below highlights the different mechanisms during 2021/2022:

Constitution Review & Monitoring (2021/2022)	Internal Audit Service (2021/2022)	Governance Audit Committee (2021/2022)	Standards Committee (2021/2022)	External Auditors (2021/2022)
<p>We undertook a review of the Constitution to look at ways to modernise arrangements.</p> <p>An updated Constitution was taken to Council for adoption in September 2021 and subsequently approved to reflect the work of the review undertaken. This has now been published on the Council's Website.</p> <p>Formal reports by s151 or Monitoring Officer – no reports were issued by the s151 or Monitoring Officer in 2021/22.</p>	<p>The focus of Internal Audit work in 2021/2022 was on auditing areas considered to be a higher risk due to remote working due to the pandemic and the subsequent changes in control processes. This is in order to provide an opinion on the internal control, risk management and governance arrangements of the Council.</p> <p>The Head of Internal Audit's opinion is that the Council's internal control environment and systems</p>	<p>In 2021/2022 the Governance and Audit Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved the Council's Statement of Accounts including the Annual Governance Statement. • Approved the Council's Internal Audit Plan in April 2021 and a revised plan in November 2021 • Monitored Internal Audit performance against the plan. • Monitored External Audit Performance and received update 	<p>Members Code of Conduct. An annual report for 2020/2021 was presented to the Standards Committee and the Standards Committee has continued to meet through 2021/2022 to date, focussing specifically on dispensation reports and to consider national reviews undertaken by Welsh Government in respect of the standards regime throughout Wales and future proposed changes.</p>	<p>In the Audit Wales – Annual Audit Summary 2021 – which detailed the work completed since the Council's last Annual Improvement Report the Auditor General provided an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council's financial statements on 30th July 2021, in line with the statutory deadline. The Auditor General also certified that the Council has met its legal duties for improvement planning and reporting, and believes that it is likely to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales)</p>

Constitution Review & Monitoring (2021/2022)	Internal Audit Service (2021/2022)	Governance Audit Committee (2021/2022)	Standards Committee (2021/2022)	External Auditors (2021/2022)
	<p>of internal control in the areas audited are satisfactory; and that despite the limited scope of work reasonable assurance can be given that there have been no major weaknesses noted in relation to the internal control systems operating within the Authority.</p>	<p>reports from Audit Wales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee received Treasury Management Progress Reports in order to fulfill their obligations in relation to the Scrutiny of Treasury Management activity. 		<p>Measure 2009 during 2020/2021.</p>

Tudalen73

Governance Improvement Areas

Table 1 – Governance Improvement Action Plan - 2021/2022 into 2022/2023

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
A1 Tudalen Z4	<p>Reassess governance arrangements as part of recovery planning and the associated governance improvement priorities.</p> <p>Progress - Governance is one of the core activities that will underpin the implementation of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027. The Corporate Governance Group ensures the Council's governance arrangements remain robust and transparent but fit for purpose to enable the delivery of the priorities set out in the Plan and facilitate any cultural change required in the way the Council works.</p>	Corporate Governance Group
A1ii	<p>Democratic arrangements - continuous review of arrangements being undertaken to evolve democratic arrangements when meetings will be held remotely/hybrid.</p> <p>Progress - This work is ongoing. Cabinet and Democratic Services Committee approved the purchase of equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings and work is ongoing to implement the same. Reports have been presented to Full Council for the implementation of public speaking at Council meetings from January 2022 and petition schemes from Spring 2022. Work is underway to prepare a Public Participation Scheme in respect of democratic arrangements, which is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Statutory Guidance remains in consultation phase and we await the final version from Welsh Government before adopting our own Scheme. It is aimed that a final Participation Scheme will be subject to public consultation in Autumn 2022.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
A1ii	<p>Health, safety and welfare - ensuring risk assessments and associated control measures are robust across the Council to protect the workforce, those who need to use our services and functions and to uphold confidence in the Council's response to the ongoing situation.</p>	Head of Human & Organisational Development

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Tudalen75	<p>Progress - The Health and Safety Team have worked with frontline teams and trade union health and safety representatives to develop safe systems of work throughout the pandemic and continue to do so as we move into recovery. This included for example specific arrangements within Waste, amending the number of employees who could travel in a vehicle at any time, along with other control measures. Health and Safety Officers continue to work with Waste Teams as they have returned to a more normal service provision, adapting control measures to the changing nature of the pandemic risk. The Learning, Training and Development team supported the safe systems of work by providing appropriate Health and Safety training to newly appointed and redeployees to frontline teams, and for example spent several weeks supporting the 'Safe and Well' service's Food Distribution Hub.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Team and Facilities Management Team have worked jointly with the recognised trade unions to develop a Covid risk assessment based on The Quays setting out a number of identified risks and control measures designed to keep people as safe as possible during the pandemic. Accountable Managers have been issued with guidance on how to complete workplace specific risk assessments in addition to this, but using the Civic Centre risk assessment as a template. The Marketing and Communications Team issued short video guides for employees to show them what to expect on returning to the office, and this accompanied the 'Return to Workplaces' guidance which sets out what accountable managers need to do in order to arrange the safe return of employees to the workplace. This guidance has been kept under review as the WG guidance has changed during the course of the pandemic and as we move into 'Level 0', and adapted according to the changing circumstances.</p> <p>Homeworking Guidance was developed to keep our employees working at home safe and this included an online risk assessment which provides a report directly to each employee's accountable manager and enables them to understand if any measures, including the provision of equipment or furniture, is necessary to keep the employee safe.</p>	

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
	As we begin the progression into a Hybrid Framework, observing health and safety measures continues to be a key message to managers and employees.	
A1iii Tudalen76	<p>Equalities and other impacts - ensuring there is scrutiny of the extent to which the changes implemented and planned discharge the Council’s legal obligations.</p> <p>(Ensuring democratic oversight of the wider impact on the community arising from the crisis and how this may vary between geographies and between people who share protected characteristics).</p> <p>Progress - This work is ongoing. Cabinet and Democratic Services Committee approved the purchase of equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings and work is ongoing to implement the same. Reports have been presented to Full Council for the implementation of public speaking at Council meetings from January 2022 and petition schemes from Spring 2022. Work is underway to prepare a Public Participation Scheme in respect of democratic arrangements, which is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Statutory Guidance remains in consultation phase and we await the final version from Welsh Government before adopting our own Scheme. It is aimed that a final Participation Scheme will be subject to public consultation in Autumn 2022. Scrutiny Committees continue to meet on a frequent basis to ensure that there is suitable oversight of the Council’s statutory obligations.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services / Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support
A1iv	<p>Finance – understanding the one-off and recurring costs associated with the pandemic and its future impact on the Council’s financial health.</p> <p>Progress - Established processes are in place to deal with claims from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund for current Covid related costs. Understanding the longer term structural impacts of the pandemic will be part of the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).</p>	Chief Finance Officer

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Av Tudalen77	<p>Digital and Cyber Security - ensuring there is an assessment of the impact of current service delivery and innovation on Information Risk and suitable measures in place to manage the risks.</p> <p>Progress - The NPT Cyber Security strategy was approved by Members at full cabinet on the 12 January 2022.</p> <p>The strategy sets out the Council’s approach to protecting our digital services from unauthorised access, harm or misuse, which will ensure the services we provide are secure and our residents, businesses and stakeholders can safely interact with us.</p> <p>To support the implementation of the strategy, Cyber Playbooks have been developed which deal with a range of cyber incidents including phishing, malware and data loss.</p> <p>There is ongoing training and development for officers which has included the Socitm Breach Workshop attended, training sessions with staff to ensure they are cyber aware and ‘Bob’s Phishing exercise’ is underway to improve staff awareness of Phishing.</p> <p>Officers actively participate in a number of Cyber groups including the Wales WARP group and participate in NCSC briefings and workshops.</p> <p>Officers regularly arrange vulnerability testing of council systems with any remediation action scheduled and acted on. We ensure any new applications conform to security standards.</p>	Chief Digital Officer
Avi	<p>Business Continuity – a review of business continuity planning to identify lessons learned for both the ongoing situation and for future incidents. (Assurance that emergency response can be mobilised quickly to any rise of infection across the county borough or to local clusters/outbreaks).</p> <p>Progress - The Emergency Planning Team carried out an incident debrief in the summer of 2020 to review the Council’s response to the first wave of the pandemic. It included</p>	Head of Human & Organisational Development

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Tudalen78	<p>recommendations and a plan of action which was provided to Corporate Director Group for their consideration.</p> <p>The Strategic Officer rota was established in 2020, with every Corporate Director and Head of Service participating in 24/7 'on call' arrangements to ensure that the Emergency Planning Team have named senior officer support in the event of a major incident. Online training has been provided and every officer participating in the rota has been provided with hard copy guidance. Officers are given the opportunity to participate in 'exercises', which is a safe way to gain experience of participating in an incident response.</p> <p>Additional funding has been made available to enable the establishment of 2 PROTECT Officers and in February 2022 successful appointment were made to these posts. This will support the development of actions in line with the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy.</p>	
A1vii	<p>Capacity and capability – review the Council's workforce planning priorities to ensure they continue to be aligned with the organisation's priorities given the challenges and opportunities associated with moving through the "Recovery Process".</p> <p>Progress - The workforce priorities to support corporate recovery were developed, discussed and reported to the council's Corporate Recovery Board. This has led to the development of a framework 'Future of Work' strategy, and funding has been made available to recruit resources to develop and deliver this strategy.</p> <p>Audit Wales worked with the Head of Human & Org Development in the summer of 2021 to review workforce planning arrangements in the council, both pre pandemic and during the pandemic to see what lessons could be learnt. Wales Audit said:</p> <p>"The Council's reactive workforce planning during the pandemic worked well, with strong focuses on maintaining essential services and ensuring employee wellbeing".</p>	Head of Human & Organisational Development

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
Tudalen 179	<p>Wales Audit have particularly praised the Succession Planning Toolkit as a means of facilitating service level workforce planning. This was launched just before the pandemic in 2020 and as a result the operational use of the toolkit has so far been limited. Plans are in place in 2022 to support every Head of Service to develop a succession plan for their service which can then inform the development of corporate strategies to support these plans.</p> <p>Additional funding has been made available to support winter pressures identified in winter 2022, as well as to increase capacity as we progress into recovery. Additional resource to support recruitment capacity in the HR Team has led to the creation of a Recruitment Taskforce, working with service managers to establish what recruitment strategies are needed to recruit and retain employees within their services, developing a wide range of actions working with key partners such as DWP, Employability services, Swansea University, Neath College, Trinity St David's University, etc.</p>	
A11.1	<p>Undertake a review in 2021/2022 to ensure the revised Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool is embedded into practice by Autumn 2021.</p> <p>Progress - Three separate reviews of the IIA process have been undertaken to determine how well the IIA tool is embedded into the decision making process, its effectiveness and the quality of the IIAs. Two of the reviews were completed by March 2022 (Internal Audit / external consultant) with the last (Audit Wales) due to be completed by July 2022.</p> <p>The recommendations from the reviews undertaken will be implemented to further improve the embedding of the IIA process into decision making.</p> <p>Training to address the recommendations will be part of the New Member Induction Programme following the Local Government Elections in May 2022) for Members. Training will also be arranged for officers in early autumn.</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
A1.4.1	<p>Review of Anti-fraud, Corruption and Malpractice Strategy to be completed and reported to Members during 2021/2022.</p> <p>Progress - The review is nearing completion and a revised policy will be presented to Members for approval in the Autumn.</p>	Chief Finance Officer
A2.1.1	<p>Report annually to the Corporate Governance Group on corporate procurement and compliance.</p> <p>Progress - A report will be presented to Corporate Governance Group in Autumn 2022 highlighting compliance. In the interim, a report was undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit section on the procurement work during the Covid-19 pandemic with a high assurance of compliance being identified.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
A2.2.1	<p>Ethical awareness Officer training was provided in March 2021 on ensuring safe and legal decision making. Further sessions and ethical awareness matters are planned for 2021/2022.</p> <p>Progress - Training Sessions have taken place through 2021/2022 focussing on decision making and governance related issues to ensure officers are aware of the appropriate steps that must be taken in decision making. In addition, training for Chief Officers, Accountable Managers and Members has taken place with an external provider to consider the relationship between officers and members and the appropriateness of compliance with Member/Officer protocols.</p> <p>Training was also provided to Cabinet Members on the importance of the member and officer protocol. Code of Conduct training for elected members also took place in Spring 2021. Members Dispensations were sought at the Standards Committee by individual members throughout 2021/2022</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		
A2.3.1	<p>Courses in relation to Recruitment and Selection and Safe Recruitment and other Employment Policies and Procedures to be delivered in 2021/2022.</p> <p>Progress - Five Recruitment & Selection courses were delivered during 2020/2021 with 43 attendees. No courses of this nature were delivered in 2021/2022 due to covid-19. However, training courses on HR policies and procedures will be planned and included in the Corporate Training programme for 2022/2023.</p> <p>Informal Sessions were delivered by HR on the Hybrid Working Framework to Accountable Managers to help them implement Hybrid Working within their services and 6 courses on 'Managing and Motivating Teams' took place with 53 managers attending.</p>	Head of Human & Organisational Development
A2.4.2	<p>To ensure that a copy of all partnership agreements are logged centrally with the Head of Legal & Democratic Services.</p> <p>Progress - This work is ongoing.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
A3.2.1	<p>To put in place an agreed procedure where Financial Regulations and Accounting instructions are reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and proportionate. A review of Accounting Instructions is currently underway.</p> <p>Progress - Work is ongoing with the first, highest priority, accounting instruction having been reviewed and re-issued.</p>	Chief Finance Officer

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A4.1.2	<p>To undertake a review of FOI Publication Scheme throughout 2021/2022 with a report to Cabinet for approval. An amended version of the Publication Scheme will then be considered as part of a review on the Constitution to ensure it is fully up to date.</p> <p>Progress - This review is presently ongoing with the aim that a report will be presented to members in the Autumn 2022.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
A4.1.5	<p>To undertake review of the Corporate Communications and Community Relations Strategy 2018-2020</p> <p>Progress - This has been delayed to align the review with the publication of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and we will be timetabling a review of this with members.</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support
A4.1.1	<p>To undertake review of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2018-2020</p> <p>Progress - This has been delayed to align the review with the publication of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and we will be timetabling a review of this with members.</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support
A4.7	<p>Mapping exercise of partnership arrangements to be undertaken (as part of recovery planning) to capture the lessons learned including the identification of those partnerships that were effective during the emergency response and the de-prioritisation of those that were not.</p> <p>Progress – Key partners have been identified in the Council's recently published Corporate Plan who will continue to contribute / support the Council in achieving its priorities.</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support
A4.13.1	<p>Where relevant incorporate proposals for improvements from external regulators audit work into the Council's 2021/2023 corporate planning arrangements.</p> <p>Progress - The Council's Corporate Plan 2021/2023 was presented to Council on 26th May 2021.</p> <p>See comment in A5.1.1 below.</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A5.1.1	<p>We will incorporate the findings from the Audit Wales review of our performance, risk and business planning arrangements into the corporate review of the Council's corporate planning, financial planning and performance management arrangements (to be undertaken early 2021/2022 – as part of recovery planning).</p> <p>Progress - The findings from the above review were considered as part of the development of the Service Recovery Plan arrangements and are being considered as part of the development of the Councils corporate self-assessment framework (in readiness for implementation during 2022/2023).</p>	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A6.9.1	<p>Additional work on the forward financial plan covering the period April 2022 – March 2025 will be undertaken.</p> <p>Progress - The budget for 2022/2023 was agreed by Cabinet and Council on 28th February 2022 and 1st March 2022 respectively. Work is ongoing on the development of a Medium Term Financial Strategy.</p>	Chief Finance Officer

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A7.6.1	<p>To undertake a review of all proposals and keep a central electronic list of delegations.</p> <p>Progress - This work is ongoing and officers have been requested to update the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on any times delegations have been made to officers that have been made in accordance with Constitutional provisions. A version of the current list of delegations is available from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A8.13: Tudalen84	<p>New responsibilities for the renamed Governance and Audit Committee to be developed during 2021/2022.</p> <p>Progress - The remit of the Governance and Audit Committee was changed in March 2021 to comply with the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. Lay Members to the Governance and Audit Committee have now been recruited and approved by Full Council in February 2022.</p>	Chief Finance Officer / Head of Legal Services & Democratic Services
A8.14.1 Tudalen84	<p>Review of Data Processing, Data Protection and Data Sharing to be undertaken by the Information Governance team. (As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic there was a delay in commencing this area of work but work began in Spring 2021 and will continue throughout 2021/2022).</p> <p>Progress - This work is ongoing.</p>	Chief Digital Officer / Head of Legal & Democratic Services
A8.17	<p>The Council will assess its financial position during 2021/2022 in line with the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code.</p> <p>CIPFA issued a new code The FREM which sets out the standards of financial management for local Authorities. Adoption of the Code commenced in April 2021. Appendix A of this report provides a self-assessment which has been approved by Corporate Directors Group – it gives assurance that the financial management of the Authority are being met.</p>	Chief Finance Officer

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability		
Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2021/2022 into 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
A9.5.1	<p>Work to deliver governance awareness training across the Council is ongoing and will continue to ensure appropriate training takes place with Council officers. Training has been provided in Spring 2021 and will continue throughout 2021 and 2022.</p> <p>Progress - Training Sessions have taken place through 2021/2022 focussing on decision making and governance related issues to ensure officers are aware of the appropriate steps that must be taken in decision making. In addition, training for Chief Officers, Accountable Managers and Members has taken place with an external provider to consider the relationship between officers and members and the appropriateness of compliance with Member/Officer protocols. Further sessions will continue to take place through 2022/2023.</p>	Head of Legal & Democratic Services / Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support

Tudalen85

Table 2 – Governance Improvement Action Plan - 2022/2023

Ref (action)	Improvement Action to be undertaken during 2022/2023	Responsible Officer
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of the law		
A3.2.1	Complete the review of Accounting Instructions.	Chief Finance Officer
Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits		
A5.1	Develop and implement a revised Corporate Performance Management Framework that meets the new duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021	Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support
Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		
A5.4.1	Complete the review of the Council’s Risk Management Policy and ensure the Council’s Risk Register is updated regularly.	Chief Finance Officer / Strategic Manager Policy & Executive Support
A6.9	Develop a Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Chief Finance Officer

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

A9.5.1	Work to deliver governance awareness training across the Council is ongoing and will continue to ensure appropriate training takes place with Council officers.	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
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Signed:

Signed:

Chief Executive:

Leader of the Council:

Date:

Date:

Tudalen87

Financial Management Code of Self-Assessment

Section 1: The Responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer and the Leadership Team

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
A	The Leadership Team is able to demonstrate that the services provided by the authority provide value for money.	<p>The Auditor General examines whether the Council has put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and has to be satisfied that it has done this. The 2021 Annual Audit Summary issued by Audit Wales identified no issues in relation Value for money.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>
B	The authority complies with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government.	<p>We comply with the requirements of the code.</p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is a CIPFA qualified accountant with over 20 years of local government experience. Reports directly to Chief Executive Officer and sits on the Leadership Team, influencing material decisions and ensuring financial implications are provided in all reports. The CFO is responsible for maintaining and resourcing an effective Internal Audit service and leads on risk management.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>

Tudalen 88

Section 2: Governance and Financial Management Style

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
C	The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behaviours responsibility for governance and internal control.	<p>The Council adopts the Nolan principles as can be evidenced in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) The AGS was signed off by Audit Wales as part of the accounts audit process.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>
D	The authority applies CIPFA/ SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016.	<p>The Governance & audit committee reviews the adequacy of Governance arrangements of the authority, approving the AGS, receiving risk management updates. An independent review of governance arrangements was commissioned during 2021/22 and reported to the Governance and Audit Committee/</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>
E	The financial management style of the authority supports financial sustainability.	<p>Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary for 2021 concluded that the Council is well placed to maintain its financial sustainability and plans to strengthen some areas of financial management.</p> <p>The Authority has a healthy level of usable reserves and is projected to be 5.3% of the net revenue budget for 2021/22 and does not plan to use its general reserve to fund its medium-term financial deficit.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>

Tudalen 89

Section 3: Long to Medium-Term Financial Management

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
F	The authority has carried out a credible and transparent financial resilience assessment.	<p>The budget setting for 2021/22 includes a statement relating to the robustness of the estimates used in calculating the budget requirement and indicates the budget process has been prepared in conjunction with officers. It also identifies the risk areas that will be actively managed during the financial year.</p> <p>RAG Rating =</p>
G	The authority understands its prospects for financial sustainability in the longer term and has reported this clearly to members	<p>In 2019-20 the Council primarily concentrated on annual budgeting, and did not have a published Medium Term financial plan. During 2020-21 the Council has not made any changes to its approach to develop a medium-term financial plan, as prioritisation was given to the response to the COVID pandemic. Plans are currently underway to develop the forward financial plan and identify sustainable efficiency savings with a view to developing a medium term financial plan linked to the corporate objectives.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Amber</p>
H	The authority complies with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities	<p>The Authority complies will all elements of the Prudential Code.</p> <p>RAG Rating = Green</p>
I	The authority has a rolling multi-year financial plan with sustainable service plans	<p>During 2020-21 the Council has not made any changes to its approach to develop a medium-term financial plan, as prioritisation was given to the response to the COVID pandemic. Service recovery plans are being developed</p> <p>RAG Rating = Amber</p>

Tudalen90

Section 4: The Annual Budget

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
J	The authority complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process	The Council complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process as set out in the Local Government Finance Act (1992). A legal and balanced budget set by the Council by the statutory deadline 11 March and assurance has been provided regarding the robustness of estimates and adequacy or reserve levels. The Council is aware of the circumstances under which a S114 notice should be issue. RAG Rating = Green
K	The budget report includes a statement by the chief finance officer on the robustness of the estimates on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.	The budget setting report comments upon the robustness of the estimates included therein and a balanced affordable budget has been set. The reserves are reported within the budget setting process and monitored throughout the financial year. Currently the authority reserves are projected to be 5.3% of its net revenue budget, thereby remaining at a reasonable level. RAG Rating = Green

Section 5: Stakeholder Engagement and Business Plans

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
L	The authority has engaged with key stakeholders where appropriate in developing its long term financial strategy, medium term financial plan and annual budget.	Key stakeholders are consulted on key projects for example stakeholder views were sought when developing the corporate plan. Member workshops are run at budget setting. Cabinet approved the consultation process with stakeholders on the draft budget. Consultation responses are reported to Council. RAG Rating = Green
M	The authority uses an appropriate documented option appraisal methodology to demonstrate the value for money of its decisions.	The Authority does not have a documented methodology for options appraisals. Criteria have been developed and approved for agreeing Capital Projects. Further work is underway to develop a business case process. RAG Rating = Amber

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Section 6: Monitoring Financial Performance

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
N	The leadership team takes action using reports enabling it to identify and correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability.	Monthly reports are considered by budget holders. Significant issues identified are reported to Senior Management Team. Quarterly Finance reports are presented to Cabinet. Treasury management reports are taken to Cabinet on a quarterly basis RAG Rating = Green
O	The leadership team monitors the elements of its balance sheet that pose a significant to its financial sustainability.	The balance sheet is monitored by the CFO. RAG Rating = Green

Section 7: External Financial Reporting

Standard Reference	Financial Management	Rating (Red / Amber / Green)
P	The chief finance officer has personal and statutory responsibility for ensuring that the statement of accounts produced by the local authority complies with the Code Practice in Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.	The CFO's responsibilities are set out in the "Statement of responsibilities" within the Statement of accounts. This clearly sets out that the CFO is responsible for the preparation of the Councils Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. The annual audit letter confirms that the statement of accounts have been prepared on time and in accordance with the code of practice. RAG Rating = Green
Q	The presentation of the final outturn figures and variations from budget allows the leadership team to make strategic financial decisions.	The outturn figures are reported to Corporate Directors Group and included in the narrative report of the Statement of Accounts. RAG Rating = Green

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet
29th June 2022

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,
LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING
ANDREW THOMAS**

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: Briton Ferry West, Coedffranc Central, Coedffranc North, Coedffranc West, Dyffryn, Neath North

STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW WELSH-MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOL IN NEATH ABBEY

Purpose of report

1. To obtain approval to publish a proposal to establish a new Welsh – medium primary school at St John’s Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND
2. Publication of the proposal provides a 28 day period for the submission of objections. Following the period for submitting objections, Cabinet will need to meet to consider objections received before taking a decision as to whether or not the proposal should be implemented.
3. This Cabinet report needs to be read in conjunction with the consultation report (appendix A), the consultation document (appendix E) and the Cabinet report of 19th January 2022 (appendix F)

Executive summary

4. Neath Port Talbot's draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.
5. The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.
6. In recent years, pupil numbers in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas have risen with the result that both the English-medium schools in those areas and the Welsh-medium schools that admit pupils from those areas are facing accommodation pressures. New housing developments in Crymlyn and Coed Darcy in particular have contributed to the increase in pupil numbers, as well as increased numbers of families moving into the area.
7. Modelling work on expanding Welsh- medium provision suggests that the Neath Abbey area is a good location for creating a new Welsh-medium school.
8. This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.
9. It is proposed that a new Welsh-medium starter school would open for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils expected to attend the new school from September 2023.
10. Consultation on this proposal took place from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022.

11. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires the Council to consult on its proposal and to publish a consultation report summarising any issues raised by consultees, the Council's response to those issues and Estyn's view of the overall merit of the proposal. This report will be published on 20th June 2022

Background

12. The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities.
13. Implementing the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools.
14. The Council has determined to review its provision on the basis of:
 - educational standards
 - the need for places and the accessibility of schools
 - the quality and suitability of school accommodation
 - effective financial management
15. Neath Port Talbot currently has nine Welsh-medium primary schools, and one Welsh-medium middle (3-18) school over two sites, one at the north in Ystalyfera and one in the south in Sandfields/Baglan. Three of the nine primary schools are situated in the south of Neath Port Talbot – Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhos Afan in Sandfields, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd in Neath centre and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn in Briton Ferry. All three schools have seen an increase in pupil numbers and are facing accommodation pressures. The numbers of pupils choosing Welsh-medium in the south of the county borough has seen an increase year on year.

Table 1

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
YGG Castell-nedd	364	356	360	359	362	384	387	405	415	419	417
YGG Rhosafan	339	366	355	354	361	360	360	359	365	381	392
YGG Tyle'r Ynn	211	219	218	218	230	239	236	227	226	230	258
Total	914	941	933	931	953	983	983	991	1006	1030	1065

16. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot and all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives through the medium of Welsh. This principle is underpinned by ensuring universal access to this provision across the county borough. Neath Port Talbot Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and celebrating Welsh language learning across all phases and sectors.
17. Neath Port Talbot's draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. It both complements and assists in facilitating the National vision for the Welsh language, to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050:

The year 2050: The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society, and economy of Wales. Our vision is to secure favourable circumstances throughout the country that support language acquisition and use of Welsh language skills. We want to see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child, an education system that provides Welsh language skills for all

Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers (Welsh Government, 2017)

18. The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from

16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

Current Situation

19. In recent years, pupil numbers in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas have risen with the result that both the English-medium schools in those areas and the Welsh-medium schools that admit pupils from those areas are facing accommodation pressures. New housing developments in Crymlyn and Coed Darcy in particular have contributed to the increase in pupil numbers, as well as increased numbers of families moving into the area.
20. Modelling work on expanding Welsh-medium provision suggests that the Neath Abbey area is a good location for creating a new Welsh-medium school.
21. Currently, 125 pupils from Neath Abbey, Skewen, Llandarcy and Jersey Marine travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn to access Welsh-medium education, from nursery to year 6, shown below in tables 2 and 3. Approximately 50 pupils from Neath Port Talbot also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

Table 2

English-medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Castell Nedd									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	1	4	5	0	3	2	1	3	6	25
Coedffranc Primary School	1	5	6	7	5	3	3	4	2	36
Crymlyn Primary School	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	14
Total	2	9	12	10	11	7	6	8	10	75

Table 3

English –medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Tyle'r Ynn									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Coedffranc Primary School	0	5	3	8	3	3	4	6	7	39
Crymlyn Primary School	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	8
Total	0	9	5	8	3	6	4	8	8	50

22. It is anticipated therefore that locating a new Welsh-medium school in this area will alleviate the capacity issues in both Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn (nearly or at full capacity) and will further stimulate demand for Welsh-medium education provision in the area.

The proposal

23. This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.
24. Abbey Primary School currently operates between three separate sites and the school has relocated to a brand new build single site school at Heol Penlan in the Longford area of Neath during April 2022.
25. It is proposed that a new Welsh-medium starter school would open for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils expected to attend the new school from September 2023.
26. The new school would provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils by September 2029. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil numbers, including potential growth in pupil population.

27. An application to Welsh Government for grant funding to completely refurbish and modernise the building was unsuccessful, however it is intended that work will be undertaken to adapt the building to make it suitable for childcare and younger primary aged children. Work will include fully refurbishing the two toilet facilities in the main building (new toilets, hand basins, cubicles flooring etc.), remodelling classrooms to ensure that they are suitable for delivering the new curriculum, new flooring to the reception area and corridors and upgrading the school hall. A complete mechanical and electrical upgrade will be made in order to facilitate learning walls and digital equipment. External works including new fencing will also be completed. It is estimated that these works would cost approx. £200k and will be funded from the education capital maintenance budget.
28. The admission arrangements will be in line with the Council's approved admission arrangements for primary schools. For the purpose of consultation, the proposed admission number for primary phase education is 30.
29. The proposed new Welsh-medium school will serve the combined catchment areas of Crymlyn, Coedffranc and Abbey primary schools, making it easier for parents to easily understand their Welsh-medium and English-medium choices, and is a change to the current situation where pupils in this area attend either Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn for Welsh-medium education. Approximately 50 pupils from the Skewen area also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.
30. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.
31. A starter school model is considered the most appropriate solution for new Welsh-medium schools. Whilst demand is growing for Welsh-medium education, opening the school immediately to all year groups could destabilise other schools across the authority and could adversely affect the ability to support effective provision.

- **What is a starter school?**

32. A starter school is a model that can be used when establishing a new school to allow the facilities and staff to be used efficiently while the school grows to its full potential. The school opens initially with only Nursery class, and a year group is then added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6.

33. During the *first* year of the starter school opening, one mainstream class will be in operation as follows

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;

34. In the *second* year, the starter school will consist of:

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
- A **reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;

35. In the *third* year, the school will consist of:

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
- A **reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;
- A **Year 1** class with a maximum of **30** places;

36. In the years following, each new reception year group will have a maximum of 30 places. Full capacity of the school will be realised in September 2029 when all year groups will operate under a one-form entry arrangement.

37. The table below shows an example of the starter model of growth for a one form-entry school.

Table 4

Available Places by Academic Year							
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Nursery (January)	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Reception (September)	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 1		30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 2			30	30	30	30	30

Year 3				30	30	30	30
Year 4					30	30	30
Year 5						30	30
Year 6							30

- **What are the benefits of a starter school?**
 - The school capacity grows as demand increases;
 - Stable growth to support existing schools;
 - Reduces the possibility of mass movement of pupils from other schools;
 - Effectively manages class sizes to support staffing and the school budget;
 - Pupils living outside the school catchment area can still apply for a place at the school and if places are available may be successful.

- **What are the disadvantages of a starter school?**
 - Takes a number of years to deliver growth
 - Possible implications for siblings with changing catchments;
 - Possible implications for families moving to Neath Port Talbot with different aged children due to changing catchments;

Childcare provision

38. The proposal includes the intention to incorporate a new Welsh-medium childcare setting on the school site, to offer pre-school and wraparound care for children through the medium of Welsh. This would increase the total childcare provision across Neath Port Talbot through the creation of 12 additional places and will have a positive impact on Welsh-medium education through stimulated demand.

39. The nearest Welsh-medium childcare provision is some distance away in Neath and a new setting in the proposed new school would ensure that families from the area are offered greater choice and flexibility, and will also support parents to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

Consultation

40. This school reorganisation proposal is being brought forward under the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme. Formal consultation is required in line with the Welsh Government's School organisation Code, November 2018, which specifies the procedures

to be followed, including the content of the consultation document, those to be consulted and timeframes.

41. The consultation period ran from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022. The consultation document was made available by e-mail to consultees. It was also available on the Council's website. Hard copies were available on request.
42. Responses to the consultation were submitted by email, and via the Council's online consultation portal. Details of how to respond were included in the consultation document and links to the online consultation portal were included on the website and on the Council's social media channels.
43. In total 47 responses were received

Online responses	44
Emails	3
Paper forms/letter	0
44. In total 28 consultees supported the proposal recognising the need for an additional Welsh-medium school in the area, the linguistic benefits to the community and the vision of making Welsh-medium education accessible to all.
45. 19 consultees raised concerns relating to the traffic management of the proposed site and age of the current building.
46. The consultation report has been made available to those required by the Code, including responders who requested a copy, with the latter being contacted by email advising of the link to the report on the Council's website.
47. The Consultation Report contains details of comments received with officer responses and is attached as Appendix A.

Impact on Pupils and Parents

48. The proposed new school will offer the opportunity for pupils to access Welsh-medium education in their immediate area rather than travelling to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn. It is anticipated that this will prove to be

attractive to many parents in the area and that interest in the Welsh language will therefore grow.

49. The additional benefit of an onsite childcare provision will also support parents and may help and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.
50. Parents of children who currently attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from the Neath Abbey and surrounding areas will not be affected by this proposal as their children will remain in their current schools. Younger siblings (preschool or nursery age) will be able to access the proposed new school and parents/carers will be encouraged to take advantage of the more local provision.
51. Pupils and parents from Neath centre, Briton Ferry and surrounding areas will also benefit from the proposal as Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn will, should this proposal be approved, have capacity to admit more pupils from their immediate areas and will be able to avoid the possibility of catchment pupils being refused a place at their nearest suitable school.

Impact on Governors

52. A temporary governing body will be established prior to the opening of the proposed new school. The temporary governing body will take important decisions about the new school including the appointment of a head teacher, agreeing a staffing structure and adopting operating procedures and agreeing a name for the school. The temporary governing body will also resolve other issues including school uniform which, in line with good practice, will be determined following consultation with parents and if possible with pupils.
53. The temporary governing body is expected to include existing governors from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn with the aim of ensuring good working relationships between the three schools, and to ensure that the good practice currently evidenced in the two schools is shared and developed into the new school.

Impact on Travel Arrangements

54. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their immediate local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.
55. Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council's Home to School Transport policy. This means that primary school aged pupils living 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable or designated school will be considered for transport assistance.
56. Under the School Travel Plan requirements, all schools, together with the Council's Road Safety Team, are committed to:
 - improving road safety within the local community
 - raising awareness about travel issues
 - encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for the school journey where applicable
 - encouraging independent travel where applicable.

Financial Impact

57. An application for Welsh Government grant funding to completely refurbish and modernise the building was unsuccessful, however works will continue to adapt the building to make it suitable for childcare and younger primary aged children.
58. Work will include fully refurbishing the two toilet facilities in the main building (new toilets, hand basins, cubicles flooring etc.), remodelling the classrooms to ensure that they are suitable for delivering the new curriculum, new flooring to the reception area and corridors and upgrading the school hall. A complete mechanical and electrical upgrade will be made in order to facilitate learning walls and digital equipment. External works including new fencing will also be completed. It is estimated that these works will cost approx. £200k and will be funded from the education capital maintenance budget.

