



CABINET

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 22nd February 2023**

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

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

Webcasting/Hybrid Meetings:

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Part 1

1. Appointment of Chairperson
2. Chairpersons Announcement/s
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 12*)
5. Forward Work Programme 2022/23 (*Pages 13 - 16*)
6. Public Question Time
Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services, democratic.services@npt.gov.uk no later than noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.

FOR DECISION

7. Self Assessment 2021/2022 (*Pages 17 - 56*)
8. Establishment of a liaison forum in respect of Afan Valley Adventure Resort (*Pages 57 - 64*)
9. Establishment of an advisory panel in respect of the Global Centre of Rail Excellence (*Pages 65 - 88*)
10. Phase One of the Accommodation Review (*Pages 89 - 102*)

FOR MONITORING

11. Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/2023 - As at end of December 2022 (*Pages 103 - 114*)
12. Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2022/2023 - As at end of December 2022. (*Pages 115 - 132*)
13. Treasury Management Report 2022/2023 (*Pages 133 - 140*)
14. Treasury Management Mid Year Review Report 2022/2023 (*Pages 141 - 158*)
15. 2022/2023 Risk Register Monitoring Report (*Pages 159 - 166*)
16. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 (as amended).

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Thursday, 16 February 2023

Cabinet Members:

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

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EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

CABINET

30 NOVEMBER 2022

Cabinet Members:

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

Officers in Attendance:

K.Jones, A.Jarrett, A.D.Thomas, N.Pearce, C.Griffiths, M.Shaw, H.Jones, N.Blackmore, A.Hinder, D.Holder-Phillips, J.Merrifield, K. Windsor-Brown, C.L.John and J.Woodman-Ralph

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

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

2. **CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENT/S**

Cllr. S.K. Hunt welcomed all to the meeting and asked the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to address Members with advice on pre-determination.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services addressed Members.

“As you will be aware there is a report on the agenda today regarding the School Strategic Improvement Plan.

This proposal is a new and fresh decision that members will make, so the fact that you may have voted in a particular way at a previous

meeting, will not amount to pre-determination provided you retain a genuinely open mind in respect of this new meeting.

As you will know, when arriving at decisions relating to any of the Councils business, you must do so with an open mind and consider all the information before you objectively, having due regard to the advice of officers. During the decision-making process, you must act fairly and in the public interest. You are required to make your decisions on the basis of the facts in front of you, and not to have made your mind up in advance of the meeting.

If you consider that you have come to a settled view or decision in respect of this matter and are unable or unwilling to take into account any other representations or advice, or a member of the public may feel that in taking into account all matters there is a risk, you will in all likelihood have predetermined the matter. Accordingly if you feel you have predetermined your position you should not be taking part in any vote. Pre-determination could not only invalidate the decision, it could lead to proceedings being brought against the Council and it may also amount to a breach of the Members Code of Conduct. This would be the opportunity for you to declare that.

You are entitled to hold a preliminary view about a particular matter in advance of a meeting (otherwise known as pre-disposition) as long as you keep a genuinely open mind and are prepared to consider the merits of all the arguments and points made about the matter under consideration before reaching your decision.

It should be noted that the determination here is one for members to decide.

For the sake of clarity, manifesto commitments and policy statements which are consistent with a preparedness to consider and weigh relevant factors when reaching the final decision, are examples of legitimate predisposition, not predetermination. In addition, previously expressed views on matters which arise for decision in the ordinary run of events are routine provided you are able to approach this particular decision with an open mind.”

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members made Declarations of Interest at the start of the meeting in regard to Agenda Item 6 – Strategic School Improvement

Programme – Proposal to Establish and English-Medium 3 – 11 School to replace Alltwen, Godre’rgraig and Llangiwig Primary Schools.

Councillor S.Harris	Her daughter is a teacher at Ysgol Cwm Brombil School but has dispensation to speak and vote.
Councillor N.Jenkins	She is a school governor at Alltwen Primary School but has dispensation to speak and vote.
Councillor A. Llewelyn	He is a school governor at Ysgol Cymraeg Bro Dur but has dispensation to speak and vote.

The following member made a declaration of interest in regard to Agenda Item 7 – Third Sector Grant Funding – Award of Grants for 2023/2024 at the start of the meeting.

Councillor S.Knoyle	He is a board member of Glynneath Training Centre.
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4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON THE 29TH JUNE, 28TH JULY, 19TH OCTOBER AND THE 21 NOVEMBER 2022.**

The minutes of previous meetings held on the 29th June, 28th July, 19th October and the 21st November 2022 were agreed at an accurate record of the meeting.

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were received.

6. **STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN ENGLISH-MEDIUM 3 - 11 SCHOOL TO REPLACE ALLTWEN, GODRE'RGRAIG AND LLANGIWG PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Decision:

Members considered the proposal to amend the recommendations to avoid the consultation period taking place over the Christmas period suggested by the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held prior to this meeting. After discussion it was agreed that the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Services in consultation with the Leader and requisite members would be granted delegated authority to consider the extension of the consultation period as detailed below.

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, approval be granted that, in line with Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, to consult on the proposal to establish an English-medium 3 -11 school with a specialist learning support centre, in new build premises to accommodate pupils from the current catchment areas of Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwg Primary, all of which will close on 31st August 2025 and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning in consultation with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Education and Chair of Cabinet Scrutiny to agree a suitable extension to the consultation period to enable members of the public to respond to the consultation.

With date of implementation to be 1st September 2025.

Reason for Decision:

The decision will enable the Council to comply with the formal consultation requirements imposed on the Council by the School Organisation Code.

Subject to the outcome of consultation, 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:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period which ends at 9am, 4th December 2022.

Consultation

The report is asking for permission to consult.

7. **THIRD SECTOR GRANT FUNDING - AWARD OF GRANTS FOR 2023/2024**

Decisions:

1. That approval be granted to award grants to Third Sector organisations as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report.
2. It was agreed not to award grants to the organisations as detailed in Appendix 2 to the circulated report.
3. That the amount of grant payable to each Strategic Partner be approved as detailed in Appendix 3 to the circulated report.

Reason for Decisions:

To enable grants to the third sector organisations to be considered in line with the Council's Scheme.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period.

8. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2023-2028**

Decision:

Having given due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment approval be granted to start a 12 week consultation on the Draft Public Participation Strategy as detailed in the circulated report between the 5th December 2022 and the 26th February 2023.

Reason for Decision:

To enable the publication of a final Public Participation Strategy which will ensure the Council meets legal duties set out in The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 as they relate to council participation activities.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period which ends at 9am, 4th December 2022.

9. **DELIVERY OF THE WELSH GOVERNMENT'S DISCRETIONARY COST OF LIVING SUPPORT SCHEME - PROPOSALS FOR USE OF REMAINING FUNDING**

Decisions:

1. That the distribution criteria for the remaining balance of the Welsh Government Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme be approved as detailed in the circulated report.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Finance Officer in conjunction with the Leader of Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Social Justice to determine an appropriate distribution method for funding allocated to foodbanks.

Reason for Decisions:

To ensure that all funding available to the Council is utilised in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period which ends at 9am, 4th December 2022.

10. **CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2023-24**

Decisions:

That the 2023/2024 net Council Tax Base be approved:

- Of 48,808.10 for the whole of the County Borough; and
- for each Town and Community Council area the amount shown in paragraph 6 of the circulated report.

Reason for Decisions:

To determine the Council Tax Base for 2023/24.

Implementation of the Decisions:

With the agreement of the Cabinet Scrutiny Chairperson. The decision will be for immediate implementation. There is no all in on this item.

11. **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN FOR 2022-2023 PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2022 - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022 (HALF YEARLY PROGRESS REPORT)**

Decision:

That the report be noted.

12. **QUARTER 2 (1ST APRIL 2022 - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022)**
CORPORATE INDICATORS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S
DIRECTORATE SERVICE LEVEL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2022/2023

Decision:

That the report be noted.

13. **URGENT ITEMS**

Because of the need to deal now with the matter contained in Minute No 14 below, the Chairperson agreed that this could be raised at today's meeting as an urgent item pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reason:

Due to time element.

14. **PONTARDAWE SWIMMING POOL - EMERGENCY WORKS**
FUNDING.

Decision:

Having given due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment approval be granted for funds as detailed in the circulated report be allocated to undertake repair works at Pontardawe Swimming Pool.

Reason for Decision:

Without the works being carried out, Pontardawe Swimming Pool would be permanently closed.

Implementation of the Decision:

With the agreement of the Chairperson of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee the decision will be for immediate implementation. No call in on this item.

CHAIRPERSON

Cabinet (All starting 2pm unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item and Type	Contact Officer
1 st March 23	Final Budget 23/24 – FOR DECISION	Huw Jones

Meeting Date	Agenda Item and Type	Contact Officer
5 th April	Welsh Language Strategy Final Results of Consultation – commend to Council for approval' FOR DECISION	Rhian Headon
	Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy	Simon Brennan

Meeting Date	Agenda Item and Type	Contact Officer
17th May		
	Audit Wales Annual Summary – FOR INFORMATION	Caryn Furlow-Harris Karen Jones

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

22nd FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SHEENAGH REES

Matter for: Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title – Self-Assessment 2021/2022

Purpose of Report

1. To present Members with the Council's draft self-assessment for 2021/2022. The Council is required to publish the self-assessment within 4 weeks of approval.

Background

2. The completion of an annual self-assessment is a new requirement for all local authorities in Wales. The requirement is contained in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and is a corporate, organisational assessment rather than an assessment of individual services.
3. As part of the self-assessment, we are required to consider the extent to which the Council is:
 - exercising its functions effectively (*how well we are doing*)
 - using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively (*how do we know*)
 - ensuring its governance is effective for securing the above (*what and how can we do better*)
4. From having sight of examples of completed self-assessments from across Wales, local authorities have adopted different approaches. Many have combined the self-assessment with the annual report on

the achievement of well-being objectives for 2021/2022. This approach was not adopted here as the focus of the self-assessment should be an evidence-based analysis, understanding what both quantitative and qualitative information reveals about how the council is exercising its functions, using its resources and governing itself (rather than a focus on operational / service delivery).

5. In undertaking this self-assessment process, in addition to stating what arrangements we have in place to ensure we are exercising our functions effectively, using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively and ensuring our governance is effective, we have also considered how those arrangements can be further improved.
6. The report sets out how we have approached the self-assessment – utilising the LGA Efficiency Toolkit – which has provided a baseline enabling year on year improvement to be evidenced.

Conclusion:

7. The conclusion of the self-assessment is set out on page 27. Overall, the council is deemed as mature when assessed against the LGA Efficiency Toolkit.
8. A number of opportunities for improvement were identified during 2021/2022 as part of the extensive, council-wide work to develop the council's revised Corporate Plan for the period 2022/2027. The self-assessment exercise has provided assurance those opportunities for improvement were the right things to be focussing on during 2022/2023 (and onwards) and have been included in the Action Plan. Progress on those improvement areas is also included.
9. In addition, the work undertaken to complete the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2021/2022 – which is an assessment of the effectiveness of internal control - identified 6 areas for improvement and these can be found in the Action Plan on page 29-35 along with progress made.

10. As required under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 on 15th February 2023 the Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the draft Self-Assessment 2021/22. The Committee made no recommendations for any changes to the conclusions or actions contained within the draft.

Integrated Impact Assessment

11. There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment in respect of this item.

Valleys Communities Impact:

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

Workforce Impact

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

Legal Impact

14. There are no legal impacts in respect of this item.

Risk Management

15. There are no risk management issues in respect of this item.

Consultation

16. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

17. Members are asked to approve the draft self-assessment prior to publication and submission to the Welsh Government.

Reason for Proposed Decision

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

- it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- its governance is effective for securing the above.'

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

20. Appendix 1 – Draft Self-Assessment 2021/2022

List of Background Papers

21. Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Officer Contact

Sheenagh Rees, Head of People & Organisational Development

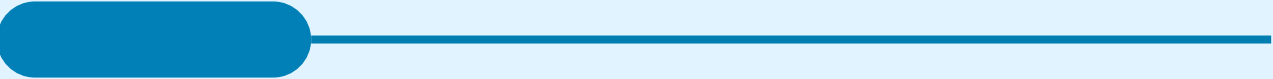
Email: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk

Caryn Furlow-Harris, Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support

Email: c.furlow@npt.gov.uk

Louise McAndrew, Corporate Strategic Planning & Governance Officer

Email: l.mcandrew@npt.gov.uk



SELF-ASSESSMENT 2021/2022



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Introduction

From the Neath Port Talbot Council Leader, Councillor Steve Hunt and Chief Executive, Karen Jones

This report sets out Neath Port Talbot Council's Self-Assessment for 2021/2022.

The completion of an annual Self-Assessment is a new requirement for all local authorities in Wales.

This requirement is contained in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and is a corporate, organisational assessment rather than an assessment of individual services.

As part of the Self-Assessment, we are required to consider the extent to which the Council is:

- exercising its functions effectively (*how well are we doing?*)
- using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively (*how do we know?*)
- ensuring its governance is effective for securing the above (*what and how can we do better?*)

In undertaking this self-assessment process, in addition to stating what arrangements we have in place to ensure we do the above well, we have also considered how effective those arrangements are and how they can be further improved.

Cllr Steve Hunt – Leader

Karen Jones – Chief Executive



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



What is Self-Assessment?

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a new process for monitoring the performance of all local authorities based on a self-assessment.

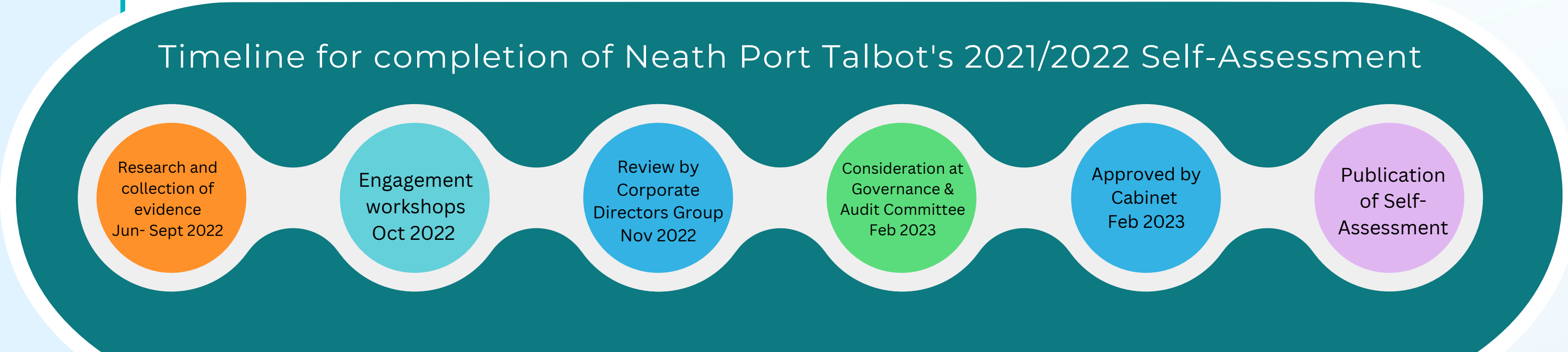
Self-assessment is a way of critically, and honestly, reviewing the current position in order to make decisions on how to secure improvement for the future. The council recognises undertaking a self-assessment will enable both officers and members to build on, and further support, a culture in which the council can continuously challenge the current ways of working and ask questions about how the council is operating and how to learn from best practice.

A transparent and open self-assessment is key to adapting for the future in the challenging times we find ourselves in.

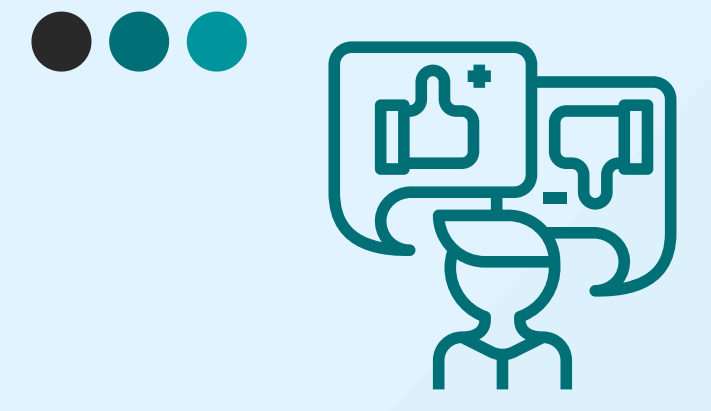
At its simplest level, the self-assessment is about asking the following questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What and how can we do better?

Reflecting on these 3 questions has enabled the council to find a comprehensive baseline to benchmark against for coming years and support the delivery of future plans and strategies.



Developing our approach to self-assessment



The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 is non prescriptive on the approach individual councils should take to completing their self-assessments. This enabled the council to determine its own approach, designed to fit local circumstances and corporate structures and informed by best practice.

When developing our approach we took into account the following key principles:

- » Self-assessment is not a fixed judgement. To be truly effective, embedding self-assessment throughout the council should be an ongoing process, addressing issues as they are identified, responding in real time and effectively to challenges and opportunities.
- » The self-assessment process should encourage honesty, objectivity and transparency about the council’s performance and governance.
- » The self-assessment should be focused on outcomes, what has been achieved rather than the process.
- » The self-assessment is an evidence-based analysis, by understanding what both quantitative and qualitative information reveals about how the council is exercising its functions, using its resources and governing itself.
- » The self-assessment should be owned and led at a strategic level, whilst involving members and officers at all levels of the organisation and a range of people across communities and partners.
- » The self-assessment is not to be a standalone process, but integrated as part of the council’s corporate planning, performance and governance processes.

From the outset, it was important to ensure the approach adopted would enable a comprehensive baseline to be established and year on year improvement to be evidenced. Improvement in this context is the ability to:

- deliver against priorities
- remain capable and adaptable to respond to the challenging environment; and
- consider how internal processes and people operate in order to make the right decisions for the longer term.



Developing our approach to self-assessment

continued...