59. Additional revenue costs for two years for the proposed starter school are estimated at £652,651, based on the current costs of teaching and support staff required to operate a starter school at the point of opening.
60. Revenue funding for schools is distributed on an annual basis by means of an approved formula. This ensures school budget shares are allocated on a simple, objective and measurable basis.
61. Additional revenue costs associated with the opening of the new welsh medium starter school can be met from existing resources within the current financial year. Recurring revenue costs for future financial years will need to be factored into the work associated with the development of the medium term financial plan as there is currently no provision for opening of additional schools within the delegated schools budget quantum. As such the revenue costs for the new starter school represents a pressure on Council resources and additional funding will need to be secured to operate the school successfully.
62. Once the starter school is in operation the budget allocation for the school will come from the annual overall Schools Budget quantum. The school will receive an annual budget share allocation, using the same budget formula methodology as every other primary school within the authority. The school will need to operate within the financial constraints of its annual schools budget, the same as every other school.
63. Most of the revenue budget allocation to schools is generated by pupil numbers. Therefore the proposed new school budget will be based mainly on the pupil roll, and as the pupil numbers grow the budget will also increase. Based on a school of 210 full time pupils and 45 part time nursery places the projected budget share for the proposed new school is estimated to be approx. £957k when the school is fully occupied.
64. Transport costs are unlikely to be affected by this proposal as while it is expected that pupils attending the proposed new school will no longer require transport, the current buses will still be required to transport pupils to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from other areas, although it is possible

that smaller vehicles could be used, or routes could be combined so less vehicles are needed.

Integrated Impact Assessment

65. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) 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, and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Environment (Wales) Act 2016).
66. The IIA is attached as appendix C. This indicates that the proposal is likely to have an impact on pupils, staff and other potential users of the new school. The proposal may also impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language. Members are asked to consider the same as part of any decision making.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and impact on Welsh Language

67. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. The local authority underpins this principle by committing to enabling all learners to benefit from its universal access to this provision.
68. Our statutory education system also has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers as highlighted by Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy. In order to achieve our goals, we must significantly increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in all settings and thus use it in their everyday lives.
69. Welsh Government have set a target for Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education of between 17% and 27% over a 10 year period. This target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

70. In order to reach our target of an increase of 208 pupils by the end of the 10 year plan, we will aim to establish 3 new Welsh-medium schools within Neath Port Talbot. The first of the 3 schools is the subject of this proposal, a new single form entry starter school in Neath Abbey area subject to member approval and compliance with the extant criteria of the Schools' Organisation Code.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

71. Overall the proposal is expected to have many positive impacts on the Welsh language. The proposal will support the council's progress towards the Welsh in Education Plan targets of increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032 and will also provide the opportunity to increase the numbers of primary aged pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision within their immediate area.
72. The proposal should allow further growth in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from their local areas at the same time as creating school places for a growing population in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas.
73. Additionally onsite childcare provision should support parents and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.
74. To further improve the positive impacts the council will ensure that the new school, if approved, will be publicised to raise awareness with prospective parents, with the aim of ensuring that there is a growing Welsh speaking pupil population in the area.
75. Negative impacts on the language identified by consultees could occur if pupil numbers at in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn do not increase as expected. It is unlikely that overall pupil numbers in Neath Port Talbot would not increase with the introduction of a new school, however it is recognised that the current schools may need additional support to ensure that the recent rise in pupil numbers continues. It will be necessary to ensure that additional support is provided and that these schools are also publicised in their local areas. Additional building work has already taken place at both schools to increase the capacity and to improve the learning environments.

76. Admission arrangements will need to ensure that new pupils are not 'swapping' between schools and that catchment areas are adhered to as much as possible while still allowing for parental choice. The proposal to open the starter school one year group at a time will prevent sudden destabilisation of the current schools as children who are already attending will not be able to move into the new school, as only nursery pupils will be able to apply.
77. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix B and members are requested to consider the same as part of decision making.

Valley Communities Impacts

78. There are no impacts on valley communities as result of this report.

Workforce impacts

79. This proposal seeks to establish a new Welsh-medium school and as such any workforce impacts are positive, as new teaching and support staff would be required for the new school.
80. There is a risk that pupil numbers at existing schools that could be affected by this proposal could reduce, leading to possible job losses. This is not anticipated in the early years of the school opening as numbers in the catchment areas have demonstrated significant growth which is predicted to continue. However if this was to be the case then staff from the Welsh-medium schools or who have the appropriate Welsh language skills in the English-medium schools could transfer to the new school, where additional staff would be needed.
81. The draft Welsh in Education Plan outlines the need for additional staff with appropriate Welsh language skills across Neath Port Talbot in future years and how training and development needs will be identified and addressed. It is expected that staff in the current English-medium schools in this area may wish to develop Welsh language skills in the future enabling them to also transfer to the new school if they should wish to do so and if the pupil numbers grow as expected.

Legal impacts

82. The School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) provides the legislative framework by which the Council may implement a proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, November 2018, made under Sections 38 and 39 of the Act, imposes on the Council requirements and guidelines on matters relating to school organisation. The Council's procedures are in line with legislative requirements.
83. Pupil travel arrangements will be in line with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008; the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014; and the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, 2017.
84. Revenue funding will be in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010; and the Council's approved formula for funding schools.

Risk Management Impacts

85. A risk assessment has been carried out under the Council's Risk Management Policy 2018.
86. The potential risks associated with the proposal comprise the Council's reputation, educational standards, financial management, staff employment and service delivery.
87. Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:
 - forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise
 - the demand for Welsh-medium places is not as high as expected
 - current Welsh-medium schools pupil numbers reduce
 - increased staff anxiety in current schools affected by the proposal
 - resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support
 - educational standards not maintained
 - 21st Century School capital funding opportunity not realised
 - the development of Welsh in the early years is not realised due to no available, suitable site for a childcare provision
 - budget allocation insufficient to meet needs

88. Failing to implement the proposal will result in the following teaching/learning and financial benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:
- progress towards the Welsh in Education Plan targets of increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032
 - increasing the numbers of primary aged pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision within their immediate area
 - allowing further growth in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from their local areas
 - creating school places for a growing population in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas
 - avoiding increased transport costs as a result of having to transport children across Neath Port Talbot to access suitable provision due to nearest suitable schools being full
 - onsite childcare provision to support parents and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children
89. The benefits of implementing the proposal will mitigate the effects of identified risks. A new Welsh-medium school in Neath Abbey will ensure progress towards the targets of increased numbers of pupils taught through the medium of Welsh as outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and will enable existing Welsh-medium schools to continue to grow and flourish with pupils from their local areas.
90. The full risk assessment is attached to this report as appendix D.

Recommendation

91. Having given due regard to the impact assessments in relation to equality, risk and Welsh language, and to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales 2015), together with the legal implications, it is recommended that,

(a) In line with Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, Members approve the statutory publication of a proposal to establish a new Welsh –medium primary school at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND

(b) The proposed date of implementation to be 1st January 2023.

(c) Notice of the proposal to be published on 30th June 2022, allowing 28 days for receipt of objections and a report be brought back to members following the outcome of this period for final determination by members.

Reasons for proposed decision

92. This decision is necessary to comply with the formal publication requirements of the School Organisation Code and associated legislation. A draft statutory notice is attached as appendix G. Implementation of the proposal will enable the Council to promote high educational standards and the fulfilment of every child's potential. It will also enable the Council to meet its duty to secure efficient education in its area.

Implementation of the decision

93. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation following consultation with the chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Appendices

Appendix A: Consultation report
Appendix B: Welsh Language Impact Assessment
Appendix C: Integrated Impact Assessment
Appendix D: Risk Assessment
Appendix E: Consultation Document
Appendix F: Cabinet Board report January 2022
Appendix G: Draft Statutory Notice

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning
Service
Strategic School Improvement Programme

CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal to establish a new
Welsh-medium
3-11 school in Skewen**



Response to consultation on the Proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Skewen

- analysis and comments

Introduction

On 19th January 2022, the Council's Cabinet determined to consult on the proposal to establish a Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Skewen. The consultation period ran from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022. A list of consultees is included at Appendix A. This consultation report summarises the issues raised by consultees during the consultation period. It responds to these by means of clarification and commentary, with supporting reasons.

Consultation responses were received in support of the proposal recognising the need for an additional Welsh-medium school in the area, the linguistic benefits to the community and the vision of making Welsh-medium education accessible to all. Concerns were raised relating to the traffic management of the proposed site and age of the current building.

The view of Estyn, the schools' inspectorate, is included in this consultation report together with views from parents, the community, the Community Council, Governing Bodies and Menter Iaith.

This report needs to be read alongside the consultation document, 'Proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Skewen.

Context

The Council has consulted with interested parties on the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Skewen located on the vacant site of the former Abbey Primary, St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey.

Background

The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities.

Implementing the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools.

The Council has determined to review its provision on the basis of:

- educational standards
- the need for places and the accessibility of schools
- the quality and suitability of school accommodation
- effective financial management

The Council is proposing to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school at Skewen.

It has been proposed that the new school will be located on the vacant site of the former Abbey Primary, St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey and is expected to open to nursery pupils in January 2023.

The new Welsh-medium primary school for boys and girls aged 3-11 years will be a starter school. It will open initially with only Nursery class, and a year group will be added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6. Full capacity of the school will be realised in September 2029 when all year groups will operate under a one-form entry arrangement. As a result, the proposed new school will provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils in September 2029. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil numbers, including potential growth in pupil population.

The proposed new Welsh –medium school will serve the combined catchment areas of Crymlyn, Coedffranc and Abbey primary schools, making it easier for parents to easily understand their Welsh-medium and English-medium choices, and is a change to the current situation where pupils in this area attend either Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn. Approximately 50 pupils from the Neath Abbey area also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.

Consultation process

On 19th January 2022, the Council's Cabinet determined to consult on the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Skewen. The consultation period ran from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022. A list of consultees is included at Appendix A. The consultation document was made available by e-mail to consultees. It was also available on the Council's website. Hard copies were available on request.

Responses to the consultation were submitted by email, and via the Councils online consultation portal. Details of how to respond were included in the consultation document and links to the online consultation portal were included on the website and on the Council's social media channels.

The consultation document invited views and opinions to be submitted in respect of the proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires the Council to consult on its proposal and to publish a consultation report summarising any issues raised by consultees, the Council's response to those issues and Estyn's view of the overall merit of the proposal.

The proposal and the consultation report will be considered by elected Members of the Council and should it be agreed to proceed with the plans consulted upon then the next stage of the process will be to publish a statutory notice outlining the proposal. This would be published for a period of 28 days during which written objections may be submitted.

Where objections are received, an objection report will be published summarising the objections and the Council's response to those objections. Elected Members of the Council will consider the proposal in light of objections received when taking a decision as to whether or not the proposal is to be implemented.

Consultation Responses

Online responses	44, 26 in support
Emails	3, 2 in support
Paper forms/letter	0, 0 in support

In total 47 responses

Although a count of the responses is shown below, no particular weight is given to the number received as it is the views expressed and issues raised which informed this consultation report.

Table 1

Parents/Carers	12	Members of the Community	20
Staff	1	Others	6
Governors/ Governing Bodies	2	Community Council	1
ESTYN	1	Prospective parents/ carers	4

- Summary of comments received

In order to reflect the sentiment and feelings expressed by respondents, extracts from the responses to the consultation are included below. These are a sample of the views expressed. Individual concerns and queries have been addressed either directly or indirectly in the officer response to each of the main themes arising from the consultation.

-I'm supportive. It is important that we allow accessible Welsh-medium education for everyone close to home.

-This will contribute towards the government's target for a million Welsh speakers.

- We agree that it is a great idea to establish a new Welsh-medium school in the area. Looking at statistics in the consultation we can see that the demand is here. The Council needs to remember how important it is to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education with parents in the area, so that they understand all the benefits that they and their children have as they attend a Welsh-medium school. We as Menter Iaith would be keen to help with this important promotional work.

- The governing body of Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd has recently met to discuss your plan to establish a new Welsh-medium school aged 3-11 in Neath Abbey and we are pleased to say that we are in favour of the scheme.

-I think it would be excellent to have a school in the village of Skewen. It would serve a large area, reduce congestion through Neath Town Centre. Save parents from Skewen having to travel.

- YGG Castell Nedd is currently over subscribed with limited capacity to expand. Having more local Welsh school encourages more people to speak Welsh and can only be a good thing for our community.

- I think it gives a lot more options to the area if this was an option when my son started I would off 100% put him in the Welsh school.
- My son would have a great opportunity to learn the Welsh language within the community. He would potentially start on January in the first nursery class. I think this would be great for children of Neath Abbey and Skewen.
- The Welsh language is an important part of Wales. It is currently a dying language and it is our responsibility to not let it die out completely.
- For children living in Skewen and Neath abbey area there is no Welsh language school within walking distance at present. The Welsh government aims to give all children in wales the opportunity to learn in Welsh medium, and as it stands children in this area have less of a change due to having to commute in neighbouring towns and as a result a slap being out of catchment area.
- As a very local resident i would be pleased to see a welsh school in skewen, wish it was available when we moved here 4 years ago as we would have sent our daughter, unfortunately its to late for our daughter but wiuold be a fantastic benifit to local children when they reach school age, as well as being an asset to skewen itself.
- It is high time that there was a choice as to whether Welsh-medium learning would be provided within the local community.
- Having better access to Welsh Schools in the area would be a phenomenal advancement for Wales.
- There are no welsh schools this side of Neath and living in skewen but working in Swansea this would be ideal when my 1 year old comes to start school.
- This is a wonderful proposal to keep the Welsh language alive and thriving.
- I would likely move out of the area should there not be an opportunity to send my kids to welsh school. The building should be protected and rescued, as should the other site. Parking will continue to be an issue as it is now, however this could be mitigated with better policing in the area during key times.
- As a welsh speaker I would want my child to go to a welsh medium school the only option is Ysgol Castell Nedd and with Bro Dur open now too I feel there should be stronger and better feeder primary schools in the area.
- As a previous pupil and current community member it would be a waste for the building to be vacant, there's also no local Welsh schools that are easily accessible for our local community, I believe this will help the Welsh language flourish and create a stronger local Welsh community.
- It would definitely have a positive impact because we are going to offer golden opportunities for the children of the area to use the Welsh language.
- I would question why it is being sited where it is given the current chaos that traffic and parking causes for both residents and parents every day.
- This is far too dangerous for a school, so pleased new school built in Longford, so this is adding even more traffic to already congested chaos and no parking outside school.
- My understanding of the reason the current school was moved was due to safety concerns of children on the main road. This is not a good location for a school. I support the opening of extra Welsh schools in the area but not in this location.

- Whilst a new Welsh school is much needed the site was closed as unsuitable for English medium education but is deemed suitable for children attending a Welsh medium school. It is situated on an extremely busy road which is not suitable for young children.
- Traffic ,congestion, pollution. All the reasons the previous school was moved. Why should children at a Welsh school be of less concern of these issues than those at an English one. Not good enough for those attending an English speaking school but ok for Welsh speaking ones. Is this another example of the resurgence of the Welsh Knot?
- The establishment of the new school on this site will bring with it all the traffic problems previously experiences by Mynachlog Nedd Junior School over the years.
- It is a pity that the proposal is not a brand new building rather than being established in an old building.
- Another ageing building, limited site capacity to grow, failure to take into account what it takes to develop a high performing school, and a failure to address the ageing and limited site capacities of existing welsh schools in the area. It also fails to take into account the needs of a site in line with the new curriculum e.g outdoor space and a flexible learning space.
- Once again Welsh language schools are being given the leftovers when English medium schools are built a new campus to suit today's needs. It is not fair on Welsh medium children. Why do they not get a purpose built state of the art school?
- Why not a new building rather than an old building?
- Only as long as the school is temporary and leads to a move to a brand new school.
- My understanding is that there would be a school sited closer to the Coed Darcy estate. I am not sure why this isn't happening.
- Also my children are now settled with friends and class mates in castell nedd I would not like them to be forced to move schools due to this decision.
- There are already two Welsh medium schools within the area and how will this new school affect their intake/numbers?
- Long has been the expectation, and difficult to understand this choice of site after 25 years and in remembering the consultation that has been and the promise to build a Welsh-medium school in Llandarcy

Governing Body Responses

The governing body of Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd have responded and state 'The governing body of Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd has recently met to discuss your plan to establish a new Welsh-medium school aged 3-11 in Neath Abbey and we are pleased to say that we are in favour of the scheme'.

Additionally the following specific point was raised:

- 'While we support the proposed opening of a new Welsh-medium school we would like to express our disappointment that that school is to be established in the old Neath Abbey school buildings'

Trade Unions

No responses were received from Trade Unions

Community and Town Councils

A response has been received from Clydach Community Council.

Clydach Community Council raised concerns around traffic and parking issues around the site of the proposed new school.

Estyn

It is Estyn's view that the proposer has given a clear explanation of the rationale behind the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Neath Abbey.

Estyn states that it would also provide more local Welsh-medium education in an area where there are parents who want Welsh-medium education for their children. Estyn considers that the proposal is likely to maintain current standards of education, provision, and leadership and management.

They also consider that a 'seedling school' is the most appropriate solution for a new Welsh-medium school, which would prevent the problem of creating instability in existing Welsh-medium schools that currently provide education for this catchment area.

ESTYN states that another major advantage is the new Welsh-medium childcare provision that will be located on the school's site as the nearest provision is currently some distance away in Neath. Locating the new childcare provision at the school will give parents more choice and flexibility to choose Welsh-medium education for their children.

Estyn have commented that - *The proposer has not clearly explained the process they intend to follow in terms of securing an effective governing body for the seedling school, nor the plans for recruiting a headteacher and staff.* Should the proposal be approved then a new Governing Body will be formed, which might include some Governors from other Welsh-medium schools in the area, and governors who are local to the proposed new school. The Governing Body will receive support and advice from officers to help guide them through the process of recruiting and appointing staff.

When considering the four options in the consultation, ESTYN agree with the decision to support this option as the ideal one, especially when considering

the local authority's target of increasing the number of pupils in Welsh-medium education over a 10-year period.

The full response is included as Appendix B.

Officer responses

-Coed Darcy

Comments have been received asking why the new Welsh-medium school will not be built as previously stated in Coed Darcy.

It is anticipated that when a school is built in Coed Darcy, it will be a Welsh-medium school. At present, the Local Authority does not own any land on this site. There is currently an outline planning application, with all matters reserved except for strategic access, for residential uses (C2 & C3 use class), including land for education (D1 use class) with associated public open space, commercial uses (A1, A2, A3, B1, D1 & D2), commercial/employment (B2 & B8) uses, public open space, highway works, sustainable drainage, ecological mitigation and enhancement, landscaping, ground remediation, and associated engineering and infrastructure work.

This is currently undetermined, but within the masterplan a site for education provision to serve the development has been identified.

It is for this reason that we have taken the decision not to wait for further building developments in Coed Darcy and to open a Welsh-medium seedling school in the area. Currently there are 124 pupils from the area attending Welsh medium education within NPT. 52 of these pupils are traveling on school transport from the area to YGG Castell-nedd and Tyle'r Ynn (schools at or close to full capacity) along with an additional 51 pupils in the area attending Welsh medium schools in a neighbouring authority. The current need for a Welsh-medium school in this area is clear.

The seedling school will have 210 places (one form entry) and could potentially transfer to Coed Darcy when a new school is built in the future. Alternatively, if the demand for Welsh medium education should grow as expected, there is a possibility that the Welsh-medium seedling school will remain in Skewen and an additional Welsh-medium school could be built in Coed Darcy to accommodate the growing numbers. Comprehensive demographic and geographic assessments will be completed in order to assess the situation when contractors complete the number of builds needed to trigger the build of a new school in line with planning requirements.

-The proposed location

Comments have been received which question why the site was not fit for purpose for an English-medium school but is acceptable for a Welsh-medium school. Abbey Primary did not move to a new site as a result of the poor condition of the buildings nor as a result of any issues relating to safety. The decision in relocating the English-medium school was made due to capacity issues and the practical issues of having one primary school split over 3 sites. Therefore, the site in St. John's Terrace remains suitable for a one form entry school.

Another key reason for using an existing site as a starter school using the seedling model is to ensure that when a new Welsh-medium school is built in Coed Darcy, it will be of a correct size and capacity. At present, using catchment area data and the number of existing pupils from the area in Welsh-medium education, it is predicted that a single form entry Welsh-medium school is needed within the Neath Abbey area. Due to the high percentage of population growth in the area and its proximity to neighbouring Local Authorities, it is expected that the school will grow. At this stage, it is not possible to accurately predict the rate of growth in Welsh-medium education in this area due to the existing lack of Welsh-medium provision. Therefore, by establishing the first cohorts within the existing site and analysing admission application trends and population growth over the first years, we will be able to better predict the size and capacity needed for a new build Welsh-medium school within the area in the future.

A comment has been received in relation to lack of outdoor learning space on the proposed site. The site in St. John's Terrace comprises of a range of hard surface playground areas and an extensive grassed area adjacent to the buildings. These areas provide an excellent opportunity to develop a range of flexible outdoor learning spaces in line with the new curriculum.

-Pupils forced to move schools

Pupils who live within the catchment area but are currently attending other schools are not expected to transfer to the new Welsh-medium school. As the new school is a starter school, there will be no option for pupils in other schools to transfer in January 2023, other than Nursery pupils, with Reception pupils in September 2023, Year 1 in September 2024 and so forth.

-Traffic/ parking issues

The proposal currently under consultation relates to establishing a new Welsh-medium school on an existing school site. It is proposed that this school will be for pupils within a two mile catchment radius and therefore within walking distance to school. It will open with a possible maximum number of 45 part time pupils (spread over 2 sessions) in January 2023 with an additional maximum of 30 pupils per additional year group per year. When at full capacity in 2029, the single form entry school will have a maximum of 210 full time pupils and 45 part time pupils. This total will be significantly less than the current number of pupils attending Abbey Primary.

During the first few years of the school opening the situation will be closely monitored by road safety and health and safety officers. Discussions have already taken place about some possible mitigating measures which could address traffic concerns, and these could be progressed if there is a need to do so, as the school population grows.

– Transport to school, Travel

All schools in Neath Port Talbot are committed to encouraging walking and cycling to school where possible. For many of the primary aged pupils the location of the proposed new school remains within 2 miles travel distance for homes in the catchment area.

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.

Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council's Home to School Transport policy. This means that primary school aged pupils living 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable or designated school will be considered for transport assistance.

Under the School Travel Plan requirements, all schools, together with the Council's Road Safety Team, are committed to:

- improving road safety within the local community
- raising awareness about travel issues

- encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for the school journey where applicable
- encouraging independent travel where applicable

In the longer term this proposal will negate the need for transport from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn.

– ***Impact on other Schools***

A comment has been received which questions the impact of this proposal on intake/ admission numbers of the two Welsh-medium schools in the area, Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn.

The new Welsh-medium school will follow the starter school model. A starter school is a model that can be used when establishing a new school to allow the facilities and staff to be used efficiently whilst the school grows to its full potential. The benefits of using the starter school model is that the new school capacity will grow as demand increases, it will ensure stable growth to support existing schools and it will reduce the possibility of mass movement of pupils from other schools.

The starter model of growth will minimise the likelihood and impact of a reduction in intake numbers in YGG Castell-nedd and YGG Tyle'r Ynn by limiting the availability of additional pupil places in older year groups.

The school opens initially with only Nursery class, and a year group is then added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6. The benefits of using this model is that it ensures stable growth to support existing schools and reduces the possibility of mass movement of pupils from other schools.

In the last 2 years significant funding has been secured for Ysgol Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn and Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd, with the aim of increasing the school capacity and providing enhanced teaching and learning environments across the school due to capacity pressure.

In Tyle'r Ynn, £1.14m of funding was awarded which enabled the provision of 2 extra classroom spaces and a new Welsh medium childcare provision. It is anticipated that this will ease accommodation pressures in the area, with demand for Welsh medium pupil places increasing year on year. The project has been successfully completed and is a very welcome and timely addition to

the school. Pupil numbers have already shown an increase with both nursery and reception classes full in September 2021.

A new 60 place Foundation Phase classroom provision at YGG Castell-nedd has also been provided as part of the Reducing Infant Class Size grant in order to alleviate capacity pressures. Pupil numbers have already shown an increase with most classes near or at full capacity.

Alternative Options

Consultees have responded with alternative suggestions which are responded to below.

A. Build a new Welsh-medium school on an alternative site

Comments have been received suggesting a new Welsh-medium school should be built on an alternative site. Suggestions have included Coed Darcy, Longford, Bryncoch and Neath Abbey. Progress with the developer as regards a proposed new Welsh-medium Primary school at Coed Darcy (funded through a S106 Planning Agreement) continues to move forward slowly. Consideration has also been given to the building of another whole new school in the Neath Abbey area. Land of sufficient size to accommodate a new Welsh-medium primary school in the area is scarce and given the likely planning and construction programme associated with delivery of a new school, there is unlikely to be any timely easing of the short-term pressures on the increasing demand for Welsh-medium primary education in the general Neath Abbey area.

B. Extend YGG Castell-nedd to accommodate increases pupil numbers

YGG Castell-nedd benefitted from two additional modular classrooms funded through the Welsh Government's Infant Class Size Reduction Grant totalling £325K. YGG Castell-nedd occupies a restricted site in a town centre setting and is now fully developed. The school is easily sustainable from pupils attending from the designated catchment. The majority of pupils likely to attend from the Neath Abbey would not be within walking distance which would lead to an accompanying increase in transport costs. Also, land of sufficient size to accommodate a new Welsh-medium primary school in Castell-nedd is scarce and given the likely planning and construction programme associated with delivery of a new school, there is unlikely to be any timely easing of the short-term pressures on the increasing demand for Welsh-medium primary education in the general Neath Abbey area.

C. Make the new school a dual language school

At present there are sufficient numbers of English-medium places within the catchment area but no Welsh-medium provision or places. The purpose of this proposal is to promote and grow the Welsh language and to ensure that there is equity between both languages thus ensuring that parents have a choice. The aim of this proposal is not to further increase the sufficient number of English-medium places within the catchment. Also, a larger site would be required to accommodate a dual language school as it would attract more pupils from within the catchment area. This would potentially put English-medium schools within the area at risk.

D. New build on the existing site

There is no room on this site to expand the capacity further or build a new school that meets Welsh Government Sustainable Communities for Learning Standards in terms of area per pupil. Due to the size of the site, the new Welsh-medium school will be a single form entry school. The current site would not allow expansion due to its limited area.

Conclusion

Having considered all the information gathered to date, it is the view of officers that establishing a Welsh-medium starter school on the site of the former Abbey Primary in St John's Terrace, Neath will deliver the greatest benefits to pupils, staff and the wider community as a whole within the given constraints of time, and capacity issues in neighbouring Welsh-medium schools.

The inclusion of a Welsh-medium childcare facility would ensure that families from the area are offered greater choice and flexibility, and will also support parents to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

The next step

Following the publication of this consultation report, should the Council decide to progress with its plans as consulted upon then the next stage will be for it to approve the publication of a proposal, allowing 28 days for objections.

Consultees are advised that, unfavourable comments made during the consultation period will not be treated as objections. Anyone wishing to object will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period. Comments

submitted as part of this consultation process will need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory objection period if they are to be considered as objections.

Appendices

Appendix A

List of Consultees	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn: Pupils Parents / carers Staff Governing Body Wider School Community	NAASH (Secondary Schools Forum)
	LLAN (Primary Schools Forum)
	Bordering authorities – Swansea/ Bridgend/ Carmarthenshire/ Powys/ RCT
All other NPT schools	Dyffryn Clydach Community Council Coedffranc Town Council
NPT Elected Members	WG Schools Management Division
Diocesan Directors of Education - Diocese of Menevia, Swansea - Diocese of Llandaff, Vale of Glamorgan	MP (for Neath) – Christina Rees
	AM (for Neath) – Jeremy Miles
Trade Unions	Regional Assembly Members
Estyn	ALN Partners
Regional Education Consortium (ERW)	Children and Young Person Partnership (inc. Early Years Development and Childcare)
NPTCBC Integrated Transport Unit	Police and Crime Commissioner
Communities First Partnership	NPTCBC Officers

Estyn response to the proposal

Response by Estyn to the proposal by Neath Port Talbot Council to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Neath Abbey.

Introduction

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals. Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

Summary/Conclusion

The proposer has given a clear explanation of the rationale behind the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Neath Abbey. Currently, 125 pupils from the Neath Abbey, Coedffranc and Crumlin area travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Tyle'r Ynn to receive Welsh-medium education. Both of those schools are full, or almost full, so a new school in this area would probably alleviate the problem in those schools. It would also provide more local Welsh-medium education in an area where there are parents who want Welshmedium education for their children. Estyn considers that the proposal is likely to maintain current standards of education, provision, and leadership and management.

Description and advantages

The proposer has set out a clear rationale for providing Welsh-medium education locally to a number of parents who choose Welsh-medium education for their children. They also consider that a 'seedling school' is the most appropriate solution for a new Welsh-medium school, which would prevent the problem of creating instability in existing Welsh-medium schools that currently provide education for this catchment area. The proposer explains the 'seedling school' model in detail and how this model works as it develops from nursery-only to a fully-grown school. They have also set out clearly the expected timetable for statutory procedures and implementation of the proposals. Neath Port Talbot Council has identified the expected

advantages and disadvantages of establishing a 'seedling school' and has also listed the expected advantages of the proposal. These include moving towards the local authority's WESP targets, providing more opportunities for pupils to benefit from Welsh-medium provision and reducing travel times to school. Another major advantage is the new Welsh-medium childcare provision that will be located on the school's site. The nearest provision is currently some distance away in Neath. Locating the new childcare provision at the school will give parents more choice and flexibility to choose Welsh-medium education for their children. The proposer has considered potential risks and risk management actions appropriately. Risks are identified, such as the risk that demand for Welsh-medium education is lower than expected or that there is resistance to change leading to a lack of support from pupils, parents and staff. The main factor in mitigating these risks is the local and national pattern of growth in demand for Welsh-medium education when a new school opens. The main risk to consider is the failure to realise the opportunity for capital expenditure, since this will greatly affect the nature of the project as the scheme will need remodelling and renovation which will significantly impair the plans and advantages listed in the consultation. The proposer considered four options before deciding on this proposal as the ideal option. The other three options include either expanding another Welsh-medium school or allocating a different site in the Neath Abbey area. Expanding other Welsh-medium schools would not meet the requirements for Welsh-medium education locally and allocating land for a new school would be more time-consuming and much more costly. We agree with the decision to support this option as the ideal one, especially when considering the local authority's target of increasing the number of pupils in Welsh-medium education over a 10-year period. To achieve this, they aim to establish three new Welsh-medium schools within the local authority, and this consultation is the first. The Council has given fair consideration to the effect of the changes on learners' travel arrangements. It is reasonable to expect that the majority of pupils that will attend the school will live within two miles of the new school. This is because current data show that of the 125 pupils that travel from the area to neighbouring Welsh-medium schools, 117 live within 2 miles of the site of the proposed new school. In the long term, this should reduce the need for transport from the area to the two neighbouring Welsh-medium schools. The proposer gives detailed consideration to financial costs including the impact on the budget as the school grows. The main factor is whether or not the Council will succeed in its bid for grant funding to help meet additional capital and revenue costs through the 21st Century Schools programme. Without this funding, the proposal cannot be realised in full.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has not clearly explained the process they intend to follow in terms of securing an effective governing body for the seedling school, nor the plans for recruiting a headteacher and staff. For example, it is not clear whether the seedling school will be under the supervision of a successful headteacher or governing body from another school as it establishes. The proposal appears to consider recruiting new staff and a new governing body at the outset, but this is not considered a risk and there are no steps to mitigate the impact should the process not succeed. The proposer has considered information from the latest Estyn reports for the two neighbouring Welsh-medium schools that are likely to be affected. They have also considered the potential impact on other nearby schools.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

Welsh Language Impact Assessment June 2022

Introduction

Neath Port Talbot Council are proposing to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND.

As a general rule, if a new or updated policy has the potential to impact on people, it will also have the potential to impact in some way on Welsh speakers and therefore on the Welsh language.

This is due to not only the regulations on bilingual Education provision and considerations under **Cymraeg 2050**, but the requirements of the **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**, under which the Welsh Language Standards require policy decisions of any kind to be assessed as to their effect on the Welsh language in the policy and/or geographic area in question. The same policy-making standards apply to both Welsh Government and Neath Port Talbot Council.

The proposal

This is a proposal to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND, which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.

Abbey Primary school currently operates between three separate sites and has relocated to a new build single site school at Heol Penlan in the Longford area of Neath during April 2022.

The most recent assessment of building condition of the St John's Terrace site reports that the main building has received a moderate amount of investment and is performing well whilst the rear building requires remedial works to the external façade. Both buildings would benefit from a new heating distribution system.

The buildings are largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.

Overall the site is graded C+ for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at £671K.

An application for Welsh Government grant funding to completely refurbish and modernise the building was unsuccessful, however works will continue to adapt the building to make it suitable for childcare and younger primary aged children. Work will include fully refurbishing the two toilet facilities in the main building (new toilets, hand basins, cubicles flooring etc.), remodelling to ensure that they are suitable for delivering the new curriculum, new flooring to the reception area and corridors and upgrading the school hall. A complete mechanical and electrical upgrade will be made in order to facilitate learning walls and digital equipment. External works including new fencing will also be completed. It is estimated that these works will cost approx. £200k.

This new Welsh-medium starter school would open for Nursery pupils in January 2023 to avoid leaving the buildings vacant for a lengthy period of time. The first cohort of Reception pupils would attend the new school from September 2023. This proposal would allow nursery and reception aged children in the Neath Abbey area to access Welsh-medium education in their local area.

It is anticipated that all pupils would be within walking distance of the new school with some exceptions for pupils from the Llandarcy and Jersey Marine area.

The Welsh Language in Neath Port Talbot

Welsh language impact assessments must reference a range of factors including links to legislation and details of supporting evidence and mitigating factors.

This section of the assessment therefore pulls together additional supporting evidence from a number of sources of information, from relevant Council policies and strategies to national regulations and Census data, in order to support Neath Port Talbot Council as it decides on the proposal to establish a new school.

i) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Welsh in Education Strategic Plans are a requirement under the **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019**.

Neath Port Talbot's draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.

The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

Currently, 125 pupils from the Neath Abbey, Coedffranc and Crymlyn area travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn in order to seek Welsh-medium education. It is anticipated therefore that the decision to locate the starter school in this area will alleviate the capacity issues in both these schools (nearly or at full capacity) and will stimulate demand for this type of education provision, resulting in a legacy that will benefit the whole authority as more and more parents consider this a preferred option for their children.

ii) Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Under Welsh Language Standard 145 (see Neath Port Talbot Council's [compliance notice](#)), local authorities had to develop and implement 5-year promotion strategies, working with partner organisations to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in their respective areas. Amongst other matters the strategy had to include the following:

- a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in the area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the area by the end of the 5-year period concerned;
- a statement setting out how they intend to reach that target; and conduct a review of the strategy and publish a revised version on their website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

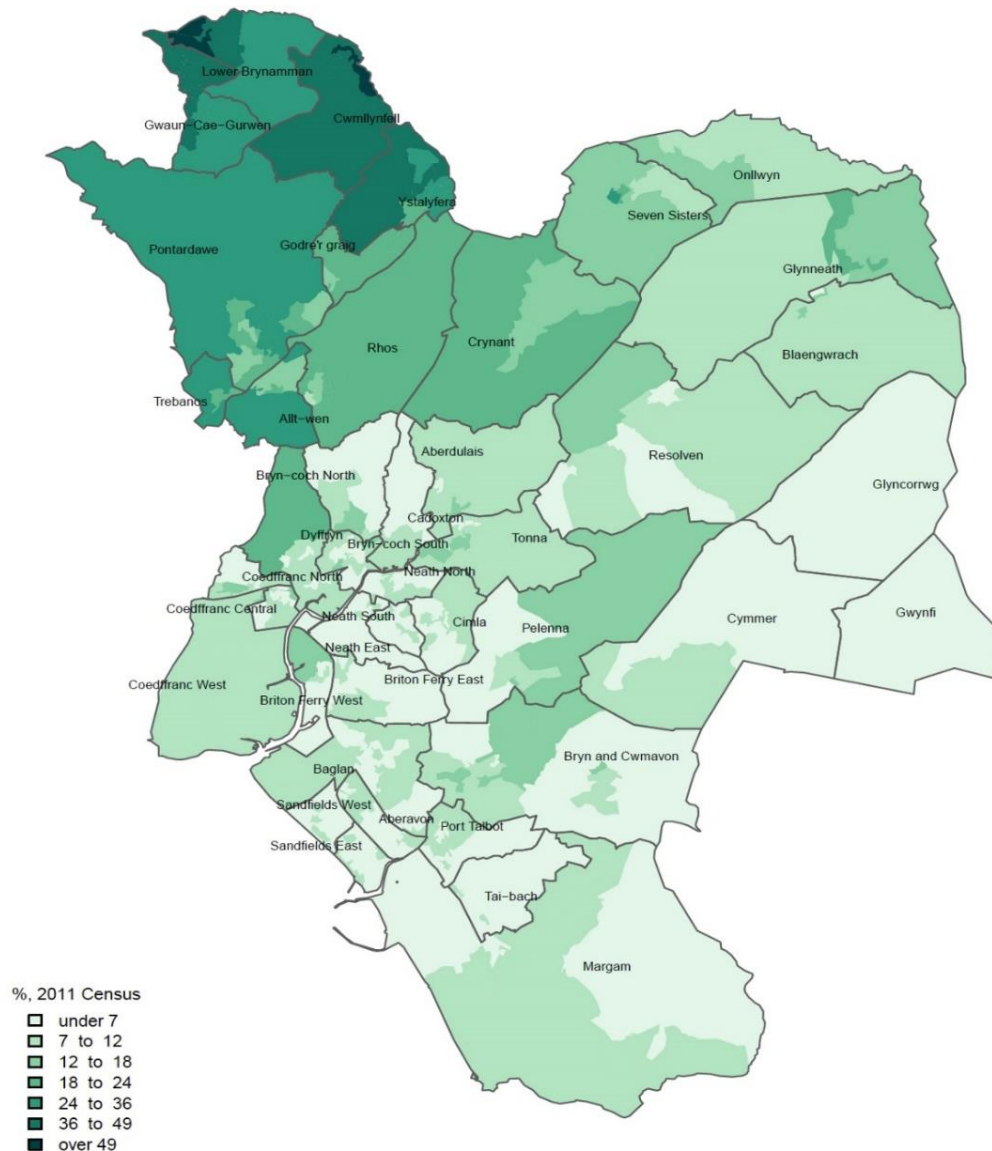
Welsh-medium education, whether in the form of full Welsh-medium provision via Welsh schools, or the teaching of Welsh as a second language in English-medium schools, directly supports this aim and intrinsically links this strategy with the WESP.

iii) Map of fluent Welsh speakers by Ward

The [map](#) below provides 2011 Census data demonstrating the Welsh language skills of people in the Neath Port Talbot area

Neath Port Talbot

Table: Welsh language skills
KS207WA0014 (Can speak, read and write Welsh)



The maps show percentages within Census 2011 output areas, within electoral divisions

Map created by Hywel Jones. Variables KS208WA0022-27 corrected

Contains National Statistics data © Crown copyright and database right 2013; Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013

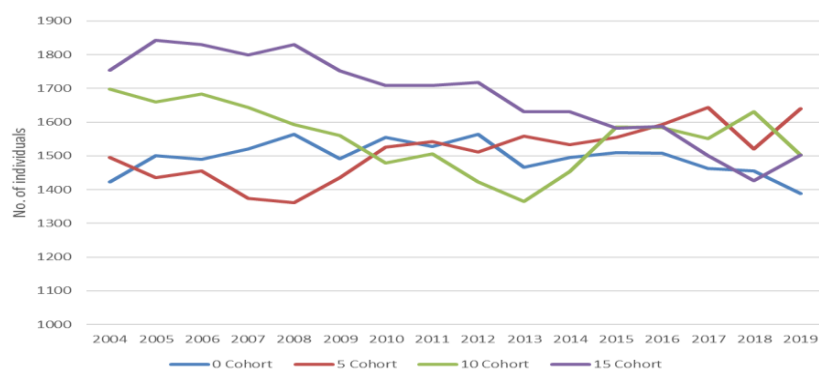
Current trends and projected forecasts

The overarching 10 year target in the WESP is set as a result of a geographic and demographic assessment. The analysis tells us:

- The number of children within the zero age cohort gradually increased in the early 2000s but this process has now flattened out and returned to the lower levels previously seen at the beginning of the period.

- The three year average number of individuals within this cohort in 2017-19 is 1,436, which is 5.9% down on the level seen a decade earlier when the three year average for 2007-09 was 1,526 (90 individual per year higher).
- The age five cohort has displayed considerable growth over the last decade with the three year average 15.2% higher for this age group during 2017-19 than compared to 2007-09 (up from 1390 to 1601). This is in contrast with older age cohorts with the number of 15 year olds present within the County Borough seeing a sustained fall over the last 15 years, with the number in this age group now 17.7% lower than a decade earlier.

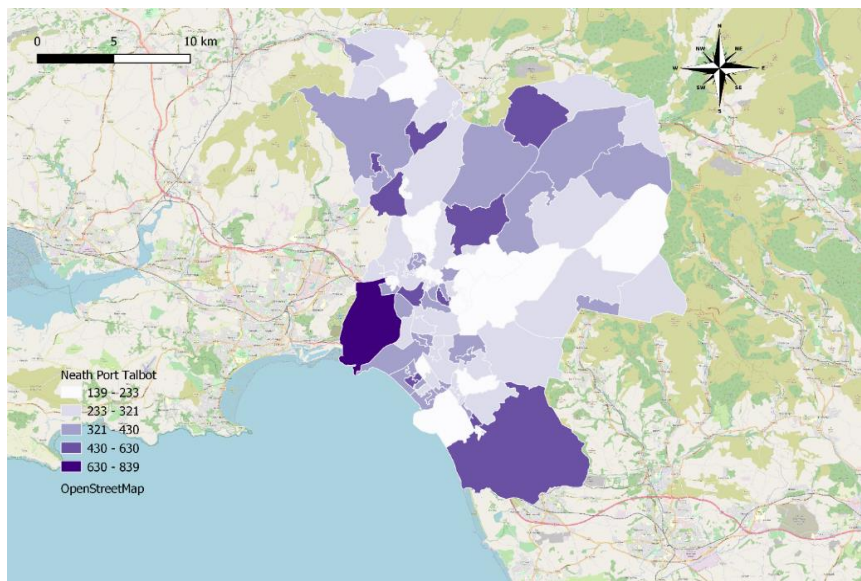
County level population chart



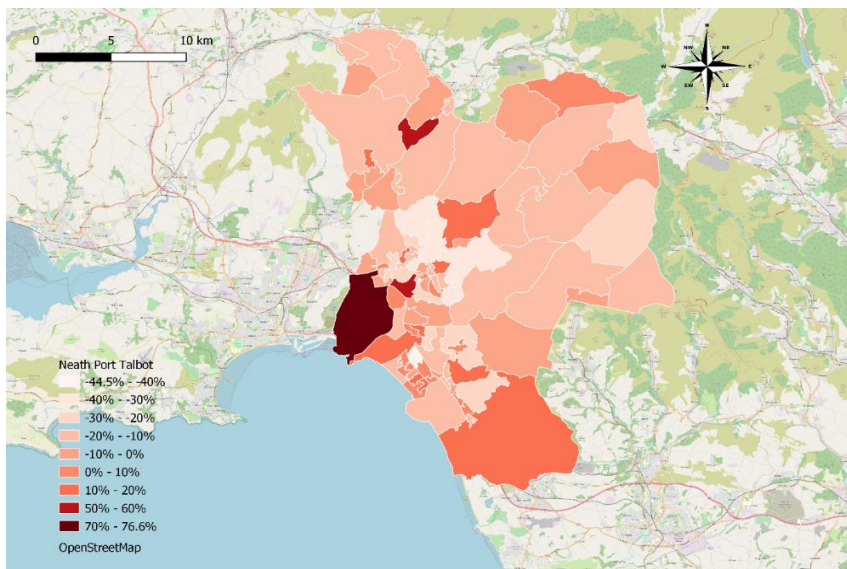
The above data shows a decrease in zero age population, however, an analysis of factors which will impact on the future of Welsh medium education has showed a projected plateauing in the school age population and a potential to substantially increase the number of Welsh medium learners within the next 10 years. The factors taken into consideration when conducting the assessment included population change, population density, population composition, existing Welsh language skills, current Welsh-medium learners and potential additional demand for Welsh-medium education.

The data from the assessment shows that some areas within the Local Authority are showing significant population growth in the under 19 category with one showing a population increase of 76.6% from a three year average of 475 in 2002-04 to 839 in 2017-19. The three year average for this area of 839 makes this the largest in terms of absolute population for this age group.

Under 19 Population 2017-19 Average



Under 19 % Population Change 2002-4 Average to 2017-19 Average

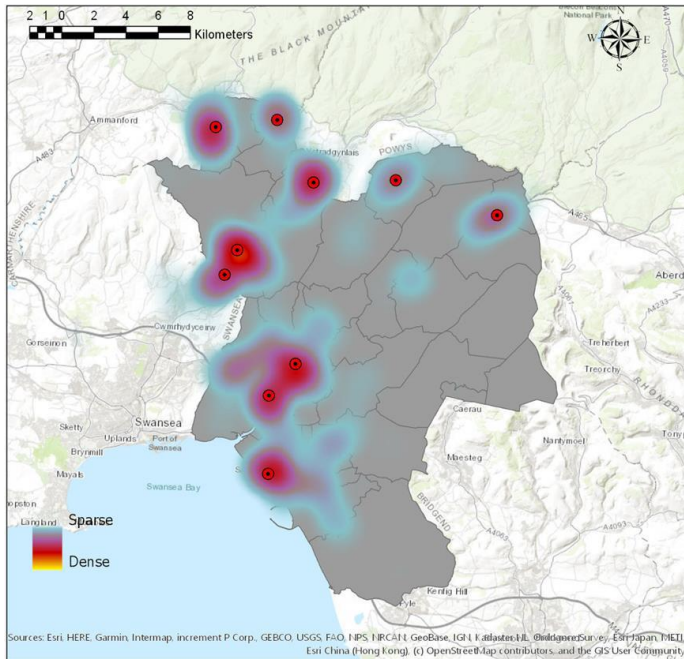


Current Welsh-medium pupils

Primary school Welsh-medium learners are largely drawn from the areas relatively close to the existing Welsh-medium schools. The exceptions to this are pupils drawn from the Taibach, Cwmavon and northern area of Resolven.

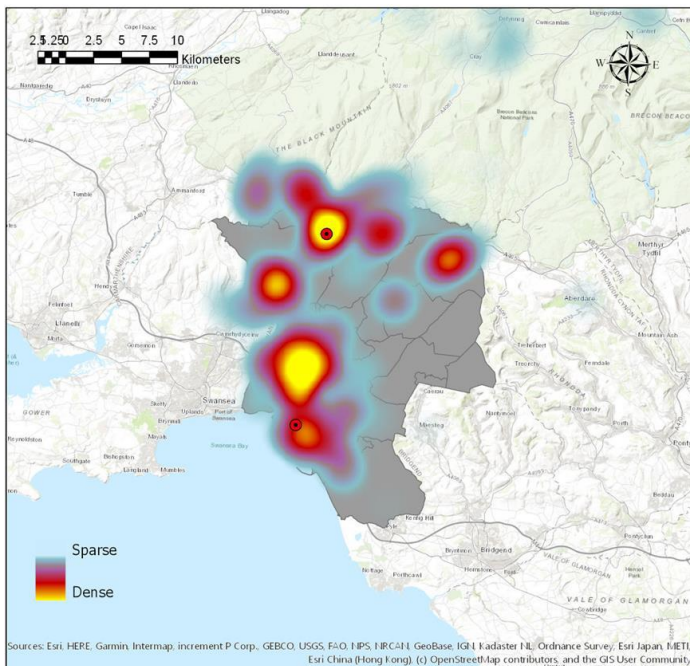
Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen 1 and Pontardawe 2 have provided the highest number of pupils on average into Welsh Medium Primary Schools over the last ten years, while Gwynfi and Cymer have provided the least. There are also a large number of pupils attending Welsh Medium Primary education traveling from out of County, although this number has dropped somewhat from the early 2000's, it is still close to 100 learners per year.

Current Welsh-medium primary learners (Plasc 2019)



There is a very high density of secondary school age WM learners close to Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera-Bro Dur North Campus, while the highest density to the South of the County is found in the Neath and Skewen areas. Pontardawe and the areas around Glynneath and Blaengwrach also appear to be hot spots.

Current Welsh-medium Secondary Learners (Plasc 2019)



Of the individual LSOA's Seven Sisters and Glynneath consistently send the most Secondary age pupils to Welsh Medium Education, while Cymmer 2 and Gwynfi did not send any pupils for Welsh

medium secondary education during the last ten years, while Cymmer 1, Bryncoch North and Margam 1 also reported very low numbers.

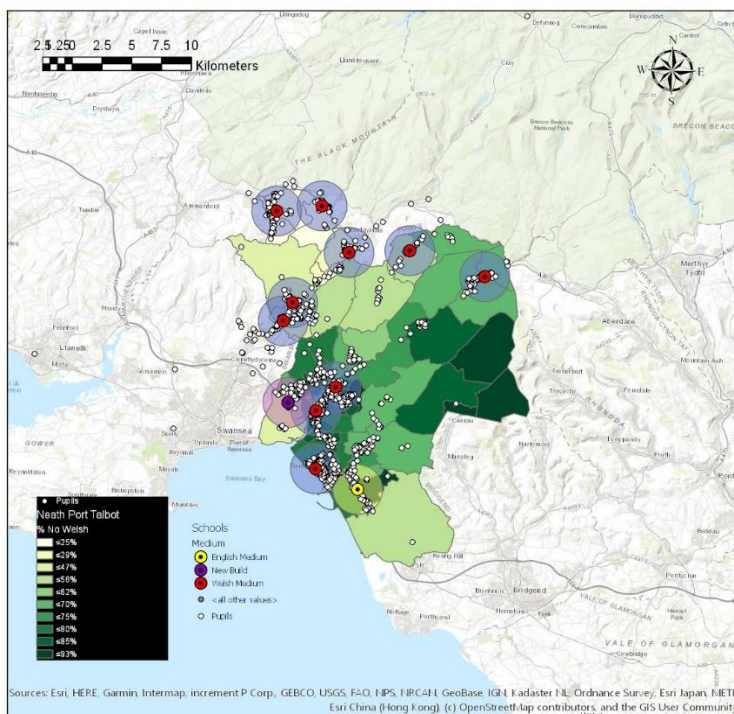
As with Primary learners a considerable number of Welsh Medium pupils travel in from out of county with on average 153 doing so. This is higher both numerically and proportionally than within the Primary age group and represents some 15.9% of all Welsh medium secondary School pupils.

Possible Future Plans

Using current data it is possible to model future growth patterns enabling us to anticipate where the potential exists to increase WM provision to meet the target of 30%.

This modelling estimates that the range of growth could be between 818 and 1697 new WM places needed by 2030. This would suggest 2 primary schools and one secondary school would need to be created to meet the WG targets.

By using a combination of variables it is possible to estimate where a new WM primary school could be created to increase the number of WM learners. The wards of Coedffranc West and Taibach have been identified as the most likely places for new primary schools.



In recent years, pupil numbers in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas have risen with the result that both the English–medium schools in those areas and the Welsh-medium schools that admit pupils from those areas are facing accommodation pressures. New housing developments in Crymlyn and Coed Darcy in particular have contributed to the increase in pupil numbers, as well as increased numbers of families moving into the area.

Currently, 125 pupils from Neath Abbey, Skewen, Llandarcy and Jersey Marine travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn to access Welsh-medium education, from nursery to year 6, shown below in tables 2 and 3. Approximately 50 pupils from Neath Port Talbot

also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

Table 1

English-medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Castell Nedd									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	1	4	5	0	3	2	1	3	6	25
Coedffranc Primary School	1	5	6	7	5	3	3	4	2	36
Crymlyn Primary School	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	14
Total	2	9	12	10	11	7	6	8	10	75

Table 2

English-medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Tyle'r Ynn									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Coedffranc Primary School	0	5	3	8	3	3	4	6	7	39
Crymlyn Primary School	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	8
Total	0	9	5	8	3	6	4	8	8	50

It is anticipated therefore that locating a new Welsh-medium school in this area will alleviate the capacity issues in both Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn (nearly or at full capacity) and will further stimulate demand for Welsh-medium education provision in the area.

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus, Seaway Parade, Port Talbot, SA12 7EQ, is a Welsh-medium, 11-16 school. This school is not a subject of the proposal and is not considered to be directly affected, however the number of pupils expected to progress to Year 7 admission for this school will be greater from September 2030 than the current admission number. The south campus currently has the capacity for 650 11-16 year old pupils who transition into the school from the current three Welsh-medium primary school in the south and is anticipated to reach full capacity by 2028. Further consideration will therefore be needed to ensure sufficient capacity within the Welsh-medium secondary phase in the near future.

Childcare

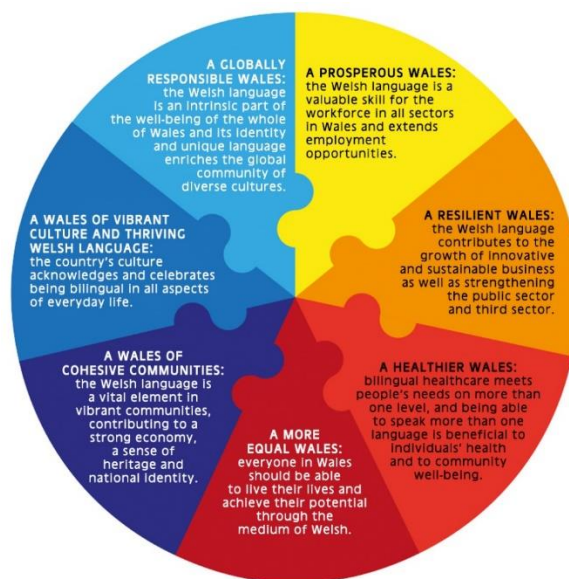
The nearest Welsh-medium childcare provision is some distance away in Neath and a new setting in the proposed new school would ensure that families from the area are offered greater choice and flexibility, and will also support parents to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

The proposal will see an increase in the total childcare provision across Neath Port Talbot through the creation of 12 additional places at the new Welsh-medium primary school. This will have a positive impact on Welsh-medium education through stimulated demand.

The Welsh Language and Future Generations

In order to achieve the desired growth in terms of the numbers of Welsh language speakers contained within Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 national strategy and Neath Port Talbot's own draft WESP, looking at each of the 7 aims of the Well-being "wheel" from a Welsh language perspective provides a useful perspective of how the language is an intrinsic part of each aim, and therefore all aspects of the Council's work, not simply part of the aim in which the Welsh language is explicitly referenced.

The adapted wheel below shows how the Welsh language forms a part of, and plays a part in all aspects of education, health and social care, community cohesion, the economy and so much more.



It is included in this assessment therefore in order to be considered as a general principle and as part of the decision-making process with regard to this proposal.

Consultation

This school reorganisation proposal is being brought forward under the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme. Formal consultation is required in line with the Welsh Government's School organisation Code, November 2018, which specifies the procedures to be followed, including the content of the consultation document, those to be consulted and timeframes.

The consultation period ran from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022. The consultation document was made available by e-mail to consultees. It was also available on the Council's website. Hard copies were available on request.

Responses to the consultation were submitted by email, and via the Council's online consultation portal. Details of how to respond were included in the consultation document and links to the online consultation portal were included on the website and on the Council's social media channels.

In total 47 responses were received

Online responses	44
Emails	3
Paper forms/letter	0

In total 28 consultees supported the proposal recognising the need for an additional Welsh-medium school in the area, the linguistic benefits to the community and the vision of making Welsh-medium education accessible to all.

19 consultees raised concerns relating to the traffic management of the proposed site and age of the current building.

The consultation report has been made available to those required by the Code, including responders who requested a copy, with the latter being contacted by email advising of the link to the report on the Council's website.

Impacts

Overall the proposal is expected to have many positive impacts on the Welsh language and many consultees responded to express this view.

The proposal will support the council's progress towards the Welsh in Education Plan targets of increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032 and will also provide the opportunity to increase the numbers of primary aged pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision within their immediate area.

The proposal should allow further growth in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from their local areas at the same time as creating school places for a growing population in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas.

Additionally onsite childcare provision should support parents and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

To further improve the positive impacts the council will ensure that the new school, if approved, will be publicised to raise awareness with prospective parents, with the aim of ensuring that there is a growing Welsh speaking pupil population in the area.

Negative impacts on the language identified by consultees could occur if pupil numbers at in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn do not increase as expected. It is unlikely that overall pupil numbers in Neath Port Talbot would not increase with the introduction of a new school, however it is recognised that the current schools may need additional support to ensure that the recent rise in pupil numbers continues. It will be necessary to ensure that additional support is provided and that these schools are also publicised in their local areas, Additional building work has already taken place at both schools to increase the capacity and to improve the learning environments.

Admission arrangements will need to ensure that new pupils are not 'swapping' between schools and that catchment areas are adhered to as much as possible while still allowing for parental choice. The proposal to open the starter school one year group at a time will prevent sudden destabilisation of the current schools as children who are already attending will not be able to move into the new school as only nursery pupils will be able to apply.

Conclusion

This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School.

The WESP overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

A new Welsh-medium school should provide greater choice for families in the area and it is expected that this proposal will increase the number of pupils being educated through the medium of Welsh, as well as having a positive impact on families and the local community through providing opportunities to improve and increase the use of the Welsh language in daily life.

The proposal therefore should impact positively on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English, by expanding the Welsh-medium education provision in Neath Port Talbot.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

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

1. Details of the initiative

	<p>Title of the Initiative: Proposal to Establish a New Welsh-Medium Primary School in Neath Abbey</p>
1a	<p>Service Area: Strategic School Improvement Programme</p>
1b	<p>Directorate: ELLLS</p>
1c	<p>Summary of the initiative: The Council is proposing to establish a new Welsh-medium starter school for 210 full time and 45 part time nursery pupils aged 3-11 in Neath Abbey. It is proposed to also include a childcare setting for up to 12 children.</p> <p>It is proposed that the school will be located on the vacant site of the former Abbey Primary, St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey. The school is expected to open to nursery pupils in January 2023.</p>
1d	<p>Is this a 'strategic decision'? Yes - forming part of the Council's WESP 10 year plan to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education. The target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.</p>
1e	<p>Who will be directly affected by this initiative? Service Users, staff and members of the community.</p>

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1f	<p>When and how were people consulted?</p> <p>On 19th January 2022, the Council's Cabinet determined to consult on the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school in Neath Abbey. The consultation period ran from 25th January 2022 to 8th March 2022. A list of consultees is included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Consultation was undertaken at a formative stage and allowed for intelligent consideration and response. The consultation period was 6 weeks to allow consultees time to consider the proposal and submit comments.</p> <p>The consultation document was made available by e-mail to consultees, members of the community, Diocesan Directors of Education and the Community Council as a representative of individuals within the community. Consultation also included prospective parents. It was also available on the Council's website. Hard copies were available on request.</p> <p>Responses to the consultation were submitted by email and via the Council's online consultation portal. Details of how to respond were included in the consultation document and links to the online consultation portal were included on the website and on the Council's social media channels.</p> <p>The consultation document invited views and opinions to be submitted in respect of the proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires the Council to consult on its proposal and to publish a consultation report summarising any issues raised by consultees, the Council's response to those issues and Estyn's view of the overall merit of the proposal.</p>
1g	<p>What were the outcomes of the consultation?</p> <p>The consultation process followed Welsh Government's guidelines, in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and School Organisation Code 2018. The Council consulted with a range of statutory consultees outlined in and required by the Code.</p> <p>The Authority received</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online responses 44, 26 in support • Emails 3, 2 in support • Paper forms/letter 0, 0 in support <p>In total 47 responses were received</p>

The Council is using the feedback and responses received to the engagement and consultation exercises carried out in relation to the proposal as part of its decision making process.

It is recognised that a low number of responses were received and this will be mitigated by future monitoring and actions as stated in the relevant section below.

2. Evidence

What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?

Following consultation a Consultation Report has been prepared summarising the comments received and officer responses. This should be read alongside this impact assessment.

Respondents were asked to complete an Equalities Monitoring form included in the consultation document.

A great deal of information is available with relation to the population within Neath Port Talbot. This can be accessed from the following sources.

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- NPT draft WESP 2022-2032
- Consultation Report
- Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)
- School Organisation Code, 2018

- Household projections by local authority [Subnational household projections \(local authority\) additional variant projections: 2018-based | GOV.WALES](#)
- <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/Local-Authority/2018-based/populationprojections-by-localauthority-year>
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2020-05/summary-statistics-regions-wales-2020-629.pdf>
- Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data has also been used along with the Local Authority data relating to school staff

All Neath Port Talbot schools are inclusive for pupils of all ethnic groups and ethnicity is not a criterion under the Council's Admissions Policy. In addition, the Council is an inclusive employer.

Inclusivity and respect of others is an intrinsic element of the National Curriculum, and the proposed new school would seek to provide an inclusive environment which meets the needs of all pupils irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. The Estyn School Inspection Handbook also details how inspection would evaluate how well individual pupils benefit from the school and states it may be relevant to pay particular attention to those with protected characteristics, therefore including transgender pupils. Under spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Estyn would look for evidence where pupils develop awareness and respect for diversity in relation to, for example gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disability.

It is recognised that there is a lack of general data for all protected characteristics in Welsh-medium education. To mitigate this, the Local Authority will continue to monitor protected characteristics in the future.

3. Equalities

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

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age	√			The Equality Duty covers the protected characteristic of age, which refers to a person having a particular age or being within an age group.

			<p>The establishment of a new Welsh-medium Primary school will support the increasing demand for Welsh-medium education Neath Port Talbot, which has been growing significantly over recent years. There is currently no Welsh-medium provision for ages 3 - 11 years in the Neath Abbey area that could increase the opportunities for parents and children in this area to attend Welsh-medium education.</p> <p>The proposal will have a positive impact on children aged 3-11 who will have the opportunity to attend the new school in the future, as well as preschool pupils who will access the proposed childcare provision. The development of Welsh medium childcare provision on site adjacent to the Welsh medium Foundation Phase nursery class will enable continuity of provision for parents as well as continue to strengthen the Welsh language acquisition of the youngest children within the 3-11 age group as well as younger pre-school age children. The provision of wraparound provision will enable working families to have the same access to provision as their English medium counterparts as well as enabling children to have social play experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Employees within the school will be protected by the policies adopted by the Governing Body and will have access to suitable HR advice.</p> <p>This initiative should therefore have a positive impact on this group.</p>
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<p>Disability</p>			<p>√</p> <p>The Council's arrangements for education across the county borough include those children and young people with a disability.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the proposed new school will have enhanced facilities which should improve provision for disabled users, made possible by the planned works to remodel and refurbish the current school.</p> <p>As a result of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, significant changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of all learners with additional learning needs (ALN). All services within the local authority will be required to consider whether the child or young person needs ALP (Additional Learning Provision) in Welsh.</p> <p>The proposed new school will provide ALN support for pupils within a mainstream setting.</p> <p>It is a target within the WESP to ensure an increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with ALN. Targets in this sections include providing support for teachers within Welsh-medium mainstream schools. This will enhance the Inclusive Learning Provision (ILP) and Additional learning Needs Provision (ALP) offer within Welsh- Medium schools and Early Years settings, as set out in the new ALN Code for Wales 2021.</p> <p>This proposal should have a neutral impact on this protected characteristic group.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>			<p>√</p> <p>It is expected that all NPTCBC schools meet the needs of pupils and staff who are transgender.</p> <p>Local Authority and school policies will be in place in terms of gender reassignment. Employees and pupils within the school will be protected by the policies adopted by the Governing Body.</p> <p>The proposal therefore is likely to have a neutral impact on this aspect.</p>

Marriage & civil partnership			<p>Pupils at the school are below the legal marriage age. Staff will continue to receive protection under the Equalities Act 2010 which would be referred to by the new Governing Body and Council in order to support the staff at the school.</p> <p>Employees within the school will be protected by the policies adopted by the Governing Body and will have access to suitable HR advice.</p> <p>The proposal is designed to have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics accessing the new school.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity			<p>It is not considered that there would be a negative impact on pupils in this protected group as there is a minimal likelihood of pupils falling within this protected group due to the age range of the proposed new school. The provision of education for any pupil identified as being within this protected group would remain unaltered by the proposal.</p> <p>Employees within the school will be protected by the policies adopted by the Governing Body and will have access to suitable HR advice.</p> <p>The proposal therefore is likely to have a neutral impact on this aspect.</p>
Race			<p>All Neath Port Talbot schools are inclusive for pupils of all ethnic groups and ethnicity is not a criterion under the Council's Admissions Policy. In addition, the Council is an inclusive employer.</p> <p>It is evident from Welsh-medium school data that families from different ethnic backgrounds choose Welsh-medium education, with many English families moving to the area and making the informed decision to educate their children in Welsh-medium schools. Both the WESP and the Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Strategy aim to inform and support these families when making the decision about choosing Welsh-medium education. These aims significantly alleviate concerns and it is anticipated that this will lead to an increase in the number of pupils from ethnic backgrounds attending Welsh-medium education.</p>

			<p>Future employees of the school will be entitled to receive protection under the relevant employment and equalities law and policies which will be adopted by the Governing Body.</p> <p>The proposal therefore is likely to have a neutral impact on this aspect.</p>
Religion or belief		√	<p>It is expected that the Council's educational arrangements will meet the needs of pupils or staff members of different religions or with different beliefs.</p> <p>Religion or belief is not a criterion under the Council's Admissions Policy which will be applicable to the new school. Admission to the new school would be in line with this policy.</p> <p>Staff would continue to receive protection under the Equalities Act 2010 which would be referred to by the newly established Governing Body and Council in order to support the staff at the new school.</p> <p>Respect for all religious and non-religious beliefs would not change as a result of implementing this proposal. Similarly, the aspect of the curriculum relating to religion and belief would not change because of this proposal. The proposal does not seek to reduce the number of faith school places and increase the number of community (not-faith based) school places.</p> <p>The Estyn School Inspection Handbook also details how inspection would evaluate how well individual pupils benefit from the school. Under spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Estyn would look for evidence where pupils develop awareness and respect for diversity in relation to, for example gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disability.</p> <p>The proposal therefore is likely to have a neutral impact on this aspect.</p>

Sex			<p>All Neath Port Talbot schools admit boys and girls currently and the new school will also admit both sexes. Currently across the WM primary schools in Neath Port Talbot there are 723 male pupils and 748 female pupils (Years 1 -6).</p> <p>The Council is an inclusive employer. Across the Local Authority both male and female staff are employed within primary education settings.</p> <p>√</p> <p>Children of both sexes would be treated and taught equally at the proposed new school. There would be no different methods of teaching or curricula for either sex. The school would aim to reduce, as far as possible, segregating pupils and students by gender.</p> <p>The proposal therefore is likely to have a neutral impact on this aspect.</p>
Sexual orientation			<p>Inclusivity and respect of others is an intrinsic element of the National Curriculum, and the proposed new school would seek to provide an inclusive environment which meets the needs of all pupils irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.</p> <p>The Estyn School Inspection Handbook also details how inspection would evaluate how well individual pupils benefit from the school and states it may be relevant to pay particular attention to those with protected characteristics, therefore including transgender pupils. Under spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Estyn would look for evidence where pupils develop awareness and respect for diversity in relation to, for example gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disability.</p> <p>√</p> <p>The National Curriculum will promote inclusivity through teaching and learning within the school.</p> <p>Based on the policies in place, the proposal will have a neutral impact on people including staff and pupils in this protected group.</p>

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

This proposal, if implemented would be closely monitored with information gathered regarding characteristics and circumstances of the individuals involved. From the evidence currently available the proposal should have mainly positive or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics due to the following actions-

- The leadership team of the proposed new school would promote an inclusive ethos where everyone is valued, with support from local authority Education Development Service (EDS) and Inclusion teams
- Policies and procedures would be in place to support the school with inclusive practice; local authority policies would be adopted and adhered to
- Monitoring of pupil and staff well-being would take place by the leadership team of the school; a school review would be undertaken by the Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) team in the first 2 years of opening
- Design processes would ensure accessibility is planned for and delivered
- Monitoring of impact on larger groups will take place as the school grows

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>Policies adopted by the Governing Body and teaching and learning will aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.</p> <p>Employees within the school will be protected by Local Authority policies and policies adopted by the Governing Body and will have access to suitable HR advice.</p> <p>Pupils will be protected by Local Authority policies and policies adopted by the Governing Body.</p>

				The National Curriculum will promote inclusivity and acceptance through teaching and learning within the school.
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	√			<p>The school will be encouraged to engage with the different groups within the local community when opportunities arise.</p> <p>The development of the new curriculum will develop opportunities for pupils and staff to engage with the different groups within the local community when opportunities arise.</p>
To foster good relations between different groups	√			<p>The school will be encouraged to engage with the different groups within the local community when opportunities arise.</p> <p>The development of the new curriculum will develop opportunities for pupils and staff to engage with the different groups within the local community when opportunities arise.</p> <p>Opportunities will be present to ensure that groups work together to promote and develop the Welsh language, for example Welsh-medium schools Cluster group to further develop pupil and staff skills.</p>

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

- A Strategic Equality Plan will be developed by the school leadership team informed as a result of engagement and consultation with all stakeholders.
- Where opportunities arise, proactively look for opportunities to engage with different groups in the community.
- Where opportunities arise, new curriculum planning will develop inclusivity and acceptance within the classroom.