Extensive research was undertaken to inform the approach including:

- » Discussions with WLGA on learning from other approaches across Wales
- » An academic review of existing models used in self-assessment for organisational development and sustainable success:

- European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)
- Total Quality Management (TQM)
- Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA)
- ISO 9001
- LGA Efficiency Monitoring Self-Assessment Tool

- » Interviews with academia at Swansea University School of Management
- » A review of the Statutory Guidance on Part 6, Chapter of the Act

Following an evaluation of the above research, it was determined to use the LGA's Efficiency Monitoring Self-Assessment Tool.

The Tool is structured around the following 7 key activities:

1. Role of the Council
2. Getting the best from the workforce
3. Procurement and commissioning
4. Digital and technology
5. Managing income and expenditure
6. Effective risk management
7. Data and intelligence

Although worded slightly differently, the activities in the LGA Tool cover all of the core activities common to the governance of public bodies set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

1. Corporate planning
2. Workforce planning
3. Procurement
4. Assets
5. Financial planning
6. Risk Management
7. Performance Management

Considering the seven core activities as a framework for the self-assessment, and applying the 5 ways of working to those areas, will support the council to ensure it is governing itself to maximise its contribution to the seven well-being goals as contained in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the council's 4 well-being objectives contained in the Corporate Plan - Recover, Reset, Renew 2022/2027. It is acknowledged the assessment of assets is limited to digital, data and technology. This will be addressed in the 2022/2023 self-assessment when assets will be expanded to include physical assets and facilities

We have also included the following supplementary core activity that emerged during our self-assessment research as being integral to effective governance arrangements:

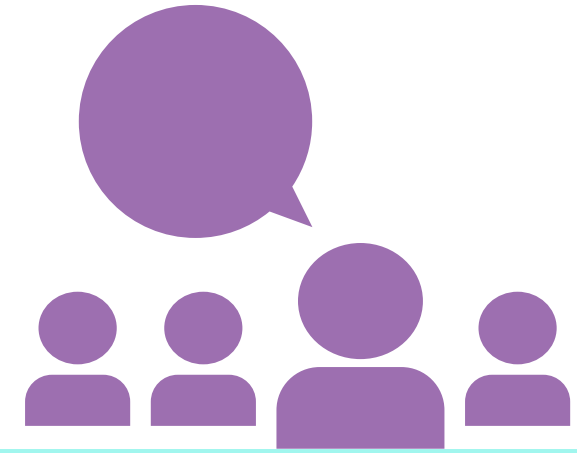
- Leadership and management

Structuring the self-assessment around the 7 core activities will enable a baseline to be established and improvement subsequently tracked in future years.

The LGA Toolkit was slightly adapted to ask the questions that will give an objective view of current performance, and these were scored against - *Developing, Mature and Leading*.



Developing our approach to self-assessment continued...



Several groups were consulted on performance

- ✔ NPT Senior Management Team
- ✔ NPT Accountable Managers
- ✔ Governance & Audit Committee
- ✔ Cabinet

STEP 1 STEPS

To initiate the self-assessment high level critiques of how the council performed during 2021/2022 across the 7 core activities were prepared by Senior Managers who also provided an assessment as to where each core activity stood in relation to Developing, Mature and Leading (as measured in the LGA Toolkit). The critiques and assessments were reviewed by an independent consultant.

STEP 2 STEPS

The critiques were used as a starting point for discussion in a half day workshop attended by the Senior Management Team (Corporate Directors and Heads of Service) facilitated by the independent consultant. During the workshop Senior Officers were asked to comment honestly and openly on these critiques and whether they thought the assessment was a true reflection of the position in 2021/2022. A further two workshops were held for Accountable Managers from across the council to again reflect on the assessment taking into account current working practices and service delivery from both a managers perspective and working closely with staff and feedback from service users. Feedback from these sessions are included in the core activity assessments set out on pages 13-26. Feedback from staff who attended the workshops were that the sessions were useful and provided a clear explanation of the core activities and provided the opportunity to identify where improvements could be made.

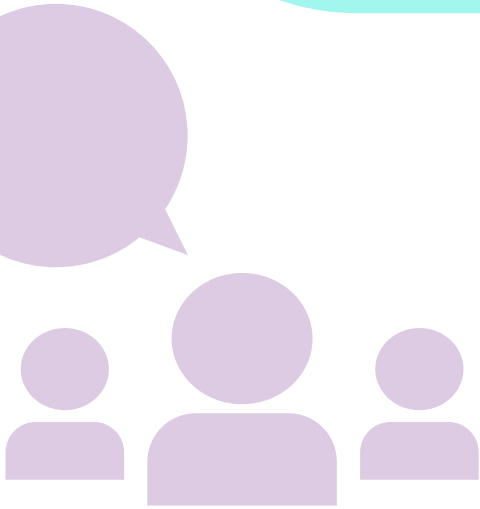
STEP 3 STEPS

From the core activity assessments and the feedback obtained during the workshops, opportunities for improvement (to increase the extent to which the council will meet the performance requirements in 2022/2023 and onwards) were identified and are contained in the Action Plan on pages 29-35. A number of the opportunities for improvement were identified during 2021/2022 as part of the extensive, council-wide work to develop the council's revised Corporate Plan for the period 2022/2027. The Plan sets out the strategic vision for the council and included a programme of organisational development to develop the capacity and capability of the council over a 3-5 year period. The self-assessment exercise has provided assurance the opportunities for improvement identified during 2021/2022 were the right things to be focussing on during 2022/2023 onwards. Progress on those improvement areas is included in the Action Plan.

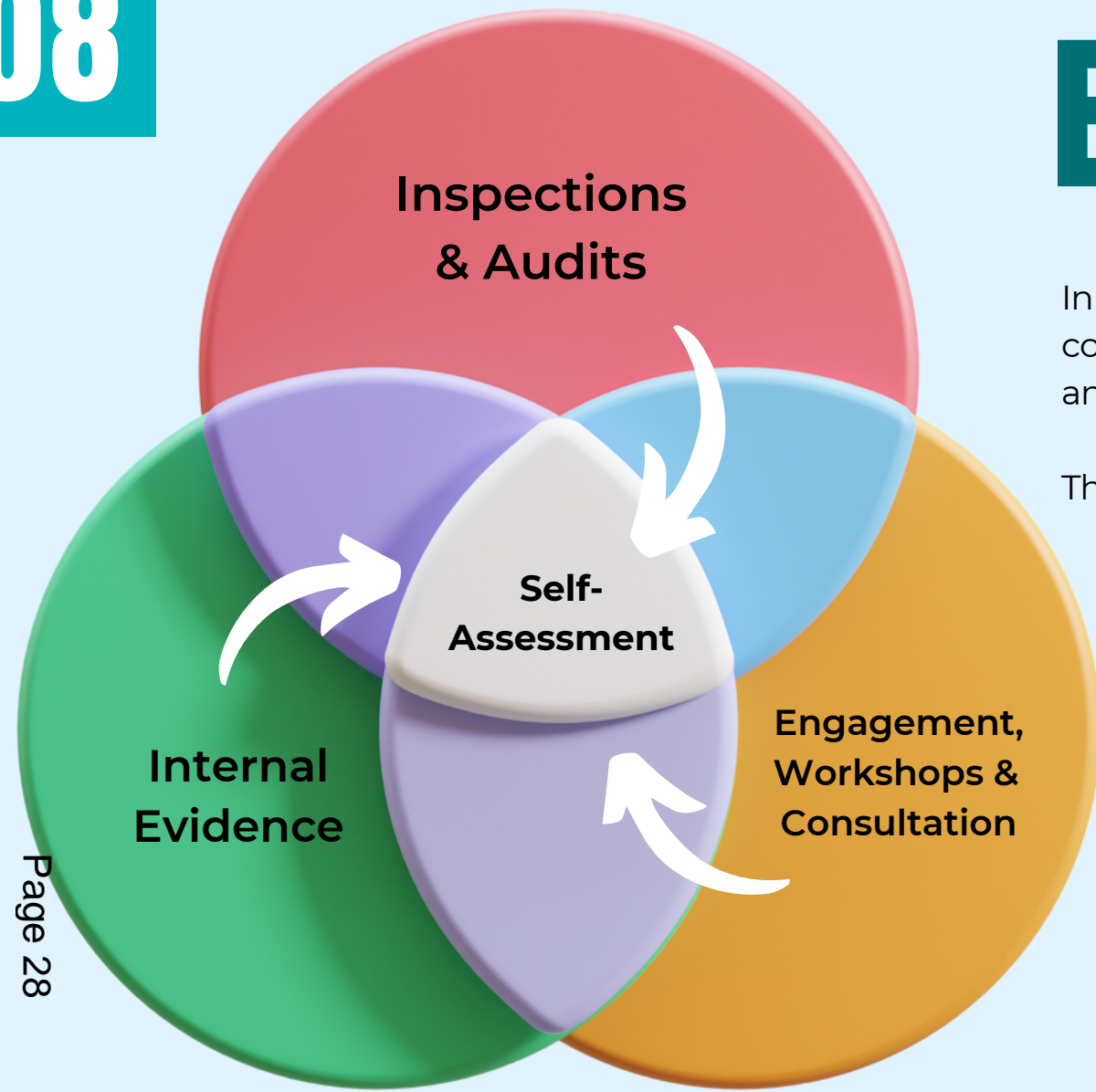
STEP 4 STEPS

The draft self-assessment was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 15th February 2023. The Committee has a role to review the draft self-assessment and may make recommendations for changes to the conclusions. Following review by the Committee no recommendations for any changes to the conclusions or actions were proposed.

“ I really enjoyed the workshop; it was really well planned, and I feel that we got a lot out of it. Thank you for organising it, it was really good to have that opportunity to feedback. ”



Evidence Based 2021 / 2022



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In addition to the completion of the high level critiques of how the council performed during 2021/2022 across the 7 core activities, we have also considered a wide variety of evidence in assessing our performance during 2021/2022. Some of the evidence has been used to inform other annual reports including the [Corporate Plan Annual Report 2021/2022](#) and the [Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022](#).

The evidence can be presented in three categories which has supplemented the conclusions drawn for the high level critiques.

Engagement from stakeholders is an integral part of how we operate on an ongoing basis - enabling the delivery of good quality services and supporting improvement. Due to the wide range of functions and service areas our approach to engagement has diversified. Prior to Covid, a Community of Practice (Involvement & Engagement) was established to involve our communities and partner agencies from the outset in the work that is undertaken by the Council to help shape proposals before wider public consultation exercises. An event was held which gathered together over 28 key partners with representatives of range of groups including, children and young people, carers, people with disabilities, Welsh speakers and partners.

Category 1 - Internal Evidence

The evidence in this category provides an internal view of how the council performed during 2021/2022:

- ➔ Corporate Plan – Annual Report
- ➔ Documentation to inform the development of the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 - a vast amount of work was undertaken to reflect on achievements to date and make suitable and sustainable plans for the coming years.
- ➔ Public Service Board Wellbeing Plan - Annual Report
- ➔ Statement of Accounts
- ➔ Annual Governance Statement
- ➔ Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021/2022
- ➔ Quarterly Performance Cabinet Reports
- ➔ Risk Register
- ➔ Compliments, Comments and Complaints
- ➔ Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports
- ➔ Internal Audit Reports

Category 2 - Regulatory / Inspection Reports

The evidence in this category provides the regulatory or external view of performance from independent bodies.

- ➔ Audit Wales Annual Improvement Report
- ➔ Audit Wales Reports
- ➔ Care Inspectorate Wales Reports
- ➔ Estyn Inspection Reports
- ➔ Public Service Ombudsman Wales
- ➔ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation

Category 3 - Consultation & Engagement

The evidence in this category is via listening to staff, residents and businesses about their experiences of services and working within the authority. Engagement has developed significantly since the pandemic and is paramount in how the Council improves and effectively and efficiently delivers services. The Council's Let's Talk campaign, Youth Council, Citizen's Panel and Community of Practice re-enforce the commitment to listen and to be accountable to act on feedback.

- ➔ Let's Talk Engagement & Consultation Campaign (Corporate Plan 2022-2027 and Budget 2022/2023)
- ➔ Trade Union meetings
- ➔ Youth Council
- ➔ Citizens Panel
- ➔ Staff Hybrid Working Surveys
- ➔ Community of Practice (Involvement & Engagement)
- ➔ Economic Development Strategy
- ➔ Consultation
- ➔ Senior Manager Workshops
- ➔ Accountable Manager Workshops



SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE 2021 / 2022

The following information provides a summary of some of the reports included in the 3 categories of internal, external and consultation/engagement which have been used to support the self-assessment.

Well-being Objectives

The well-being objectives in place during 2021/2022 were:

- To improve the well-being of children and young people
- To improve the well-being of all adults who live in the county borough
- To develop the local economy and environment so that the well-being of people can be improved.

The well-being objectives were approved by Council in 2017. Under each well-being objective there are improvement priorities and steps. The improvement priorities set out the overall improvement we are aiming to achieve and the steps set out the strategic actions we will take to deliver that improvement.

For 2021/2022, 77% of steps (72 of 93) were on track and 21 just off track. This is an improvement on 2020/2021 where 65% of steps were on track and 24 were just off track. Overall progress on steps indicates services started to recover during 2021/2022. This recovery was against a backdrop of significant impacts and disruption caused by the pandemic (during 2020/2021 and 2021/2022).

Key Performance Indicators

To assess our performance in meeting our well-being objectives during 2021/2022, alongside the above progress on steps, we used 58 performance indicators.

The summary below shows a higher proportion of corporate plan key performance indicators achieved targets in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 and 2019/20 and the percentage improving increased by 3% compared to 2020/21.

**Caution should be taken with the comparison as performance for some measures across both 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

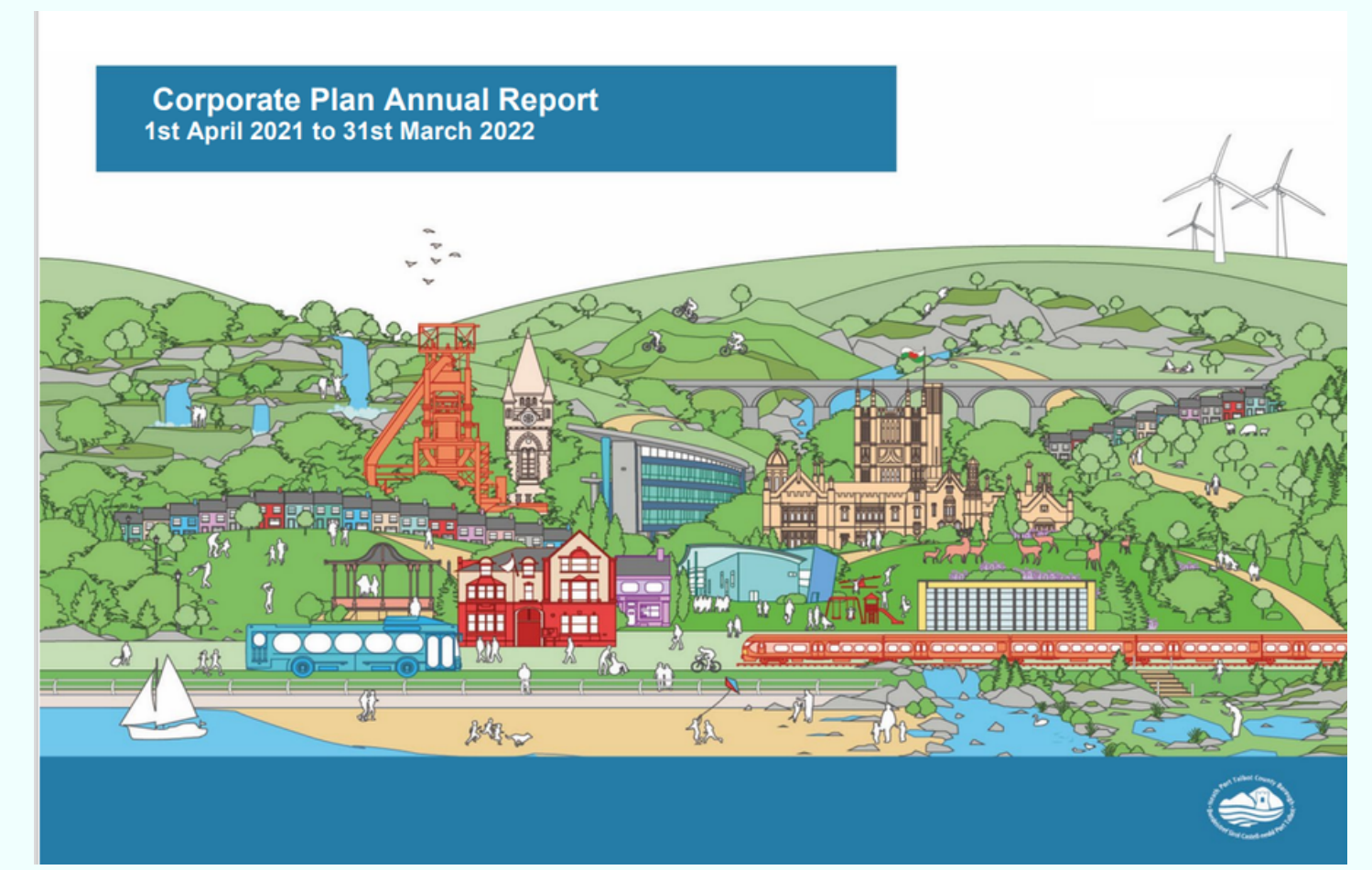
Comparing against Targets - During 2021/22, of the performance indicators that had comparable targets, 70% (28 of 40) achieved target, 7.5% (3 of 40) were within 5% of target and 22.5% (9 of 40) were 5% or more below target.

This compares favourably to 2020/21 where 61% (23 of 38) achieved target, 18% (7 of 38) were within 5% of target and 21% (8 of 38) were 5% or more below the target set. In 2019/20, 54% achieved target.