4. Socio Economic Duty

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Impact	Details of the impact/advantage/disadvantage
Positive/Advantage	<p>The proposal, if implemented, should have a positive impact on groups who experience socio economic disadvantage.</p> <p>The proposal aims to stimulate and provide local, accessible, sustainable, community-focused provision to meet the growing demand for Welsh medium education in the area.</p> <p>Adding a Welsh-medium school into the area will give the pupils the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh and could improve future employment prospects in line with Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>Provision for Welsh language childcare will be fully inclusive and accessible for all on site.</p> <p>The proposal would therefore have a positive impact in this regard.</p>
Negative/Disadvantage	<p>Some consultees responded that pupils receiving Welsh-medium education within the new school will be at a disadvantage to their English counterparts as the new Welsh-medium school will be located in an old building and not in a purpose built new school.</p>
Neutral	<p>The facility is accessible to pupils and the wider community regardless of any specific socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>The facility will be fully accessible to people with learning disabilities regardless of any specific socio - economic disadvantage.</p>

What action will be taken to reduce inequality of outcome

- Promote and encourage uptake of Welsh-medium educational provision for pupils from all socio-economic backgrounds.

5. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	√			<p>The proposal aims to promote community cohesion by contributing towards creating 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, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>The proposal also aligns itself with specific actions within the WESP, using and utilising the new school to promote community cohesion, for example, Menter Iaith's family activity sessions/ days e.g. fun days, singing sessions; The Urdd's Community Department providing arts opportunities and arranging activities to encourage and enable children and young people to socialise through the medium of Welsh outside the classroom. These activities aim to forge good relationships within the community.</p>
Social Exclusion	√			<p>There could be a positive effect on social exclusion by providing access to local Welsh-medium education to all, thus contributing towards targets as stated in the WESP document, coupled with Welsh Government's desire for additional Welsh speakers across communities in Wales.</p> <p>The proposal should have a positive impact on reducing social exclusion.</p>

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Poverty			✓	<p>Poverty has a significant impact on the educational experience and attainment of many children growing up in the UK.</p> <p>Education can be a route out of poverty, equipping children and young people with the necessary skills and qualifications which will support them to secure employment. The proposal will give the pupils the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh and could improve future employment prospects in line with Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>In this respect the proposal has an overall neutral impact.</p>
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

- Support would be provided to ensure that opportunities are taken to create a new school community, involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and wider community groups including community and town councillors, childcare providers, local businesses etc. with the aim of improving community cohesion as outlined in activities above.
- Prior to opening the Headteacher and Governing Body will be supported to investigate the opportunities available within walking distance of the new school to enrich the curriculum
- The proposed new school Leadership team will be encouraged to support and promote community engagement and events when opportunities arise, to ensure links are maintained and developed

6. Welsh

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	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?
<p>What effect does the initiative have on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language 	√			<p>Neath Port Talbot’s draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council’s vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.</p> <p>The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.</p> <p>Modelling work on expanding Welsh- medium provision suggests that the Neath Abbey area is a good location for creating a new Welsh-medium school.</p> <p>This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School.</p> <p>The proposal therefore should impact positively on people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language by expanding the Welsh-medium education provision in Neath Port Talbot.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – treating the Welsh and English languages equally 	√			<p>A new Welsh-medium school should provide greater choice for families in the area and it is expected that this proposal will increase the number of pupils being educated through the medium of Welsh, as well as having a positive impact on families and the local community through providing opportunities to improve and increase the use of the Welsh language in daily life.</p>

				<p>Some consultees responded that pupils receiving Welsh-medium education within the new school will be at a disadvantage to their English counterparts as the new Welsh-medium school will be located in an old building and not in a purpose built new school. This is addressed in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>This proposal therefore should impact positively on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.</p>
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

- Raise parental awareness of the choice of schools available in the Neath Abbey area including those offering Welsh-medium education so parents are able to make an informed decision when choosing a school
- Support preschool and childcare Welsh-medium parents in the area to enable non Welsh speaking parents to feel confident about choosing a Welsh-medium school
- Raise awareness of improvements work undertaken at the former Abbey Primary and monitor impact on pupil numbers in nearby schools
- Monitor parental choice of school i.e. Welsh/English medium and take action admission rates drop significantly as a result of the new school

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			✓	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) has a legal duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Council's Biodiversity Duty Plan

			<p>demonstrates how we will fulfil that duty and will act as a driver for conservation activities throughout Neath Port Talbot (NPT).</p> <p>The Biodiversity Duty Plan not only delivers our statutory duties with regards to biodiversity but also explains how, through meeting the Biodiversity Duty, we are delivering well-being objectives and the ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal</p>
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		✓	<p>Consultees responded that in their view traffic and parking will be an issue. It is not expected that there will be extra traffic on the road as the capacity of the school (when at full capacity in 2029) will be less than the previous Abbey Primary capacity. This will not result in an increase in levels of emissions. This is addressed in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.</p>

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

- Traffic impact will be monitored closely as the school grows.

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. Long term – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	This proposal is expected to positively impact on pupils aged 3-11 and on older children and adults who will benefit from increased use of the Welsh language in the local area. It will aim to will improve wellbeing through the promotion of the development of the Welsh language leading to increased opportunities to participate in the language and culture of Wales.
ii. Prevention – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot and all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives through the medium of Welsh. This principle is underpinned by ensuring universal access to this provision across the county borough. Neath Port Talbot Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and celebrating Welsh language learning across all phases and sectors. This proposal aims to increase the opportunities for pupils to access Welsh-medium education through the establishment of a new Welsh-medium primary school.
iii. Collaboration – working with other services internal or external	<p>Informal consultation has taken place with a range of stakeholders to help shape the proposal. Additionally the proposal has been subject to a comprehensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for a six week period. The consultation took place between 25th January and 8th March 2022</p> <p>Based on the statutory requirements set out in the School Organisation Code, 2018, local authorities must consult with a range of stakeholders.</p>
iv. Involvement – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the population	Informal consultation has taken place with local schools. The Governing Body of a Welsh-medium school that currently admits pupils from the Neath Abbey area is supportive of this proposal.
v. Integration – making connections to maximise contribution to:	

Council's well-being objectives	<p>The Strategic School Improvement Programme and its related projects are included in the Directorate's plans which link to the Council's wellbeing objectives. This proposal directly supports wellbeing objective 1 – 'to improve the wellbeing of children and young people' through the provision of enhanced opportunities and provision for current and future generations of primary aged pupils. It also indirectly supports wellbeing objective 2 – 'to improve the wellbeing of all adults who live in the county borough' and wellbeing objective 3 'to develop the local economy and environment so that the wellbeing of people can be improved' through creating a community resource which can be used to support families and help to develop the Welsh language in the area.</p>
Other public bodies objectives	<p>This proposal directly impacts upon the Public Services Board priority to support children in their early years.</p>

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 proposed new school's senior leadership team and Governing Body will be responsible for monitoring the progress and well-being of pupils, staff and service users to ensure the expected positive impacts are being realised and that mitigating actions are undertaken to minimise any identified negative impacts.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council works closely with Governing Bodies of schools to ensure that the highest standards are robustly maintained, that teaching and learning is of a high quality and that leadership and governance is strong. The Local Authority works with Estyn in order to monitor the performance of schools and to support school improvement. Monitoring would take place on a regular basis by Support for Learning and Inclusion officers, Education Development Service officers and outside bodies including Estyn.

10. Assessment Conclusions

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

	Conclusion
Equalities	The proposal should have a positive impact on Age, and a neutral impact on all other protected characteristics
Socio Economic Disadvantage	The proposal should have a positive impact on pupils from all socio economic groups.
Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty	The proposal should impact positively on increasing community cohesion. The proposal should impact positively on reducing social exclusion. The proposal should have a neutral impact on poverty.
Welsh	The proposal should impact positively on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language by expanding the Welsh-medium education provision in Neath Port Talbot. This proposal should impact positively on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
Biodiversity	The proposal should have a neutral impact on biodiversity.
Well-being of Future Generations	The proposal directly supports the Council's wellbeing objectives through the provision of Welsh-medium 3-11 school, for current and future generations of primary aged pupils and the community.

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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

The proposal would create a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school for pupils in the Neath Abbey area. This would enhance well-being, and would provide the conditions to improve accessibility to Welsh-medium education. It would also contribute significantly to the overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

The proposal can be seen to have positive impacts on Age and a neutral impact on all other protected characteristics. A new Welsh-medium school would impact positively on pupils from all socio economic groups and would also positively impact on community cohesion, and social exclusion.

The proposal would have a positive impact on the Welsh language and a neutral impact on biodiversity.

The Wellbeing of Future generations has been considered and the proposal directly supports the Council's wellbeing objectives.

As a result it is recommended that this proposal should continue as planned.

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?
Ensure all appropriate policies and procedures are in place prior to the proposed new school opening	School Leadership team (including Governing Body) with support from Education Development Service	January 2023	Polices in place and adopted
Monitoring of impact on larger groups will take place as the school grows	School Leadership team (including Governing Body) with support from Education Development Service	January 2023 ongoing	Data to support impact on larger groups within the community

Engagement with prospective parents, staff and wider school community to facilitate proposed new Welsh-medium school	SSIP Officers	June 2022 ongoing	Smooth, successful start to the new school
Develop links with the local communities to support the development of the proposed new school	SSIP Officers Project Manager	June 2022 ongoing	Creation of a strong and supportive school community
Assistance provided to support the proposed new Welsh-medium school, parents and pupils in planning safe routes in line with Welsh Government Learner Travel Guidance	NPT Road Safety Officers	September 2022	Safe routes identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise parental awareness of the choice of schools available in the Neath Abbey area so parents are able to make an informed decision when choosing a school; Monitor parental choice of school i.e. Welsh/English-medium and take action if admission rates drop significantly in other schools as a result of the new build 	WESP Forum	Ongoing	Actions implemented and contributing to development of Welsh language

12. Sign off

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Kate Windsor-Brown	Transformation Co-ordinator		06.06.22
Signed off by	Andrew Thomas	Director of ELLs		06.06.22

Risk Assessment

**STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME -
PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW WELSH-MEDIUM
PRIMARY SCHOOL IN NEATH ABBEY**

Context

1. This risk assessment has been carried out in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy 2018.
2. Implementing the proposal will result in the establishment of a new a new Welsh –medium primary school at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND

3.

The reasons for the proposal

4. The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. This will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities in order to ensure future provision is sustainable.
5. This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.
6. The Council have recently submitted an expression of interest to Welsh Government for specific Welsh-medium capital funding to support an exciting project that aspires to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing buildings at the St John's Terrace site to establish a new Welsh-medium starter school including a 45 place nursery and a 12 place childcare setting.
7. A decision from Welsh Government on whether the expression of interest for capital grant funding is successful is expected early in 2022.
8. It is proposed that a new Welsh-medium starter school would open

for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils expected to attend the new school from September 2023.

9. The new school would provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils by September 2029. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil numbers, including potential growth in pupil population.
10. The admission arrangements will be in line with the Council's approved admission arrangements for primary schools. For the purpose of consultation, the proposed admission number for primary phase education is 30.
11. The proposed new Welsh –medium school will serve the combined catchment areas of Crymlyn, Coedffranc and Abbey primary schools, making it easier for parents to easily understand their Welsh-medium and English-medium choices, and is a change to the current situation where pupils in this area attend either Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn for Welsh-medium education. Approximately 50 pupils from the Skewen area also attend Ysgol Gymraeg Lon Las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.
12. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.
13. A starter school model is considered the most appropriate solution for new Welsh-medium schools. Whilst demand is growing for Welsh-medium education, opening the school immediately to all year groups could destabilise other schools across the authority and could adversely affect the ability to support effective provision.

Risks associated with the proposal

14. The potential risks associated with the proposal comprise the

Council's reputation, educational standards, financial management, staff employment and service delivery.

15. Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:

- forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise
- the demand for Welsh-medium places is not as high as expected
- current Welsh-medium schools pupil numbers reduce, leading to possible job losses
- pupil numbers at existing English-medium schools reduce, leading to possible job losses
- increased staff anxiety in current schools affected by the proposal
- resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support
- educational standards not maintained
- 21st Century School capital funding opportunity not realised
- the development of Welsh in the early years is not realised due to no available, suitable site for a childcare provision
- pressure on Welsh-medium secondary school places if numbers grow as anticipated in the primary phase

14. Failing to implement the proposal will result in the following teaching/learning and financial benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:

- progress towards the Welsh in Education Plan targets of increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032
- increasing the numbers of primary aged pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision within their immediate area
- allowing further growth in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from their local areas as predicted
- creating school places for a growing population in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas
- avoiding increased transport costs as a result of having to transport children across Neath Port Talbot to access suitable provision due to nearest suitable schools being full
- onsite childcare provision to support parents and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium

school for their children, helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children

Risk assessment

15. The benefits of the proposal along with specific actions will mitigate the effects of identified risks.
16. A significant number of pupils from the Neath Abbey, Skewen, Llandarcy and Jersey Marine areas travel to YGG Castell-nedd and YGG Tyle'r Ynn, indicating that there is currently a demand for Welsh-medium education in the area and it is clearly growing, therefore it is unlikely that the forecasted numbers would not materialise or that the demand would not continue or grow. Additional evidence from a recent demographic and geographic survey shows a potential increase in pupil numbers in this area through modelling.
17. The school will be a starter school with a growing workforce on an annual basis. This will ensure that new staff will be introduced gradually over a period of time. An effective Headteacher and Governing Body will be appointed to ensure a high level of management and leadership. This should minimise the effects of change and ease anxiety for staff in the current schools and for the school communities, as well as ensuring that good standards of education and pupil well-being are prioritised.
18. Additional training and staff development has been identified as a priority within the WESP, with the aim of providing support for staff who wish to transition from existing schools into the proposed new school as appropriate, including from English to Welsh-medium.
19. The proposal will be subject to a full consultation and will enable the school communities to voice opinions and raise queries. This will support the process of change and aim to reduce anxiety.
20. An Integrated Impact Assessment will be required to fully progress this proposal and will be undertaken as part of the consultation process.

Risk register

No	Risk description	L'hood score	Impact score	Overall Risk (Lxl)	Prox'ty *	Planned action to mitigate	Target Date	Owner	Update	Trend Up Down
1	Forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise	2	4	Medium Risk	4	Consultation with stakeholders; implementation of the proposal; information sharing with parents in the locality;	January 2022 ongoing	- SSIP team - EDS - GB - Headteacher	31.5.22	No change
2	The demand for Welsh-medium places is not as high as expected	2	4	Medium Risk	4	Consultation with stakeholders; Awareness raising, working with partners to stimulate demand in the area	January 2022 - ongoing	- SSIP team - WESP forum and partners	31.5.22	No change
3	Current Welsh-medium schools pupil numbers reduce leading to possible job losses	1	2	Low Risk	3	Use of starter school model to promote a smooth transition; work with WESP partners to ensure that all schools benefit from awareness raising in the local communities with the aim of increasing pupil numbers; monitoring admissions; additional training and staff development provided to support staff to transition from existing school into new school as appropriate	January 2022 – ongoing	- SSIP team - WESP forum and partners - Admissions officers - HR	31.5.22	No change

4	Pupil numbers at existing English-medium schools reduce, leading to possible job losses	2	2	Low Risk	3	Additional training and staff development provided to support staff to transition from existing school into new school as appropriate, including from English to Welsh-medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSIP team - WESP forum and partners - HR 	31.5.22	No change
4	Increased staff anxiety in current schools affected by the proposal	2	3	Medium Risk	1	Starter school model grows the workforce gradually; training and development needs identified to support staff, including with transitioning from EM to WM as appropriate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temp GB - Headteacher - EDS - SSIP 	31.5.22	No change
5	Resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support	2	5	Medium Risk	1	Information on the proposal to provide greater awareness for those affected. Effective communication with parents and staff as early as possible	January 2022 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSIP team 	31.5.22	No change
6	Educational standards not maintained	1	5	Low Risk	3	Implementation of proposal together with appropriate support and challenge	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSIP team - Temp GB - Headteacher - EDO Team 	31.5.22	No change

7	The development of Welsh in the early years is not realised due to no available, suitable site for a childcare provision	3	4	High Risk	1	Implementation of proposal along with childcare setting situated onsite	January 2022-ongoing	- SSIP team - EYs Officers	31.5.22	No change
8	Budget allocation insufficient to meet needs	2	5	Medium Risk	2	When the new school opens it will receive a budget appropriate for the size of the school and the number of pupils attending.	January 2023	- ELLLS - Temp GB - Headteacher	31.5.22	No change

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning Service Strategic School Improvement Programme

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

**Proposal to establish a new Welsh-
medium
3-11 school in Neath Abbey**



Large print and alternative format or language versions of this document are available on request

Contents

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1. Background
2. The proposal and why change is being proposed
3. Details of the schools affected by this proposal
4. Options that have been considered
5. The impacts of the proposal
6. Legal process and consultation

List of Consultees

Comment Form

Introduction

What is this report about?

This document is for pupils, parents/carers, school staff, school governors and others who have an interest in education in Neath Port Talbot.

The Council has produced this consultation document as it is proposing to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school at Neath Abbey.

It is proposed that the school will be located on the vacant site of the former Abbey Primary, St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey.

The school is expected to open to nursery pupils in January 2023

1. Background

The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities. This will include ensuring suitable provision for those pupils with special educational needs/additional learning needs.

Implementing the Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools. It will also involve re-organising education provision to ensure pupils gain access to and benefit from the specialist support, skills and expertise available within the County Borough.

The Council has decided to review its provision on the basis of:

- educational standards
- the need for places and the accessibility of schools

- the quality and suitability of school accommodation
- effective financial management

On 19th January 2022 the Council's Cabinet gave permission to consult on the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium 3-11 school at Neath Abbey. The Council wishes to receive the views of pupils, parents, prospective parents, staff, Governing Bodies and other key stakeholders.

2. The proposal and why change is being proposed

This is a proposal to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND, which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.

Abbey Primary school currently operates between three separate sites and is due to relocate to a new build single site school at Heol Penlan in the Longford area of Neath during March 2022.

The most recent assessment of building condition of the St John's Terrace site reports that the main building has received a moderate amount of investment and is performing well whilst the rear building requires remedial works to the external façade. Both buildings would benefit from a new heating distribution system.

The buildings are largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.

Overall the site is graded C+ for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at £671K.

The Council have recently submitted an expression of interest to Welsh Government for specific Welsh-medium capital funding to support an exciting project that aspires to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing buildings to establish a new starter school including a 45 place nursery and a 12 place childcare setting.

A decision from Welsh Government on whether the expression of interest for capital grant funding is successful is expected early in 2022.

This new Welsh-medium starter school would open for Nursery pupils in January 2023 to avoid leaving the buildings vacant for a lengthy period of time. The first cohort of Reception pupils would attend the new school from September 2023. This proposal would allow nursery and reception aged children in the Neath Abbey area to access Welsh-medium education in their local area.

It is anticipated that all pupils would be within walking distance of the new school with some exceptions for pupils from the Llandarcy and Jersey Marine area.

Neath Port Talbot's draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. The WESP outlines a commitment to stimulate demand for Welsh-medium education across Neath Port Talbot. Currently, 125 pupils from the Neath Abbey, Coedffranc and Crymlyn area travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn in order to seek Welsh-medium education. It is anticipated therefore that the decision to locate the starter school in this area will alleviate the capacity issues in both these schools (nearly or at full capacity) and will stimulate demand for this type of education provision, resulting in a legacy that will benefit the whole authority as more and more parents consider this a preferred option for their children.

Catchment

The proposed new Welsh –medium school will serve the combined catchment areas of Crymlyn, Coedffranc and Abbey primary schools, making it easier for parents to easily understand their Welsh-medium and English-medium choices, and is a change to the current situation where pupils in this area attend either Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn. Approximately 50 pupils from the Neath Abbey area also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium

education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.

This data is outlined in the following tables:

YGG Castell-nedd

Catchment Areas	YGG Castell Nedd									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	1	4	5	0	3	2	1	3	6	25
Coedffranc Primary School	1	5	6	7	5	3	3	4	2	36
Crymlyn Primary School	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	14
Total	2	9	12	10	11	7	6	8	10	75

YGG Tyle'r Ynn

Catchment Areas	YGG Tyle'r Ynn									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Coedffranc Primary School	0	5	3	8	3	3	4	6	7	39
Crymlyn Primary School	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	8
Total	0	9	5	8	3	6	4	8	8	50

A starter school model is considered the most appropriate solution for new Welsh-medium schools. Whilst demand is growing for Welsh-medium education, opening the school immediately to all year groups could destabilise other schools across the authority and could adversely affect the ability to support effective provision.

What is a starter school?

A starter school is a model that can be used when establishing a new school to allow the facilities and staff to be used efficiently whilst the school grows to its full potential. The school opens initially with only Nursery class, and a year group is then added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6.

During the *first* year of the starter school opening, one mainstream class will be in operation as follows:

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;

In the *second* year, the starter school will consist of:

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
- A **reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;

In the *third* year, the school will consist of:

- A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
- A **reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;
- A **Year 1** class with a maximum of **30** places;

In the years following, each new reception year group will have a maximum of 30 places. Full capacity of the school will be realised in September 2029 when all year groups will operate under a one-form entry arrangement.

The table below shows an example of the starter model of growth for a one form-entry school.

Available Places by Academic Year							
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Nursery (January)	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Reception (September)	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 1		30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 2			30	30	30	30	30

Year 3				30	30	30	30
Year 4					30	30	30
Year 5						30	30
Year 6							30

As a result, the proposed new school will provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils in September 2029. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil numbers, including potential growth in pupil population. For the purpose of consultation, the proposed admission number for primary phase education is 30. The admission arrangements will be in line with the Council's approved admission arrangements for primary schools. Staff will need to be appointed to accommodate the pupil numbers. The Headteacher and the Governing Body will manage this in line with agreed recruitment processes.

What are the benefits of a starter school?

- The school capacity would grow as demand increases;
- Stable growth to support existing schools;
- Reduces the possibility of mass movement of pupils from other schools;
- Effectively manages class sizes to support staffing and the school budget;
- Pupils living outside the school catchment area can still apply for a place at the school and may be successful.

What are the disadvantages of a starter school?

- Takes a number of years to deliver growth;
- Possible implications for siblings with changing catchments;
- Possible implications for families moving to Neath Port Talbot with different aged children due to changing catchments.

Childcare

The nearest Welsh-medium childcare provision is some distance away in Neath and a new setting in the proposed new school would ensure that families from the area are offered greater choice and flexibility, and will also support parents to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well

as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

The proposal will see an increase in the total childcare provision across Neath Port Talbot through the creation of 12 additional places at the new Welsh-medium primary school. This will have a positive impact on Welsh-medium education through stimulated demand.

The expected benefits of the proposal

The **benefits** of the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium Primary School are:

- The number of Welsh-medium primary school places will increase in line with WESP targets;
- Increased opportunities for pupils to access Welsh-medium provision;
- Increased opportunity to have Welsh-medium provision as a local school;
- A Welsh-medium Childcare facility will be created;
- Reduced pupil journey times to school;
- Opportunities and facilities for local community engagement through the medium of Welsh;
- Fully refurbished location to 21st Century Schools standards;
- Effective use of an unused Education asset;

Potential Risks and Risk Management

The potential risks associated with the proposal comprise the Council's reputation, educational standards, financial management, staff employment and service delivery.

Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:

Risk	Mitigating Factor
The demand for Welsh-medium places is not as high as expected	This is unlikely due to the increase in demand in recent years. Additional evidence from a recent Demographic and Geographic Survey shows a potential increase in demand in this area.
Resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support	There is a significant number of pupils from the areas travelling to YGG Castell-nedd and YGG Tyle'r Ynn, therefore there is currently a

	demand for Welsh-medium education in the area. This will not be a significant change.
Forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise	It is not possible to predict with any certainty the number of applications that will be received for the new school. By utilising the vacant former Abbey Primary building in St John's Terrace, the LA has chosen to invest in an existing asset rather than spending on new build facilities. This represents better value for money, especially when pupil numbers are unknown.
Staff anxiety and new management arrangements	The school will be a starter school with a growing workforce on an annual basis. This will ensure that new staff will be introduced gradually over a period of time. An effective Headteacher and Governing Body will be appointed to ensure a high level of management and leadership.
21 st Century School Welsh-medium capital funding opportunity not realised	21 st Century School Welsh-medium capital funding has been sought. Failure to secure this grant will result in the project scope being reduced meaning that the planned remodelling and refurbishment works will be limited.
Demand for all provision increases	Admissions and the WESP forum will continue to monitor projections and act accordingly.

The benefits of implementing the proposal will mitigate the effects of identified risks. A new Welsh-medium school will lead to greater numbers of pupils with the ability to speak Welsh within the Local Authority. This aligns with the following documents:

- Neath Port Talbot Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (draft)
- Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
- Welsh Government's national Welsh language strategy 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050' The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21- A desire for learners to become increasingly bilingual

- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017-21- Sets the direction for the development of Welsh-medium education

3.Details of the schools affected by this proposal

The two current Local Authority maintained Welsh-medium Primary schools in Neath Port Talbot that may be affected by the establishment of the new Welsh-medium school are ***Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd, Woodland Road, Neath, SA11 3AL and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, Llansawel Crescent, Llansawel, Port Talbot, SA11 2UN***. These two schools could be affected as parents may choose to send or transfer their child to the new primary school for convenience of location, and therefore there could be a risk that their pupil numbers could decrease. The starter model of growth will minimise the likelihood and impact of this risk by limiting the availability of additional pupil places in older year groups.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd is a Welsh-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the town of Neath approx. 2 miles from the possible site of the proposed new school.

Pupil Numbers

As at January 2021 there were 320 full-time and 97 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 340 full-time and 65 part-time (nursery) pupils per session, the school has a surplus capacity of 5.88% (20 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2021 to January 2022 suggest a slight increase in pupil numbers.

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd</i>				
		<i>Jan 2021</i>		<i>Jan 2022</i>
	<i>School capacity</i>	<i>Actual Pupil Numbers</i>	<i>Surplus places</i>	<i>Projected Pupil Numbers</i>
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>20 (5.88%)</i>	<i>331</i>
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	<i>65 (per Session)</i>	<i>97 (total of both current sessions)</i>	<i>33 (25.38%)</i>	<i>86</i>

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2017 – 2021 + Sept. '22 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Sept.22</i>
<i>Pupil numbers</i>	<i>387</i>	<i>405</i>	<i>415</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>404</i>
<i>Full Time</i>	<i>331</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>337</i>	<i>336</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>350</i>
<i>Part Time</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>54</i>

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 20-21 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report 2021

Quality and standards in education

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd was last inspected in March 2016 and Estyn reported that it was a school with good and excellent features, awarding good judgements in the 3 inspection areas. Past judgements from the school National Categorisation System placed the school in the green support category which recognises it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

Standards

Since 2020, Welsh Government do not expect returns for all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place before the school summer holidays as a result of the Covid pandemic. This includes National Data Collection (NDC) 2020 data collection and Welsh National Tests (WNT) 2020 data collection.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be ‘good’ in the recent Estyn report (March 2016) which states: ‘There is a strong sense of belonging to a happy and friendly community across the school.’

Attendance has been consistent, with current data showing a percentage of 94.6% for 2019 (pre Covid data), where nearly all pupils are punctual and their parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school.

Teaching and Learning

Estyn, in 2016, report that across Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd 'The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, with a few elements of excellence'.

The Estyn report states that 'Teachers question probingly in order to develop previous knowledge and extend pupils' understanding' and 'have a sound understanding of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and they introduce new information and skills clearly, and model high standards of language.'

Care, Support and Guidance

Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that the Headteacher has established effective arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing. This has improved pupils' wellbeing very effectively.

Estyn also report that there is a wide range of valuable provision to meet the needs of pupils who have additional needs.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd has skilled teaching assistants providing high quality care and support to ensure that pupils with a range of additional needs integrate seamlessly into the daily life of the school, this led Estyn to report that, 'An effective team of teaching assistants supports the work well'.

Leadership and Management

In 2016, Estyn judged Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd's leadership and management to be good with excellent elements, reporting that: 'The headteacher has a clear vision which is based on developing each pupil as a whole individual '.

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

Quality of accommodation

The most recent assessment of building condition of YGG Castell Nedd reports that the original main building is in relatively good condition considering its age whilst other more recently added areas including the kitchen, dining hall, two storey teaching block require limited works.

The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.

Overall the site was graded B for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at circa. £391K.

Continued investment at the school since the date of the last condition assessment, including the very recent installation of a brand new large modular classroom funded from Welsh Government's Class Size Reduction Grant will in all probability result in an improved situation when the assessment is next updated.

Ysgol Gynradd Tyle'r Ynn

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn is a Welsh-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the town of Briton Ferry approx. 3.5 miles from the possible site of the proposed new school.

Pupil Numbers

As at January 2021 there were 202 full-time and 56 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 236 full-time and 34 part-time (nursery) pupils per session, the school has a surplus capacity of 14.4% (34 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2021 to January 2022 suggest a slight increase in pupil numbers.

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn</i>				
		<i>Jan 2021</i>		<i>Jan 2022</i>
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
<i>Full-time</i>	236	202	34 (14.4%)	208
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	34 (per session)	56 (Total of both sessions)	12 (17.65%)	50

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2017 – 2021 + Sept. '22 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	17	18	19	20	21	<i>Sept.22</i>

<i>Pupil numbers</i>	236	227	226	230	258	257
<i>Full Time</i>	193	190	182	179	202	226
<i>Part Time</i>	43	37	44	51	56	31

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 20-21 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report 2021

Quality and standards in education

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn was last inspected in May 2017 and Estyn reported that it was a school with adequate and good features, awarding adequate judgements in the 3 inspection areas. Past judgements from the school National Categorisation System placed the school in the yellow support category in 2019-20 which recognises it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

Standards

Since 2020, Welsh Government do not expect returns for all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place before the school summer holidays as a result of the Covid pandemic. This includes National Data Collection (NDC) 2020 data collection and Welsh National Tests (WNT) 2020 data collection.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be 'good' in the recent Estyn report (May 2017) which states: 'nearly all pupils' standards of wellbeing are consistently good within the school's caring and familial community.'

Attendance has been consistent, with current data showing a percentage of 96.2% for 2019 (pre Covid data), where nearly all pupils are punctual and their parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school.

Teaching and Learning

Estyn, in 2017 report that across Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn 'Nearly all teachers provide interesting tasks that stimulate most pupils' interest successfully. They use appropriate teaching methods across the school, which meet the needs of most pupils suitably'.

The Estyn report states that teachers 'offer useful oral feedback to pupils in many lessons and question purposefully to reinforce learning and to develop pupils' thinking skills appropriately.'

Care, Support and Guidance

Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that 'The school is a caring community in which pupils feel safe'. It also notes that 'The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on the care, support, wellbeing and satisfaction of pupils and staff'.

Estyn also report that the school has effective arrangements to address the requirements of pupils with additional learning needs.

Leadership and Management

In 2017, Estyn judged Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn's leadership and management to be adequate with good features.

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

Quality of accommodation

The most recent assessment of building condition of YGG Tyle'r Ynn reports that the building is in fair condition and has received moderate investment over recent years including an extension comprising classrooms, toilets and staffroom. The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.

Overall the site was graded C- for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at circa. £886K.

The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works were still required.

Whilst issues were identified in a number of areas including car park, internal floor coverings, decoration as well as heating and lighting installations, many of these will have been addressed with the recent completion of a significant investment funded through the Council and

Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Capital Grant that has also resulted in the delivery of a brand new nursery and community room.

The recently completed works mentioned above will in all probability result in an improved situation when the condition assessment is next updated.

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus, Seaway Parade, Port Talbot, SA12 7EQ, may also be indirectly affected by the proposal. Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus is a Welsh-medium, 11-16 school. This school is not a subject of the proposal and is not considered to be directly affected, however the number of pupils expected to progress to Year 7 admission for this school will be greater from September 2030 than the current admission number. The south campus currently has the capacity for 650 11-16 year old pupils who transition into the school from the current three Welsh-medium primary school in the south and is anticipated to reach full capacity by 2028. Further consideration will therefore be needed to ensure sufficient capacity within the Welsh-medium secondary phase in the near future.

Abbey Primary, Coedffranc Primary, Crymlyn Primary

Abbey Primary School, St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, SA10 7ND, Coedffranc Primary School, Stanley Road, Skewen, SA10 6LP and Crymlyn Primary School, School Road, Jersey Marine, SA10 6JJ could also be indirectly affected by the proposal, as the proposed new starter school will be the Welsh-medium primary school for the three catchment areas. Coedffranc Primary school is also within close proximity to the proposed new school. There is therefore a possibility that the number of applications for nursery and reception places at the three English-medium primary schools are reduced as a result of the starter Welsh-medium school.

However the starter model of growth is expected to minimise the likelihood and impact of this risk by limiting the availability of additional pupil places in older year groups. It is also the case that the three schools are over or nearing their capacity, each one demonstrating consistent increased pupil

numbers in the last 6 years and pupil numbers continue to grow in the area. Therefore it is anticipated that there will be little impact in the early years of the school opening.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Abbey Primary	370	389	405	425	440	455
Coedffranc Primary	386	385	392	396	400	418
Crymlyn Primary	64	59	56	70	87	113

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon Las, Swansea

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon Las, Walters Road, Swansea, SA7 9RW could also be potentially affected by this proposal. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school. Currently 50 pupils from Neath Port Talbot attend there and potentially live within the proposed catchment area of the new starter school. There is therefore a possibility that in the future pupil numbers at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las might be affected if parents living in Neath Port Talbot opt to send their children to the new school instead of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las. However it is likely that for many pupils living on the borders between Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las would be nearer than the proposed new school, and would therefore likely remain as the first Welsh-medium school of choice for pupils in that area.

4.What options have been considered?

Option 1 new build primary school on an alternative site in the Neath Abbey area

Progress with the developer as regards a proposed new Welsh-medium Primary school at Coed Darcy (funded through a S106 Planning Agreement) continues to move forward slowly. Consideration has also been given to the building of another whole new school in the Neath Abbey area. Land of sufficient size to accommodate a new Welsh-medium primary school in the area is scarce and given the likely planning and construction programme

associated with delivery of a new school, there is unlikely to be any timely easing of the short-term pressures on the increasing demand for Welsh-medium primary education in the general Neath Abbey area.

Option 2 extend YGG Castell-nedd to accommodate increases pupil numbers

YGG Castell-nedd has benefitted from two additional modular classrooms funded through the Welsh Government's Infant Class Size Reduction Grant totalling £325K. YGG Castell-nedd occupies a restricted site in a town centre setting and is now fully developed. The school is easily sustainable from pupils attending from the designated catchment. The majority of pupils likely to attend from Neath Abbey would not be within walking distance which would lead to an accompanying increase in transport costs.

Option 3 extend YGG Tyle'r Ynn to accommodate increases pupil numbers

YGG Tyle'r Ynn have recently reconfigured their Foundation Phase and key stage 2 classrooms to provide improved learning experiences. The school have also recently taken possession of 2 new extra classroom spaces, a Welsh-medium dedicated childcare setting and a Community Hub which were funded through the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium, Childcare Offer and Community Learning Centres/Community Hub Capital grants totalling £1.554m. The site is in effect now fully developed and the school is sufficiently sustainable for pupils attending from the designated catchment. The majority of pupils likely to attend from the Neath Abbey area would not be within walking distance which would lead to an accompanying increase in transport costs. This option is not favoured.

Option 4 starter school (including childcare) provision in the Neath Abbey area

This scheme would see the current Abbey Primary School (Junior site) refurbished, re-modelled and adapted to accommodate a new Welsh-medium starter school and childcare provision. Abbey Primary pupils and staff are due to move into a new 21st century school building in March 2022. It is proposed that this new Welsh-medium starter school provision would open to Nursery pupils in January 2023 to avoid leaving the vacated building empty for a lengthy period of time. The first cohort of Reception pupils would

attend the new school from September 2023 with additional year groups being added year on year thereafter.

Preferred option - Option 4 starter school (including childcare) provision in the Neath Abbey area

5. Impacts of the Proposal

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and impact on Welsh Language

Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. The authority underpins this principle by committing to enabling all learners to benefit from its universal access to this provision.

Our statutory education system also has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers as highlighted by Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy. In order to achieve our goals, we must significantly increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in all settings and thus use it in their everyday lives.

Welsh Government have set a target for Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education of between 17% and 27% over a 10 year period. This target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

In order to reach our target of an increase of 208 pupils by the end of the 10 year plan, we will aim to establish 3 new Welsh-medium schools within the Local Authority. The first of the 3 schools is the subject of this consultation, a new single form entry starter school in the Neath Abbey area subject to member approval and compliance with the extant criteria of the Schools' Organisation Code.

A Welsh language Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix A.

What is the financial impact?

Applications for grant funding have been submitted to assist with additional capital and revenue costs for identified projects through the 21st century schools programme, including this proposal.

Based on Welsh Government's standardised costs for a "medium" refurbishment, an initial budget calculation of up to £2.43M has been identified for necessary works to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing Abbey Primary junior site buildings to establish the proposed new school and childcare provision.

Additional revenue costs for two years for the proposed starter school are estimated at £652,651, based on the current costs of teaching and support staff required to operate a starter school at the point of opening. Two year revenue costs for the new childcare setting have been estimated at £16,000, based on similar provision within Neath Port Talbot, and an application for an additional revenue support grant has been submitted along with the Welsh medium grant funding bid.

Revenue funding for schools is distributed on an annual basis by means of an approved formula. This ensures school budget shares are allocated on a simple, objective and measurable basis.

Most of the revenue budget allocation to schools is generated by pupil numbers. Therefore the proposed new school budget will be based mainly on the pupil roll, and as the pupil numbers grow the budget will also increase. Based on a school of 210 full time pupils and 45 part time nursery places the projected budget share for the proposed new school is estimated to be approx. £957k when the school is fully occupied.

Transport costs are unlikely to be affected by this proposal as while it is expected that pupils attending the proposed new school will no longer require transport, the current buses will still be required to transport pupils to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from other areas, although it is possible that smaller vehicles could be used, or routes could be combined so less vehicles are needed.

Land and Buildings

It is proposed to locate the new Welsh-medium starter school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupies a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.

Abbey Primary school currently operates between three separate sites and is due to relocate to a brand new build single site school at Heol Penlan in the Longford area of Neath during March 2022.

The Council benefit from a longstanding fully repairing lease of the land and buildings at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND with the Diocese of Llandaff.

What is the impact on travel arrangements?

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.

Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council's Home to School Transport policy. This means that primary school aged pupils living 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable or designated school will be considered for transport assistance.

Under the School Travel Plan requirements, all schools, together with the Council's Road Safety Team, are committed to:

- improving road safety within the local community
- raising awareness about travel issues
- encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for the school journey where applicable
- encouraging independent travel where applicable

In the longer term this proposal will negate the need for transport from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn.

Impact on community usage

A community Impact Assessment (CIA) was undertaken when Abbey Primary was established in 2015, and at that time it was found that there was little use of the school buildings by the community. This situation has not changed although it is expected that the new build at Longford will greatly increase opportunities for community participation.

The proposed Welsh-medium school will utilise the junior site and is some distance away from Abbey primary's new build. The proposal therefore should still provide opportunities for community use in the Neath Abbey area, and in addition can be seen as an opportunity to further support, enhance and expand the local community's Welsh language provision.

Local residents should not be subjected to any additional school traffic as pupil numbers for the primary will be significantly less in the first years of the starter school with the potential of growing to the total number of pupils currently attending the English medium school.

6. Legal process and Consultation

The School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) provides the legislative framework by which the Council may implement a proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, November 2018, made under Sections 38 and 39 of the Act, imposes on the Council requirements and guidelines on matters relating to school organisation. The Council's procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

Pupil travel arrangements will be in line with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008; the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014; and the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, 2017.

Revenue funding will be in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010; and the Council's approved formula for funding schools.

The management of staff affected by the proposal will follow the relevant school policy and procedure requirements.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is the proposer and the Council wishes to hear the views of all interested parties before deciding whether to progress its proposal. All responses to this consultation will be considered when making its decision and a consultation report will be published following the end of the consultation period. The consultation report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and include a response. The consultation report will also set out Estyn's view on the proposal.

Having considered the views expressed by interested parties, if the Council decides to proceed with its plan it will publish a statutory proposal. Once the statutory proposal is published there will be a 28 day period to respond in writing, known as the 'objection period'. Only objections submitted during this period will be considered. If objections are received, an objection report will be published following the end of the objection period. The report will summarise objections raised and provide a response.

Please note that only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period will need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period if they are to be considered as objections.

Following the conclusion of the objection period the Council is required to determine the proposal and the matter will go before the Council's Cabinet for decision. In its decision making the Council's Cabinet will give due consideration to any objections raised alongside the case for the proposal. The proposal will be determined in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and associated School Organisation Code 2018.

Process Timetable

The main activities and actions, and the dates/periods that they are scheduled to take place is set out below

What	When
Publication of consultation document	25th January 2022
Period for submitting responses	25th January 2022- 8th March 2022
Consultation report published	June 2022
Proposed implementation date	9th January 2023

Making comment on the proposal

The purpose of this consultation document is to provide information and to invite views on the Council's proposal to open a new 3-11 Welsh-medium school in Neath Abbey.

Formal consultation will take place during the period: 25th January 2022- 8th March 2022. Comments on the proposal must be submitted in writing by letter or e-mail.

Consultation responses can also be submitted using the Consultation Portal on the Council's web site or by email to SSIP@npt.gov.uk.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is 8th March 2022
Unfortunately we will not be able consider any consultation responses received after this date.

Responses should be sent to the following address: **The Director of Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning, (marked for the attention of the SSIP Team), Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ** or e-mail to: SSIP@npt.gov.uk

A full list of those being consulted can be seen below:

List of Consultees	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn: Pupils Parents / carers Staff Governing Body Wider School Community	NAASH (Secondary Schools Forum)
	LLAN (Primary Schools Forum)
	Bordering authorities – Swansea/ Bridgend/ Carmarthenshire/ Powys/ RCT
Governing Body of: Abbey Primary School Coedffranc Primary School Crymlyn Primary School YG Ystalyfera –Bro Dur	Briton Ferry Town Council Coedffranc Town Council Dyffryn Clydach Community Council Neath Town Council
All other NPT schools	
NPT Elected Members	WG Schools Management Division
Diocesan Directors of Education	MP (for Neath) – Christina Rees
- Diocese of Menevia, Swansea - Diocese of Llandaff, Vale of Glamorgan	MS (for Neath) – Jeremy Miles
Trade Unions	Regional Assembly Members
Estyn	ALN Partners
Regional Education Consortium (ERW)	Children and Young Person Partnership (inc. Early Years Development and Childcare)
NPTCBC Integrated Transport Unit	Police and Crime Commissioner
Communities First Partnership	NPTCBC Officers
Welsh Language Commissioner	

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board

19th January 2022

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,
LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING
ANDREW THOMAS**

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: Briton Ferry West, Coedffranc Central, Coedffranc North, Coedffranc West, Dyffryn, Neath North

**STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME -
PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW WELSH-MEDIUM
PRIMARY SCHOOL IN NEATH ABBEY**

Purpose of report

1. To obtain approval to consult on a proposal to establish a new Welsh –medium primary school at St John’s Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND

Executive summary

2. Neath Port Talbot’s draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council’s vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.
3. The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh

from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

4. In recent years pupil numbers in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas have risen with the result that both the English-medium schools in those areas and the Welsh-medium schools that admit pupils from those areas are facing accommodation pressures. New housing developments in Crymlyn and Coed Darcy in particular have contributed to the increase in pupil numbers, as well as increased numbers of families moving into the area.
5. Modelling work on expanding Welsh- medium provision suggests that the Neath Abbey area is a good location for creating a new Welsh-medium school.
6. This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.
7. The Council have recently submitted an expression of interest to Welsh Government for specific Welsh-medium capital funding to support an exciting project that aspires to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing buildings at the St John's Terrace site to establish a new Welsh-medium starter school including a 45 place nursery and a 12 place childcare setting.
8. It is proposed that a new Welsh-medium starter school would open for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils expected to attend the new school from September 2023.

Background

9. The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for

the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities.

10. Implementing the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools.

11. The Council has determined to review its provision on the basis of:
 - educational standards
 - the need for places and the accessibility of schools
 - the quality and suitability of school accommodation
 - effective financial management

12. Neath Port Talbot currently has nine Welsh-medium primary schools, and one Welsh-medium middle (3-18) school over two sites, one at the north in Ystalyfera and one in the south in Sandfields/Baglan. Three of the nine primary schools are situated in the south of Neath Port Talbot – Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhos Afan in Sandfields, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd in Neath centre and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn in Briton Ferry. All three schools have seen an increase in pupil numbers and are facing accommodation pressures. The numbers of pupils choosing Welsh-medium in the south of the county borough has seen an increase year on year.

Table 1

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
YGG Castell-nedd	364	356	360	359	362	384	387	405	415	419	417
YGG Rhosafan	339	366	355	354	361	360	360	359	365	381	392
YGG Tyle'r Ynn	211	219	218	218	230	239	236	227	226	230	258
Total	914	941	933	931	953	983	983	991	1006	1030	1065

13. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot and all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives through the medium of Welsh. This principle is underpinned by ensuring universal access to this provision across the county

borough. Neath Port Talbot Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and celebrating Welsh language learning across all phases and sectors.

14. Neath Port Talbot's draft WESP 2022-32, is the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. It both complements and assists in facilitating the National vision for the Welsh language, to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050:

The year 2050: The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society, and economy of Wales. Our vision is to secure favourable circumstances throughout the country that support language acquisition and use of Welsh language skills. We want to see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child, an education system that provides Welsh language skills for all

Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers (Welsh Government, 2017)

15. The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

Current Situation

16. In recent years pupil numbers in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas have risen with the result that both the English–medium schools in those areas and the Welsh-medium schools that admit pupils from those areas are facing accommodation pressures. New housing developments in Crymlyn and Coed Darcy in particular have contributed to the increase in pupil numbers, as well as increased numbers of families moving into the area.

17. Modelling work on expanding Welsh- medium provision suggests that the Neath Abbey area is a good location for creating a new Welsh-medium school.
18. Currently, 125 pupils from Neath Abbey, Skewen, Llandarcy and Jersey Marine travel to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn to access Welsh-medium education, from nursery to year 6, shown below in tables 2 and 3. Approximately 50 pupils from Neath Port Talbot also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

Table 2

English-medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Castell Nedd									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	1	4	5	0	3	2	1	3	6	25
Coedffranc Primary School	1	5	6	7	5	3	3	4	2	36
Crymlyn Primary School	0	0	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	14
Total	2	9	12	10	11	7	6	8	10	75

Table 3

English –medium School Catchment Areas	YGG Tyle'r Ynn									
	N2	N1	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Abbey Primary School	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Coedffranc Primary School	0	5	3	8	3	3	4	6	7	39
Crymlyn Primary School	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	8
Total	0	9	5	8	3	6	4	8	8	50

19. It is anticipated therefore that locating a new Welsh-medium school in this area will alleviate the capacity issues in both Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn (nearly or at full capacity) and will further stimulate demand for Welsh-medium education provision in the area.

The proposal

20. This proposal would seek to establish a Welsh-medium starter primary school in premises previously occupied by Abbey Primary

School at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND which occupy a prominent position off the A4230 between Neath Abbey and Skewen.

21. Abbey Primary School currently operates between three separate sites and the school is due to relocate to a brand new build single site school at Heol Penlan in the Longford area of Neath during March 2022.
22. The Council have recently submitted an expression of interest to Welsh Government for specific Welsh-medium capital funding to support an exciting project that aspires to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing buildings at the St John's Terrace site to establish a new Welsh-medium starter school including a 45 place nursery and a 12 place childcare setting.
23. A decision from Welsh Government on whether the expression of interest for capital grant funding is successful is expected early in 2022.
24. It is proposed that a new Welsh-medium starter school would open for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils expected to attend the new school from September 2023.
25. The new school would provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils by September 2029. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil numbers, including potential growth in pupil population.
26. The admission arrangements will be in line with the Council's approved admission arrangements for primary schools. For the purpose of consultation, the proposed admission number for primary phase education is 30.
27. The proposed new Welsh-medium school will serve the combined catchment areas of Crymlyn, Coedffranc and Abbey primary schools, making it easier for parents to easily understand their Welsh-medium and English-medium choices, and is a change to the current situation where pupils in this area attend either Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn for Welsh-

medium education. Approximately 50 pupils from the Skewen area also attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las which is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school.

28. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.
29. A starter school model is considered the most appropriate solution for new Welsh-medium schools. Whilst demand is growing for Welsh-medium education, opening the school immediately to all year groups could destabilise other schools across the authority and could adversely affect the ability to support effective provision.

- **What is a starter school?**

30. A starter school is a model that can be used when establishing a new school to allow the facilities and staff to be used efficiently while the school grows to its full potential. The school opens initially with only Nursery class, and a year group is then added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6.
31. During the *first* year of the starter school opening, one mainstream class will be in operation as follows
 - A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
32. In the *second* year, the starter school will consist of:
 - A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;
 - A **reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;
33. In the *third* year, the school will consist of:
 - A **nursery class** where up to **45 part-time** places will be offered over either a morning or afternoon session;

- **A reception class** with a maximum of **30** places;
 - **A Year 1 class** with a maximum of **30** places;
34. In the years following, each new reception year group will have a maximum of 30 places. Full capacity of the school will be realised in September 2029 when all year groups will operate under a one-form entry arrangement.
35. The table below shows an example of the starter model of growth for a one form-entry school.

Table 4

Available Places by Academic Year							
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Nursery (January)	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Reception (September)	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 1		30	30	30	30	30	30
Year 2			30	30	30	30	30
Year 3				30	30	30	30
Year 4					30	30	30
Year 5						30	30
Year 6							30

- **What are the benefits of a starter school?**
 - The school capacity grows as demand increases;
 - Stable growth to support existing schools;
 - Reduces the possibility of mass movement of pupils from other schools;
 - Effectively manages class sizes to support staffing and the school budget;
 - Pupils living outside the school catchment area can still apply for a place at the school and if places are available may be successful.
- **What are the disadvantages of a starter school?**
 - Takes a number of years to deliver growth
 - Possible implications for siblings with changing catchments;
 - Possible implications for families moving to Neath Port Talbot with different aged children due to changing catchments;

Childcare provision

36. The proposal includes the intention to incorporate a new Welsh-medium childcare setting on the school site, to offer pre-school and

wraparound care for children through the medium of Welsh. This would increase the total childcare provision across Neath Port Talbot through the creation of 12 additional places and will have a positive impact on Welsh-medium education through stimulated demand.

37. The nearest Welsh-medium childcare provision is some distance away in Neath and a new setting in the proposed new school would ensure that families from the area are offered greater choice and flexibility, and will also support parents to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.

Details of the Schools affected by this proposal

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd

38. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd is a Welsh-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the town of Neath approx. 2 miles from the possible site of the proposed new school.

- **Pupil Numbers**

39. As at January 2021 there were 320 full-time and 97 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 340 full-time and 65 part-time (nursery) pupils per session, the school has a surplus capacity of 5.88% (20 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2021 to January 2022 suggest a slight increase in pupil numbers.

Table 5

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd</i>				
		<i>Jan 2021</i>		<i>Jan 2022</i>
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
<i>Full-time</i>	340	320	20 (5.88%)	331
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	65 (per Session)	97 (total of both current sessions)	33 (25.38%)	86

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

Table 6

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2017 – 2021 + Sept. '22 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	17	18	19	20	21	Sept.22

<i>Pupil numbers</i>	387	405	415	419	417	404
<i>Full Time</i>	331	339	337	336	320	350
<i>Part Time</i>	56	66	78	83	97	54

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 20-21 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report 2021

- **Quality and standards in education**

40. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd was last inspected in March 2016 and Estyn reported that it was a school with good and excellent features, awarding good judgements in the 3 inspection areas. Past judgements from the school National Categorisation System placed the school in the green support category which recognises it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

- **Standards**

41. Since 2020, Welsh Government do not expect returns for all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place before the school summer holidays as a result of the Covid pandemic. This includes National Data Collection (NDC) 2020 data collection and Welsh National Tests (WNT) 2020 data collection.

- **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning**

42. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be 'good' in the recent Estyn report (March 2016) which states: 'There is a strong sense of belonging to a happy and friendly community across the school.'

Attendance has been consistent, with current data showing a percentage of 94.6% for 2019 (pre Covid data), where nearly all pupils are punctual and their parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school.

- **Teaching and Learning**

43. Estyn, in 2016, report that across Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd 'The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, with a few elements of excellence'.

The Estyn report states that 'Teachers question probingly in order to develop previous knowledge and extend pupils' understanding' and 'have a sound understanding of the Literacy and Numeracy

Framework and they introduce new information and skills clearly, and model high standards of language.'

- ***Care, Support and Guidance***

44. Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that the Headteacher has established effective arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing. This has improved pupils' wellbeing very effectively.

Estyn also report that there is a wide range of valuable provision to meet the needs of pupils who have additional needs.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd has skilled teaching assistants providing high quality care and support to ensure that pupils with a range of additional needs integrate seamlessly into the daily life of the school, this led Estyn to report that, 'An effective team of teaching assistants supports the work well'.

- ***Leadership and Management***

45. In 2016, Estyn judged Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd's leadership and management to be good with excellent elements, reporting that: 'The headteacher has a clear vision which is based on developing each pupil as a whole individual '.

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

- ***Quality of accommodation***

46. The most recent assessment of building condition of YGG Castell Nedd reports that the original main building is in relatively good condition considering its age whilst other more recently added areas including the kitchen, dining hall, two storey teaching block require limited works. The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.
47. Overall the site was graded B for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at circa. £391K.
48. Continued investment at the school since the date of the last condition assessment, including the very recent installation of a brand new large modular classroom funded from Welsh

Government's Class Size Reduction Grant is expected to result in an improved situation when the assessment is next updated.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn

49. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn is a Welsh-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the town of Briton Ferry approx. 3.5 miles from the possible site of the proposed new school.

Pupil Numbers

50. As at January 2021 there were 200 full-time and 56 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 236 full-time and 34 part-time (nursery) pupils per session, the school has a surplus capacity of 15.25% (36 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2021 to January 2022 suggest an increase in pupil numbers.

Table 7

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn</i>				
		<i>Jan 2021</i>		<i>Jan 2022</i>
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
<i>Full-time</i>	236	200	36 (15.25%)	208
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	34 (per session)	56 (Total of both sessions)	12 (17.65%)	50

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

Table 8

<i>Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2017 – 2021 + Sept. '22 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Sept.22</i>
<i>Pupil numbers</i>	236	227	226	230	256	257
<i>Full Time</i>	193	190	182	179	200	226
<i>Part Time</i>	43	37	44	51	56	31

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 20-21 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report 2021

- **Quality and standards in education**

51. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn was last inspected in May 2017 and Estyn reported that it was a school with adequate and good features, awarding adequate judgements in the 3 inspection areas.

Past judgements from the school National Categorisation System placed the school in the yellow support category in 2019-20 which recognises it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

- **Standards**

52. Since 2020, Welsh Government do not expect returns for all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place before the school summer holidays as a result of the Covid pandemic. This includes National Data Collection (NDC) 2020 data collection and Welsh National Tests (WNT) 2020 data collection.

- **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning**

53. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be 'good' in the recent Estyn report (May 2017) which states: 'nearly all pupils' standards of wellbeing are consistently good within the school's caring and familial community.'

Attendance has been consistent, with current data showing a percentage of 96.2% for 2019 (pre Covid data), where nearly all pupils are punctual and their parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school.

- **Teaching and Learning**

54. Estyn, in 2017 report that across Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn 'Nearly all teachers provide interesting tasks that stimulate most pupils' interest successfully. They use appropriate teaching methods across the school, which meet the needs of most pupils suitably'.

The Estyn report states that teachers 'offer useful oral feedback to pupils in many lessons and question purposefully to reinforce learning and to develop pupils' thinking skills appropriately.'

- **Care, Support and Guidance**

55. Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that 'The school is a caring community in which pupils feel safe'. It also notes that 'The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on the care, support, wellbeing and satisfaction of pupils and staff'.

Estyn also report that the school has effective arrangements to address the requirements of pupils with additional learning needs.

- **Leadership and Management**

56. In 2017, Estyn judged Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn's leadership and management to be adequate with good features.

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

- **Quality of accommodation**

57. The most recent assessment of building condition of YGG Tyle'r Ynn reports that the building is in fair condition and has received moderate investment over recent years including an extension comprising classrooms, toilets and staffroom. The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works are still required.

58. Overall the site was graded C- for condition and B for accessibility with backlog maintenance and accessibility costs being assessed at circa. £886K. The site is largely compliant with accessibility legislation although some works were still required.

59. Whilst issues were identified in a number of areas including car park, internal floor coverings, decoration as well as heating and lighting installations, many of these will have been addressed with the recent completion of a significant investment funded through the Council and Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Capital Grant that has also resulted in the delivery of a brand new nursery and community room.

60. The recently completed works mentioned above are expected to result in an improved situation when the condition assessment is next updated.

Other schools potentially affected by the proposal

61. **Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, South Campus**, Seaway Parade, Port Talbot, SA12 7EQ, will be indirectly affected by the proposal. This school is not a subject of the proposal, however the number of pupils expected to progress to Year 7 admission for this school will be greater from September 2030 than the current admission number. The south campus currently has the capacity for 650 11-16 year old pupils who transition into the school from the current three Welsh-medium primary school in the south and is anticipated to reach full capacity by 2028. Further consideration will

therefore be needed to ensure sufficient capacity within the Welsh-medium secondary phase in the near future.

62. **Abbey Primary School, St John’s Terrace, Neath Abbey, SA10 7ND,**
Coedffranc Primary School, Stanley Road, Skewen, SA10 6LP
Crymlyn Primary School, School Road, Jersey Marine, SA10 6JJ

These schools could also be indirectly affected by the proposal, as the proposed new starter school will be the Welsh-medium primary school for the three catchment areas. Coedffranc Primary school is also within close proximity to the proposed new school. There is therefore a possibility that the number of applications for nursery and reception places at the three English- medium primary schools will be reduced as a result of the starter Welsh-medium school.

63. However the starter model of growth is expected to minimise the likelihood and impact of this risk by limiting the availability of additional pupil places in older year groups. It is also the case that the three schools are over or nearing their capacity, each one demonstrating consistent increased pupil numbers in the last 5 years (table 9) and pupil numbers continue to grow in the area. Therefore it is anticipated that there will be little impact in the early years of the school opening.

Table 9

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Abbey Primary	389	405	425	440	455
Coedffranc Primary	385	392	396	400	418
Crymlyn Primary	59	56	70	87	113

64. **Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las, Heol Walters, Llansamlet, Swansea SA7 9RW** could also be potentially affected by this proposal. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las is a Welsh-medium school in the City and County of Swansea, approximately 3.5 miles from the location of the proposed new school. Currently 50 pupils from Neath Port Talbot attend there and potentially live within the proposed catchment area of the new starter school. There is therefore a possibility that in the future pupil numbers at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las might be affected if parents living in Neath Port Talbot opt to send their children to the new school instead of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las in the future. However it is likely that for many pupils living on the borders between Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lon-las would be

nearer than the proposed new school, and would therefore likely remain as the first Welsh-medium school of choice for pupils in that area.

Impact on Pupils and Parents

65. The proposed new school will offer the opportunity for pupils to access Welsh-medium education in their immediate area rather than travelling to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd or Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn. It is anticipated that this will prove to be attractive to many parents in the area and that interest in the Welsh language will therefore grow.
66. The additional benefit of an onsite childcare provision will also support parents and may help and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, as well as helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children.
67. Parents of children who currently attend Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from the Neath Abbey and surrounding areas will not be affected by this proposal as their children will remain in their current schools. Younger siblings (preschool or nursery age) will be able to access the proposed new school and parents/carers will be encouraged to take advantage of the more local provision.
68. Pupils and parents from Neath centre, Briton Ferry and surrounding areas will also benefit from the proposal as Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn will, should this proposal be approved, have capacity to admit more pupils from their immediate areas and will be able to avoid the possibility of catchment pupils being refused a place at their nearest suitable school.

Impact on Governors

69. A temporary governing body will be established prior to the opening of the proposed new school. The temporary governing body will take important decisions about the new school including the appointment of a head teacher, agreeing a staffing structure and adopting operating procedures and agreeing a name for the school. The temporary governing body will also resolve other issues including

school uniform which, in line with good practice, will be determined following consultation with parents and if possible with pupils.

70. The temporary governing body is expected to include existing governors from Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn with the aim of ensuring good working relationships between the three schools, and to ensure that the good practice currently evidenced in the two schools is shared and developed into the new school.

Impact on travel Arrangements

71. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils attending will live within a two mile radius of the proposed new school, ensuring that Welsh medium education is available within their immediate local area. Current data indicates that of the 125 pupils who currently travel from the area to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn, 117 live within a 2 mile radius of the proposed new school site.
72. Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council's Home to School Transport policy. This means that primary school aged pupils living 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable or designated school will be considered for transport assistance.
73. Under the School Travel Plan requirements, all schools, together with the Council's Road Safety Team, are committed to:
 - improving road safety within the local community
 - raising awareness about travel issues
 - encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for the school journey where applicable
 - encouraging independent travel where applicable.

Financial Impact

74. Applications for grant funding have been submitted to assist with additional capital and revenue costs for identified projects through the 21st century schools programme, including this proposal.
75. Based on Welsh Government's standardised costs for a "medium" refurbishment, an initial budget calculation of up to £2.43M has been

identified for necessary works to refurbish, re-model, and adapt the existing Abbey Primary junior site buildings to establish the proposed new school and childcare provision.

76. Additional revenue costs for two years for the proposed starter school are estimated at £652,651, based on the current costs of teaching and support staff required to operate a starter school at the point of opening. Two year revenue costs for the new childcare setting have been estimated at £16,000, based on similar provision within Neath Port Talbot, and an application for an additional revenue support grant has been submitted along with the Welsh medium grant funding bid.
77. Revenue funding for schools is distributed on an annual basis by means of an approved formula. This ensures school budget shares are allocated on a simple, objective and measurable basis.
78. Most of the revenue budget allocation to schools is generated by pupil numbers. Therefore the proposed new school budget will be based mainly on the pupil roll, and as the pupil numbers grow the budget will also increase. Based on a school of 210 full time pupils and 45 part time nursery places the projected budget share for the proposed new school is estimated to be approx. £957k when the school is fully occupied.
79. Transport costs are unlikely to be affected by this proposal as while it is expected that pupils attending the proposed new school will no longer require transport, the current buses will still be required to transport pupils to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from other areas, although it is possible that smaller vehicles could be used, or routes could be combined so less vehicles are needed.

Integrated Impact Assessment

80. A first stage Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) 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, and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Environment (Wales) Act 2016).

81. The first stage screening assessment is attached as appendix A. This indicates that the proposal is likely to have an impact on pupils, staff and other potential users of the new school. The proposal may also impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language.
82. Members should note that work on the IIA is an ongoing process and following full consultation where views of all stakeholders will be gathered, greater information will be available which will further help to inform the full assessment.
83. A fully completed IIA will be put before members prior to any final decision being taken on whether or not the proposal is to be implemented. The impact on different protected groups, together with the three equality needs to which members must have regard will be set out in the IIA.
84. As part of the IIA the impact on the proposal on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English will also be fully assessed.
85. As this proposal relates to the establishment of a Welsh-medium school, the School Organisation Code specifies that a Welsh Language Impact Assessment must be undertaken, and this will also be developed through the consultation process for presentation to Members before the final decision is taken on whether the proposal should be implemented.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and impact on Welsh Language

86. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. The local authority underpins this principle by committing to enabling all learners to benefit from its universal access to this provision.
87. Our statutory education system also has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers as highlighted by Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy. In order to achieve our goals, we must significantly increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in all settings and thus use it in their everyday lives.

88. Welsh Government have set a target for Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education of between 17% and 27% over a 10 year period. This target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.
89. In order to reach our target of an increase of 208 pupils by the end of the 10 year plan, we will aim to establish 3 new Welsh-medium schools within Neath Port Talbot. The first of the 3 schools is the subject of this proposal, a new single form entry starter school in Neath Abbey area subject to member approval and compliance with the extant criteria of the Schools' Organisation Code.

Valley Communities Impacts

90. There are no impacts on valley communities as result of this report.

Workforce impacts

91. This proposal seeks to establish a new Welsh-medium school and as such any workforce impacts are positive, as new teaching and support staff would be required for the new school.
92. There is a risk that pupil numbers at existing schools that could be affected by this proposal could reduce, leading to possible job losses. This is not anticipated in the early years of the school opening as numbers in the catchment areas have demonstrated significant growth which is predicted to continue. However if this was to be the case then staff from the Welsh-medium schools or who have the appropriate Welsh language skills in the English-medium schools could transfer to the new school, where additional staff would be needed.
93. The draft Welsh in Education Plan outlines the need for additional staff with appropriate Welsh language skills across Neath Port Talbot in future years and how training and development needs will be identified and addressed. It is expected that staff in the current English-medium schools in this area may wish to develop Welsh language skills in the future enabling them to also transfer to the new school if they should wish to do so and if the pupil numbers grow as expected.

Legal impacts

94. The School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) provides the legislative framework by which the Council may implement a proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, November 2018, made under Sections 38 and 39 of the Act, imposes on the Council requirements and guidelines on matters relating to school organisation. The Council's procedures are in line with legislative requirements.
95. Pupil travel arrangements will be in line with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008; the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014; and the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, 2017.
96. Revenue funding will be in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010; and the Council's approved formula for funding schools.

Risk Management Impacts

97. A risk assessment has been carried out under the Council's Risk Management Policy 2018.
98. The potential risks associated with the proposal comprise the Council's reputation, educational standards, financial management, staff employment and service delivery.
99. Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:
 - forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise
 - the demand for Welsh-medium places is not as high as expected
 - current Welsh-medium schools pupil numbers reduce
 - increased staff anxiety in current schools affected by the proposal
 - resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support
 - educational standards not maintained
 - 21st Century School capital funding opportunity not realised
 - the development of Welsh in the early years is not realised due to no available, suitable site for a childcare provision
 - budget allocation insufficient to meet needs

100. Failing to implement the proposal will result in the following teaching/learning and financial benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:

- progress towards the Welsh in Education Plan targets of increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032
- increasing the numbers of primary aged pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision within their immediate area
- allowing further growth in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn from their local areas
- creating school places for a growing population in the Neath Abbey, Skewen and Crymlyn areas
- avoiding increased transport costs as a result of having to transport children across Neath Port Talbot to access suitable provision due to nearest suitable schools being full
- onsite childcare provision to support parents and encourage those who do not speak Welsh to opt for a Welsh medium school for their children, helping to develop early Welsh language speaking and listening skills in preschool children

101. The benefits of implementing the proposal will mitigate the effects of identified risks. A new Welsh-medium school in Neath Abbey will ensure progress towards the targets of increased numbers of pupils taught through the medium of Welsh as outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and will enable existing Welsh-medium schools to continue to grow and flourish with pupils from their local areas.

102. The full risk assessment is attached to this report as appendix B.

Consultation

103. This school organisation proposal is being brought forward under the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme. Formal consultation is required in line with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, November 2018, which specifies the procedures to be followed, including the content of the consultation document and those to be consulted.

104. Subject to approval, it is intended to consult on this proposal between 25th January and 8th March 2022 - see timeframe below. Responses

to the consultation will be reported to Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet board for consideration by Members in June 2022.

105. If, following consideration of the responses, members decide to progress the proposal then a 28 day period will follow for the submission of objections.

Publication of consultation document	25 th January 2022
Period for submitting responses	25 th January 2022- 8 th March 2022
Consultation report published	June 2022
Proposed implementation date	9 th January 2023

106. Information on the proposal and the consultation document will be available on line on the Council's website and also on the websites of the affected schools. Hard copies will also be available on request.

107. All consultees, as directed by the Code will be sent the Consultation document via email. The Council's social media channels will also contain information on how to access the consultation document.

108. Consultation responses can also be submitted using the Consultation Portal on the Council's web page, or by email to SSIP@npt.gov.uk , or in writing.

109. Due to the ongoing public health situation there will be no face-to-face consultation events arranged for this consultation. Questions concerning the proposal can be submitted to SSIP@npt.gov.uk .

Recommendation

110. Having given due regard to the impact assessments in relation to equality, risk, community usage and Welsh language, and to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales 2015), together with the legal implications, it is recommended that, in line with Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, Members approve consultation on the proposal to establish a new Welsh –medium primary school at St John's Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND

111. If approved the proposed date of implementation to be 9th January 2023

Reasons for proposed decision

112. This decision is necessary to comply with the consultation requirements imposed upon the council by Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019.

Implementation of the decision

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

Appendices

Appendix A: Integrated Impact Assessment First Stage

Appendix B: Risk Assessment

Officer Contact:

Andrew Thomas

Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong learning

Email: a.d.thomas@npt.gov.uk

Rhiannon Crowhurst

Head of Support Services and Transformation

Email: r.crowhurst@npt.gov.uk

**This Statutory Notice is published by
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Port Talbot. SA13 1PJ**

NOTICE is given in accordance with Section 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (hereinafter referred to as “the Council”) having consulted such persons as required, propose to:

- Establish a new Welsh –medium primary school at St John’s Terrace, Neath Abbey, Neath, SA10 7ND

The Council undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the Council’s response to these queries and the views of Estyn is available on the Council’s website under the Strategic School Improvement Programme reports page or via the link <https://www.npt.gov.uk/1890>

It is proposed to implement the proposal on **1st January 2023**.

The proposed new school will be a Welsh-medium, starter community primary school. The school will open for part time nursery pupils in January 2023 with the first cohort of full time reception pupils admitted in September 2023.

The Council will be the admission authority. It is not proposed that the admission arrangements to the new primary school will make any provision for selection by aptitude or ability.

The new school would provide for up to 210 full-time primary age pupils and 45 part-time nursery age pupils by September 2029.


The admission number for pupils aged 4 years at the new primary school in the first year in which the proposal has been implemented is 30.

Transport arrangements will be in line with the Council’s Home to School Travel Policy.

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of this proposal, that is to say by the **27th July 2021**, any person may object to the proposal.