Comparing against previous year performance - In 2021/22, 60% (29 of 48) improved or maintained performance, 15% (7 of 48) marginally declined but within 5% and 25% (12 of 48) declined by 5% or more.

In 2020/21, 57% (24 of 42) improved or maintained performance, 24% (10 of 42) marginally declined and 19% (8 of 42) declined by 5% or more. In 2019/20, 63% (32 of 51) improved or maintained performance.

Examples of improvements include more year 11 pupils studying Welsh first language which is likely to rise steadily for the next 3 years, child assessments completed in time (99%), employability programme outcomes linked to Workways+, Communities for Work (16-24) and Communities for Work Plus, increase in apprenticeships within the council, quicker processing of benefits, further improvement in the condition of A, B and C roads, increases in council tax and National Non-domestic collection rates (NNDR) and more services available online.



SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE continued...

We also achieved or exceeded our targets for a range of measures which include our recycling rates (although the recycling rate reduced slightly), street cleanliness, food establishments meeting food hygiene standards (97%), percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless, our Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) figure, healthy relationship lessons to pupils, air quality measure, 410 jobs created/safeguarded as a result of financial support by the authority and % local government electors verified and registered to vote.

Some of our performance has declined and/or missed targets during the year, almost all of these continue to be affected in some way by the impacts of the pandemic including school attendance, the average time taken to complete a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), Communities for Work (age 25+) outcomes, domestic abuse high risk repeat referrals, time taken to clear fly tipping, planning applications determined in time and council sickness rates (which have significantly increased).

The average time taken to answer telephone calls from the public was below target and showed a slight drop in performance for the year, however, performance improved in the second half of the year. Contact with young people through the youth service and visits to theatres, leisure centres and libraries are still lower than pre-pandemic levels.

More detail of service achievements can be found in Corporate Plan Annual Report 2021/2022

Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) / Benchmarking Council Performance

Previously, at council level, performance has been compared with other local authorities across Wales against the national set of Public Accountability Measures (PAMs). However, these measures ceased being collected and compared nationally in 2021.

Although, a number of these measures are still being benchmarked by our service areas. A number of services also share good practice and information via benchmarking groups.

Data Cymru is currently developing a set of measures with support of local authorities, including Neath Port Talbot, which can be used for benchmarking at council and service level. In the meantime, Neath Port Talbot Council will be reviewing our own benchmarking arrangements to further strengthen and improve them.

At an operational level, service areas for 2022/23 have completed a self-assessment of performance when developing their Service Recovery Plans (SRP). Within the SRP guidance, services are encouraged to benchmark their performance (e.g. with other organisations) where data is available. This process will be reviewed and further strengthened during 2022/23.

Complaints and Compliments

Complaints and compliments provide valuable information about how we are performing and what our customers think about our services. Most people who complain tell us what we have done wrong and how we can do better. We use this feedback to improve our services. Publishing an annual report demonstrates the council's commitment to transparency and a positive approach to acknowledging, investigating, responding to and learning from complaints. The annual report for 2021/2022 can be found [here](#).

There was an increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints received across the Council from 102 received in 2020/2021 to 111 received in 2021/2022. However, the percentage upheld/partially upheld during 2021/2022 was 19.82% (22 of 111). This is a reduction on previous years. In 2020/2021 the percentage was 23.53% (24 of 102) and in 2019/2020 the percentage was 31.76% (47 of 148).

There was an increase in the number of Stage 2 complaints received from 14 in 2020/2021 to 25 in 2021/2022. However, only 2 Stage 2 complaints were upheld/partially upheld (8.33%) - an increase in just one when comparing to the previous year when 1 of 14 (7.14%) Stage 2 complaints received was upheld/partially upheld.

No systemic failings could be attributed to a particular service area from the instances reported and investigated.

There has been a steady year on year increase in compliments from 115 in 2017/18 to 360 in 2020/2021. However, in 2021/2022 there has been a reduction in the number of compliments received falling to 249.



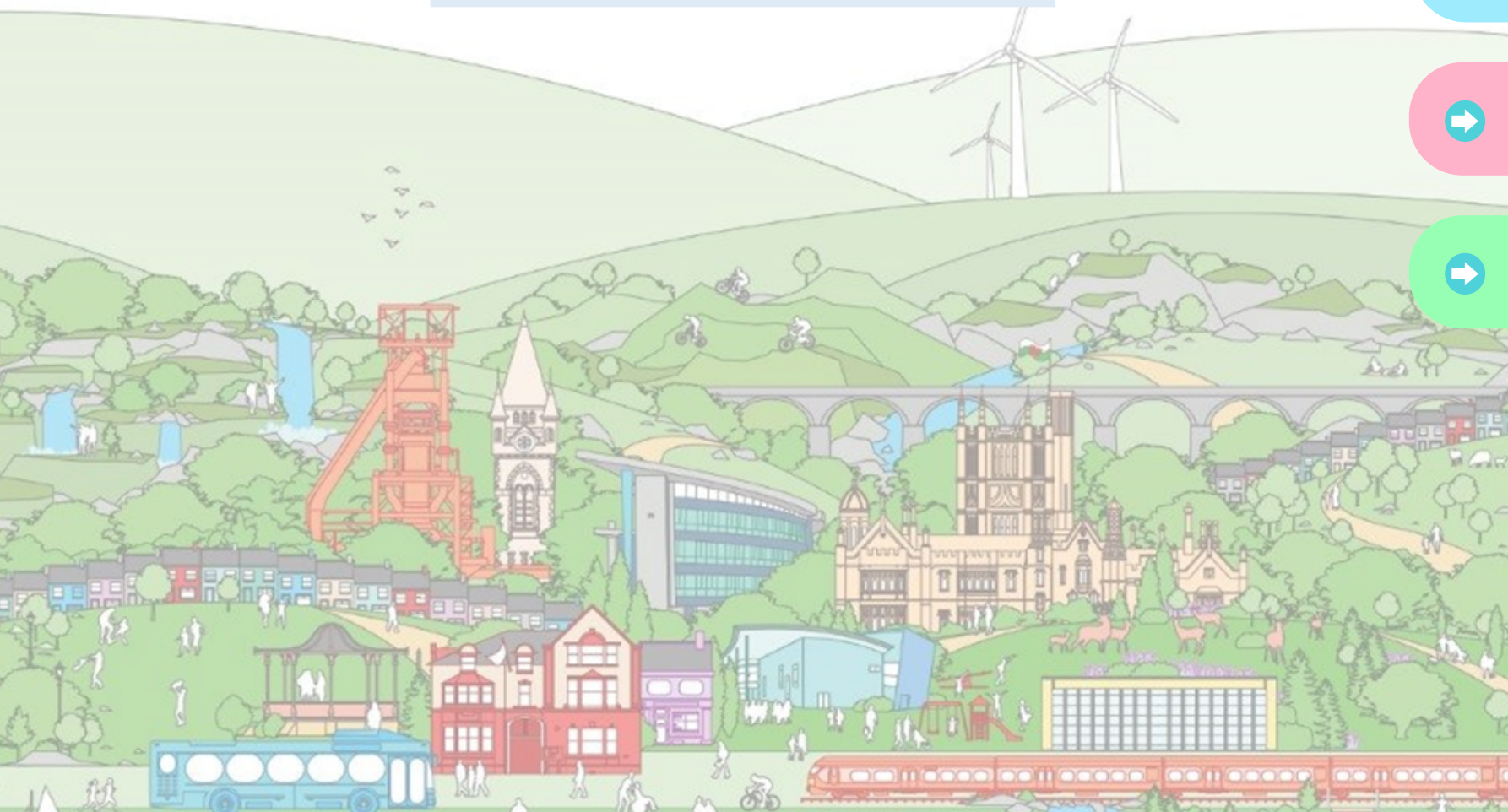
SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE continued...

The council has adopted the 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA). To comply with the Framework, the council published an Annual Governance Statement, 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. The framework brings together an underlying set of legal requirements, good practice and management processes.

The completion of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is an important component of the Council's corporate governance arrangements which is about making sure the Council is run properly, does the right things at the right time in the right way and:

- ➔ 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
- ➔ There is clear accountability for the use of resources to achieve priorities which benefit local people and communities

The self-assessment of the effectiveness of internal control for the year 2021/2022 identified 6 areas for improvement and these can be found in the Action Plan on pages 29-35. The AGS for 2021/2022 – can be found [here](#).



How Consultation and Engagement during 2021/2022 informed the Council's Priorities

Community Events

Youth Council

Let's Talk

Citizens Panel

Staff Surveys

Community of Practice

The council's Corporate Plan 2022-2027 – Recover, Reset, Renew was informed by many people – residents, employees, elected members, community organisations, businesses and other partners. Internal engagement started during spring 2021 to establish lessons learned and priorities for recovery. This included the involvement of all accountable managers in completing strategic assessments to identify lessons learned and proposals for the future shape of services.

A cross party Coronavirus – Member Panel met on five occasions (during March 2021 – November 2021) to discuss approaches to form the basis of recovery from the pandemic and a number of all Member Seminars were also held to discuss recovery planning.

The initial phase of public engagement “Let’s Talk” started on 19th July and the aim of this phase was to find out what mattered to local people in the context of recovery from Covid-19. Over 1,700 responses were received. The feedback informed the four draft wellbeing objectives and the proposed focus of work under each wellbeing objective during 2022/2023, during the next 5 years and the longer term.

During this initial phase, the Chief Executive visited a number of wards across the county borough to talk to local Members, groups and residents about what mattered to local people in the context of recovery.

The second phase of the public consultation, which started on 5th January 2022, tested whether or not we had captured what is important to people now and in the future in terms of the changes we aim to make over the next 12 months, the next 5 years and the longer term.

Most people strongly agreed / agreed with each of the four draft wellbeing objectives and most people agreed with all the things we should focus on in the next 12 months and longer term. There were a number of consistent themes in the detailed feedback under each wellbeing objective and the draft Plan was amended to reflect that feedback.

In addition, the Chief Executive attended a number of consultation events to engage partners and stakeholders in the development of the Plan (Public Services Board; Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum; Staff Council; 3rd Sector consultation; Town & Community Council Liaison Forum.





The following section provides a

Summary of High Level Critiques for each Core Activity 2021/2022

- Corporate Planning - *Role of the Council*
- Workforce planning - *Getting the best from the workforce*
- Leadership - *Leadership and Management*
- Procurement - *Procurement & Commissioning*
- Risk Management - *Effective Risk Management*
- Data, Digital & Technology
- Financial Planning - *Managing Expenditure / Managing Income*

Summary of High Level Assessment

Corporate Planning '*The Role of the Council*'

Corporate Planning is the process by which businesses create strategies for meeting business goals and achieving objectives.

During 2021/2022, the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2022 was fundamentally reviewed and a new Plan was launched setting out how the council will approach recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in the short, medium and longer term.

The Plan 'Recover, Reset, Renew' was informed by six months of engagement and consultation to ensure we took the views of people living and working in the county borough, partners, businesses, trade unions and visitors on board from the very earliest stages. This ensured the Plan was developed in true collaboration.

The Plan was also informed by an analysis of other important factors that needed to be taken into account including: poverty, deprivation and inequalities; public finances; green recovery and decarbonisation; digitisation, demographic change; future of work; community; and government policy.

The council's purpose, vision, values, relationships and priorities were also reset and renewed taking into account:

- » what matters to local people, businesses and our employees;
- » the impact that we know Covid-19 has had on our communities, our local economy and wider stakeholders;
- » the lessons we have learned from our pandemic response and from elsewhere; and
- » other anticipated changes in our external environment.

The Plan clearly sets out the Council's Purpose, Vision, Values and Priorities:

Purpose: *To help Neath Port Talbot residents live good lives*

Our Vision:

- All children get the best start in life
- All communities are thriving and sustainable
- Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations
- Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs

Values:

- Connected – what matters to you matters to us
- Caring – we care about you, your life and the future of our county borough
- Collaborative – we work with our citizens and our partners because together we can achieve more
- Confident – we are optimistic and confident about the future



The plan summarises the context in which it has been developed and sets out the council's strategic change programme for the next five years which has four well-being objectives:

- » All children get the best start in life.
- » All communities are thriving and sustainable.
- » Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations.
- » Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs.

In addition the Plan includes an Enabling Programme – a programme of organisational development to develop the capacity and capability of the Council over a 3-5 year period to deliver the significant organisational change that is needed to deliver the well-being objectives, cultural changes and associated programmes of work.

A key component of effective corporate planning is performance management.

The council understands the need to and how to review the performance of services. In terms of the need the council recognises the importance of having a fit for purpose Corporate Performance Management Framework (CPMF) in place that sets a clear direction for the council that links/joins up all council business from employee level up to council level and where everybody is clear how they contribute to achieving the Council's vision, values and priorities.

It is imperative that our planning (including financial and workforce planning), performance and risk processes are robust and interwoven into our decision making at every level of the organisation.

It is important that we have mechanisms in place to manage and monitor performance and everyone in the council has a role to play in performance management and everyone understands their responsibilities regarding performance management.

Summary of High Level Assessment

Corporate Planning '*The Role of the Council*' continued...

These processes will enable the council to achieve its vision and values and deliver the council's well-being objectives so that we can improve outcomes for our residents and businesses, whilst achieving value for money and contributing to the national 7 well-being goals.

During the development of the council's revised Corporate Plan and planning for recovery, it was evident the council's current performance management framework was no longer fit for purpose. It was recognised work was needed around strengthening the council's performance management arrangements and work is currently underway (2022/2023) to develop a revised Corporate Performance Management Framework which will demonstrate the above mechanisms are in place.

In terms of how to review the performance of services, the council recognised in 2021/2022 the need to further develop this process and during 2021/2022 preparatory work was undertaken to develop a Service Recovery Plan (SRP) template for all services to complete as part of the council's approach to recovery. The SRP is designed to tell a story of where the service is now, how do you know and what you have to do to improve and change to get to where you want to be.

Although there is still some work to be done to ensure consistency across the council, there was general agreement in the workshops, that with ongoing refinement, the Corporate Plan and supporting SRP processes were fit for purpose and defined as part of "the golden thread".

It was also acknowledged there is more work needed across service areas to take into consideration how residents' access and utilise services and to gauge satisfaction levels which will be addressed via revised guidance to be issued for the development of SRP's for 2023/2024

To date a range of engagement methods have taken place including the introduction of the Let's Talk campaign, the Community in Practice (Involvement & Engagement) and the council's Citizens Panel.

These engagement methods have been extremely productive and along with a revised Engagement Strategy (both internal and external) will enable the Council to involve residents/service users and staff in the shaping and development of future service delivery.

Conclusion of Self-Assessment: the council is mature in corporate planning

Summary of High Level Assessment

Workforce Planning '*Getting the best from the workforce*'

The council believes people make the difference. The council's Workforce Plan 2018-2022 sets out the following purpose and vision:

PURPOSE:

To ensure the Council has the right number of people with the right skills and attitudes in place at the right time to deliver its services and functions.

WORKFORCE VISION:

It is important that we are able to map out our priority workforce measures needed to shape the future workforce and ensure it has the capacity and capability to deliver our Corporate Plan. We can then deliver what matters to our communities and customers and fulfil our well-being objectives and the Workforce Management Improvement Priority.

The plan also sets out the following vision specifically in relation to the council's workforce:

People – we believe people make the difference. We will ensure our people are well led, supported, trusted and recognised for the contribution they make.

People will be treated fairly and with respect and also encouraged to bring forward ideas about how we can improve what we do. We will develop a workforce which is representative of its communities and people will have equal opportunity to progress in our organisation. We will develop a culture where people are accountable for and recognised for what they do and how they do it.

The Workforce Plan 2018 – 2022 sets out alignment to the well-being objectives of the council, financial planning, asset management planning and governance arrangements, as well as the corporate change programme. This Plan sets out five key workforce themes and the appended delivery plan sets out the intended actions, outcomes, and measures under each of the themes. Throughout 2021 / 2022 preparatory work took place to develop the draft Strategic Workforce Plan: The Future of Work Strategy for the period 2022 – 2027, aligning to the Corporate Plan and the Strategic Change Programme for the same period.

At a corporate level, the Workforce Plan for 2018 – 2022, and the draft Strategic Workforce Plan: The Future of Work Strategy 2022 – 2027 aim to ensure the right resources, skills and capabilities are in place to deliver the priorities of the council in the short, medium and long term.

At operational service level, the Succession Planning Toolkit was developed to assist managers to prepare a service level Succession Plan in order to identify and develop the potential future leaders and individuals required to fill other business-critical positions within the council to ensure we continue to provide high quality services to our citizens. The toolkit was launched in late 2019.

During 2021/2022, Audit Wales undertook a review of workforce planning arrangements across the Council. The review found that pre-Covid, the council had made significant progress with workforce planning and developed clear processes and tools and was aware that it needs to do more to embed it consistently through all levels and all services.

The review identified a number of strengths:



Summary of High Level Assessment continued...

Workforce Planning 'Getting the best from the workforce'

During Covid, Audit Wales found the council's reactive workforce planning during the pandemic worked well, with strong focuses on maintaining essential services and ensuring employee wellbeing. The pandemic has highlighted to the council the value of people and the value in planning how those people work. Planning is more than important than ever with the council facing recruitment and retention challenges alongside the need for new skills and ways of working.

The council has strategic and operational tools in place to create effective workforce plans. The council has the opportunity to build on the current momentum where people have recognised the need for effective future planning. The council should clarify its own vision for workforce planning after considering a number of key themes that have arisen during our fieldwork.

Strengths identified included:

- ➔ Early establishment of workforce groups
- ➔ Surveyed employees for redeployment
- ➔ Recruited and trained for new teams
- ➔ Working together across boundaries, focus on the tasks and the residents, not the budget
- ➔ Clear proof that remote working is effective
- ➔ HR processes returned quickly
- ➔ Now looking at the 'new normal'
- ➔ Focus on employee wellbeing

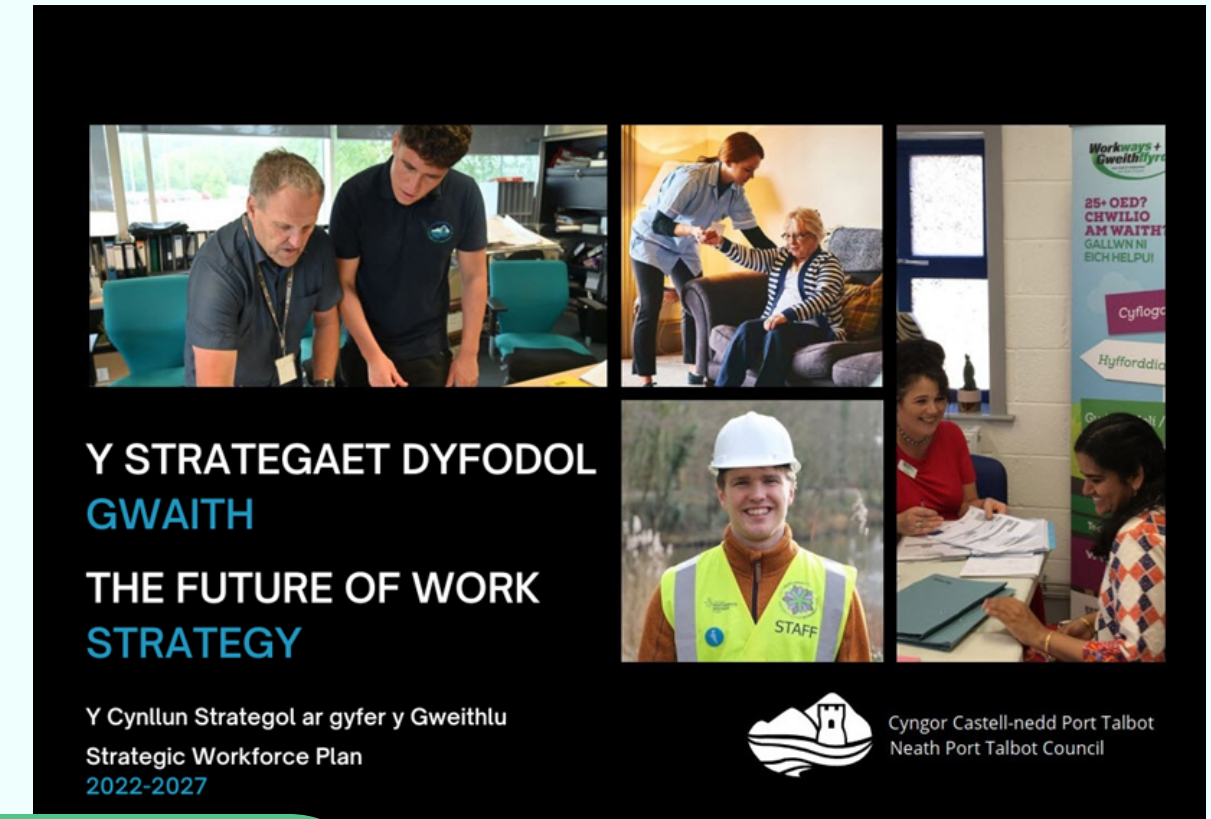
The Audit Wales review identified a number of areas for improvement including recommendations for workforce priorities for consideration the next planned iteration of the workforce plan.

As a result of Audit Wales work and review of the **Workforce Plan 2018 – 2022** a number of actions have already been initiated as part of the council's Strategic Change Programme (Corporate Plan 2022/2027) including the establishment of a Future of Work Team and Recruitment Taskforce – additional resources to supplement the People & Organisational Development service to ensure deliverability of this ambitious programme and drive the council's recruitment strategy.

During the self-assessment, there was a general positivity from Senior Management and Accountable Managers regarding Workforce Planning across the council.

In particular the work around the development of the Strategic Workforce Plan: The Future of Work Strategy 2022 – 2027, recruitment and succession planning undertaken during 2021/2022.

Feedback from all workshops confirmed communication and engagement of staff was key in the development of the Strategic Workforce Plan. Comments from the Accountable Managers workshop included the feeling that senior management were supportive, solution focussed, open to discussions and ideas and willing to take informed risks. However, comments were made on the need to put more emphasis on long-term planning.



Conclusion of Self-Assessment: the council is mature in workforce planning and moving towards leading.



Summary of High Level Assessment

Leadership & Management

Leadership and Management

Leadership and management across the council has strengthened significantly over recent years and was further highlighted when we were plummeted into a global pandemic. Like all other authorities across the UK the demand for support and services was incredible, with staff mobilising with immediate effect to provide residents, businesses and voluntary organisations with assistance in a variety of ways.

Further assessments, and audits, undertaken during 2021/2022 demonstrated the impact of strong leadership across Neath Port Talbot Council. In the main this is reflected via reports published by Council regulators (Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn). One such report [1] rated the governance and leadership of the council's Youth Offending team as 'outstanding'. Similarly, the following extract has been taken from the Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements report [2] where the leadership and management of this work was reviewed staff confirmed 'There was strong leadership from the local authority officers who strategically and operationally actively promoted an effective safeguarding culture across all school's'.

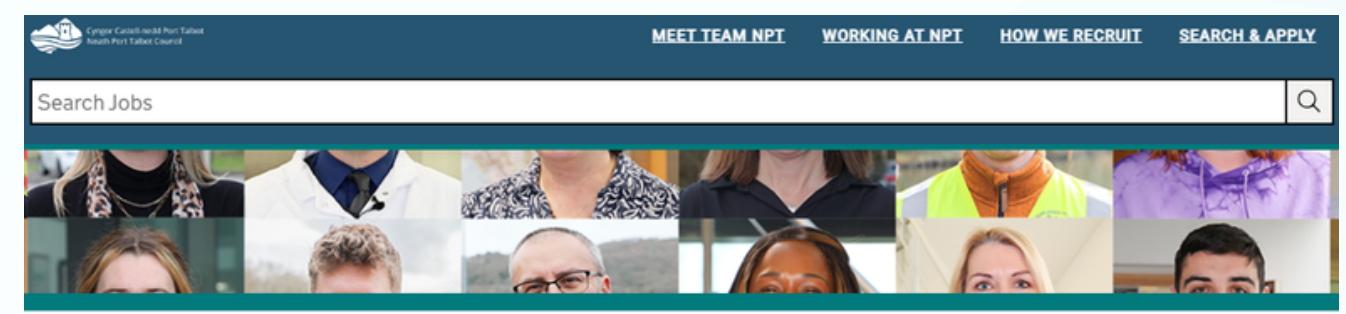
In addition to the above, a workshop was held by Audit Wales in February 2022 noting their Assurance and Risk Assessment [3] detailing emerging risks and next steps. Listed as one of the assurances for the year was that Audit Wales deemed that the council has 'Strong strategic leadership and a new corporate directors group providing clear direction to services and staff'.

Developing our Leaders

Whilst there are strong, forward thinking, strategic leaders providing clear direction to staff and services, we are developing processes, procedures and frameworks to underpin "leadership and management" in terms of training, development and strengthening resilience.

The council, as at 2021/2022, did not have a leadership development plan or strategy in place. Whilst there are strong, forward thinking, strategic leaders providing clear direction to staff and services[1], there are developing frameworks underpinning "leadership and management" in terms of training, development and strengthening resilience. During the austerity decade the leadership development budget was deleted, along with the post-holder employed to deliver leadership development activity.

In January 2022, the council confirmed its commitment to the development of its workforce by approving the creation of a significant Organisational Development reserve budget to create and support the development of the whole workforce. This includes leadership and management development to provide a sense of vision, purpose and inspiration to employees and build organisational confidence, lead to innovation and improve outcomes for the people who live and work in Neath Port Talbot.



Meet Team NPT With us, you can

Each person in Team NPT makes their own unique and valuable contribution to our work. Find out more from them about what's it's like to work together to help our residents live fulfilled lives in a place we're all proud of.



[1] Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation – An inspection of youth offending services in Neath Port Talbot, May 2022

[2] Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA): Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Wales National Probation Service, South Wales Police - June 2021

[3] Audit Wales - Assurance and Risk Assessment Workshop, February 2022



Summary of High Level Assessment

Leadership & management continued...

Whilst implementing the council's Strategic Workforce Plan - The Future of Work Strategy (2022 – 2027) the following action has been made a priority "The development of well-resourced corporate programmes proving comprehensive development at every level of leadership will help ensure that the leaders of today and tomorrow are capable, confident, competent and compassionate".

In addition, leadership and management effectiveness going forward will be evidenced through the annual appraisal cycle.

This cycle will act as the council's internal 'climate check' this is in development and will be highlighted through the Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 setting out the council's vision, values and priorities and in relation to leadership.

A comprehensive programme of in-house training and development activity is being planned by the Learning, Training & Development Team.

In March 2022, the Chief Executive initiated a review of the council's organisational design focusing on the senior management leadership level, aiming to "increase capacity at head of service level and also to provide an opportunity to make portfolios more coherent".

Creating Team NPT will enable us to learn from one another, build organisational confidence, lead to innovation and improve outcomes for the people who live and work in Neath Port Talbot.

During the self-assessment, there was significant agreement that more learning together across the council leadership team would be helpful, aligning senior staff to a level of leadership which would drive continuous improvement. This ranged across induction, understanding the current position and performance of the council and knowing what each other does to encourage innovation across directorates.

Accountable Managers felt it was imperative that clear and consistent careers development paths and opportunities to progress were available and the expectations on leaders, strategic leads was clearly and a full definition of competencies articulated.

**Y STRATEGAET DYFODOL
GWAITH**

**THE FUTURE OF WORK
STRATEGY**

Y Cynllun Strategol ar gyfer y Gweithlu
Strategic Workforce Plan
2022-2027

Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Conclusion of Self-Assessment: the council is mature, and has plans in place to move to leading.

Summary of High Level Assessment

Procurement - '*Procurement & commissioning*'

Procurement is defined as the process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. This is the central theme of our procurement work.

Procurement rules and policies are going to be subject to significant change in forthcoming years, to not only meet legislative changes, but also to ensure the council achieves its priorities. This includes the development of a new procurement strategy.

The council is committed to ensuring it achieves value for money from its third party procurement expenditure – circa, £205,000,000 per annum. Third-party spend is increasing, as is the reliance on procured goods and services, with local government remaining a significant commissioner and purchaser at both a place and aggregate level across all key spend categories.

Increased volume and complexity of demand and market pressures on services, particularly social care, has created further challenges. Increased costs due to high inflation, exponentially higher energy costs, the climate change emergency, disruptions in the supply chains and suppliers unable to meet contractual requirements, and the war in Ukraine are all material to the way in which the council must approach procurement.

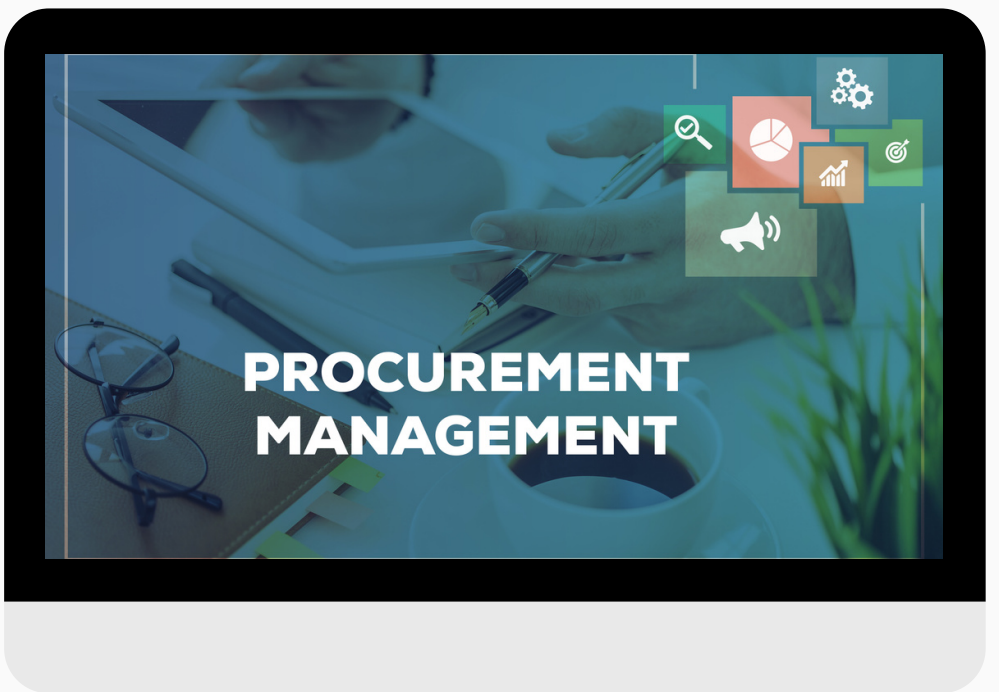
The council has clear policies in place to increase value through the procurement process via its contract procedure rules and various policies and protocols. As part of its tender strategy work, it considers ways to meet continuous improvement in its procured services.

Training packages for officers in respect of procurement processes are being developed to ensure training is embedded in service delivery. In addition, toolkits are being developed to address this and ensures the provision of accurate data as we undertake strategic work programmes.

Arrangements are in place to address supplier performance and contract and relationship management is recognised by the council as being essential to overall performance.

Well defined systems are in place to target both financial loss and fraud with a proactive approach to issues, such as irregular transaction, duplicate payments and fake creditors and invoices throughout the supply chain. Potential collusion and market distortion is actively investigated. Contract conditions ensure maximum legal protection to the council.

The council is exploring the best approach to Member engagement in procurement and commercial matters to ensure the views of residents and elected representatives filters through to procurement processes.



Summary of High Level Assessment

Procurement - '*Procurement & commissioning*' continued...

During the self-assessment, it was acknowledged the council has clear policies in place to increase value through the procurement process via its contract procedure rules and various policies and protocols.

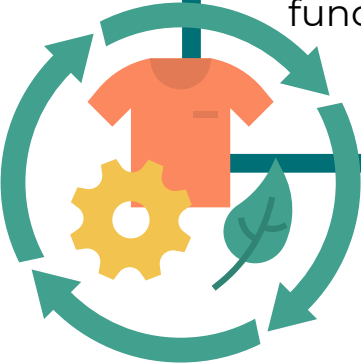
Whilst the amount of work placed upon procurement and the ability to get decisions approved was held in high regard it was highlighted there are areas to improve on to ensure more cross functional working. Those using the service were positive about the work of the legal team but would like to be able to speed up the process if resources allowed.

Senior Managers acknowledged they are engaged in procurement and commercial issues routinely taking advice at key decision points and officers are engaging in procurement processes at an early stage. Commissioning officers have detailed expertise and understanding of their expenditure and supplier base and are able to use this knowledge to commission services which are required by the council. Work however is in isolation from commercial and procurement advisers in some areas but there is an acknowledgement that a cross-council approach to design and implementation is needed to improve procurement functions.

Systems are in place to allow data and intelligence to be collected on costs incurred but limited access to tangible data to allow access to identify themes and areas of expenditure. Toolkits are being developed to address this and ensures the provision of accurate data as we undertake strategic work programmes.

It was acknowledged that focus is still on compliance and standard cost/quality ratios but innovation is also a consideration. Arrangements are in place to address supplier performance and it is essential that both contract and relationship management is monitored and expenditure is challenged where required. Training packages for officers in respect of procurement processes are being developed to ensure training is embedded in service delivery.

It was acknowledged, there are areas which need to be improved on to get to a position where we are a leading operation but from a compliance and an operational perspective, and procurement functions meet the needs of the council and service delivery. More work needs to be focussed on community impact (consideration and understanding of the cost of living to vulnerable groups and long term service needs which will continue throughout 2022/2023 onwards).



Conclusion of Self-Assessment: the council is mature with its strengths being in process, legislative compliance and achieving good results for the council.



Summary of High Level Assessment

Risk Management - 'Effective risk management'

The council's Risk Management Policy was developed in 2015 and describes a structured and focussed approach to managing risks and exploiting opportunities at a corporate level. The policy applies to all of the activities of the council and builds on existing good operational risk management practices within the council and complements the other systems of governance, which form the council's internal systems of control.

It is acknowledged that during 2021/2022 the focus of risk management was extensively around the council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic ensuring the council was able to respond to the pandemic in a structured and measured way.

This meant there was a lessening of focus on the approach (framework) set out in the above policy, in particular the recording and reporting of both operational and strategic risks at an officer level and the oversight of those risks by members.

However, the council recognises risk management is the process followed to control the level of risk in decision making, functions and service activities which could impact on the achievement of the council's vision, purpose and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027.

It is also recognised that an effective system of corporate governance leads to good management, good performance good stewardship of public funds, good public engagement and ultimately is essential for the council to demonstrate that it is acting in the best interests of the community it serves.

Although recovery remains a focus for the council, there are a number of new number challenges facing the council (e.g. financial (budget),

economically (cost of living crisis / energy)) and it is essential the council has a robust risk management policy in place to deliver the following benefits in such a chaotic and turbulent environment the council now finds itself in:

- » Protection of reputation and assets and demonstrates openness and accountability (good governance and internal control)
- » Provides early warning on key / emerging matters to enable transparent, timely decision making and intervention at appropriate levels leading to greater financial and budget controls
- » Supports the achievement of the council's vision, purpose and priorities
- » Contributes to building a risk savvy workforce and environment that allows for innovation and a responsible approach to risk taking

During 2022/2023, work has been initiated to revise the 2015 Policy. The revised Policy will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the management of risk in order to:

- » Support the delivery of the council's vision, purpose and priorities;
- » Ensure statutory obligations are met;
- » Safeguard all stakeholders to whom the council has a duty of care;
- » Protect physical and information assets and identify and manage potential liabilities;
- » Ensure effective stewardship of public funds, efficient deployment and use of resources and securing value for money for the public purse;
- » Learn from previous threats, opportunities, successes and failures;
- » Preserve promote and protect the reputation of the council; and
- » Build a workforce where innovation and a responsible approach to risk taking is part of its culture.