Objections should be sent to the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (for attention of the Strategic School Improvement Programme team) at Civic Centre Port Talbot. SA13 1PJ or e-mailed to ssip@npt.gov.uk

Signed:



Andrew Thomas, Director of Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Dated: 30th June 2021

Explanatory Notes:

(This note does not form part of the Notice but is offered by way of explanation)

- (i) A starter school is a model that can be used when establishing a new school to allow the facilities and staff to be used efficiently while the school grows to its full potential. The school opens initially with only Nursery class, and a year group is then added each academic year until the first reception cohort reaches Year 6.
- (ii) The reasons for the proposal are set out in the consultation document which is available on the Council's website under the Strategic School Improvement Programme consultation page or via the link: <https://www.npt.gov.uk/1891>
- (iii) The Authority's School Transport policy is available from the Council's website: www.npt.gov.uk or from the Civic Centre Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ.
- (iv) Hard copies or alternative versions of all documentation may be obtained upon request from the Strategic School Improvement Team, Education Department, 2nd Floor Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

29 June 2022

Report of the Head of People and Organisational Development – S Rees

Matter for Monitoring

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021-2022

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for 2021-2022, produced in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015.

Executive Summary

2. This annual report, produced in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, provides an overview of compliance with the standards with which we had a duty to comply during the year.
3. The report also details the number of complaints received during the year which relate to compliance with the service delivery, operational and policy making standards and the Welsh language generally. A total of nine complaints were received during the year; six via the Welsh Language Commissioner and three direct to the Council.
4. Specific information as required by the standards in relation to the Welsh language skills of employees and new and vacant posts is also included.

Background:

5. Following the Welsh Language Commissioner's final determination in relation to the Council's challenge to a number of standards a final compliance notice was received on 25 April 2018.
6. The annual report, attached at Appendix 1, provides an overview of compliance with the standards with which we had a duty to comply during 2021-2022.
7. The Council's Welsh Language Officer Group remains key to the promotion of the Welsh language, the implementation of the standards, identification of good practice and monitoring compliance.

Annual Report

8. Monitoring compliance with the Welsh language standards during 2021-2022 continued to be challenging with the ongoing impact of the pandemic. The outcome of the Welsh Language Commissioner's evidence gathering exercise for 2020-2021 was received and discussions with the Commissioner's officer took place in January 2022.
9. Compliance was like the curate's egg – good in parts. While some of the areas initially indicated relatively high levels of compliance these were let down by simple oversight/errors/omissions: notably omission of text / hashtags on social media posts, lack of standard text on English versions of documents and forms and Welsh webpages not mirroring those in English.
10. However some areas saw no improvement from the monitoring exercise undertaken by the Welsh Language Commissioner in 2019-2020: responses to correspondence and calls to the main telephone number.
11. The Commissioner has recommended further actions to ensure full compliance with specific standards:
 - ensure that all English versions of documents and forms clearly state that the document/form is also available in Welsh.

- take steps to ensure that social media accounts fully comply with the requirements of the standard.
- produce a Policy on Awarding Grants by 27 May 2022.
- take steps to ensure that the new HR/Payroll system and therefore all of the Council's recruitment processes fully comply with the requirements of the standards.

12. The Welsh Language Officer Group has made significant strides in promoting the Welsh language as well as supporting staff in complying with Standards – although it is recognised that further work need to be done to ensure full compliance. Guidance and supporting materials as well as promotional work, have been produced over the last year.

Financial Impacts:

13. Full compliance with the standards continues to be challenging, particularly with the impact of the outbreak of the pandemic on the Council's human resources.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

14. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring/information purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

15. The Annual Report includes progress made in delivering services to support residents in valley communities.

Workforce Impacts:

16. Staff with Welsh language skills continue to be encouraged to use Welsh in their work. In order to help increase the future language capability of staff the Council encourages the uptake of available Welsh courses. We are taking every opportunity to recruit staff with Welsh language skills where appropriate.

Legal Impacts:

17. This report deals with the Council's duty to comply with the final Compliance Notice issued on 25 April 2018.

Risk Management Impacts:

18. Failure to comply with the standards could lead to a £5,000 fine per standard. There is also a risk of damage to the Council's reputation.

Consultation:

19. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

20. It is recommended that:

Members monitor Neath Port Talbot Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021-2022, attached at Appendix 1, prior to its publication by the statutory deadline of 30 June.

Appendix:

21. Appendix 1 - Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021-2022

List of Background Papers:

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015

Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice

Officer Contact:

22. Sheenagh Rees Head of People and Organisational Development Tel: 01639 763315
or e-mail: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk
23. Rhian Headon Corporate Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language Tel 01639
763010 or email: r.headon@npt.gov.uk



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Report 2021-2022

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

www.npt.gov.uk

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If you require this information in larger print or in an alternative format, please contact the Corporate Policy Team on 01639 763010 or email: policy@npt.gov.uk

Introduction

This annual report highlights our work in implementing the Welsh language standards as applied to the Council as well as identifying areas where more work is required.

During 2021-2022 we continued on the long meandering road towards some form of normality with changes in the demand for council services - backlogs of work that accrued when services were required to stop - a permanent move to a hybrid model in place of traditional office work patterns, significant staff absences due to the physical and mental health impacts of Covid alongside an increasingly competitive local market.

The unexpected impacts of not only the pandemic but also of the introduction of new systems and working practices are currently being worked through with their anticipated resolution by April 2023.

Background

This annual report provides an overview of how as a Council we have implemented the Welsh language standards and provides information on specific areas: the number staff who are Welsh speakers and the language requirements of vacant post as required under the Welsh Language Measure (2011) and Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015.

The standards which have been applied to the Council under section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 are contained in our [compliance notice](#).

Accountability

The Council has ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the standards, with the Chief Executive having overall responsibility for ensuring arrangements are in place to secure compliance. In addition, we recognise that each member of staff has a role to play in the successful implementation of the standards.

Our governance arrangements require the Annual Report to be monitored by Cabinet, with Cabinet Scrutiny Committee undertaking an important role in ensuring progress on performance is being sustained.

The Equality and Community Cohesion Group supports the Chief Executive and elected Members and has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the standards. During 2021/2022, this group was chaired by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Equality and has a membership drawn from each directorate as well as representatives from local equality organisations.

The Welsh Language Officer Group (WLOG) supports the administration and implementation of the standards and helps with the early resolution of any issues that may occur, supports staff in the delivery of services in accordance with the duties placed on the Council as well as helping promote the language.

All information and support materials relating to the implementation of the Welsh language standards are available on the intranet and can be

accessed by staff. Awareness of the requirements of the standards is raised via Corporate Management Group, directorate management teams, team meetings as well as through the Council's internal publicity mechanisms, e.g. the online newsletter, 'In the Loop' and Sway communication.

Compliance and Promotion

Welsh Language Commissioner: compliance with Welsh language standards - in August 2021 we submitted evidence in support of our self-assessment of compliance across specific work areas, as requested by the Welsh Language Commissioner while the Commissioner's officers undertook desktop surveys. In January 2022 we met with the Commissioner's officer to discuss the outcome of the compliance monitoring exercise.

10 areas of activity were assessed: correspondence, telephone calls to the main telephone number, documents/forms, website, social media, reception areas, policy making, assessing the language requirements of new and vacant posts, promoting the Welsh language and record keeping and supplementary matters and arrangements for self-regulation.

While it was found that documents/forms and webpages reviewed were available in Welsh it was frustrating to learn that Welsh was treated less favourably (all webpages assessed and one form) with required text omitted from all documents/forms assessed.

Our compliance in relation to social media suffered a similar fate; although the majority of posts were in Welsh (9/10 on Twitter and 7/10 Facebook) Welsh was treated less favourably in nearly half of those assessed: not available in Welsh, missing text in a Welsh post and missing hashtags.

Disappointingly the following areas failed to show improvement from the previous year's performance assessment:

- correspondence - of three pieces of Welsh correspondence received only two were answered in Welsh with the third receiving no response at all.
- telephone calls – only one out of three telephone calls were dealt with in its entirety in Welsh; neither of the other calls were answered.

Following the meeting further actions have been recommended to ensure full compliance with specific standards, with evidence of their completion to be submitted to the Commissioner as soon as practicable after 30 June 2022. These actions are:

- ensure that all English versions of documents and forms clearly state that the document/form is also available in Welsh. (Standards 49 and 50A)
- take steps to ensure that social media accounts fully comply with the requirements of the standard. (Standard 58)
- produce a Policy on Awarding Grants by 27 May 2022. (Standard 94)
- take steps to ensure that the new HR/Payroll system and therefore all of the Council's recruitment processes fully comply with the requirements of the standards. (Standards 136A, 137, 137A and 139)

Welsh Rights Day (7 December 2021) - following small-scale celebrations in recent years, we had hoped to celebrate the third Welsh Language Rights Day more widely. However, the ongoing restrictions meant that the publicity campaign was limited to social media platforms and information for staff members in our weekly Sway update, Intranet news section and staff Yammer channel.

Welsh Language Rights Day celebrates our rights to use Welsh in our everyday lives, including in the workplace.

Did you know you can...?

- Undertake Welsh language training
- Apply for jobs in Welsh
- Access HR policies in Welsh
- Make complaints in Welsh
- Access support materials such as software to assist you when writing Welsh
- Access Welsh email signatures and out of office messages
- Receive promotional material such as lanyards and 'Iaith Gwaith' badges.

For more information on your rights and support materials take a look at:

- Our Welsh Language Standards webpage
- Staff Intranet
- The Welsh Language Commissioner's My Language Rights webpage
- Welsh language training
- Welsh and bilingual services in Neath Port Talbot



Welsh Language Rights Day – 7 December 2021

Welsh Language Rights Day is held annually in December and marks the date on which the [Welsh Language Measure](#) was passed by Parliament. The Measure confirms the official status of the Welsh language, and establishes the principle that the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than the English language in Wales. The aim of the day is to celebrate our Welsh language services and promote your rights within the workplace.

Did you know you can?

- undertake Welsh language training
- apply for jobs in Welsh · access HR policies in Welsh
- make complaints in Welsh
- access support materials such as software to assist you when writing Welsh
- access Welsh email signatures and out of office messages
- receive promotional material such as lanyards and 'Iaith Gwaith' badges

Working closely with Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot, our Welsh Language Officer Group is working to raise awareness of our language and culture as well as the language services provided to both you and the public. To better promote the use of the language we are currently working on a range of activities one of which is working with Digital Services to provide Teams backgrounds for Welsh speakers...so watch this space!

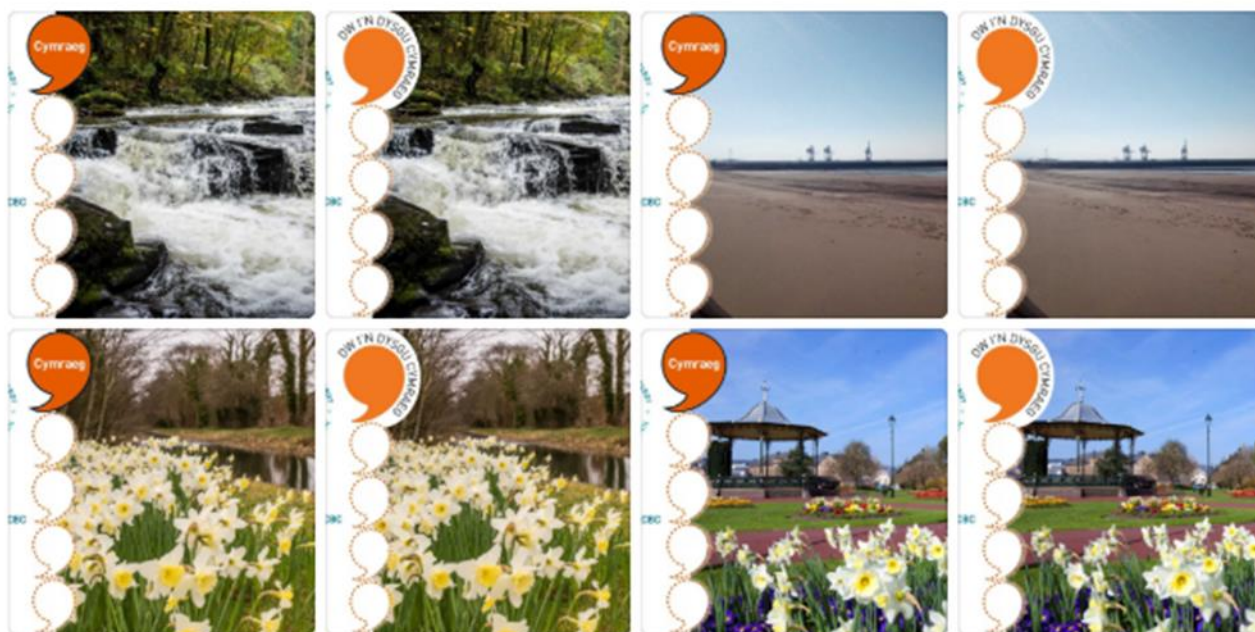
For more information on your rights and support materials please visit:

- Our [Welsh Language Standards webpage](#)
- The Welsh Language Commissioner's [My Language Rights](#) webpage

Please [click here](#) for more information on Welsh language training opportunities .

For more information on Welsh and bilingual services in Neath Port Talbot, please [visit our webpage](#).

Welsh Microsoft Teams backgrounds were produced and Welsh speaking staff and learners were encouraged to use these in their Teams meetings. Seasonal Teams backgrounds for all staff are being produced by our communications team and by the end of the year we should have a full complement of backgrounds for use by all staff.



Following on from Welsh Language Rights Day, we have created a more visible section for the [Welsh language](#) on our website, signposting to Welsh language standards, Welsh language promotion and opportunities to learn and use Welsh. This will continue to be updated and improved during 2022/2023

Let's Talk Campaign - Over the summer 2021, we ran a campaign to engage people from all backgrounds and of all ages with a view to testing our understanding of how the pandemic has impacted on different parts of our county borough and to also understand what matters most to local people.

The responses told us that people in NPT were proud of their Welsh communities and wished to preserve and protect our Welsh language, traditions and culture. Amongst the many responses received during the Let's Talk people told us that their local environment, the Welsh Language and our heritage and culture matters to them. They wanted us to:

- Keep the past alive, promoting and celebrating our heritage to strengthen our sense of identity and sense of belonging;
- Help to protect, preserve and maintain our historic and heritage sites for present and future generations;
- Promote our Welsh language, traditions and culture;
- Help all generations to connect with our natural environment, heritage and culture;
- Help our community and voluntary groups to sustain and further develop their important work.

Consequently the Council's Wellbeing Objectives were developed based on the responses received; with one in particular recognising the importance placed on Welsh language heritage and culture in Neath Port Talbot. The [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#) contains further information on the Wellbeing Objectives as well as the actions to realise them.

The responses during the Let's Talk campaign have also been used to inform the Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board's Wellbeing Assessment. One of the dimensions of the Assessment is Cultural Wellbeing which includes the themes of Culture and Heritage and the Welsh language. The Public Services Board recognises the need to monitor the situation and provide more opportunities for people in NPT to speak Welsh.

Service Delivery standards

Providing services generally has continued to be challenging since the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020 and providing a Welsh language service has been even more difficult for some of our service areas during this period. The majority of staff have continued to work from home with a limited number of staff able to return to the office environment. However, the effects of Covid 19 on staffing levels and ultimately services continues to be felt.



Correspondence in Welsh – in order to reduce the number of erroneous requests to receive correspondence in Welsh the Welsh Language Officer Group has redesigned the online request form which is now only available in Welsh on our website. A data cleansing exercise is to be carried out to help ensure the correct information is available to services.

82 people have indicated they wish to receive correspondence from us in Welsh.



The database has been incorporated into the new recently introduced Legal Case Management System; the system runs a process of risk checks one of them being linked to the Welsh Language Database and alerts are highlighted on individual files if correspondence in Welsh is required.

Telephone calls – we have experienced difficulty over recent years in recruiting and retaining Welsh speaking staff in our Customer Services Team which has had a direct impact on our ability to deal effectively with Welsh enquiries on our main telephone number. This has been compounded by the ongoing issues associated with the pandemic, for example with services having to change their operating models, and prolonged periods of staff sickness. An increase of 14% in the number of Welsh language calls (1215 compared to 1043 in 2020-2021) to the main telephone number has further exacerbated the position.

We hope to address these issues by increasing capacity in our Customer Services Team through the further recruitment of Welsh speakers into posts as well as encouraging staff with some Welsh language skills to improve their level and/or confidence in using Welsh at work.

Council Meetings – while bilingual council meetings were to commence during 2021-2022 the Members ICT Reference Group (a sub group of the Democratic Services Committee) made the decision that purchase and administration of the licenses, virtual Zoom training for Members as well as purchase the additional laptops (all required to use the system) should wait until the new administration of the Council.

Simultaneous translation of Council meetings will now commence in September 2022 when the meetings will be held utilising the Public-I Hybrid/Webcasting equipment which effectively enables the translation elements of the digital system.

Policy Making Standards

The requirements of the policy making standards are incorporated into the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) framework. The impact assessment process is undertaken for all new and revised policies /initiatives and so opportunities to use Welsh as well as not treating Welsh less favourably than English are considered each time. Comprehensive guidance and associated forms are currently available on our intranet for all staff.

Three separate audits of the IIA process were undertaken during 2021-2022; (two delayed from 2020-2021) - one identified in the Annual Governance Statement and undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit service focusing on how well the framework is embedded into our decision making process, the other by an external consultant concentrating on the quality and effectiveness of the assessments; the third undertaken by Audit Wales to consider Equality Impact Assessments and their use in decision making. The two former audit reports were completed in March 2022 with the latter audit due to be completed by July 2022.

Recommendations from the audits will be considered and will inform further revision of the IIA tool as appropriate.

Training for elected members (as part of the new member induction training) and relevant staff are being arranged for June/July and September 2022.

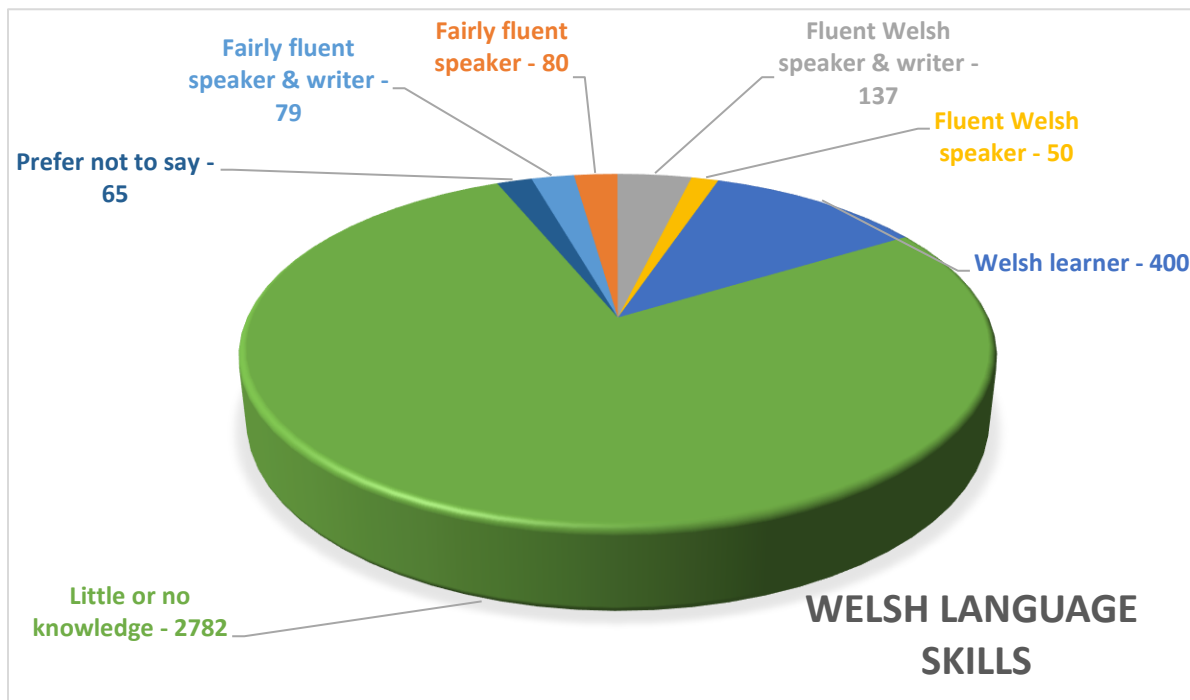
While the Welsh language was a key component of the IIA process its consideration when awarding grants was not always as robust. The third sector grants policy included sections relating to the Welsh language but little consideration was given to the language amongst other grants we administered.

During the year, along with a number of many other local authorities we became aware that we did not meet the requirements of standard 94 and so following advice from the Welsh Language Commissioner and, using a template developed by 'Deddf', an Awarding Grants Policy has been produced and implemented in May 2022.

Operational standards

While policies relating to staff employment have been produced in Welsh and are available on our intranet, no existing or new member of staff has wished to receive information regarding their employment in Welsh during 2021-2022.

The number of staff who identified as having Welsh language skills during 2021-2022 remained relatively low overall. However, there was a small increase in the number of staff identifying as fluent speakers and writers (137 compared to 126 during 2020-2021) and the number of Welsh learners increased by 17.



Welsh speaking employee directory - 146 members of staff were identified on our employee directory as willing/able to use their language skills as part of their work. Unfortunately, with the introduction of the new HR/Payroll system in late autumn 2021 our digital services team were unable to continue to maintain the employee directory, a system that was linked to our previous HR/Payroll system. We are working on introducing an alternative.

While the position is frustrating and has the potential to hinder our ability to readily identify Welsh speakers it has also provided an opportunity to harmonise various strands of work notably the identification of Welsh speakers and the introduction of the language assessment framework. We aim to complete this work during 2022-2023.

Language skills assessments - In order to ensure language skills are assessed consistently across service areas a new language assessment framework is being introduced. The framework will enable staff to assess their language skills, and then update their HR records, in line with widely recognised criteria. Anecdotally staff underestimate their skill level and so it is hoped that this new process will help boost confidence and hopefully

encourage staff to use their Welsh language skills in work. The assessment process will also help managers have a better understanding of the language skills within their service areas when considering workforce planning/recruitment.

While it was originally anticipated the framework would be part of the implementation of a new HR/Payroll system in late autumn 2021 on further reflection it is now considered more appropriate to introduce this incrementally during 2022-2023.

Information, and support material - guidance and other support material on using and complying with the Welsh language standards is available to all staff via the Performance Hub Welsh language page on the Intranet. During the year the Welsh Language Officer Group has updated the information available and included some new material, for example employee guidance, a meeting checklist and a guide to Welsh translations.

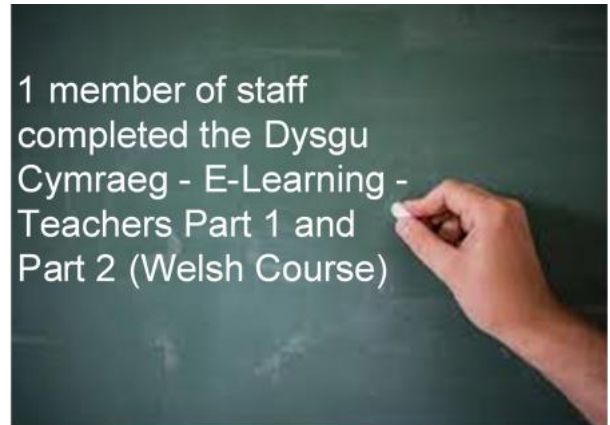
With the move to alternative work platforms the Welsh Language Officer Group has also created two Yammer groups in March/April 2022; one to enable Welsh speakers to chat and provide peer support and the other for all staff to access information, help and support as well as promotional materials. These will be fully functioning during 2022-2023.

Training

Peer led Welsh language sessions are held fortnightly by the Welsh speaking Development Officer for colleagues in the Flying Start and Early Years Childcare Team to raise their basic Welsh speaking ability. As the team is progressing the Welsh in Childcare Award (developed to encourage childcare settings to become bilingual) it was considered key for staff to increase their confidence in using and knowledge of the language in order support the English speaking settings; it was essential to undertake the journey together and for childcare staff to see that we are also willing to learn and working hard to improve our own personal Welsh language abilities.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of staff accessing e learning Welsh language courses during 2021-2022 (a total of 37 compared to 248 in 2020-2021). While there doesn't appear to be a particular reason for this decrease it is likely that changes to working arrangements towards the latter part of 2020-2021 and throughout 2021-2022 (more schools fully reopening, new hybrid working arrangements for

office based staff, increased workloads/changing priorities and a reduction in the number of staff initially redeployed) as well as natural drop off have contributed to this decrease.



Nine staff accessed/progressed through to higher levels of Welsh language courses during the year; four completed their courses with another member of staff nearing completion.

While the numbers are small it is encouraging to see staff from across all directorates are accessing these courses.

Promotion Standards

[Welsh Language Promotion Strategy](#) – the penultimate annual progress report (2020-2021) for the current strategy was published in January 2022. There was a hiatus in progress during the period as a consequence of the pandemic which in turn led to the maintenance of services being a priority for in many areas. However there were some areas of progress notably:

- A virtual Youth Club was established to encourage the social use of Welsh amongst pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera and has been shortlisted for a Youth Work Excellence Award.
- Increase in the number of staff accessing online Welsh language courses.
- A wide range of Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot activities delivered over the period to help promote and support Welsh language provision amongst families and the wider community.
- 'Welsh Homework Help' created by Mentrau Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot and Abertawe to offer parents in both areas practical support on homework, and any issues about Welsh medium education.

Specific Legislative Requirements

Vacant Posts for 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022.

Welsh language skill requirements	Number of posts	Percentage of posts
Essential	8	1.2
Desirable	181	28.9
Need to learn Welsh	0	0
No Welsh skills required	438	69.9

Language Skills of staff

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

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Complaints

A total of nine complaints were received during 2021-2022; six via the Welsh Language Commissioner and three direct to the Council.

CS035 - Polling Station Card - the card displayed text in English first. The Commissioner determined that as Returning Officers are responsible for the issue of poll cards and are not subject to language duties, no investigation was possible.

CS067 – Lack of community consultation and the closure of three English medium schools to create a new school for around 700 children in Pontardawe. The Commissioner decided not to undertake an investigation, as there did not appear to be any suspicion of failure to comply with one or more of the standards. However the Commissioner did ‘feel that there is room for the Council to expand its consideration of the effects on the Welsh language in the consultation document...making recommendations to the Council to strengthen its process of considering the effects on the Welsh language in the consultation document.’

CS068 – Lack of community consultation and the closure of three English medium schools to create a new school for around 700 children in Pontardawe. The Commissioner decided not to undertake an investigation, as there did not appear to be any suspicion of failure to comply with one or more of the standards. However the Commissioner did ‘feel that there is room for the Council to expand its consideration of the effects on the Welsh language in the consultation document...making recommendations to the Council to strengthen its process of considering the effects on the Welsh language in the consultation document.’

CS077 – School Transport letter in English only. The Commissioner did not investigate the complaint because the Council has taken appropriate steps to ensure that letters relating to school transport are sent bilingually in future.

CS114 – Consultation regarding the closure of three English medium schools to create a new school for around 700 children in Pontardawe. The complaint alleges that the Council did not include a Welsh Language Impact Assessment during the first part of the consultation process. It also refers to the Impact Assessment commissioned by the Welsh Government that was not available to the public, and therefore no opportunity was available to comment on that assessment. The investigation is ongoing.

CS119 – Complaint containing three allegations from a member of staff. Firstly, the allegation that internal staff communication was in English only; secondly, the complainant alleges to have asked several times for a Welsh form to reserve a seat on a school bus; and lastly the complainant had to ask for a Welsh form when commencing employment with the Council. The Commissioner did not investigate the first allegation, as there is no standard requiring the council to provide general correspondence to staff in Welsh. Due to the time elapsed since the other incidents occurred (2017 and 2018) the Commissioner does not need to consider investigating.

The complaints received direct to the Council:

Margam Park Signage – the complaint focused on errors in the Welsh content on park signage and signs that were in English only. An internal inspection found that some signs were erected before the standards came into force and one of the signs belonged to a private business operating in the park, who are not bound by the language standards. Bilingual boards and signs where errors have been identified will be changed when funding allows. The signs regarding coronavirus precautions were commissioned and installed at short notice, which allowed no time for translation. Staff at the park have been reminded of the need to ensure that signs are bilingual and that the translation is correct.

Street Signage – The complaint referred to incorrect Welsh language on a street sign. An internal investigation found that a translation was

obtained out of context resulting in the erroneous translation. Employee guidance has been amended to reflect that if a phrase/sentence is sent for translation, context must be provided, as this could affect the accuracy of the translation.

Website/Winter Fuel Payment Application – The complaint referred to issues with the council website; the Winter Fuel Payment Scheme Application was not available in Welsh, the Welsh language correspondence request form would not load correctly and Welsh links on the website were to English pages. The relevant department was advised that in future any forms published on the council website must be in both Welsh and English. The complainant's details were added to the Welsh language preference database and they were advised as such.

The following complaints were determined during 2021-2022:

CSG727 - Coronavirus letter and Safe and Well leaflet in English only. The Commissioner determined the Council had failed to comply with standard four and further actions were imposed to prevent the continuation or repetition of the failure. Consequently, actions were undertaken, and were accepted by the Commissioner, which 'puts the Council in a better position so that you do not make a decision not to send correspondence in Welsh in an emergency situation in the future'.

CS026 - Posters, recycling/garden refuse bags and signage on recycling vehicles – 'disadvantaging the Welsh language'. Although all text/signage is bilingual in all instances the complainant considers that its position 'disadvantages the Welsh language'. The Commissioner decided not to conduct an investigation as the Welsh language was not treated less favourably in any of the circumstances.

Have your Say

Enquiries or feedback on this report are welcomed via:

Email: policy@npt.gov.uk

Post: Chief Executive, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,
Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ

Social media:



Follow us and add your comments to the Council's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NeathPortTalbotCBC>



Follow this report and add your Tweets on our Twitter Page: [@NPTCouncil](https://twitter.com/NPTCouncil)



Follow us on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/nptcouncil/>

Measures

Translations	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total cost of translations (where able to be identified)	£49,573	£43,072	£39,573
Number of requests for translation received by the translation unit	716	662	815

Telephone Calls	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Number of staff with fluent/fairly fluent language skills identified in the employee directory	126	146	146*
Average time to answer telephone calls – English	52 seconds	43 seconds	44 seconds
Average time to answer telephone calls - Welsh	45 seconds	51 seconds	57 seconds

* This figure is based on the latest information available prior to the removal of the employee directory as a result of the introduction of the new HR/Payroll system.

Increased call levels 1215 in 2022 compared to the previous year of 1043 at a growth of 14% along with a limited number of Welsh speakers within the section continues to limit our ability to deal with Welsh enquiries. We continue to find that switchboard enquiries are taking considerably longer to deal with compared to pre-pandemic as services have changed their operating models to adapt. We are continuing to attempt to counter these issues but this has impacted on the time taken to deal with generally quick enquiries with a resulting knock on effect across all services. We have been further impacted by various sickness absences affecting a number of the Welsh speaking team over protracted periods during the year which has had a detrimental effect on scope to answer calls as quickly as we would

like. We are countering this by increasing Welsh speaking staffing during upcoming recruitment processes.

Social Media	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.22
Twitter			
Followers - English corporate account	14,381	15,799	16,584
Followers - Welsh corporate account	306	368	431
Facebook			
English corporate account	10,878	15,882	17,704
Welsh corporate account	71	103	141

NPT News e-newsletter	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.22
No of subscribers to Welsh e-newsletter	11	17	17
No of subscribers to English e-newsletter	1,221	1,922	2,186
No of subscribers to bilingual e-newsletter	24	33	48

Website	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total number of hits on website	3,576,298	3,980,097	4,009,274
Hits on Welsh webpages	34,045	23,423	29,177

Language Skills	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021- 2022
Fairly fluent speaker & writer	83	77	79
Fairly fluent speaker	69	76	80
Fluent Welsh speaker & writer	102	126	137
Fluent Welsh speaker	49	48	50
Welsh learner	347	383	400
<p>The number of staff who identified as having Welsh language skills during 2021-2022 remained relatively low overall. However, there was a small increase in the number of staff identifying as fluent speakers and writers (137 compared to 126 during 2020-2021)</p>			

Vacant Posts	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Welsh language skills were desirable	146	83	181
Welsh language skills were essential	36	2	8
Welsh language skills were not necessary	390	206	438
Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post	1	0	0

Complaints	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Number of complaints received via the Welsh Language Commissioner	7	2	6
Number of complaints where the Welsh Language Commissioner determined no investigation necessary	4	-	2
Number of complaints where the Welsh Language Commissioner determined there was no failure to comply with the standards *	1	-	3

* In order to provide a better understanding of the outcome of the complaints received via the Commissioner it is considered appropriate to add a further category to the table and data from previous years has been re-categorised accordingly.

While there was an increase in the number of complaints received during the year it should be noted that of the six received one was not the responsibility of the Council and three complaints were about aspects of the same matter (new school provision in Pontardawe); there was no failure to comply in relation to three of the complaints with the investigation continuing in respect of the third.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Cabinet

29th June 2022

Report of the Chief Finance Officer – Huw Jones

Matter for Decision:

Delivery of the Welsh Government's Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of report

To agree the criteria for the delivery of the discretionary element of the Welsh Government's cost of livings support scheme (COLSS).

Background

The Welsh Government have announced funding to the 22 Unitary Authorities to provide support payments to households within the County Borough in order to assist with the current cost of living crisis.

The purpose of the funding is to support households across Wales facing an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis, fuelled by soaring energy bills and household living costs.

There are two elements to the funding:

A main scheme – Councils are required to make a £150 payment to all eligible households within council tax bands A – D; and to all households in receipt of council tax support (CTRS) irrespective of band.

This scheme has now been substantially delivered with approximately 53,000 payments having been made.

A discretionary scheme – For local authorities to provide support for those not included within the criteria for the main scheme. This report

includes proposals for the criteria to be applied for this discretionary scheme.

Proposed Qualifying Criteria- Discretionary Scheme

In relation to the discretionary scheme Welsh Government guidance is that:

- In developing a local Discretionary Scheme, each local authority has complete autonomy to target the funds to best support its residents and to ensure its approach best suits the needs of individual households.
- This support may take any form the Authority considers appropriate in order to satisfy the aims of the scheme. For example a payment to a household not already covered in the main scheme or an additional payment on top of the £150 main scheme payment.

In light of the above guidance it is proposed that the discretionary scheme for Neath Port Talbot be as follows:

- To provide a £150 payment to all households within bands E and F who meet the criteria detailed in Appendix 1.

This is in recognition of the fact that the cost of living crisis isn't only impacting on households who live in Bands A-D. The Council Tax bandings which are based on 2005 valuations do not necessarily reflect household income levels. The proposal is in line with many other Welsh local authority discretionary scheme.

It is also proposed that this discretionary scheme be used to provide:

- A £150 payment to a household in Band A – F who did not qualify for the main scheme or the above discretionary scheme due to the exemptions listed in Appendix 1.

Financial Impact

The cost of the scheme(s) will be met by Welsh Government.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act, 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 assessment, attached at Appendix 1, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Valleys Community Impacts

Positive impact for all households within all communities.

Workforce impacts

There will be additional staff resource time required to deal with the administration of the scheme(s). The admin funding provided will meet this cost.