Conclusion of Self-Assessment: the council is mature and has plans in place to move to leading.

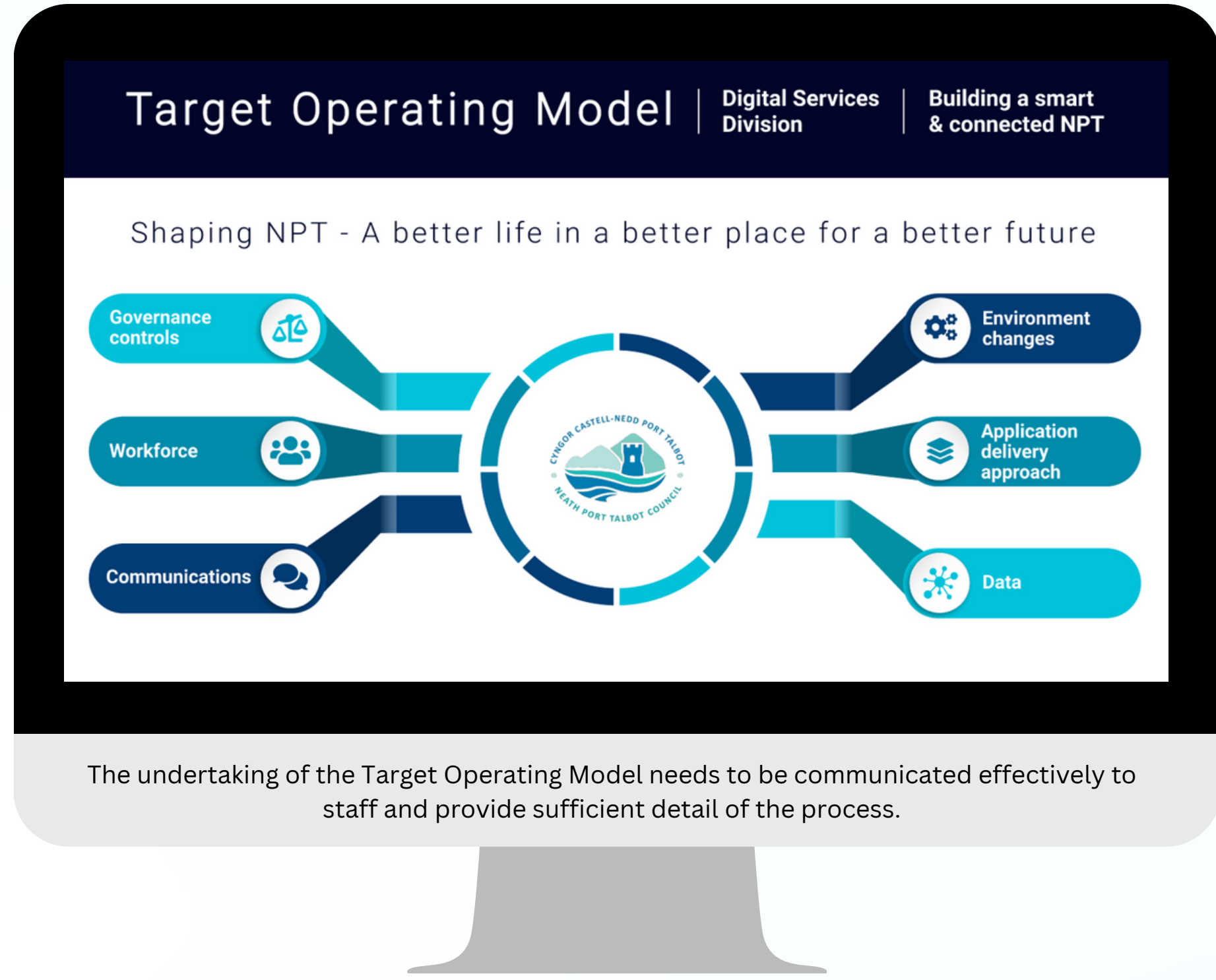
Summary of High Level Assessment

Data, Digital & Technology



During the self-assessment, there was significant praise for the IT and Digital team who are seen as:

helpful and valued and now a team that acts with the confidence of a valued part of the council



The recent independent baseline for digital services has identified a number of specific areas for improvement including Digital Infrastructure; Application delivery; Data; Cyber Security; Digital Capability and Capacity; and the wider workforce skillset.

The Digital Services team continues to deliver extensive reactive support across the council's service areas and in recent years, the loss of key staff with a lack of succession planning has created further pressures, along with an increased backlog in service maintenance and development that is urgently required.

During the self-assessment, the newly formed Data team was acknowledged as a step in this direction. The new team will support the whole council in better using the extensive data sets available to inform service design and delivery. Areas such as Management Information, developing a Data & Business Intelligence Strategy, standardising data architecture, and using data analytics to support service delivery are all in scope.

There is a need for the Data Team to have an understanding of service and community needs and as result support the council to ensure data silos do not exist across the council. It is clear that aligned data collection is limited. There is ad-hoc reporting / manual exports from applications and data is not currently linked to form a single holistic view across customer journey. There is a large amount of data duplication / multiple copies being held by departments across the council. GDPR restrictions needs to be reviewed to ensure data can be held collectively and be used for a multiple of purposes in the best interest for the service user/resident.

As a result of an independent review of digital operations an innovative new Target Operating Model (TOM) will transform how digital services operates across the council and will support the implementation of the Corporate Plan and transform the experience for all residents, businesses, staff and visitors.

Summary of High Level Assessment

Data, Digital & Technology continued...

The premise for the Corporate Plan 2022-2027, and embedded in the programme of organisational development which will develop the capacity and capability of the council over a 3-5 year period, is to become a Digital Enabler to take smart and connected steps to improve as a council and as a place.

There is a comprehensive understanding of the strategic opportunities around Digital, Data and Technology which will bring to improve service delivery and allow the council, and county borough as a whole, to become smart and connected.

In the main, teams are generally quick to respond to issues, but resources impact on timing and priorities shift.

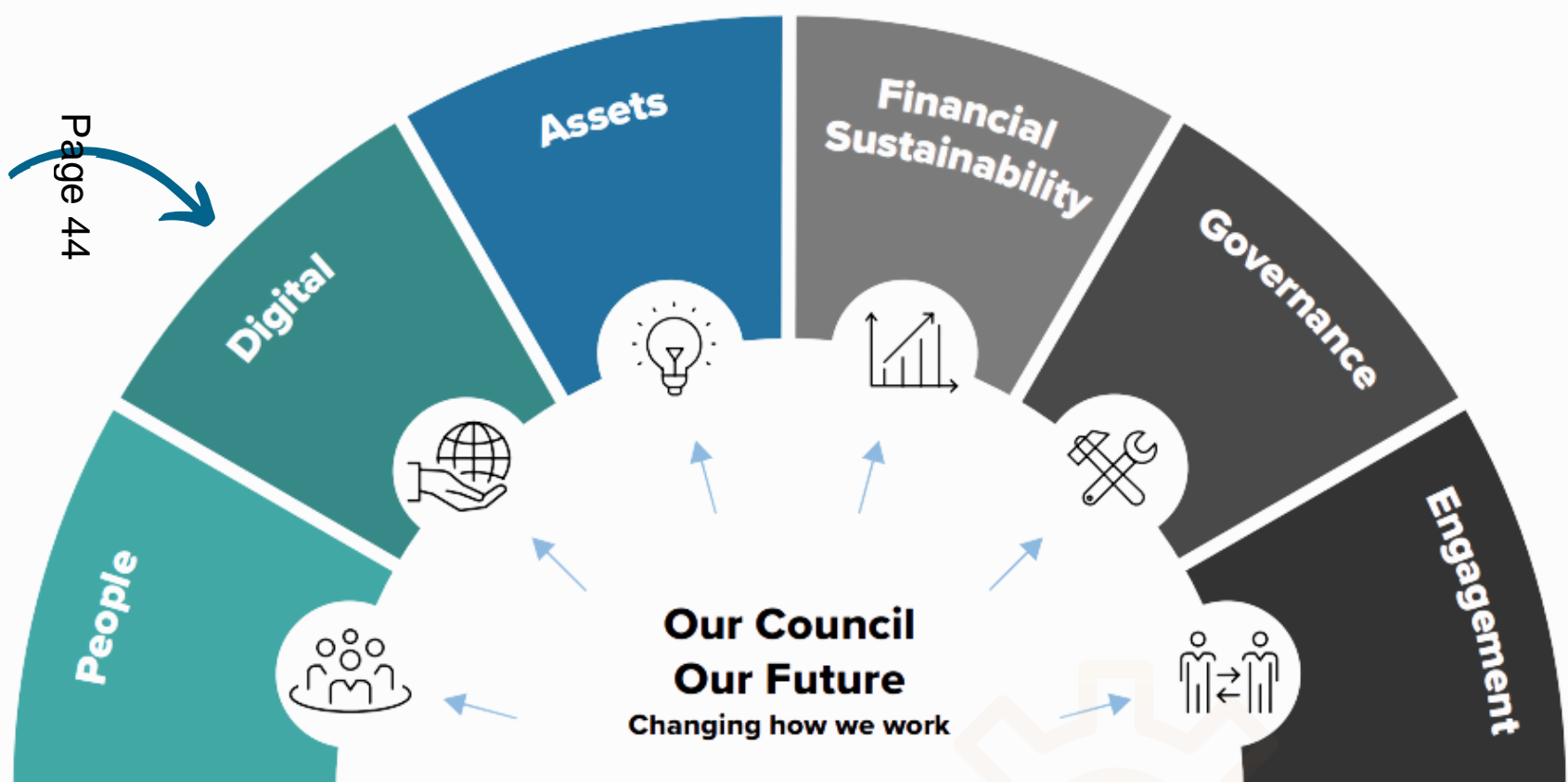
It is imperative that digital plans are designed and in place with clear governance and aligned to the strategic objectives of the Corporate Plan. It's not about more tech, more platforms, more solutions to problems we think exist, it's about real user centred design, placing our residents, businesses and visitors at the heart of service delivery.

There is a clear direction of travel at an executive level to progress this approach, which will require a whole council shift, it cannot be done in isolation by digital services and it will require strong leadership and a financial commitment across all Directorates. There has definitely been a marked shift in the support and willingness to develop 'digital solutions' for service areas, although further work needs to be undertaken to ensure there is a true undertaking of what service areas require.

There are a number of proven examples where the council have utilised Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to improve service and reduce cost in service areas including HR, Land Charges and Finance. We are actively planning engagement with wider service areas to explore additional opportunities.

This is where a holistic approach is required to tap into service knowledge and experience to develop fit for purpose systems.

Measurable, improved services and reduced unit costs, Where RPA has been implemented service improvements have been made and cost reduced (e.g. Environmental Information Requests 95% reduction and Faster Payments 91% reduction).



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Conclusion of Self-Assessment: The current position of the council's digital and technological assets is progressing from developing to mature.

Summary of High Level Assessment

Financial Planning *'Managing expenditure'*

The council understands the resources required to deliver effective and efficient services at cost centre/activity level. During 2021/2022 an exercise was undertaken to demonstrate the actual activity being delivered at service level. This exercise not only looked to quantify the physical inputs i.e. numbers of staff but also the outputs i.e. number of refuse collections etc.

The council is in a strong position in comparison to some other local authorities across Wales. To evidence this the council has started the process of developing a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), various models have been prepared which deal with different scenarios for a number of the key drivers of costs and income. When approved this plan will detail a number of strategic interventions to redesign the way in which some services are delivered.

At present these interventions are being translated into more detailed plans with specific objectives including accountability for delivering subject to appropriate check point and governance arrangements.

The council has an established process to monitor variations on a monthly basis through its budget monitoring process. These variations do not only focus on financial variances but seek to understand the activity which drives any variances.

The council's governance arrangements are such that Corporate Directors are responsible for delivering their services within an overall financial envelope referred to as their 'cash limit'.

Where possible Corporate Directors will take action to contain the causes of any variations, if not possible they will look to take action elsewhere to contain overall expenditure within the cash limit.

Moving forward and taking into account global financial pressures there is a balance required of delivering statutory

services, planning for the longer-term alongside being innovative and trying new things to make improvements. Finance officers and senior management have good understanding and a pragmatic approach to Directorate needs and are required to deliver a holistic approach to budget setting, recognising challenges.

These approaches will include increased use of automation and robotics and a number of service reviews in relation to accommodation and transport. The medium term financial plan will be essential in determining what and where improvements can be made, this will underpin all other choices. Individual service managers are aware of the demands within their own areas and work to ensure that the service meets the customers' needs in the most efficient way.

Historically it has proven to be exceptionally difficult to compare costs with other council's on a like for like basis. Differences in accounting arrangements has meant that previous exercises have ended up focussing on issues such as apportionment of overheads as opposed to any meaningful comparisons. Various benchmarking opportunities have come and gone over the years, primarily due to the aforementioned difficulties. It would be beneficial to find common ground to allow benchmarking to take place.



Conclusion of Self-Assessment: The general assessment, and in conjunction with Audit Wales recommendations, is that the position is moving from developing to mature.

Summary of High Level Assessment

Financial Planning 'Managing income'

It is accepted that as a council work in this area is significantly under developed and will need significant attention in the foreseeable future. The council currently has an income generation working group and a Commercial Coordinator, although work in this area took a back seat during the Covid pandemic due to the support needed within the Communications Team.

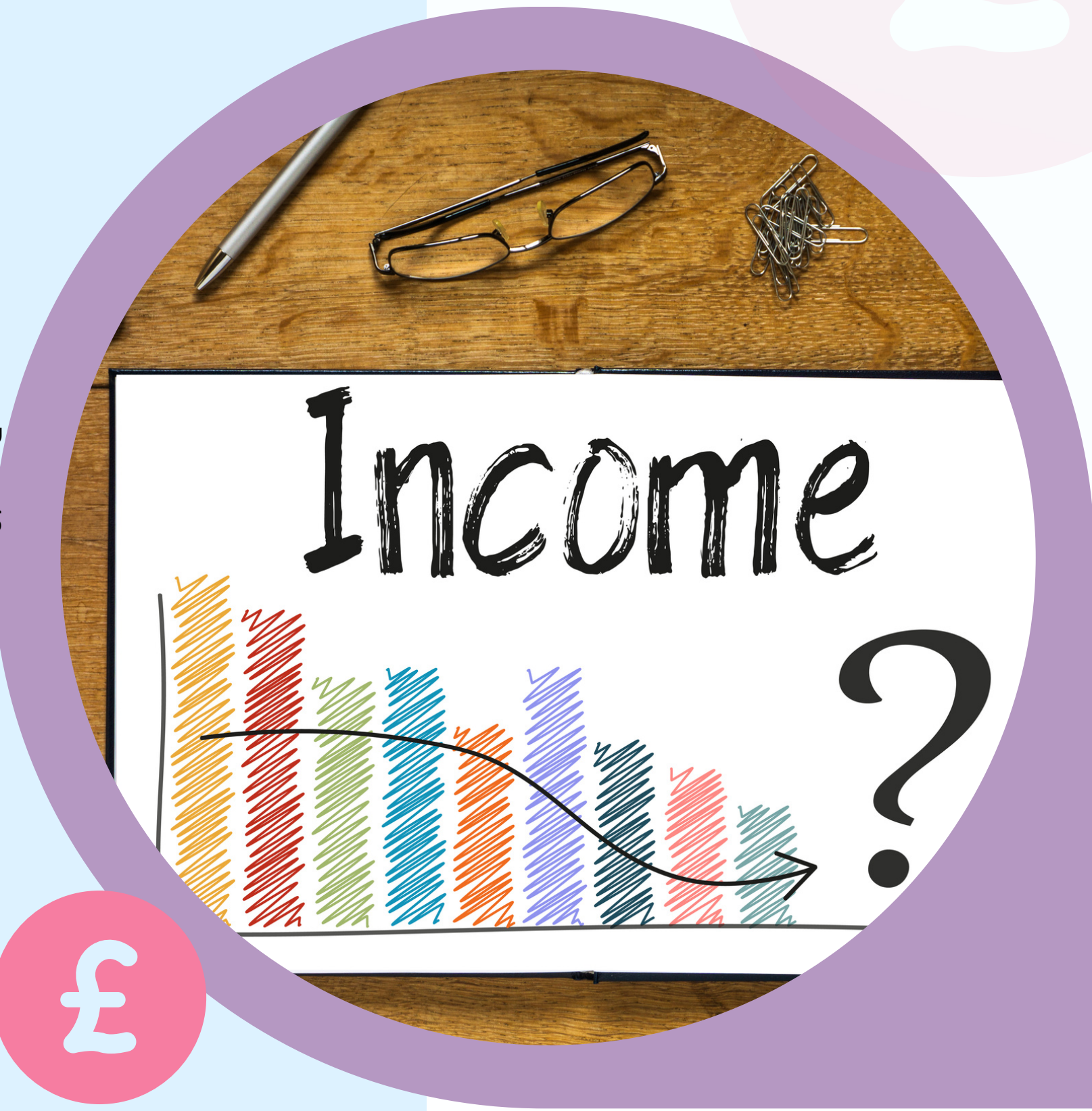
Initiatives to date have been of a small scale and as such have not required a great deal of risk management.

During the self-assessment, maximising income generation for the benefit of the council, residents, businesses and the environment was seen as an area that could yield results in the medium term, it was felt that this should be a specific role and not an add-on to a current role.

More emphasis will be focused on commercial strategy, prioritising services where there are established market opportunities.

Investment in capacity to maximise external grant income is key. In addition, there is a need to consider whether fees and charges are proportionate to the cost of services and regulatory activity. This work will be linked to the strategic outcomes the council wishes to achieve.

Conclusion of Self-Assessment: The general assessment is developing but with plans in place to move to mature.



Conclusion

To complete the self-assessment, the council has worked across seven core activity areas to assess whether it is exercising its functions effectively and using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively.