Legal impact

No impact

Risk management

No impact.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the criteria for the discretionary scheme.

Reason for proposed decision

To enable the Council to administer the Welsh Government discretionary cost of living support scheme.

Implementation of decision

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Detailed qualifying criteria

Appendix 2 - Stage 1 Integrated Impact Assessment

List of background papers

Welsh Government Grant Scheme Guidance.

Officer contact

Ms Ann Hinder - Principal Council Tax Officer

Tel. No. 01639 763908

E-mail: a.hinder@npt.gov.uk

Qualifying Criteria for Discretionary Scheme – Bands E –F

- Be liable for Council Tax on the property on 15 February 2022 and
- Not be receiving a Council Tax exemption for that property on 15 February 2022 and
- Be living in the property as their main or primary home on 15 February 2022 and
- Be responsible for paying the utility and other regular bills for that property on 15 February 2022.

Qualifying Criteria for Discretionary Scheme in exempt categories – Bands A – F

- The person is liable for Council Tax on the property on 15 February 2022 and
- Is responsible for paying the utility and other regular bills for that property on 15 February 2022 and
- Is **not** eligible for a payment from the main Cost of Living scheme and
- Receives a 100% Council Tax exemption for one of the following reasons:
 - a) **Exemption Class J** -The property is unoccupied as the liable person is absent from the property as they are **providing** personal care to another person elsewhere
 - b) **Exemption Class N** -The property is occupied only by students
 - c) **Exemption Class S** -The property is occupied by a person under 18 years old
 - d) **Exemption Class U** -The property is occupied by severely mentally impaired persons only
 - e) **Exemption Class X** – Is a care leaver aged 18 or over but not yet reached the age of 25

Impact Assessment – First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Delivery of the Welsh Governments discretionary cost of living support scheme
Service Area: Finance
Directorate: Chief Executive's Office

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	✓	
Staff	✓	
Wider community	✓	
Internal administrative process only		✓

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		✓				
Disability		✓				
Gender Reassignment		✓				
Marriage/Civil Partnership		✓				
Pregnancy/Maternity		✓				

Impact Assessment – First Stage

Race		✓				
Religion/Belief		✓				
Sex		✓				
Sexual orientation		✓				

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		✓				
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		✓				

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		✓				
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,		✓				

Impact Assessment – First Stage

such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people		✓	
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives		✓	
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative		✓	
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions		✓	
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	✓		Funding will help to ease the cost of living crisis for eligible households.

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Impact Assessment – First Stage

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	✓
Reasons for this conclusion	
The scheme will target all households in bands E-F and will complement the main scheme already delivered for Bands A-D.	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	x
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Date
Completed by	Ann Hinder	Principal Council Tax Officer	6 th June 2022
Signed off by	Huw Jones	Chief Finance Officer	6 th June 2022

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Cabinet

29th June 2022

Report of the Chief Finance Officer – Huw Jones

Matter for Decision:

Neath Port Talbot Hardship Relief Scheme

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval to implement a hardship relief scheme within the County Borough.

Background

At the Cabinet meeting of 28th February 2022 Members set aside £2m into a hardship relief reserve and tasked the Chief Finance Officer with developing a hardship relief scheme.

The purpose of the scheme is to target those who are most in need and where opportunities exist to provide support within the current financial year.

Deliverability considerations

Following the Cabinet meeting of 28th February 2022 a number of discussions have taken place between Officers of the Council including discussion at the internal poverty group.

What is clear from these discussions is that there is no capacity within the organisation to administer any sort of application based hardship support scheme, given that there are approximately 64,000 properties within the County Borough.

At present, in addition to usual work responsibilities, officers are administering or will shortly be administering the following schemes on behalf of the Welsh Government:

- Self-isolation payment scheme
- Cost of living support scheme
- £500 grant to unpaid carers
- £1,498 payment to social care workers
- Round 2 of the Winter fuel grant

Proposed schemes for consideration

This report sets out two options for Cabinet to consider.

Option 1- One off additional 'cash' payment of £100 to households in receipt of Council tax support.

Households who receive council tax support are in receipt of a means tested benefit. This means that they have already had their income assessed to determine eligibility. As a result they represent some of the most financially vulnerable within our society.

This proposal under these options would be that we make an additional £100 hardship support payment to every household in receipt of council tax support. This will be **in addition** to any support provided by the Welsh Government cost of living support scheme.

We have received confirmation from the Department for Works and Pensions, via the WLGA, that this proposal can be delivered via 'Local Welfare Provision' and will therefore not impact on any other benefit entitlements. Confirmation has also been received from HMRC that the payment would not be taxable.

This option would be the quickest and easiest to deliver as we already have bank details for all recipients due to the fact that we have recently administered the Welsh Government Cost of Living Support Scheme.

However, the disadvantages of this option would be: that only households in receipt of Council Tax support would receive a payment; there would be no support available for any households falling just outside of the eligibility criteria; it is a one-off, short term, intervention; with no assessment as to what intervention would make the most

difference and also there would be no opportunity for signposting households to further avenues of support.

Option 2 – Deliver a hardship relief scheme utilising a partner agency (Warm Wales)

Discussions have taken place with a number of external agencies since the funding for this initiative was set aside in February 2022. Over recent months positive discussions have taken place with Warm Wales in relation to entering into a partnership agreement for Warm Wales to deliver a hardship relief scheme on behalf of the Council.

Warm Wales are a Port Talbot based organisation who are in a unique position to draw on a range of support both local and national ensuring best value for the hardship fund while creating a longer-term legacy of warmer, more efficient homes within Neath Port Talbot.

The proposed scheme will provide a range of targeted interventions, one of which could be 'cash' support with referrals coming via existing mechanisms. Interventions could be delivered on a one-off basis such as emergency electricity top up vouchers or longer lasting support like home insulation. Further details regarding this option and its advantages are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Although this option would support fewer households than option 1, it would offer support to those who do not currently meet the criteria for financial support through means tested benefits but who may still be struggling. There would be other advantages in terms of tailored support, maximising other opportunities and the opportunity to signpost to ongoing support are deemed to outweigh this disadvantage.

A disadvantage of this option compared to option 1 is that there will be a cost to administer the scheme of approximately £200k over an 18 month period. This cost can be met from additional funding provided previously by Welsh Government to administer various other schemes on their behalf which remains unspent. This will ensure that the £2m set aside for hardship relief will all be utilised supporting residents of the County Borough.

Financial Impact

All financial impacts are set out within the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act, 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 assessment, attached at Appendix 1, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Valleys Community Impacts

Positive impact.

Workforce impacts

There will be additional staff resource time required to deal with the administration of the scheme if option 1 is the preferred option. There will be no impact for option 2 as the scheme will be administered by Warm Wales and instead will be covered by a partnership agreement.

Legal impact

The Council would be utilising its general power of competence pursuant to Section 22 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2022 in facilitating this scheme.

It should be noted that an agreement with Warm Wales would have to be entered into to facilitate this arrangement and delegated authority is sought to the Chief Finance Officer to agree this arrangement, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

However, one issue that must be considered is that this agreement is being entered into by the Council with an organisation without having undertaken a competitive tender exercise with Warm Wales.

It is anticipated that the contract value will be below the threshold for competitive tendering of £213,477 set out in the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

However, the Council must comply with its own Contract Procedure Rules which apply to the letting of arrangements such as this proposal. The Council is obliged to act in an open fair and transparent manner, ensuring that contract opportunities for such services are advertised to reach a wide market in order to encourage competition and to ensure equal treatment of all bidders.

There is a risk therefore of potential challenge to this arrangement by not competitively tendering this arrangement. However, it would be contended that the risk of potential challenge here is limited in that Warm Wales would be the only organisation who could be capable of providing this service, as explained above and the risk of not pursuing this arrangement is that the Council will be unable to treating avenues of support that help people to heat their homes affordably and the mechanisms necessary to achieve this cannot be implemented.

Risk management

No impact.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

It is recommended, having due regard to the integrated impact assessment and excluding the requirements of the Neath Port Talbot Council Contract Procedure Rules, that members approve the delivery of a hardship relief scheme utilising a partner agency as set out within this report and that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Finance Officer to enter into a partnership agreement with Warm Wales to facilitate delivery of this hardship relief scheme.

Reason for proposed decision

To enable the Council to provide hardship relief to residents of the County Borough.

Implementation of decision

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Warm Wales Hardship Relief Proposal

Appendix 2 – Stage 1 Integrated Impact Assessment

List of background papers

Cabinet report 28th February 2022.

Officer contact

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Finance Officer

E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk



NPT Hardship Fund - DRAFT

Context

The UK is currently experiencing a cost-of-living crisis affecting food, fuel and energy prices, and hitting the poorest and most vulnerable the hardest. Tens of millions of households are being affected by this.

In Wales, the latest statistics indicate that up to 45% of households are in fuel poverty, and that 8% are in severe fuel poverty, spending 20% of their income on heating their homes¹.

Creating avenues of support that help people to heat their homes affordably, either directly through measures such as more efficient heating systems, or indirectly through income maximisations schemes, will embed greater financial stability, longer term.

This proposal outlines mechanisms for distributing the £2 million hardship relief fund ring-fenced by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

The focus is on spending that lifts householders further from fuel poverty more sustainably by providing repairs, maintenance, heating measures and financial support that is not usually available. In this way, the funding will reach those most in need and provide unique support for critical matters.

Delivery approach

Householders will be referred to the *Healthy Homes, Healthy People* project so they receive the full range of support provided by the project – see schedule below.

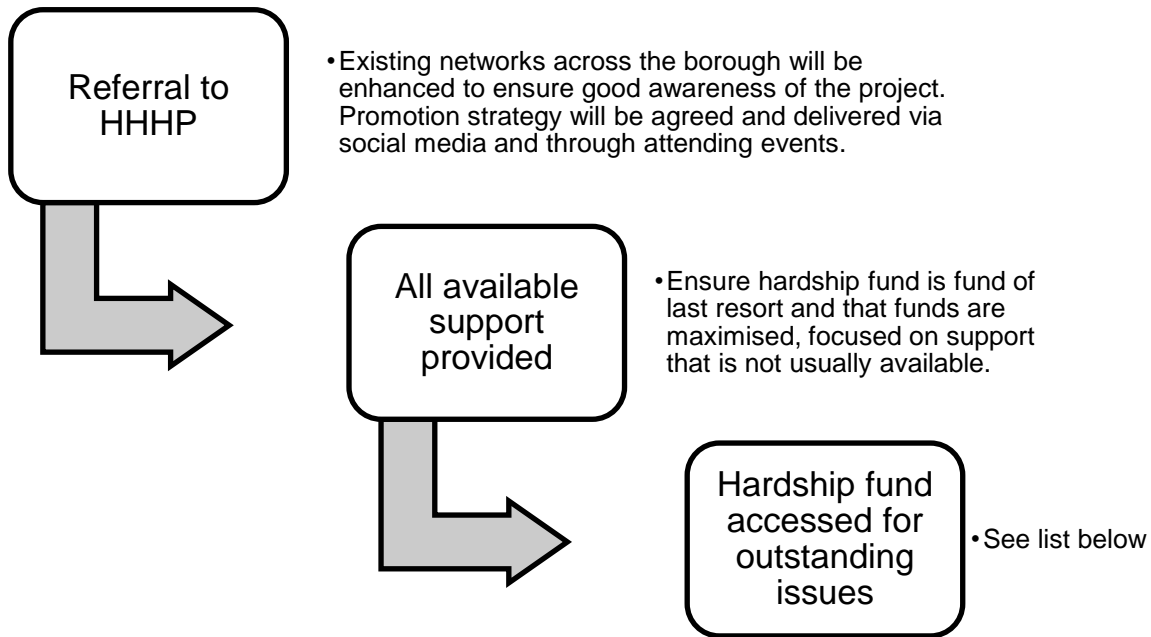
This approach ensures all forms of supporting someone are explored, that the hardship fund is a fund of last resort and that funds are maximised. For example, a householder could be

¹ <https://www.nea.org.uk/news/new-statistics-highlight-up-to-45-of-households-in-wales-now-in-fuel-poverty/>

supported to access Nest for a new boiler, and then use the NPT fund to pay off fuel debt that was accrued from having an inefficient heating system.

HHHP staff are qualified in City Guilds Energy Awareness, Level 3 and bring years of experience in supporting people to live in warmer, safer, healthier homes.

Process



Oversight and reporting

As the fund is discretionary and will be available to support a range of needs, it is not feasible to make precise projections about how the funds will be utilised.

A number of support options have been outlined on the following pages to provide an illustration of possible outcomes. Given the flexibility of the pot, it would be advantageous to factor in regular discussions to shape priorities and focus.

We would propose that:

- Funds are released to Warm Wales in increments of £100,000
- When 80% of that is spent, Warm Wales will liaise with the local authority about what the money has been spent on and agree future priorities for the spending
- This will mean approximately monthly discussions
- Quarterly reports will be submitted in addition to this, and the monthly meetings may be reduced once clearer projections for the remainder of the work can be made.

Distribution scenarios

Staffing time and on costs will be determined by aspects of how the fund is distributed. However, allowing a very rough figure of 10% of the fund for this would then require total administrative support of c£200k over an 18 month period.

Support	Estimate per measure	Estimate of volume	Partners required	Funding approach	Comments
Fuel debt	Variable - £100s up to £1000+	Increasing all the time	Citizens Advice and other agencies		Will need to be delivered via a certified partner and provide wider budgeting and financial management support.
Income Maximisation	Will cost approx. £150 per referral		National Energy Action (NEA)	Payment to NEA	This will ensure the HH is in receipt of everything they are entitled to which will support longer-term financial stability. Returns can be up to £10,000
Boiler services	£100				Many people do not service their boiler because of the cost but this leads to them breaking sooner. Barring schemes that are run and accessed by DNOs only, there are no boiler repair schemes.
Boiler repairs	£100 call out fee £500 average for repair		NEA	Payments direct to the person undertaking the repair	

Heating system maintenance	Power flush - £450 for 3 bed house			Payments direct to the engineer doing the work	Power flushes clear out the heating systems making them more efficient. ***These three services would often be delivered together, creating a package of support for homes to be heated more efficiently***
Home repairs	Variable – focused on small but significant repairs, eg broken window catches		Care & Repair	**As above	
Home installs & measures	**This would need eligibility criteria and prior agreement with the Council**		Could we use the ECO agents and their installers?	Payment to 3 rd party contractors	This could cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loft installation (often requested and rarely a standalone measure in other schemes) • Heating systems for those that don't qualify for Nest or ECO but are in fuel poverty eg those that have a Nest measure previously, possibly up to 10 years ago

White goods (cooker, fridge, freezer, washing machine)	£350 – average including install & recycling		Establish relationship with local supplier.	Purchased directly by Warm Wales and delivered to the HH	Ideally these would all come from local shops thereby having a knock-on effect for the local economy as well as for the householder. http://www.vjbailey.co.uk/
Small measures	Capped at £250. Measures chosen from a list			**As above	**Same as white goods – ideally from local suppliers.
Credit meter energy payments	£255 (average taken from CEP activity)		n/a – will need to have an account with PO	Cash payment direct to the HH via the Post Office	Making payments to energy companies on behalf of others takes hours and is unexpectedly difficult. Cash payments via the Post Office mitigates this – HH will be told to keep evidence of making a payment for their utilities. https://www.postoffice.co.uk/post-office-payout Costs approx. £1000 to set up.
Emergency top up vouchers	£50 – average cost per	10,000 electricity pre-	Fuel Bank Foundation	Vouchers (codes) will be issued by	We have an existing partnership with this organisation providing top-up vouchers in

	voucher (including admin fee) over two winters and a summer	payment meters*		the Fuel Bank Foundation direct to the HH	parts of north Wales, this can be extended to also cover NPT. £49 – winter £30 - summer Plus £5 admin fee per voucher
Solid fuel purchases	Oil is approx. £500				Oil is a minimum order of 500 litres – costs vary depending on wholesale prices, currently around £1 a litre. LPG and wood cost less per delivery. Fewer than 5,000 homes in NPT are off-gas.

* Figures from 2017, updated in 2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/793448/Local-authority-prepayment-electricity-statistics-2017.csv/preview

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Hardship Relief Scheme Each applicant will be assessed to ensure that nobody is excluded from accessing support.
Service Area: Council Tax / Welfare Support
Directorate: Chief Executive

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users (council taxpayers)	X	
Staff	X	
Wider community	X	
Internal administrative process only		X

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		X				
Disability		X				

Gender Reassignment		X				There will be no impact to any prohibited characteristic given the scheme will establish eligibility to all those impacted by the cost of living crisis detailed in
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				
Race		X				
Religion/Belief		X				
Sex		X				
Sexual orientation		X				

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		X				Applications for support can be dealt with in Welsh and accordingly no restriction on the use of the Welsh Language
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		X				Applications for support can be dealt with in Welsh and no applicant who applies in Welsh will be treated less favourably than English.

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		X				There will be no impact on the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		X				There will be no impact on the promotion of the resilience of ecosystem

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		<p>The UK is currently experiencing a cost-of-living crisis affecting food, fuel and energy prices, and hitting the poorest and most vulnerable the hardest. Tens of millions of households are being affected by this.</p> <p>In Wales, the latest statistics indicate that up to 45% of households are in fuel poverty, and that 8% are in severe fuel poverty, spending 20% of their income on heating their homes.</p> <p>Creating avenues of support that help people to heat their homes affordably, either directly through measures such as more efficient heating</p>

			systems, or indirectly through income maximisations schemes, will embed greater financial stability, longer term.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		The proposal will have a positive impact on two of the Council's Wellbeing Objectives in that it will contribute to the objectives of ensuring children get the best start in life and all our communities are thriving
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	X		Discussions have taken place with a number of external agencies since the funding for this initiative was set aside in February 2022. Over recent months positive discussions have taken place with Warm Wales in relation to entering into a partnership agreement for Warm Wales to deliver a hardship relief scheme on behalf of the Council.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	X		Discussions have taken place with a number of external agencies since the funding for this initiative was set aside in February 2022. Over recent months positive discussions have taken place with Warm Wales in relation to entering into a partnership agreement for Warm Wales to deliver a hardship relief scheme on behalf of the Council.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	X		The scheme will provide additional financial support to the most vulnerable citizens of Neath Port Talbot during an unprecedented cost of living crisis.

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	X
Reasons for this conclusion	
There will be no impact on protected characteristics, no impact on Welsh language or biodiversity issues and the proposal supports compliance with the sustainable development principle	

	Name	Position	Date
Signed off by	Huw Jones	Chief Finance Officer	9 th June 2022

Tudalen286



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29th June 2022

Report of the Head of Engineering & Transport – D.W.Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Neath North, Neath East, Neath South, Cimla and Pelenna, Cadoxton, Bryncoch South, Bryncoch North, Port Talbot, Margam and Taibach.

Proposed 30 mph Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Orders associated with Welsh Government 20 mph Default Speed Limit National Roll Out.

Purpose of the Report:

To obtain Members approval to advertise the above traffic regulation orders as indicated in Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C.

Executive Summary:

The report outlines the proposed traffic regulation orders and the reason why the orders are required.

Background:

The Welsh Government are proposing to implement a national roll out of a revision to the current default speed limit of 30 mph.

The new default speed limit in lit areas across Wales will be 20 mph not 30 mph as currently. This will possibly happen some time in 2023.

Local Authorities are able to revert back from the default of 20 mph speed limit to the current 30 mph speed limit on agreed strategic roads by creating a traffic regulation order.

It has been agreed with the Welsh Government and the local members that as an initial phase the following roads will be converted back to a 30 mph speed limit.

- A48 Margam to Station Road, Port Talbot.
- B4287 Cimla Road, Neath.
- A474 Penywern Hill, Bryncoch.

The proposed schemes are indicated in Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C.

Financial Impacts:

The scheme is to be funded by the Welsh Government.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

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 assessment, attached at Appendix D, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:-

A full impact assessment is not required as the proposed traffic regulation orders will provide a safe environment for all highway users and provide Disabled parking outside the new development.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are 'No implications' associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Legal Impacts:

The scheme is to be advertised for a 21 day period as part of the statutory process.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

Consultation:

A consultation exercise will be undertaken when the scheme is advertised.

Recommendations:

Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment it is recommended that approval is granted to advertise the 30 mph Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the Welsh Government 20 mph default speed limit national roll out in 2023 (as detailed in Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C to the circulated report) and if no objections are received that the proposals are to be implemented on site as advertised.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The proposed traffic regulation orders will convert back the strategic routes to a 30 mph speed limit following the national roll out of the 20 mph default speed limit in order to maintain traffic flow on the principal road network.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

Appendix A – Plan – Proposed 30 mph speed limit – A48 Port Talbot to Margam.

Appendix B – Plan – B4287 Cimla Road, Neath – Proposed Traffic Regulation Order.

Appendix C – Plan – A474 Penywern Road and A474 Neath Road, Bryncoch – Proposed 30 mph speed limit extent.

Appendix D – Integrated Impact Assessment.

List of Background Papers:

None.

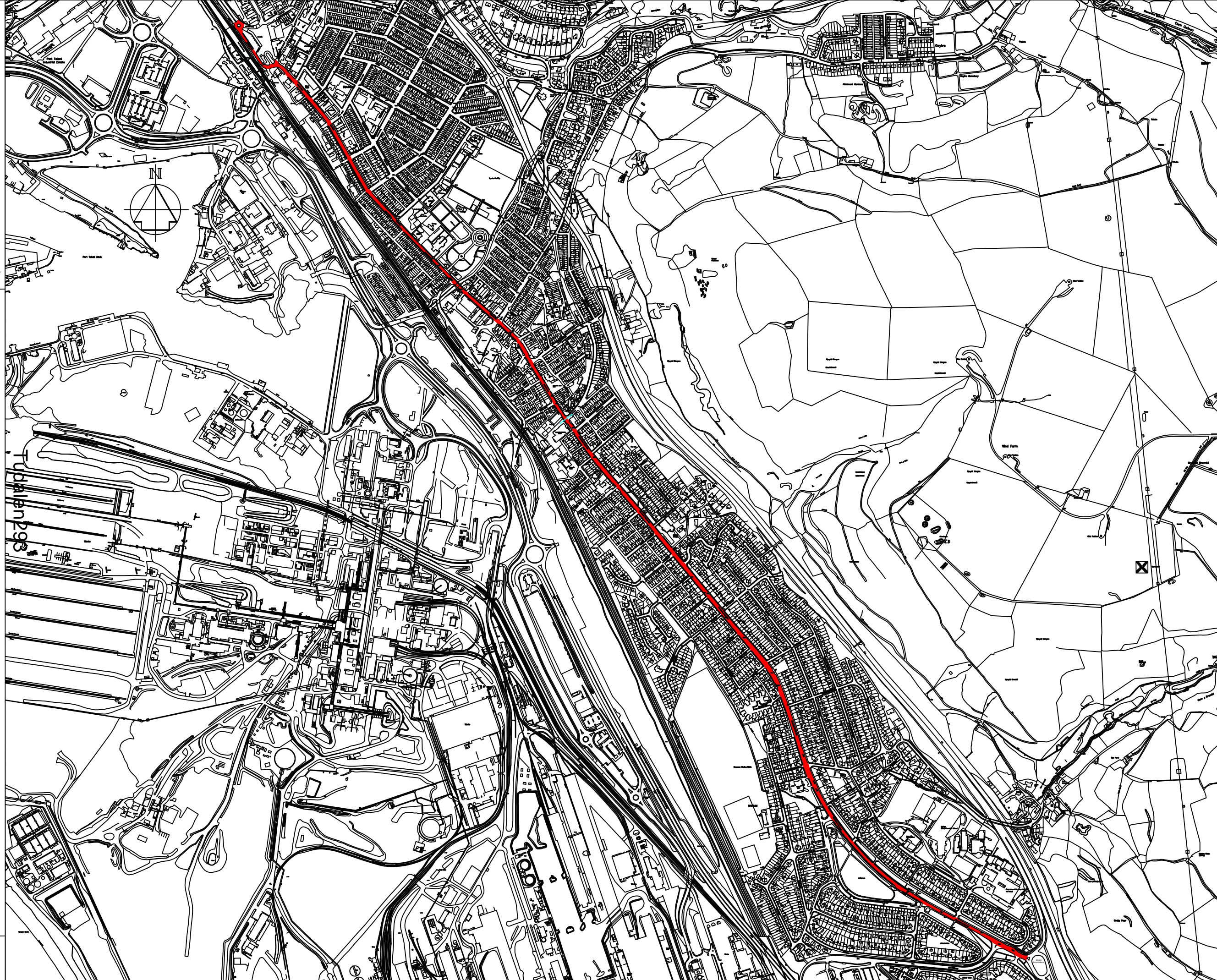
Officer Contact:

Mr Martin Brumby,
Engineering & Transport
Tel. No. 01639 686013
Email m.brumby@npt.gov.uk

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

Fig. No.

Job Title



NOTES

1. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

Key:-

Proposed 30mph Speed Limit

Rev	Details	Dr	Ch	Ap	Date

Client



ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT

NICOLA PEARCE BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI
 DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION
 THE QUAYS, BRUNEL WAY
 BAGLAN ENERGY PARK
 NEATH SA11 2GG

Job Title

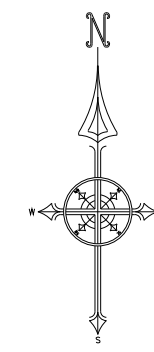
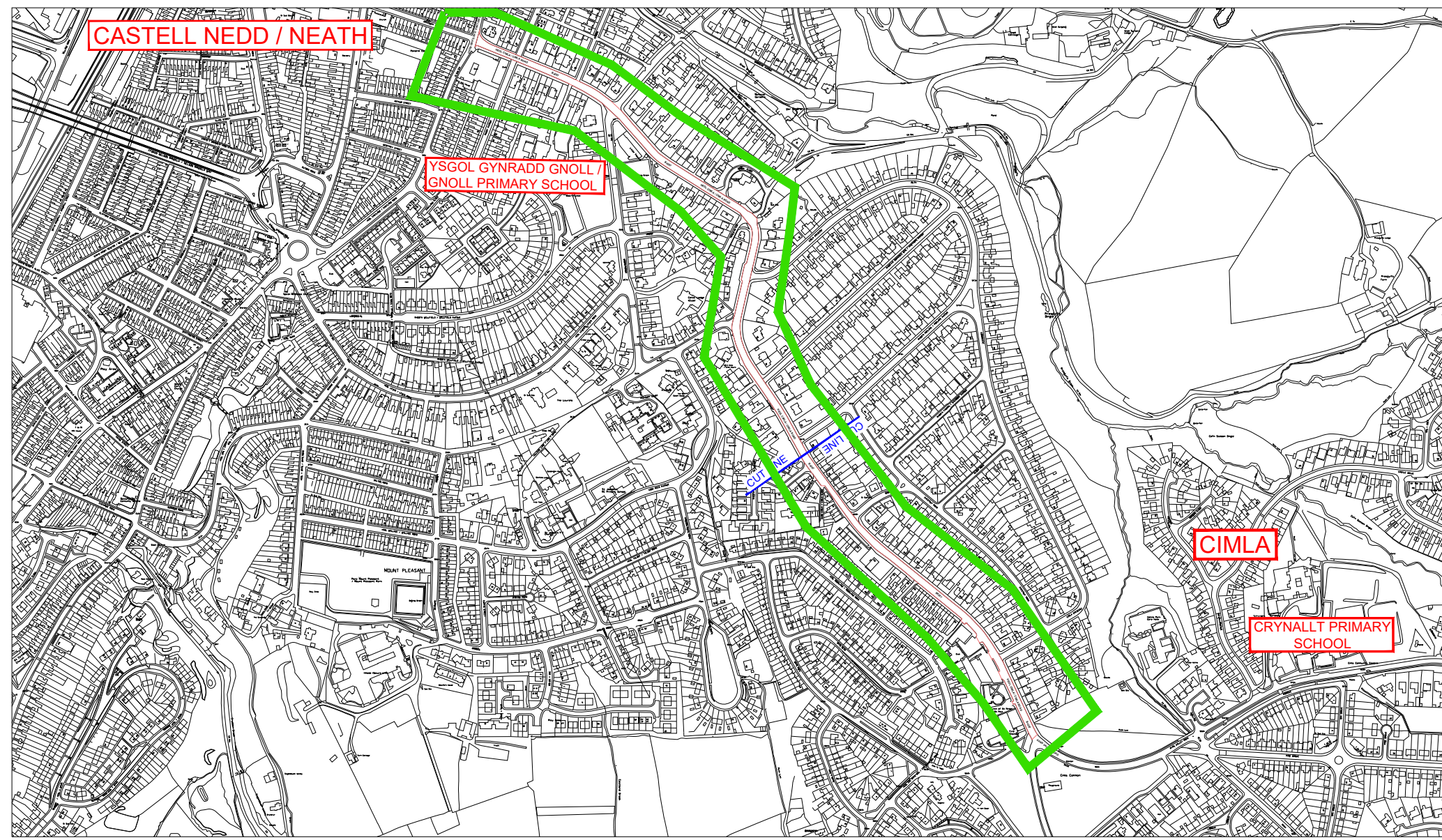
**Proposed 30mph Speed Limit
 A48 Port Talbot to Margam**

File No.	TR22	Financial Code No.	
Drawn		Checked	MCB
Date	May 22	Date	May 22
Scales	NTS	Status	
Drawing No.	legal_01		

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag

1. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

 PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT EXTENT



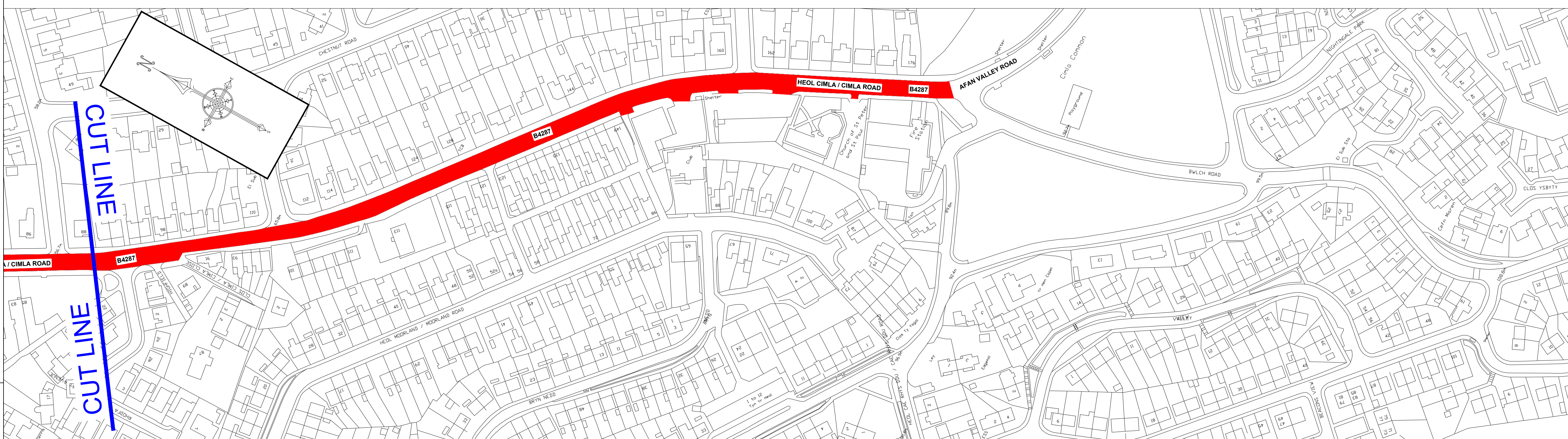
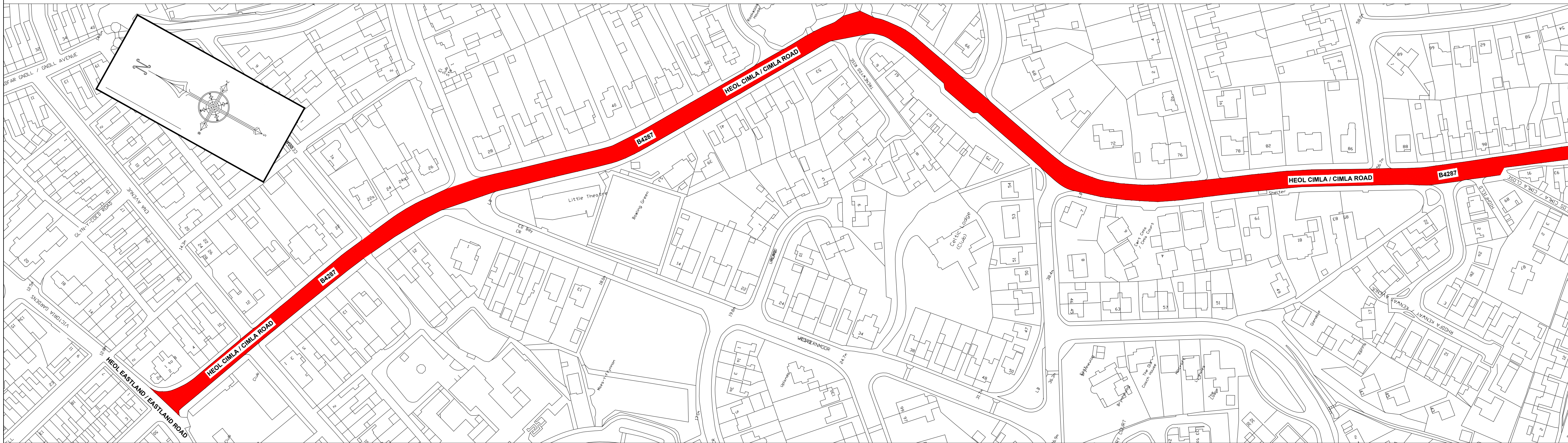
LOCATION PLAN - EXTENT OF THE SPEED LIMIT.

NOT TO SCALE

Drwg. No.