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Based on the high level assessments the overall rating as a Council stands at Mature with actions in place to move to Leading.

Whilst overall, the council is exercising its functions and using its resources maturely the self-assessment has provided assurance the opportunities for improvement identified during 2021/2022 were and remain the right things to be focussing on during 2022/2023 and onwards across the 7 core activities.

CORE ACTIVITY	DEVELOPING	MATURE	LEADING
Corporate Planning (Role of the Council)		● >>>	
Workforce Planning (Getting the best from the workforce)		● >>>	
Leadership (Leadership & Management)		● >>>	
Procurement (Procurement & Commissioning)		● >>>	
Risk Management (Effective Risk Management)		● >>>	
Data, Digital & Technology	● >>>		
Financial Planning - Managing Expenditure / Income	● >>>		

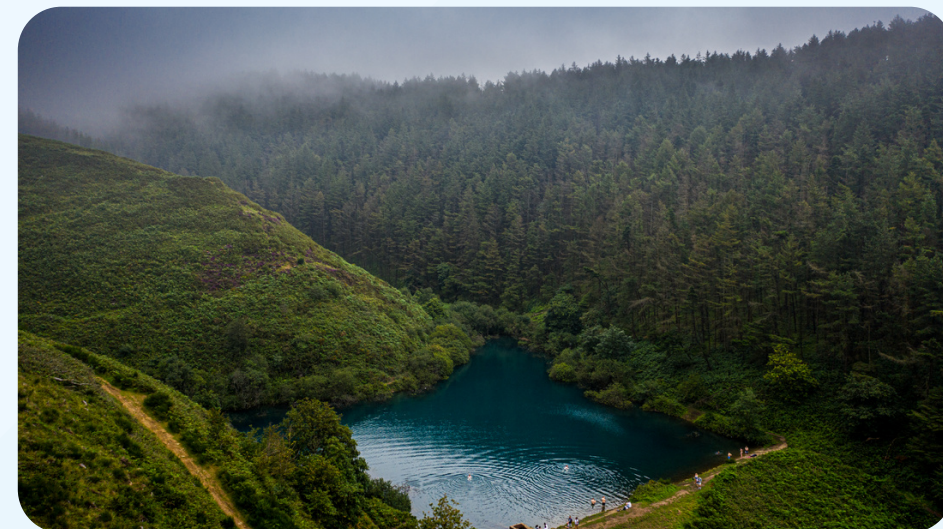
Conclusion continued...

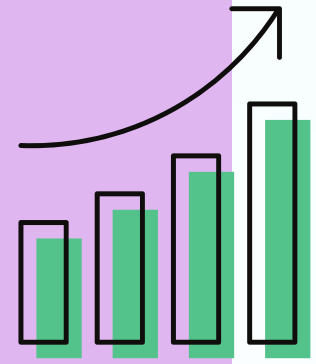
With regard to assessing if the council has effective governance in place for securing functions and resources - a number of improvements were identified following the self-assessment on the effectiveness of the council's system of internal control in place for the year ending 31st March 2022 (as part of the development of the council's AGS for 2021/2022).

The self-assessment has not identified any additional areas for improvement. The action plan contained on pages 29-35 contains actions to address the improvement areas referred to above. The action plan will be monitored by the council's Corporate Governance Group (a group of Senior Officers from across the council who have governance related responsibilities).

It is imperative the council's approach to future self-assessments continues to evolve by taking into consideration on-going learning and best practice from other local authorities across Wales. For example, the council is mindful of the assessment of assets for this self-assessment focused primarily on digital and technology. The 2022/23 self-assessment of assets will be broadened to include physical assets and facilities.

With regard to leadership this self-assessment focused on leadership from an officer perspective but this will be expanded to consider the effectiveness of the relationship between the political leadership and senior officers in the council. This will ensure the ongoing development of a culture in which the council can continuously challenge current ways of working and to challenge how the council is operating to secure improvement for the future.





ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT

Q1 & Q2 - EXERCISING FUNCTIONS EFFECTIVELY AND USING RESOURCES ECONOMICALLY, EFFICIENTLY & EFFECTIVELY *(How well are we doing and how do we know?)*

No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
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Workforce Planning & Leadership and Management

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SA1	Establish a Future of Work Team	August 2022	Completed - Advertised and recruited additional resources to supplement the People and Organisational Development service to ensure deliverability of the ambitious programme of work.
SA2	Develop and implement the council's Strategic Workforce Plan for the 2022-2027: The Future of Work Strategy	October 2022	Completed - The Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2027: The Future of Work Strategy was approved and published in November 2022.
SA3	Establish a Recruitment Taskforce to drive the council's recruitment strategy	Sept 2023	A taskforce bringing together key internal stakeholder and partner agencies was established in November 2021, and meets, with external partners, on a quarterly basis. A number of actions are underway which aim to fill vacant posts across the council with suitably qualified and experienced people and to do so at pace; and to develop longer term actions to support succession planning activity across the council. Additional resources have been provided to the HR team to support this activity for a period of 18 months.
SA4	Review of the council's organisational design to enable the council to do the work necessary to effectively and efficiently achieve the council's priorities whilst delivering a high-quality customer and employee experience.	March 2023	A phase one approach was developed and implemented in September 2022, reviewing activities across the senior team to improve synergy between services and 'right-size' senior management capacity .A Strategic Manager pay grade proposal was approved in October 2022 to address further capacity issues, as well as succession planning and retention at this level. A framework to implement this is being developed and will be available in January 2023, as part of Phase 2 of the organisational review.

No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
Workforce Planning & Leadership and Management / continued....			
SA5	Development of a strategic approach to how we develop Chief Officers and senior leaders that enables them to demonstrate the key competencies required of them in their role.	March 2024	Work to be clear on what we expect from our leaders and managers in Neath Port Talbot is underway – developing a Job Description template and competencies for Head of Service/ Strategic Manager / Accountable Manager. A facilitated discussion with the senior team is planned for March 2023: 'What does leadership mean in NPT?'. A climate check of 'leadership' in NPT will be undertaken in 2023, to provide a baseline assessment of the impact of leadership. A Leadership and Management Development programme is being scoped for delivery to a first cohort by March 2024. Coaching and Mentoring qualification being made available to managers to establish a Coaching Network across the council.
SA6	Development of an Organisational Development and Training and Development Strategy that supports the delivery of the corporate plan	Ongoing	Development of this strategy will flow from the discussions outlined above.
Procurement			
SA7	Restructure Procurement Team	Dec 2022	Recruitment has been ongoing to address demands. Appointments have been made and the process of backfilling vacant posts continues which will allow redistribution of work.
SA8	Develop NPT Procurement Strategy	Ongoing	Steps are underway to develop a Neath Port Talbot Procurement Strategy which aims to set out how the council intends to carry out procurement in socially responsible way, and meet the objectives it has set. The purpose of this strategy will be to set out how we are changing procurement within the council, to enhance our contract management arrangements and set out the vision and strategic direction necessary to deliver better outcomes for our communities. The strategy will be developed with a full appreciation of the complex regulatory framework within which procurement operates. It will also recognise that it is an area with high risks – with potentially significant impacts on service delivery, financial management and legal compliance, as well as the overall reputation of the Council.

No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
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Procurement

SA9	Category spend review	Ongoing	<p>We need to be able to understand what we are spending our money on and where the opportunities may be to drive improvement. For example, there is need to deliver on net zero carbon targets and also remove the risk to the council's financial stability that is now being challenged by the hike in energy costs and wider inflation.</p> <p>A strategic analysis is being undertaken to challenge why we are spending this money in the first place as well as focusing on how we can drive better value for money and contribute to the delivery of our corporate plan.</p> <p>This work will continue in the coming months to move towards a more strategic approach to the council's procurement, underpinned by spend data analysis and policy. In the meantime some immediate consideration has been given to steps that could be taken to ensure appropriate decision making is being embedded throughout the Council now, with the aim of reducing expenditure and improving efficiencies in commissioning and procurement activities.</p>
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Data, Digital & Technology

SA10	<p>Digital Governance – Developing a robust framework for establishing clear accountability; roles; decision making; and risk and change management authority for all our digital decisions. We will ensure there is appropriate governance arrangements so that decisions are taken by the right people, at the right time, based on the best information available.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Activities in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new Digital Strategy for NPT, building on Smart & Connected • Scope and implement the Digital Transformation Board • Baselining and implementing a forward financial plan including 2023/24 • Actions within the Cyber Security Strategy - Security and compliance – Gap analysis with Audit Wales Learning from Cyber Attacks • Develop strategy for Risk and Information Governance Team, including the creation of a Risk and Governance board • Data classification and retention review • Review of Information Asset Owner / Information Asset Manager arrangements – linked to updating Information Asset Register • Reviewing strategic and service risks across Division • Asset management lifecycle process, plus sort backlog of legacy infrastructure <p>Activities complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and embedding the NPT Digital Service Standards and Technology Code of Practice across all teams • Develop a single prioritised pipeline of Data, Digital and Technology (DDaT) activities, with all teams now openly recording non-Business As Usual work on Microsoft Planner
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No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
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Data, Digital & Technology

SA11	<p>Digital Workforce – Developing and growing the digital skills both within Digital Services and across the wider council to deliver services that are citizen and business focused.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Activities in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment continues - 14 appointments made, 18 posts to fill • Undertaking a full skills gap analysis across all team members linked to work plan, identifying training needs as required, linked to staff appraisals • Accountable Managers reviewing succession planning arrangements following training – utilising the succession planning toolkit • Developing and implementing new Intelligent Client Function across directorates • Introducing new multi-disciplined teams with rotation across the business areas • Embedding standards based delivery including ITIL standards, progressing with industry leader to design processes • Adopting a design-led and agile approach <p>Activities complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full restructure of Digital Services aligned to DDaT Framework - assimilate all existing staff into new structure <p>Also link into wider People and Organisational Development workstream:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a cultural shift around 'digital transformation' with strong leadership across all management layers • Demonstrate the value of DDaT to service design – e.g. the benefits of User Centred Design, how data should inform service design principles • Ensure Senior Leaders understand what is required to support the digital agenda • Identify next steps to support service transformation – e.g. Social Care / Flare replacement programmes • Accept and embed the NPT Digital Service Standards and Technology Code of Practice
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SA12	<p>Data - Using and sharing data and evidence to provide the best possible services for citizens and businesses.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Activities in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to workforce - recruitment dependency • Identify, develop and implement data platforms that will enable transformative use of data including Machine Learning and AI, opening up deeper predictive analytics • Track key management information and data-driven Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in accordance to business objectives and priorities • Develop a data working group to steer priorities across the council for data cleansing and ongoing data management and usage • Ensure that data is a core part of strategic decision making for new programmes of work • Ensure that complex data modelling (conceptual, logical, physical) is to a high standard and can be used to identify potential opportunities, enabling and facilitating decision making processes • Develop approaches to summarise and present highly complex data sets and conclusions in the most appropriate format for users
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No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
Data, Digital & Technology			
SA12 / cont	Data - Using and sharing data and evidence to provide the best possible services for citizens and businesses.	Ongoing	<p>Arrange training and input across teams to assist managers in analysing data within their own areas and use analytics to monitor report usage across the council</p> <p>Activities in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workstreams with Microsoft to explore developing a 'dataverse' with condensed CRM application stack to improve join up and user experience • Business Intelligence and Data Strategy • Data Architecture review • Approach to data analytics – building capacity across the organisation <p>Activities complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to workforce – Head of Data recruited and started
Communications / Consultation / Engagement			
SA13	Develop a Strategic Framework for Communications and Marketing. This framework will provide a revision of tone, channels and forms of communication to reinforce the council's vision, values and priorities. The framework will also include principles of good communications and marketing practice.	March 2023	A cross directorate working group is developing the Framework. To date progress includes the development of a set of Terms of Reference (including broad strategies to be delivered).
SA14	Develop a robust and effective Engagement Strategy (both internal and external)	March 2023	A review of the existing engagement strategy is currently underway ensuring that it reflects and compliments both the new Strategic Framework for Communications and Marketing and the Public Participation Strategy.

No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
Communications / Consultation / Engagement			
SA15	Develop a robust and effective Public Participation Strategy	Dec 2022	The draft Public Participation Strategy has been co-produced with the Council's Community of Practice (Involvement & Engagement) to determine priorities, aims and objectives, set protocols, identify resources and evaluation mechanisms. The draft is being consulted on for a period of 12 weeks (5th December 2022 – 26th February 2023) following which it will be presented to Cabinet and Council for adoption in early 2023.
SA16	Develop a new Internal/Employee Communications and Engagement Strategy	March 2023	The Internal/Employee Communications and Engagement Strategy is being developed in tandem with and in a way that reflects and compliments both the Strategic Framework for Communications and Marketing and the Public Participation Strategy.
Q3 - ENSURING GOVERNANCE IS EFFECTIVE FOR SECURING FUNCTIONS AND RESOURCES (what and how can we do better?)			
SA17	Complete the review of Accounting Instructions.	March 2023	The review has almost been completed. Thirteen sets of Accounting Instructions have been reviewed with the remaining three to be complete in the forthcoming months.
SA18	Develop and implement a revised Corporate Performance Management Framework that meets the new duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021	March 2023	Work is on-going to implement a revised Corporate Performance Management Framework. The Council's first Corporate Self-Assessment (as required under the Act) is currently being drafted and will be presented to Governance & Audit Committee on 15th February 2023. 100% (86 of 86) of Service Recovery Plans that were required to be completed by Accountable Managers for 2022/2023 have been completed and includes the requirement to undertake an ongoing self-assessment at the service level.

No.	ACTION DESCRIPTION	ACHIEVE BY	PROGRESS TO DATE
Q3 - ENSURING GOVERNANCE IS EFFECTIVE FOR SECURING FUNCTIONS AND RESOURCES (what and how can we do better?)			
SA19	Complete the review of the Council's Risk Management Policy and ensure the Council's Risk Register is updated regularly.	March 2023	Work is ongoing to re-draft the Council's Risk Management Policy and will be completed by end of March 2023. The council's schedule of strategic risks has revised and will be reported Cabinet early in the new year.
SA20	Develop a Medium Term Financial Strategy.	March 2023	Work is ongoing to develop a medium-term financial strategy. The technical work regarding identifying the funding gap over the period is almost complete. Work has also commenced on developing appropriate strategic interventions with the intention of closing the estimated funding gap.
SA21	Work to deliver governance awareness training across the Council is ongoing and will continue to ensure appropriate training takes place with Council officers.	March 2023	As part of the Member Induction sessions, following local elections in May 2022, officers have provided a series of training sessions for members on governance processes such as decision making, officer/member protocols and code of conduct. Similar training sessions have been provided to officers, for example a series of training on the importance of the member/officer protocol was provided to all Environment Accountable Managers in June 2022. Further training sessions and ad hoc advice notes to officers have continued throughout 2022/2023.
SA22	Refine the Council's approach to the annual self-assessment process	Sept 2023	This work will start early in the 2023 calendar year and will be based on a lessons learnt exercise and good practice identified across Wales.



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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

CABINET

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION AND HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

22nd February 2023

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Cymer and Glyncorrwg and Gwynfi and Croeserw

Establishment of a liaison forum in respect of Afan Valley Adventure Resort

Purpose of the Report:

To establish, at the request of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited, a liaison forum with representatives of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort, whilst ensuring the objective of the partners is the delivery of the resort, the main purpose of this forum is to ensure the maximisation of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort for the local communities, ensuring a strategic and balanced approach, whilst also driving opportunity in the wider region and Wales as a whole.

Executive Summary:

Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited have determined to engage with a number of organisations and associations in respect of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort and have proposed an Advisory Group with representatives of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited be established in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort. They have accordingly offered representatives of the Council the opportunity to sit on such an Advisory Group. Whilst ensuring the objective of the partners is the delivery of the resort, the main purpose of this forum is to ensure the maximisation of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort for the local communities, ensuring a strategic and

balanced approach, whilst also driving opportunity in the wider region and Wales as a whole.

Background:

In November 2022, members of Neath Port Talbot Council's Planning Committee, which had already granted the project outline planning permission, approved a reserved matters application from developers Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited.

This is a transformational project for the Afan Valley and this region as a whole as it will provide a large number of jobs in the construction phase and when it is finished local people will have many jobs available to them. It promises to make the Afan Valley the go-to place for adventure tourists and will also have a spa and wellness offering with many spin-off benefits for Neath Port Talbot

Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited have determined to engage with a number of organisations and associations in respect of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort and have proposed an Advisory Group with representatives of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited be established in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort. They have accordingly offered representatives of the Council the opportunity to sit on such an Advisory Group. Whilst ensuring the objective of the partners is the delivery of the resort, the main purpose of this forum is to ensure the maximisation of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort for the local communities, ensuring a strategic and balanced approach, whilst also driving opportunity in the wider region and Wales as a whole.

The predominant aims of the liaison forum will be to allow the Council and Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited to:

- (a) Work collaboratively to champion the vision of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort as a project in its own right but also as a catalyst to stimulate and leverage wider economic regeneration and distribution of opportunities and benefits to Neath Port Talbot and its public and private sector partners thus contributing to economic growth and prosperity within the region and in line with the Welsh Government Economic Contract;
- (b) Develop a shared understanding of programme, risk, challenges and opportunities, and working to achieve the Purpose;
- (c) Exploring avenues for the partners to facilitate outcomes aligned with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- (d) Champion the vision of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort as a project for Neath Port Talbot and Wales, working to achieve a new destination and

- adventure hub to provide a catalyst to simulate wider economic regeneration and distribution of opportunities and benefits to Neath Port Talbot and Welsh tourism partners and producers/suppliers aligned with Welsh Government policies;
- (e) Ensure that Partners work towards creating social value, inspiring young people and promoting new opportunities;
 - (f) Promote sustainability and net zero carbon initiatives including an energy strategy founded on the use of renewables;
 - (g) Manage and enhance bio diversity aligned with delivery;
 - (h) Enable partners to consider off-site regeneration opportunities to advance resort construction and delivery and maximise local benefits;
 - (i) Ensure the Partners support community cohesion and wellbeing, and are a considerate neighbour to adjacent and other nearby communities reducing anti-social behaviour during construction and operation;
 - (j) Oversee the Welsh Language Strategy for the resort;
 - (k) Oversee the local labour and recruitment strategy which will drive the creation of jobs in direct employment in tourism and promote indirect job creation in the Welsh supply chain, whilst promoting job opportunities to the local community during construction and operation. This will involve providing training and apprenticeship opportunities, building partnerships with local FE providers and other partners to maximise opportunities to communities.

It should be noted however that even though a liaison forum is proposed to be established, nothing in these terms of reference shall fetter or prejudice NPT's statutory rights, powers, directions and responsibilities under all statutes, bylaws, statutory instruments, orders and regulations in the exercise of their functions as a local authority. This will ensure that the Council retains its important role as a regulatory body in respect of the planning and environmental functions that it holds.

The proposed membership of the Liaison Forum shall be:

- (l) The Leader of the Council
- (m) The Deputy Leader of the Council
- (n) The Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
- (o) The elected member for Cymer and Glyncoed
- (p) The elected member for Gwynfi and Croeserw
- (q) The Chief Executive of the Council
- (r) The Council's Director of Environment and Regeneration
- (s) The Council's Tourism/ destination management officer

- (t) The Chief Executive of Wildfox
- (u) The Director of Group Strategy of Wildfox
- (v) The Director of Sustainability and Economic Development of Wildfox
- (w) The Director of Construction of Wildfox
- (x) The Wildfox Board Senior Advisor
- (y) Any other individuals at the invite of the Chair of the liaison forum

It is proposed that the liaison forum be chaired by the Leader of the Council and administration and organisation of the meetings shall be undertaken by the Council, who will arrange secretariat for the liaison forum.

Save for approving its terms of reference, this liaison forum has no decision making powers and any such decision making will be within the sole purview of the Council and Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited via their decision making processes.

A copy of the proposed terms of reference are included at Appendix 1

Financial Impacts:

No implications.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

An Integrated Impact Assessment is not requirement for this report.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce Impacts:

No implications

Legal Impacts:

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes a general power of competence which would allow the Council to establish a liaison forum.

It should be noted however that even though a liaison forum is proposed to be established, nothing in these terms of reference shall fetter or prejudice NPT's statutory rights, powers, directions and responsibilities under all statutes, bylaws,

statutory instruments, orders and regulations in the exercise of their functions as a local authority. This will ensure that the Council retains its important role as a regulatory body in respect of the planning and environmental functions that it holds.

Save for approving its terms of reference, this liaison forum has no decision making powers and any such decision making will be within the sole purview of the Council and Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited via their decision making processes.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

It is recommended that

- (a) Members approve the participation of the Council in a liaison forum for the Afan Valley Adventure Resort and note the terms of reference set out in Appendix 1 of this report; and
- (b) Members appoint the members and officers detailed in Appendix 1 of this report to the liaison forum for the Afan Valley Adventure Resort

Reason for Proposed Decision

To establish, at the request of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited, a liaison forum with representatives of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort.

Implementation of Decision

To be implemented following the end of the three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Mrs Nicola Pearce
Director of Environment and Regeneration

Mr Craig Griffiths
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Appendix 1

AFAN VALLEY ADVENTURE RESORT NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL AND WILDFOX RESORTS AFAN VALLEY LIMITED LIAISON FORUM

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (“NPT”) and Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited (“Wildfox”) (collectively referred to as “the Partners”) wish to form a liaison forum in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort, whilst ensuring the objective of the partners is the delivery of the resort, the main purpose of this forum is to ensure the maximisation of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort for the local communities, ensuring a strategic and balanced approach, whilst also driving opportunity in the wider region and Wales as a whole (“the Purpose”).

In order to achieve this, the Partners shall aim to:

- (a) Work collaboratively to champion the vision of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort as a project in its own right but also as a catalyst to stimulate and leverage wider economic regeneration and distribution of opportunities and benefits to Neath Port Talbot and its public and private sector partners thus contributing to economic growth and prosperity within the region and in line with the Welsh Government Economic Contract;
- (b) Develop a shared understanding of programme, risk, challenges and opportunities, and working to achieve the Purpose;
- (c) Exploring avenues for the partners to facilitate outcomes aligned with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- (d) Champion the vision of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort as a project for Neath Port Talbot and Wales, working to achieve a new destination and adventure hub to provide a catalyst to simulate wider economic regeneration and distribution of opportunities and benefits to Neath Port Talbot and Welsh tourism partners and producers/suppliers aligned with Welsh Government policies;
- (e) Ensure that Partners work towards creating social value, inspiring young people and promoting new opportunities;
- (f) Promote sustainability and net zero carbon initiatives including an energy strategy founded on the use of renewables;
- (g) Manage and enhance bio diversity aligned with delivery;
- (h) Enable partners to consider off-site regeneration opportunities to advance resort construction and delivery and maximise local benefits;

- (i) Ensure the Partners support community cohesion and wellbeing, and are a considerate neighbour to adjacent and other nearby communities reducing anti-social behaviour during construction and operation;
- (j) Oversee the Welsh Language Strategy for the resort;
- (k) Oversee the local labour and recruitment strategy which will drive the creation of jobs in direct employment in tourism and promote indirect job creation in the Welsh supply chain, whilst promoting job opportunities to the local community during construction and operation. This will involve providing training and apprenticeship opportunities, building partnerships with local FE providers and other partners to maximise opportunities to communities.

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in these terms of reference shall fetter or prejudice NPT's statutory rights, powers, directions and responsibilities under all statutes, bylaws, statutory instruments, orders and regulations in the exercise of their functions as a local authority.

Save for approving its terms of reference, this Liaison Forum has no decision making powers and any such decision making will be within the sole purview of the Partners via their decision making processes.

The membership of the Liaison Forum shall be:

- (a) The Leader of NPT
- (b) The Deputy Leader of NPT
- (c) The NPT Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
- (d) The local authority member for Cymer and Glyncorrwg
- (e) The local authority member for Gwynfi and Croeserw
- (f) The Chief Executive of NPT
- (g) The NPT Director of Environment and Regeneration
- (h) The NPT Tourism/ destination management officer
- (i) The Chief Executive of Wildfox
- (j) The Director of Group Strategy of Wildfox
- (k) The Director of Sustainability and Economic Development of Wildfox
- (l) The Director of Construction of Wildfox
- (m) The Wildfox Board Senior Advisor
- (n) Any other individuals at the invite of the Chair of the Liaison Forum

Partners may wish to bring support staff or specialists should specific matters arise.

The Chair of the Liaison Forum will be the Leader of NPT, or in their absence the Deputy Leader of NPT. In the event both are not in attendance, the remaining members shall elect one of their number to chair that meeting.

It is proposed that the Liaison Forum meet quarterly or as appropriate at an agreed location either in person or via teleconferencing facilities.

An urgent meeting may be requested and held virtually should it be required. A quorum for the Liaison Forum shall be at least two (2) representatives from each Partner.

Administration and organisation of the meetings shall be undertaken by NPT, who will arrange secretariat for the Liaison Forum. An agenda shall be circulated at least two (2) working days prior to the meeting and minutes will be prepared and forwarded to all parties following each Liaison Forum meeting.

These terms of reference will be agreed at the first meeting of the Liaison Forum and shall be subject to review with any changes being at the unanimous agreement of all parties.

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

CABINET

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION AND HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

22nd February 2023

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Onllwyn, Crynant and Seven Sisters

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

Purpose of the Report:

The purpose of this report is to note the terms of reference to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence Advisory Panel (“GCRE”) established by GCRE Ltd and to agree Council representatives to the various committees established by this Advisory Panel, following a request by GCRE Ltd.

Executive Summary:

GCRE Ltd have informed the Council that for GCRE to achieve its outcomes and give value to the rail and energy industry, private shareholders and the community it will be necessary to ensure formal, regular and informed dialogue takes place with industry/academia and the local community. They have established an Advisory Panel to enable this dialogue to take place and be a conduit for non-binding advice to be shared between GCRE and the local and industrial communities which it serves.

It is intended that the Advisory Panel will be informed by committees whose Chairs and Vice Chairs will form the membership of the Advisory panel. These committees will themselves be formed of individuals who represent interested parties and whose own expertise, knowledge or position will bring value to GCRE. It will be the committees where the core work of the Advisory Panel will be done. The Advisory Panel itself will be a mechanism for pulling together the

work of the committees and helping to translate their outputs to clear business objectives for GCRE.

GCRE Ltd have invited representatives from the Council to sit on committees being created by the Advisory Panel and it is accordingly proposed that elected members and officers be nominated as representatives to these committees.

The GCRE advisory structure and its constituent committees does not seek to impact or undermine any of the statutory, legal or planning processes of the local authority or any other public body.

Background:

In response to demand from the rail industry and with support from the Welsh and UK Governments, GCRE Ltd is developing an internationally recognised Rail Research, Test, Validation and Innovation Centre.

GCRE Ltd have informed the Council that for GCRE to achieve its outcomes and give value to the rail and energy industry, private shareholders and the community it will be necessary to ensure formal, regular and informed dialogue takes place with industry/academia and the local community. They have established an Advisory Panel to enable this dialogue to take place and be a conduit for non-binding advice to be shared between GCRE and the local and industrial communities which it serves.

It is intended that the Advisory Panel will be informed by committees whose Chairs and Vice Chairs will form the membership of the Advisory panel. These committees will themselves be formed of individuals who represent interested parties and whose own expertise, knowledge or position will bring value to GCRE. It will be the committees where the core work of the Advisory Panel will be done. The Advisory Panel itself will be a mechanism for pulling together the work of the committees and helping to translate their outputs to clear business objectives for GCRE.

GCRE Ltd have invited representatives from the Council to sit on committees being created by the Advisory Panel and it is accordingly proposed that elected members and officers be nominated as representatives to these committees.

The GCRE advisory structure and its constituent committees does not seek to impact or undermine any of the statutory, legal or planning processes of the local authority or any other public body.

The terms of reference of the Advisory Panel are included at Appendix 1 of this report.

Of particular relevance to the Council are the creation of the Community Committee and the Local Liaison Group. The details of which are set out in Appendix 1 but summarised below.

Community Committee

The Community Committee of the GCRE Advisory Panel will ensure GCRE engages with its stakeholders who represent the interests of the communities which will benefit from and are impacted by the GCRE. The Committee will receive a broad range of input which will influence and direct our work. The Community Committee is designed to add value to the local relationships that can help to make GCRE a success and does not seek to impact or undermine any of the statutory legal or planning processes of the local authority or any other public body.

The Community Committee will be the formal route for working with elected representatives from local authorities, and the Welsh and UK parliaments. It will allow the concerns and ambitions of the community to be shared with the GCRE company and to facilitate a two way flow of information to allow constructive dialogue to take place.

Attendees will include representatives of local communities and government. Guests representing varying subjects and themes will be invited from time to time.

The Community Committee will:

- receive updates from GCRE Ltd from public consultations and community engagement exercises which it will undertake from time to time, and from the work of the Local Liaison Group.
- provide a formal mechanism for elected representatives to raise concerns with GCRE, and to pursue their resolution
- provide input and support to GCRE Ltd as it prepares and submits bids for wider economic development via Growth Deal, Shared Prosperity Fund, Freeport and other opportunities (noting that there may be some conflicts of interest to be managed)
- provide a ready-made governance function to oversee implementation of any of the bids which may be successful.

- receive feedback from GCRE Ltd on progress against plans, and the development of future plans
- support (where conflicts can be managed) development plans and future planning applications to further develop the GCRE site in preparation for formal legal and planning processes
- ensure the views and needs of those with protected characteristics are heard, as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010.
- hold GCRE Ltd to account for delivering Social Value objectives (jobs, training and other measures).
- comment upon and input to the GCRE Communications Strategy
- in the short term support the development of the GCRE brand identity

It is proposed that membership of the Community Committee will comprise:

- Independent Chair
- Member of Welsh Parliament for Neath
- Member of UK Parliament for Neath
- Member of Welsh Parliament for Brecon & Radnorshire
- Member of UK Parliament for Brecon & Radnorshire
- Leader of Powys County Council or their nominated deputy
- Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council or their nominated deputy
- GCRE sponsoring official representing the Climate Change and Economy Ministers Welsh Government
- GCRE sponsoring official representing the Secretary of State for Wales
- Nominated lead official of Powys County Council
- Nominated lead official of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Representatives of the GCRE executive team as invited by the Chair and committee.

Accordingly, approval is sought for the Leader of Council to be nominated as the representative to the Community Committee and authority to be granted to the Leader to nominate a cabinet member to attend in his absence.

In addition, approval is sought for the Director of Environment and Regeneration to be nominated as lead official for the Council, again with the delegated authority for the Director of Environment and Regeneration to nominate a deputy to attend in her absence.

Local Liaison Group

It is proposed that the Local Liaison Group which will feed views from local residents into the Community Committee, will meet quarterly to be given updates on GCRE progress and plans for the following quarter, to address and resolve any complaints and to disburse any community levy required of GCRE. The group will comprise:

- Independent Chair
- Two elected members of Powys County Council representing adjacent wards.
- Two elected members of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council representing adjacent wards
- Community Councillors from each of the Powys County Council wards
- Community Councillors from each of the adjacent Neath Port Talbot wards
- Representative of commoners
- Plus representatives of the GCRE executive team as invited by the Chair.

The adjacent ward of GCRE is the ward of Onllwyn, Crynant and Seven Sisters, accordingly it is proposed that the two elected members of this ward be nominated to sit on the Local Liaison Group as the two elected members of the Council.

Financial Impacts:

No implications.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

An Integrated Impact Assessment is not requirement for this report.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce Impacts:

No implications

Legal Impacts:

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes a general power of competence which would allow the Council to be part of such advisory forums and committees

It should be noted however that even though involvement is proposed to each of these committees, nothing in these terms of reference shall fetter or prejudice NPT's statutory rights, powers, directions and responsibilities under all statutes, bylaws, statutory instruments, orders and regulations in the exercise of their functions as a local authority. This will ensure that the Council retains its important role as a regulatory body in respect of the planning and environmental functions that it holds.

The involvement in these committees does not commit the authority to any particular courses of action and members will have to act in accordance with the terms of reference of these groups, with future reports being brought to members if a determination is needed on any particular matter which sits outside of the terms of reference.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- Members note the terms of reference of the Advisory Panel for the Global Centre of Rail Excellence as established by GCRE Ltd and note the invite to the Council to participate in this work programme;

- Members nominate the Leader of Council to be the Council representative to the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence;
- Members authorise the Leader of Council to nominate an alternative Cabinet member to attend the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence in the event that the Leader is unable to attend;
- Members nominate the Director of Environment and Regeneration of the Council to be the Council Lead Official to the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence;
- Members authorise the Director of Environment and Regeneration of the Council to nominate an alternative office to attend the Community Committee of the Advisory Panel to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence in the event that the Chief Executive is unable to attend; and
- Members nominate the ward members for Onllwyn, Crynant and Seven Sisters to be the ward representatives to the Local Liaison Group

Reason for proposed decision

To note the terms of reference to the Global Centre of Rail Excellence Advisory Panel (“GCRE”) established by GCRE Ltd and to agree Council representatives to the various committees established by this Advisory Panel, following a request by GCRE Ltd.

Implementation of decision

To be implemented following the end of three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Global Centre of Rail Excellence – Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Mrs Nicola Pearce
Director of Environment and Regeneration

Mr Craig Griffiths
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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GCRE

Global Centre of Rail Excellence

Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

DRAFT FOR COMMENT

January 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In response to demand from the rail industry and with support from the Welsh and UK Governments GCRE Ltd is developing an internationally recognised Rail Research, Test, Validation and Innovation Centre. The core business being:

- **Infrastructure testing and accreditation,**
- **Rolling Stock testing and accreditation,**
- **Storage and Maintenance and**
- **Training and Education.**

Outside of the core activity, GCRE has identified a substantial list of opportunities which can be developed to augment the core offering. There is also an opportunity to commercially exploit and develop the renewable energy opportunities available at the site in line with GCRE's energy strategy.

GCRE will be the UK's first Net Zero railway. As such energy systems research and validation is an important complementary activity to the railway work that will be carried out at GCRE.

The aim is to build a centre that is innovative and sustainable not just in its operation but also its core design and construction. The centre will seek to incorporate genuine and challenging railway and energy innovation into its construction, in its civil engineering and track and power systems in partnership with supplier/innovator companies.

GCRE has been given a set of objectives to achieve in return for considerable public sector investment. These are set out in Appendix A.

Public funding will need to be joined by private investment to realise the ambition of the GCRE. A major public procurement to secure private investment and strategic investor(s) for the project was commenced in November 2022.

1.2. Purpose

For GCRE to achieve its outcomes and give value to the rail and energy industry, private shareholders and the community it will be necessary to ensure formal, regular and informed dialogue takes place with industry/academia and the local community.

An Advisory Panel will therefore be established to enable this dialogue to take place and be a conduit for non-binding advice to be shared between GCRE and the local and industrial communities which it serves. The GCRE advisory structure and its constituent committees does not seek to impact or undermine any of the statutory, legal or planning processes of the local authority or any other public body.

1.3. Approach

The Advisory Panel will be informed by committees whose Chairs and Vice Chairs will form the membership of the Advisory panel. These committees will themselves be formed of individuals who represent interested parties and whose own expertise, knowledge or position will bring value to GCRE. It will be the committees where the core work of the Advisory Panel will be done. The Advisory Panel itself will be a mechanism for pulling together the work of the committees and helping to translate their outputs to clear business objectives for GCRE.