Tudalen295

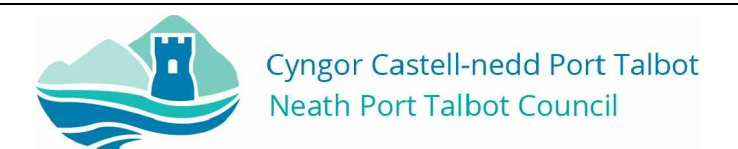
Job Title



Rev	Details	Dr	Ch	Ap	Date
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Client

APPENDIX B



ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT
 NICOLA PEARCE BSC (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI
 DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION
 THE QUAYS, BRUNEL WAY
 BAGLAN ENERGY PARK
 NEATH SA11 2GG

Job Title

**B4287 CIMLA ROAD, NEATH
 PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION
 ORDER.**

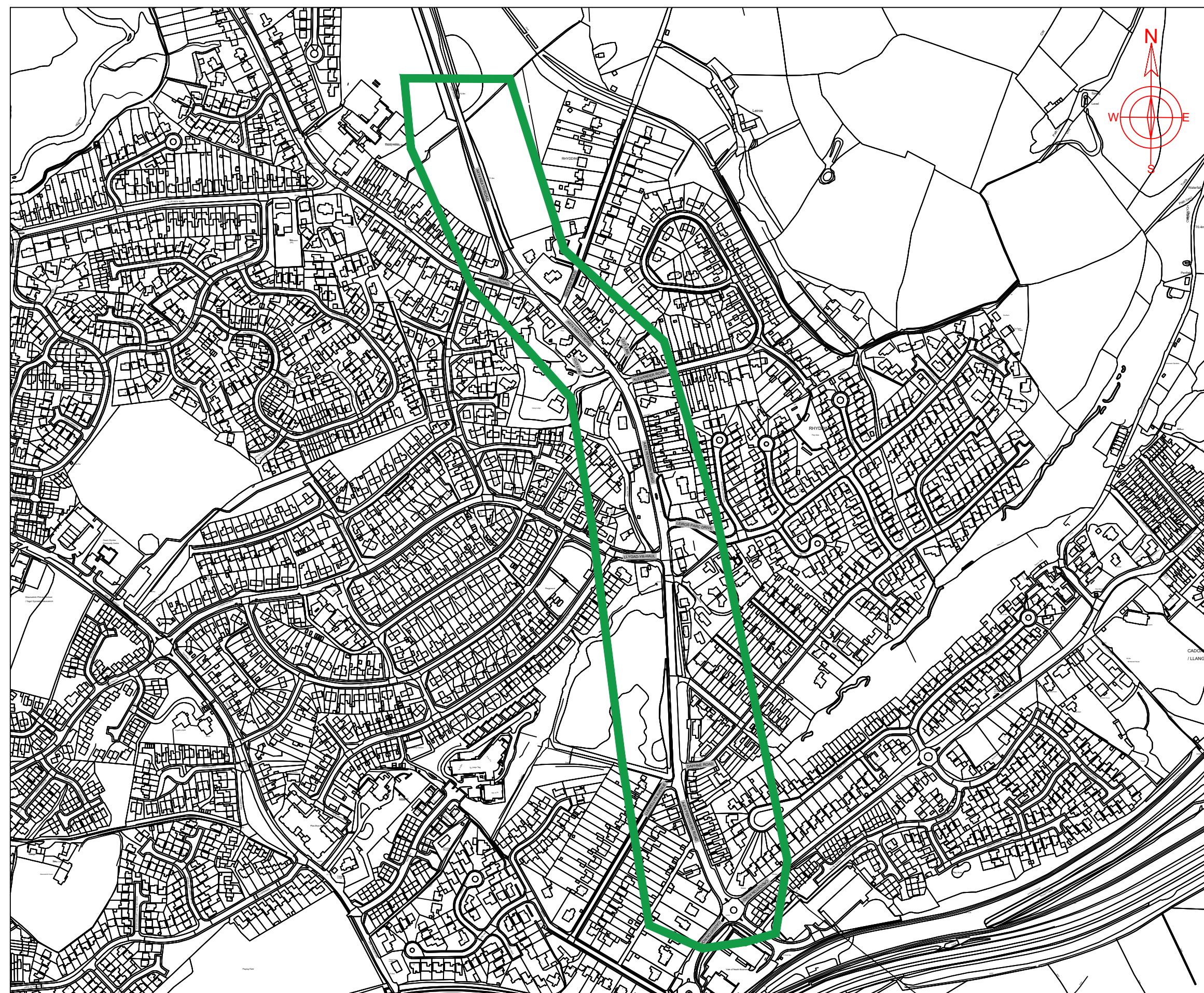
File No.	Financial Code No.				
Drawn	JJD	Checked	MCB	Approved	HHH
Date	MAY'22	Date	MAY'22	Date	MAY'22
Scales	1:1250 @ A1	Status	PRELIM		
Drawing No.	CIMLA-RD/30MPH/TRO1				

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwrddol wag

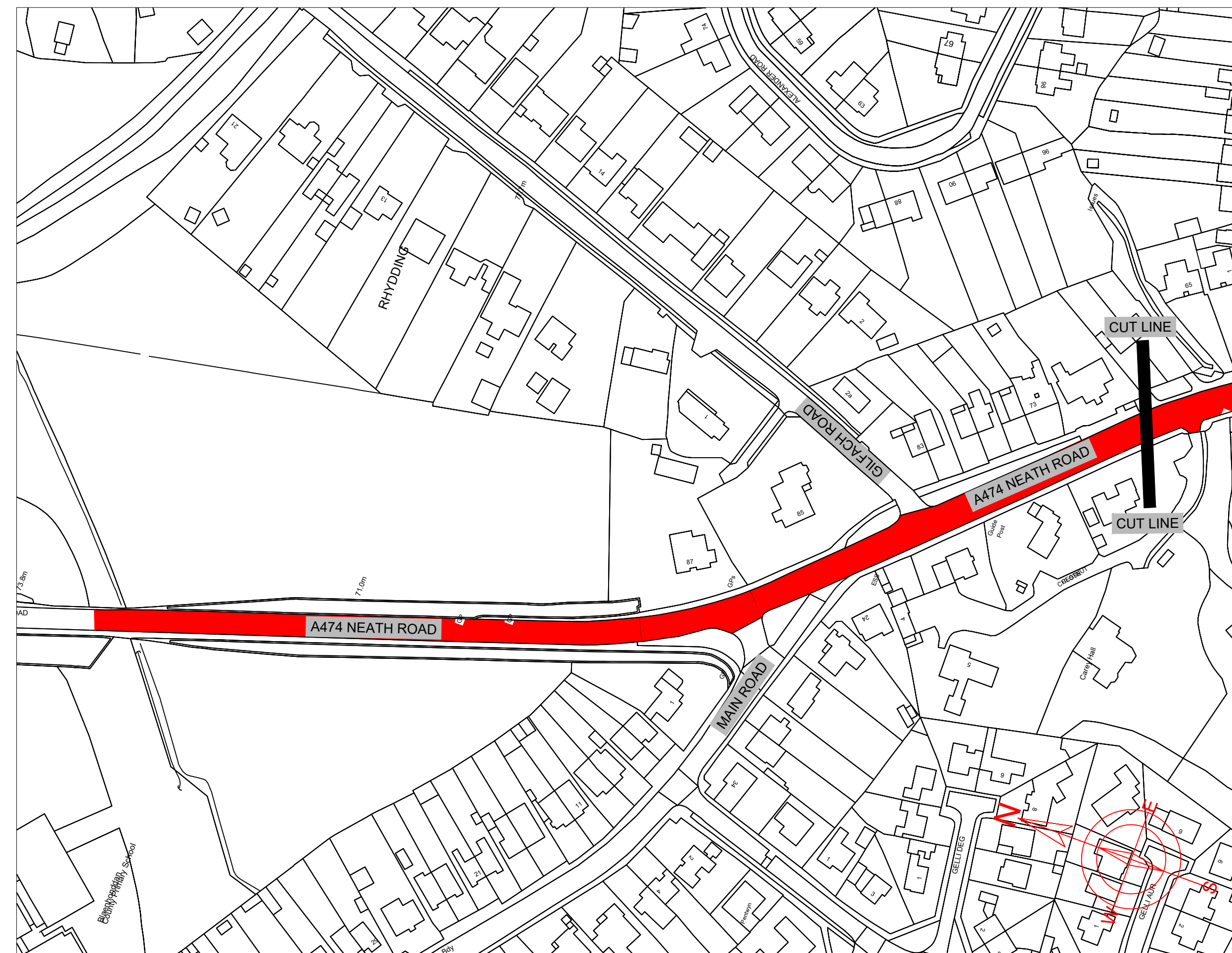
1. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

KEY:-

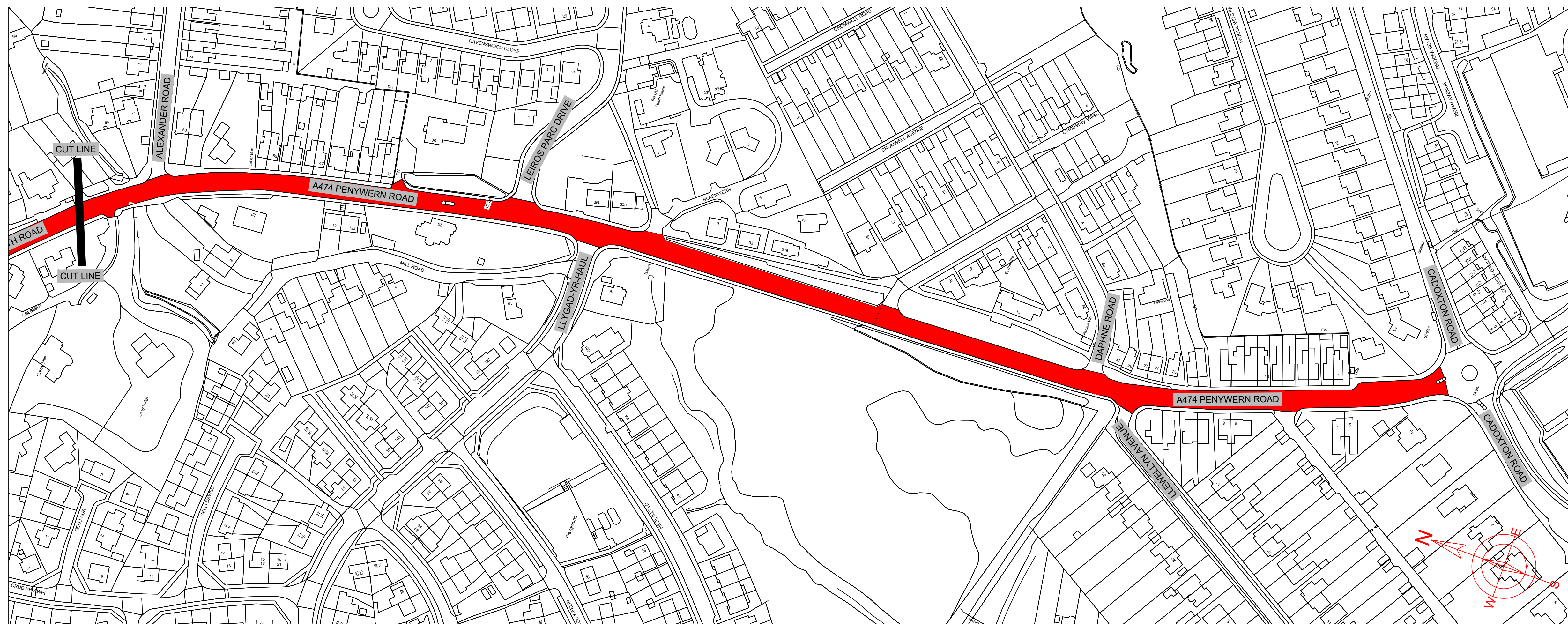
 PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT EXTENT



SITE LOCATION PLAN - SCALE 1:5000



SPEED LIMIT LAYOUT PLAN - SCALE 1:1250



SPEED LIMIT LAYOUT PLAN - SCALE 1:1250

'APPENDIX C'

Rev	Details	Dr	Ch	Ap	Date

Client



ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT
 NICOLA PEARCE BSC (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI
 DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION
 THE QUAYS, BRUNEL WAY
 BAGLAN ENERGY PARK
 NEATH SA11 2GG

Job Title
**A474 PENYWERN ROAD
 AND A474 NEATH ROAD,
 BRYNCOCH**
**PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED
 LIMIT EXTENT**

File No.	Financial Code No.				
Drawn RLJ	Checked MCB	Approved HHH			
Date APR'22	Date APR'22	Date APR'22			
Scales As Detailed	Status PRELIM				

Drawing No. **PYWR/TR01**

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwrddol wag

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Proposed 30 mph Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Orders associated with Welsh Government 20 mph Default Speed Limit National Roll Out.

Service Area: Engineering and Transport

Directorate: Environment and Regeneration

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	Y	
Staff	Y	
Wider community	Y	
Internal administrative process only	Y	

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		N			L	There is no negative impact as the scheme will maintain traffic flow on the principal highway network following the introduction of the 20 mph default speed limit across Wales by the Welsh Government.
Disability		N			L	
Gender Reassignment		N			L	
Marriage/Civil Partnership		N			L	
Pregnancy/Maternity		N			L	
Race		N			L	
Religion/Belief		N			L	
Sex		N			L	
Sexual orientation		N			L	

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language	Y				L	There will be a positive impact as we welcome all correspondence in Welsh and English when dealing with the wider community.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English	Y				L	There will be a positive impact because all permanent highway approved signage and road markings used in the traffic regulation orders are Bilingual (Welsh / English) with Welsh placed above English.

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		N			L	There is no negative impact as the signage and road markings are located on the carriageway, therefore the scheme does not impact the existing Flora, Fauna or Biodiversity. Any signage located in the verge will be on a pole which will have minimal impact.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,		N			L	There is no negative impact as the signage and road markings are located away from the kerb allowing the carriageway and footway drainage to function as at present. The scheme is located within the existing road surface and as such there is no opportunity to provide additional drainage systems such as swales, soakaways etc.

such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.						
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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
<p>Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people</p>	Y		<p>Within the Neath Port Talbot presently 59.6% of adults are obese or overweight (with 23.6% being obese) it is predicted that by 2025 the number will have risen to 66.5%. A quarter of children in Wales are overweight or obese (including 12.4% that are obese) Wales has a higher percentage of adolescents self-reporting to be overweight or obese compared to England, Scotland and Republic of Ireland, with rates being generally higher in boys than girls.</p> <p>Only 48.4% of adults in Neath Port Talbot are meeting the physical activity guidelines compared to 53.1% in Wales. For most people, the easiest form of physical activity are those that can be built into everyday life such as walking and commuting by active travel. By enabling active travel, the proposal will contribute to improved health benefits for users whilst reducing carbon emissions from vehicles.</p> <p>The Welsh Governments Llwybr Nweydd Wales transport strategy sets out the 20 year ambition and focuses on delivering an accessible, sustainable transport system that is good for people, communities, the environment the economy and Welsh language and culture.</p> <p>The 5 year priorities call for a transport system and infrastructure that plays its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions whilst increasing active travel and public transport use by providing safe, accessible, sustainable transport systems that people will want to use.</p> <p>The sustainable transport hierarchy places active travel at the forefront of transport and sets out how the strategy will encourage people to change</p>

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			<p>their travel behaviour to use low-carbon sustainable transport, cycling and walking as the preferred transport modes.</p> <p>The scheme will align in 2023 with the Welsh Government national 20 mph speed limit default strategy aimed at lowering the speed limits over a greater area with the locality increasing the enhancement of reduced emissions and the promotion of Active Travel, walking and cycling.</p>
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	Y		The scheme will maintain traffic flow on the principal highway network helping to improve the street scene improving the community health through reduced air pollution and people walking to the local facilities within the 20 mph default speed limit areas, thereby contributing to other organisations goals on improving health for the population of Wales.
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	Y		A statutory consultation exercise for the traffic regulation orders will be undertaken with letters and plans delivered to the adjacent properties detailing the proposals. The traffic regulation orders will be advertised in the South Wales Evening Post, on the Council's web site and Notices posted on site.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	Y		The various sections within the Council such as Highway Engineering, Highway Development Control section and the Legal section have worked together on this initiative. The Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Sustrans have all been are working in collaboration with the Council on Active Travel Routes within the Borough and providing advice and direction.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	Y		In NPT 25.5% of homes do not have access to a car. Where car ownership levels are low, residents are more likely to be reliant on public transport and active travel for their day to day needs and to access key services and employment. Poor facilities can lead to difficulty in using active travel which can cause to social exclusion and isolation, which subsequently can lead to a range of health and social problems.

			<p>Facilitating more journeys by Active Travel will reduce our consumption of natural resources and act to tackle the causes and consequences of congestion, climate change, traffic pollution and noise.</p> <p>Encouraging people to be more active by providing Active Travel routes will help people to be healthy, to achieve their potential.</p>
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7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	✓
Reasons for this conclusion	
<p>After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require a full Impact Assessment (second stage). The traffic regulation orders will have a positive impact on service users, have no adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics or on people's ability to use the Welsh language.</p> <p>The traffic regulation orders contribute to delivering the Welsh Government 20 mph default speed limit national roll out in 2023 by maintaining traffic flow on the principal highway network.</p>	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

Tudalen303

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Hasan Hasan	Engineering Manager	HIH	7 th June 2022

Signed off by	D.W.Griffiths	Head of Service/Director	DWG	7 th June 2022
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Tudalen304



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29th June 2022

Report of the Head of Engineering & Transport – D.W.Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Neath East

Various Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the planning conditions for the new Housing Development off Meadow Road, Neath.

Purpose of the Report:

To obtain Members approval to advertise the above traffic regulation orders as indicated in Appendix A.

Executive Summary:

The report outlines the proposed traffic regulation orders and the reason why the orders are required.

Background:

A new Housing Development off Meadow Road, Neath has planning approval conditions that require various traffic regulation orders to be implemented in the interest of road safety. The traffic regulation orders will prevent indiscriminate parking around the access/egress roads to the development. A 'No Entry' traffic regulation order on Meadow Road will prevent vehicles from travelling against the remaining 'One Way' section of Meadow Road and thus removing the potential for incidents at this location. The proposals also involve revoking the existing 'One Way' and 'No Entry' traffic regulation orders to accommodate the new vehicle manoeuvres at the newly constructed junction into the new development site.

The proposed scheme is indicated in Appendix A and the location indicated in Appendix B.

Financial Impacts:

The scheme is to be funded by the Developer.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

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 assessment, attached at Appendix C, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:-

A full impact assessment is not required as the proposed traffic regulation orders will provide a safe environment for all highway users and provide Disabled parking outside the new development.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are 'No implications' associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Legal Impacts:

The scheme is to be advertised for a 21 day period as part of the statutory process.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

Consultation:

A consultation exercise will be undertaken when the scheme is advertised.

Recommendations:

Having had due regard to the integrated impact screening assessment it is recommended that approval is granted to advertise the Various Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the planning conditions for the new Housing Development off Meadow Road, Neath. (As detailed in Appendix A to the circulated report) and if no objections are received that the proposals are to be implemented on site as advertised.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The proposed traffic regulation orders will prevent indiscriminate parking and regulate traffic manoeuvres in the interest of road safety.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

Appendix A – Plan – Housing Development on land adjacent to Meadow Road, Neath – Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders

Appendix B – Plan - Housing Development on land adjacent to Meadow Road, Neath – Location of Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders

Appendix C – Integrated Impact Assessment.

List of Background Papers:

None.

Officer Contact:

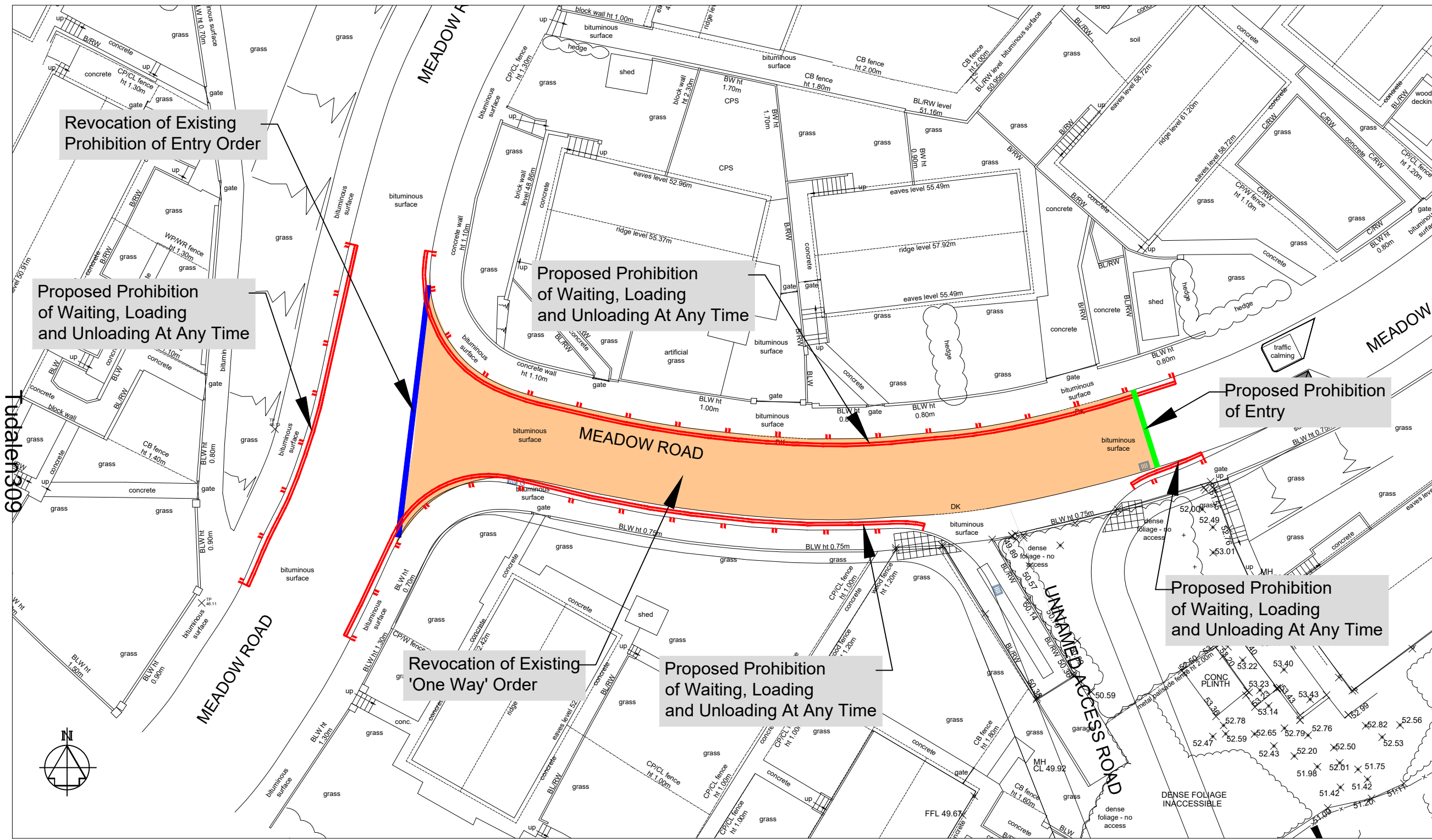
Mr Martin Brumby,
Engineering & Transport
Tel. No. 01639 686013
Email m.brumby@npt.gov.uk

Mr Ryan Jones,
Engineering & Transport
Tel. No. 01639 686771
Email r.jones15@npt.gov.uk

NOTES

1. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

- KEY:-**
- Proposed Prohibition of Waiting, Loading and Unloading At Any Time
 - Proposed Prohibition of Entry
 - Revocation of Existing 'One Way' Order
 - Revocation of Existing Prohibition of Entry Order



'APPENDIX A'

Rev	Details	Dr	Ch	Ap	Date

Client

Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
 Neath Port Talbot Council
 ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT
 NICOLA PEARCE BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI
 DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION
 THE QUAYS, BRUNEL WAY
 BAGLAN ENERGY PARK
 NEATH SA11 2GG

Job Title
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON LAND ADJACENT TO MEADOW ROAD, NEATH
PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

File No.	Financial Code No.			
Drawn RLJ	Checked MCB	Approved HHH		
Date MAY'22	Date MAY'22	Date MAY'22		
Scales Not To Scale	Status PRELIM			
Drawing No. NPT-MRS278-TRO-1				

TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER LAYOUT PLAN - SCALE 1:250

FOR OVERALL SITE LAYOUT PLAN - REFER TO DRAWING NPT-MRS278-TRO-2


Dwg. No.

Tudalen 309

Job Title

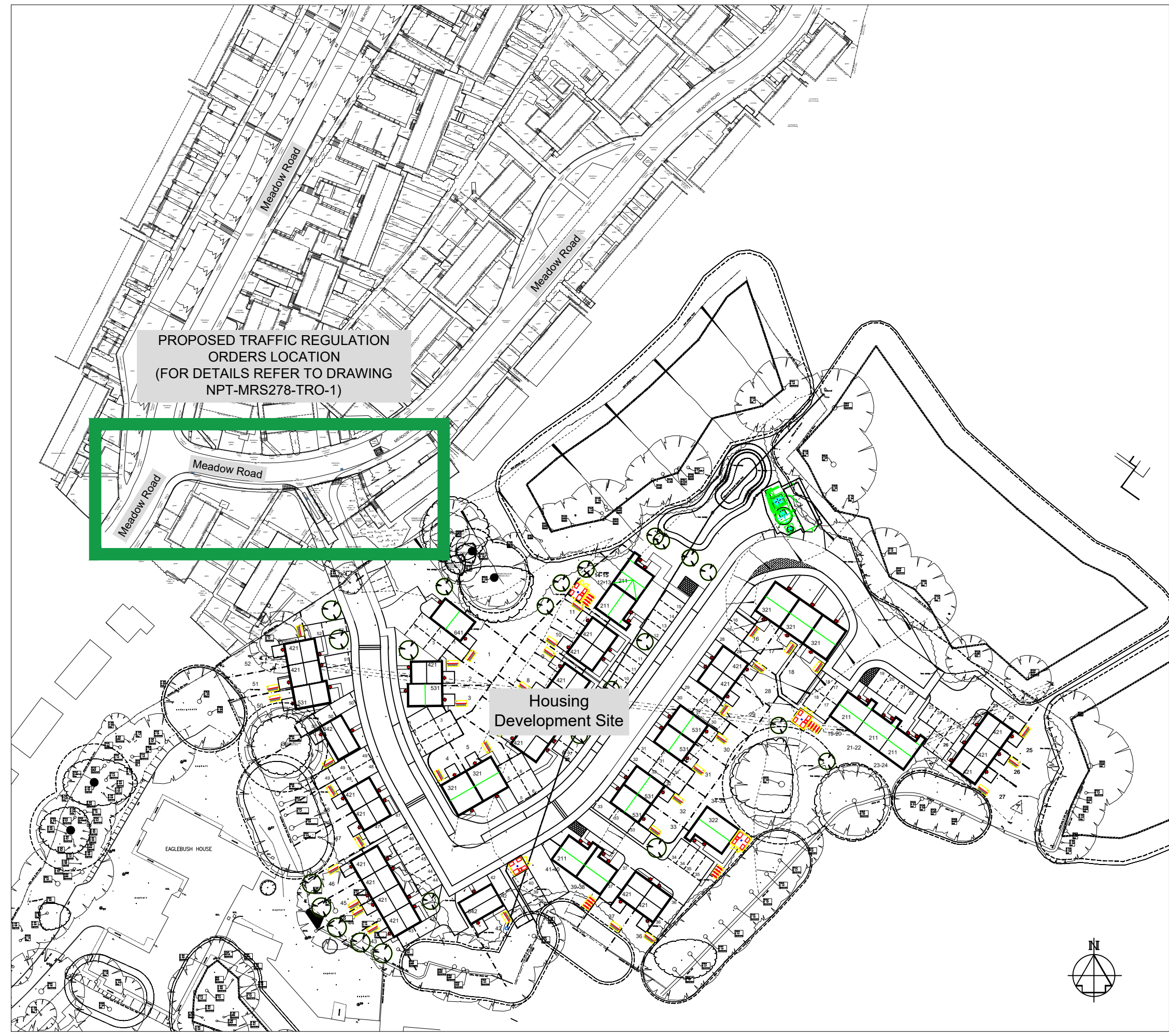
Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag

1. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.

KEY:-
 Location of Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders for New Development

Dwg. No.

Tudalen 311




PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS LOCATION
 (FOR DETAILS REFER TO DRAWING NPT-MRS278-TRO-1)

Housing Development Site

'APPENDIX B'

Rev	Details	Dr	Ch	Ap	Date
-----	---------	----	----	----	------

Client

 **Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot**
 Neath Port Talbot Council
 ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT
 NICOLA PEARCE BSC (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI
 DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION
 THE QUAYS, BRUNEL WAY
 BAGLAN ENERGY PARK
 NEATH SA11 2GG

Job Title
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON LAND ADJACENT TO MEADOW ROAD, NEATH

LOCATION OF PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

File No.	Financial Code No.				
Drawn	RLJ	Checked	MCB	Approved	HHH
Date	MAY'22	Date	MAY'22	Date	MAY'22
Scales	Not To Scale	Status	PRELIM		

Drawing No. **NPT-MRS278-TRO-2**

SITE LOCATION PLAN - SCALE 1:1000

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Various Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the planning conditions for the new Housing Development off Meadow Road, Neath

Service Area: Engineering and Transport

Directorate: Environment and Regeneration

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	Y	
Staff	Y	
Wider community	Y	
Internal administrative process only	Y	

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		N			L	There is no negative impact as the scheme will prevent indiscriminate parking thereby making the location safer for all users of the locality around the new development. This will encourage all users to walk and cycle to the development and in doing so will help to promote Active Travel.
Disability		N			L	
Gender Reassignment		N			L	
Marriage/Civil Partnership		N			L	
Pregnancy/Maternity		N			L	
Race		N			L	
Religion/Belief		N			L	
Sex		N			L	
Sexual orientation		N			L	

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language	Y				L	There will be a positive impact as we welcome all correspondence in Welsh and English when dealing with the wider community.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English	Y				L	There will be a positive impact because all permanent highway approved signage and road markings used in the traffic regulation orders are Bilingual (Welsh / English) with Welsh placed above English.

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		N			L	There is no negative impact as the road markings are located on the carriageway, therefore the scheme does not impact the existing Flora, Fauna or Biodiversity. Any signage located in the verge will be on a pole which will have minimal impact.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		N			L	There is no negative impact as the road markings and signage are located away from the kerb allowing the carriageway and footway drainage to function as at present. The scheme is located within the existing road surface and as such there is no opportunity to provide additional drainage systems such as swales, soakaways etc.

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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
<p>Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people</p>	Y		<p>Within the Neath Port Talbot presently 59.6% of adults are obese or overweight (with 23.6% being obese) it is predicted that by 2025 the number will have risen to 66.5%. A quarter of children in Wales are overweight or obese (including 12.4% that are obese) Wales has a higher percentage of adolescents self-reporting to be overweight or obese compared to England, Scotland and Republic of Ireland, with rates being generally higher in boys than girls.</p> <p>Only 48.4% of adults in Neath Port Talbot are meeting the physical activity guidelines compared to 53.1% in Wales. For most people, the easiest form of physical activity are those that can be built into everyday life such as walking and commuting by active travel. By enabling active travel, the proposal will contribute to improved health benefits for users whilst reducing carbon emissions from vehicles.</p> <p>The Welsh Governments Llwybr Nweydd Wales transport strategy sets out the 20 year ambition and focuses on delivering an accessible, sustainable transport system that is good for people, communities, the environment the economy and Welsh language and culture.</p> <p>The 5 year priorities call for a transport system and infrastructure that plays its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions whilst increasing active travel and public transport use by providing safe, accessible, sustainable transport systems that people will want to use.</p> <p>The sustainable transport hierarchy places active travel at the forefront of transport and sets out how the strategy will encourage people to change</p>

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			<p>their travel behaviour to use low-carbon sustainable transport, cycling and walking as the preferred transport modes.</p> <p>The scheme will help encourage Active Travel through helping to enhance the street scene environment (footpath access) thereby benefiting the community. Furthermore in May 2023 the Welsh Government National 20 mph speed limit default strategy may be implemented lowering the speed limit over a greater area with the locality increasing the enhancement of reduced emissions and the promotion of Active Travel, walking and cycling.</p>
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	Y		The scheme through the prevention of indiscriminate parking will help to improve the street scene improving the community health through reduced air pollution and people walking to the local facilities thereby contributing to other organisations goals on improving health for the population of Wales.
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	Y		A statutory consultation exercise for the traffic regulation orders will be undertaken with letters and plans delivered to the adjacent properties detailing the proposals. The traffic regulation orders will be advertised in the South Wales Evening Post, on the Council's web site and Notices posted on site.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	Y		The various sections within the Council such as Highway Engineering, Highway Development Control section and the Legal section have worked together on this initiative. The Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Sustrans have all been are working in collaboration with the Council on Active Travel Routes within the Borough and providing advice and direction.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	Y		In NPT 25.5% of homes do not have access to a car. Where car ownership levels are low, residents are more likely to be reliant on public transport and active travel for their day to day needs and to access key services and employment. Poor facilities can lead to difficulty in using active travel which can cause to social exclusion and isolation, which subsequently can lead to a range of health and social problems.

			<p>Facilitating more journeys by Active Travel will reduce our consumption of natural resources and act to tackle the causes and consequences of congestion, climate change, traffic pollution and noise.</p> <p>Encouraging people to be more active by providing Active Travel routes will help people to be healthy, to achieve their potential.</p>
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7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	✓
Reasons for this conclusion	
<p>After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require a full Impact Assessment (second stage). The traffic regulation orders will have a positive impact on service users, have no adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics or on people's ability to use the Welsh language.</p> <p>The traffic regulation orders contribute to delivering the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan by improving the wellbeing of people within the community by providing safe passage for all highway users.</p>	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Hasan Hasan	Engineering Manager	HIH	7 th June 2022
Signed off by	D.W.Griffiths	Head of Service/Director	DWG	7 th June 2022

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Cabinet – 29th June 2022

ACCESS TO MEETINGS/EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Purpose:	To consider whether the Public should be excluded from the following items of business.
Item (s):	<p>Agenda Item 15 – Levelling Up Fund Bids</p> <p>Agenda Item 16 – Potential Neath Port Talbot Freeport Opportunity.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Paragraphs listed below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 subject to the Public Interest Test (where appropriate) being applied.
Relevant Paragraph(s):	14.

1. Purpose of Report

To enable Members to consider whether the public should be excluded from the meeting in relation to the item(s) listed above.

Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, allows a Principal Council to pass a resolution excluding the public from a meeting during an item of business.

Such a resolution is dependant on whether it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as defined in section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.

2. Exclusion of the Public/Public Interest Test

In order to comply with the above mentioned legislation, Members will be requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation(s) to the report on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Exclusion Paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

Information which falls within paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended is exempt information if and so long as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The specific Exclusion Paragraphs and the Public Interest Tests to be applied are listed in Appendix A.

Where paragraph 16 of the Schedule 12A applies there is no public interest test. Members are able to consider whether they wish to waive their legal privilege in the information, however, given that this may place the Council in a position of risk, it is not something that should be done as a matter of routine.

3. Financial Implications

Not applicable

4. Integrated Impact Assessment

Not applicable

5. Valleys Communities Impact

Not applicable

6. Workforce Impact

Not applicable.

7. Legal Implications

The legislative provisions are set out in the report.

Members must consider with regard to each item of business the following matters.

- (a) Whether in relation to that item of business the information is capable of being exempt information, because it falls into one of the paragraphs set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended and reproduced in Appendix A to this report.

and either

- (b) If the information does fall within one or more of paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the public interest test in maintaining the

exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information; or

- (c) if the information falls within the paragraph 16 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in considering whether to exclude the public members are not required to apply the public interest test by must consider whether they wish to waive their privilege in relation to that item for any reason.

8. Risk Management

To allow Members to consider risk associated with exempt information.

9. Recommendation(s)

As detailed at the start of the report.

10. Reason for Proposed Decision(s):

To ensure that all items are considered in the appropriate manner.

11. Implementation of Decision(s):

The decision(s) will be implemented immediately.

12. List of Background Papers:

Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

13. Appendices:

Appendix A – List of Exemptions

Appendix A

NO	Relevant Paragraphs in Schedule 12A
12	Information relating to a particular individual
13	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
14	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
15	Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority
16	Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
17	Information which reveals that the authority proposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person, or• To make an order or direction under any enactment.
18	Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

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