The objectives of the panel and its committees are to:

- Provide non-binding advice to GCRE, via its executives and ultimately via the Advisory Panel Chair in their role as non-executive director of GCRE.
- Provide a route for GCRE to update and advise stakeholders of progress and plans.
- Ensure stakeholder, customer and community voices are heard at the highest level within GCRE.
- Shape the development of the GCRE Business Plan and Communications Strategy.
- Provide opportunities to stakeholder, customer and community groups to scrutinise GCRE.
- Support GCRE in delivering its work in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

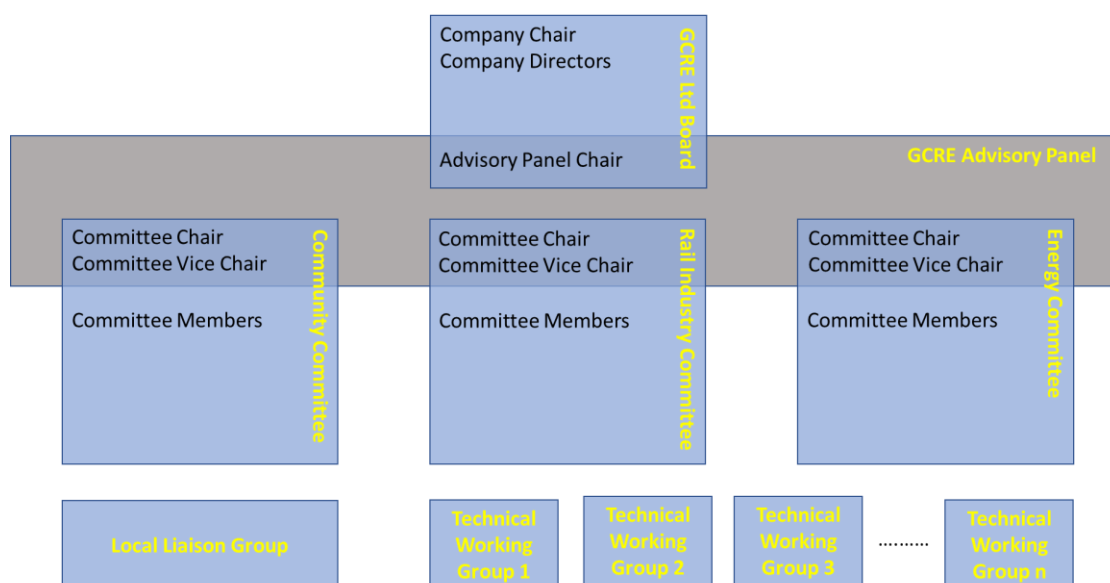
2. STRUCTURE

It is proposed that an Advisory Panel is established which will report to the GCRE Ltd board. The committees will provide reports, escalate issues and provide representation. The GCRE Board, via the Advisory Panel and its Chair (who will be a company board director), will have sight of these committees through a formal reporting structure. This structure will be governed through GCRE.

At the outset three committees are envisaged:

- Community Committee
- Rail Industry Committee
- Energy Committee

The Rail Industry and Energy committees will spawn Technical Working Groups from time to time to focus on particular areas of work. The Community Committee will be informed by a Local Liaison Group with representatives from within the communities impacted by GCRE.



2.1. Remit and Purpose – Community Committee

The Community Committee of the GCRE Advisory Panel will ensure GCRE engages with its stakeholders who represent the interests of the communities which will benefit from and are impacted by the GCRE. The Committee will receive a broad range of input which will influence and direct our work.

The Community Committee is designed to add value to the local relationships that can help to make GCRE a success and does not seek to impact or undermine any of the statutory legal or planning processes of the local authority or any other public body.

The Community Committee will be the formal route for working with elected representatives from local authorities, and the Welsh and UK parliaments. It will allow the concerns and ambitions of the community to be shared with the GCRE company and to facilitate a two way flow of information to allow constructive dialogue to take place.

Attendees will include representatives of local communities and government. Guests representing varying subjects and themes will be invited from time to time.

The Community Committee will:

- receive updates from GCRE Ltd from public consultations and community engagement exercises which it will undertake from time to time, and from the work of the Local Liaison Group.
- provide a formal mechanism for elected representatives to raise concerns with GCRE, and to pursue their resolution
- provide input and support to GCRE Ltd as it prepares and submits bids for wider economic development via Growth Deal, Shared Prosperity Fund, Freeport and other opportunities (noting that there may be some conflicts of interest to be managed)
- provide a ready-made governance function to oversee implementation of any of the bids which may be successful
- receive feedback from GCRE Ltd on progress against plans, and the development of future plans
- support (where conflicts can be managed) development plans and future planning applications to further develop the GCRE site in preparation for formal legal and planning processes
- ensure the views and needs of those with protected characteristics are heard, as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010.
- hold GCRE Ltd to account for delivering Social Value objectives (jobs, training and other measures).
- comment upon and input to the GCRE Communications Strategy
- in the short term support the development of the GCRE brand identity

2.2. Remit and Purpose – Rail Industry Committee

The rail Industry Committee of the GCRE Advisory Panel will allow GCRE to engage directly with representative policy makers, manufacturers, academics, rail operators and customers of the facility. This will allow GCRE's service offering to be shaped to meet the needs of the market and of government policy. The committee will receive a broad range of input which will influence and direct GCRE's work.

The Rail Industry Committee will:

- receive feedback from GCRE Ltd on progress against site development plans, and the development of future plans
- during the design and construction and eventual operational phases provide membership to working groups which will challenge and review the design and construction of specific elements of GCRE

- critique and input to technical elements of GCRE’s annual Business Plan
- help identify services that GCRE should be offering for the benefit of the wider rail industry in the UK
- Highlight innovations and forthcoming changes to the railway industry that members think GCRE needs to be aware of
- comment upon GCRE’s commercial proposition and its effectiveness in promoting railway innovation
- hold GCRE to account for delivering outcomes to benefit the UK railway industry
- support GCRE and our training and academic partners in equipping the local and national railway industry with relevant skills, particularly those associated with testing and validation
- comment upon and input to the GCRE Communications Strategy
- in the short term support the development of the GCRE brand identity
- receive and note GCRE progress and management reports

2.3. Remit and Purpose – Energy Committee

The Energy Committee of the GCRE Advisory Panel will eventually provide support to GCRE’s energy proposition. This position is still being developed, and until that is completed the Energy Committee will not be formed.

3. ROLES AND COMPOSITION

As well as bringing their expertise to help shape GCRE, Committee and Panel Members will be ambassadors for GCRE, working collaboratively and representing GCRE’s long-term vision:

To be a Global Centre for Rail Excellence, achieving a world leading reputation as a ‘one stop shop’ for railway innovation, from research and development, through testing and verification, to applied innovation on mainline passenger and freight railways.

Delivering a wide and integrated commercial service functionality in market focused and managed phases with continuous growth and revenue development potential, primarily attracting UK and European customers.

3.1. Composition of the Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel will be chaired by a non-executive director of GCRE Ltd.

The Panel will also comprise the Chair and Vice Chair of each Committee.

The Advisory Panel Chair will nominate one of the Committee Chairs to be the Advisory Panel Vice Chair.

The Chief Executive and other executives of GCRE will attend the Advisory Panel at the invitation of the Panel Chair.

The Advisory Panel shall meet at least once every six months, or more frequently at the panel Chair’s discretion. The Chair shall also determine the location of in person meetings, and the proportion of meetings that should take place virtually and face to face.

3.2. Advisory Panel Chair

The Advisory Panel Chair will be independent of the executive team of GCRE Ltd.

The Chair will act as the primary independent conduit between the Panel and the Board of GCRE.

The Chair will be a Non-Executive Director of GCRE Ltd, appointed by the Board of the company, and as such will report directly to the Chair of GCRE Ltd.

3.3. Composition of Committees

Committee membership will initially be via direct invitation from the Chair of GCRE Ltd.

Within 1 year of formation each committee shall identify whether additional members are required, or existing members should step down, and make a recommendation to the Board of GCRE accordingly. Within the same time period, each committee should also confirm the appointment of the permanent Chair and Vice Chair, nominating alternatives to the Chair of GCRE Ltd if required.

Members of the committees shall be chosen for their roles and employers. If either changes the Committee chair will make changes to the membership in line with the agreed terms of reference.

Executives of GCRE Ltd will attend the meetings of the Committees at the sole discretion and invitation of the Committee Chair.

The Committees shall meet at least once every quarter, or more frequently at the Committee Chair's discretion. The Chair shall also determine the location of in person meetings, and the proportion of meetings that should take place virtually and face to face.

3.4. Committee Chairs

The initial Chair and Vice Chair of each committee will be directly appointed by the Chair of GCRE Ltd.

The Chair will be an independent member selected because of their standing and reputation amongst the members of the committee.

The Vice Chair will be one of the senior members of the wider membership of the committee.

Once confirmed by the rest of the members of the committee the Chair and Vice Chair of each Committee shall be appointed for a period of no greater than 5 years. The Chair shall ensure that tenures are staggered to avoid simultaneous changes.

3.5. Community Committee Members

It is proposed that membership of the Community Committee will comprise:

- Independent Chair
- Member of Welsh Parliament for Neath
- Member of UK Parliament for Neath
- Member of Welsh Parliament for Brecon & Radnorshire
- Member of UK Parliament for Brecon & Radnorshire
- Leader of Powys County Council or their nominated deputy
- Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council or their nominated deputy
- GCRE sponsoring official representing the Climate Change and Economy Ministers Welsh Government
- GCRE sponsoring official representing the Secretary of State for Wales
- Nominated lead official of Powys County Council
- Nominated lead official of Neath and Port Talbot County Borough Council

Plus representatives of the GCRE executive team as invited by the Chair and committee.

3.6. Rail Industry Committee Members

It is proposed that membership of the Rail Industry Committee will comprise representatives from:

- Independent Chair
- BEIS
- DfT
- Welsh Government Economy/Regeneration team
- Welsh Government transport team
- Nominated officers of both local authorities
- Rail Industry Association
- RSSB
- UKRRIN
- Welsh Universities – via UKRRIN
- Local FE college representation
- Network Rail (and in future Great British Rail)
- Transport for Wales
- Transport Scotland
- Representative local SME
- Representative rolling stock manufacturer - via GCRE membership scheme
- Representative rolling stock leasing company - via GCRE membership scheme
- Rail Delivery Group

Plus representatives of the GCRE executive team as invited by the Chair and committee.

3.7. Local Liaison Group Members

It is proposed that the Local Liaison Group which will feed views from local residents into the Community Committee, will meet quarterly to be given updates on GCRE progress and plans for the following quarter, to address and resolve any complaints and to disburse any community levy required of GCRE.

- Independent Chair
- Two elected members of Powys County Council representing adjacent wards.
- Two elected members of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council representing adjacent wards

- Community Councillors from each of the Powys County Council wards
- Community Councillors from each of the adjacent Neath Port Talbot wards
- Representative of commoners

Plus representatives of the GCRE executive team as invited by the Chair.

3.8. Membership approval

Whilst GCRE is in sole ownership of Welsh Government the Shareholder of GCRE has reserved the right to veto the appointment of committee/panel members. Therefore, all prospective appointments will need to be submitted for consideration before formal appointments can take place.

The membership of the committees and the Advisory Panel will be published on the GCRE website.

4. ADMINISTRATION

Resource for Advisory Panel and Committee meetings will be provided by GCRE, which will provide the secretariat for the panel and its committees. We will ensure locations and venues are fully accessible. There will be options to request simultaneous translation, BSL interpretation, easy read copies of papers along with any requirements that will be deemed necessary for each meeting.

4.1. Remuneration & expenses

The Advisory Panel Chair shall be remunerated in accordance with their Terms & Conditions as a Non Executive of GCRE Ltd.

Committee Chairs shall be remunerated in accordance with the rate for a Welsh Government Sponsored Body Chair, at “Band 2”. At time of writing this rate is £275 per day [tbc by Welsh Government].

Panel members and Committee members will not be remunerated, but will be able to claim travel, expenses and accommodation costs at standard Welsh Government rates.

4.2. Secretariat & reporting

A GCRE provided secretariat for the panel and its committees will oversee governance and logistical arrangements.

Agendas and any supporting papers for each Advisory Panel and Committee meeting will be collated and distributed 5 working days prior to each meeting. These will be sent electronically.

The secretariat will work closely with the Committee and Panel Chairs to decide appropriate agenda items and to develop the long-term work programme of the Committees and Panel.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be agreed between each Committee and the Advisory Panel as part of the formal reporting structure. This will secure the correct information/progress/reports will be provided for the Advisory Panel to discuss and review.

Each Committee Chair shall provide a quarterly written report to be circulated amongst all of the members of the Advisory Panel. The report will update the panel on activities and recommendations that arise from the committee.

GCRE will provide a written response to recommendations made in committee reports within 4 weeks of the report being circulated.

4.3. Operation

A committee is quorate if 50% of its members (excluding GCRE staff) are in attendance, plus at least one of the Chair or Vice Chair.

The Advisory Panel will be quorate if 40% of its members (excluding GCRE staff) are in attendance, and at least one of the Chair or Vice Chair are in attendance.

Committees shall not be responsible for any budget, nor for any spending decisions on behalf of GCRE.

5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

As a wholly owned subsidiary of Welsh Government GCRE is required to work to demonstrate our commitment to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.

5.1. Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

At GCRE, we put the customers and communities we serve at the heart of everything we do. We are delivering the objectives set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which outlines five ways of working. Our advisory panel and its committees will help us to adopt these ways of working;

Long Term – Considering the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs. Good advice will help us to consider the long-term needs of people and communities.

Prevention – Gathering good advice and input from a broad representation of people and communities will help us act to prevent problems occurring or getting worse.

Integration – We will gain advice and input to help understand how our objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on our other objectives, or on the objectives of our partners.

Collaboration - Creating positive spaces and opportunities for collaboration will help us to meet our objectives to the benefit of people and communities impacted by GCRE.

Involvement – Our advisory panel and its committees will reflect the importance of involving people with an interest in achieving our goals and will ensure that those people reflect the diversity of the customers, industries and communities which we serve.

APPENDIX A - PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Welsh Government's Objectives for the project are to create a locally based, but nationally recognised world leading facility that is:

- A trusted railway partner at the heart of the UK/European and global industry, providing:
 - Rail infrastructure, systems and interfaces, innovation and testing
 - Rolling stock testing, storage, maintenance & training services
 - Certification and verification competence/certified body & exemplary H&S operations
 - Realistic, effective and game changing rail research through rapid commercial implementation
 - Shared campus for industry, innovators, researchers and funders to develop next generation solutions
 - Operationally independent of any major economic operator in the rail sector to ensure that the facility operates as “open access”
 - Acceleration of decarbonisation of the railways
- Financially sustainable (no publicly funded operating subsidy)
 - Make judicious use of committed public funding to generate revenues against these objectives
 - Establish rail vehicle storage & maintenance as an early revenue opportunity
 - Attract private sector investment to finance completion of the project
 - Seek to be the pre-eminent test/validation complex in the UK and Europe
- Providing public value
 - Be a considerate neighbour to adjacent and other nearby communities.
 - In all construction and operational activity seek to contribute to achieve Net Zero objectives.
 - Build an energy strategy founded on access to renewables and, if possible, become a net exporter of clean power.
 - Improve the biodiversity of the whole site and its surroundings
 - Creation of jobs in direct employment and promote job creation in, the Welsh supply chain and in Research, Development and Innovation
 - Through partnership with HE and industry bodies facilitate the development and maintenance of a centre of excellence of Rail related R&D.
 - Enable the dynamic growth of the UK and local rail industry SME innovation base
 - Support generation and exploitation of national and supplier Intellectual Property for the rail and other sectors -
- More than a Rail Facility
 - Establish strategic and commercial (renewable) energy and telecoms partnerships and explore links to other sectors such as automotive.

In contrast, the company expects Welsh Ministers will not want GCRE to be:

- Wholly owned by Welsh Ministers in perpetuity
- Suffering from poor cost control through construction and operation

- Controlled by any one dominant industry player
- Loss making and low usage
- Have a poor Health & Safety and environmental record
- Have poor local and community stakeholder relationships
- Create insufficient local employment
- Achieve a poor security and IP and data protection record



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

22nd February 2023

Report of the Head of Property and Regeneration

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: 'All Wards'

Proposal to close five operational staff accommodation buildings under Phase One of the Accommodation Review

Purpose of the Report:

To seek approval to close five of the Neath Port Talbot Council's ("the Council") operational staff based office accommodation buildings and declare them surplus to operational requirements with effect from 31st March 2023.

Executive Summary:

It is proposed that there is to be closure of five of the Neath Port Talbot Council's operational staff based office accommodation buildings and declare them surplus to operational requirements with effect from 31st March 2023.

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Background:

The Council has staff based in a range of civic and operational buildings located throughout the County Borough. The vast majority of these are owned freehold by the Council but a few are leased off other public sector organisations or private companies.

As Members will be aware, the Covid 19 pandemic accelerated the Council's introduction of agile/hybrid working for staff at a considerable rate of knots with many staff now continuing to work from home, partly from home and/or from no fixed base.

Initially the intention was to continue with the existing level of staff office accommodation for a period of up to 12/18 months to allow sufficient time for the Council to fully consider and evaluate staff working pattern and their needs and decide upon the future requirements for and location of the Councils Civic and operational staff office accommodation.

However, as Members will also fully appreciate, the global energy crisis centred around the ongoing war in Ukraine has significantly increased energy costs, and therefore heightened the need to urgently evaluate and decide on future accommodation requirements with the aim of reducing ongoing budget pressures on the Council.

Officers have now been embarking on an accommodation review and are undertaking this in phases that will see officers concentrate on different parts of the Civic and operational accommodation buildings over time.

Phase one is to identify some initial outcomes to achieve costs savings, Phase two will see officers consider options centred around the larger Civic accommodation buildings. Phase three will see consideration of our depot buildings. At each stage reports will be brought to members for determination on a manner to proceed.

Following a comprehensive review of staff based office accommodation, officers have identified and concluded that steps now be put in place to close the following buildings with effect from 31st March 2023 with the

circa 190 members of staff moving to alternative local existing civic and operational staff office accommodation.

- 36 Forge Road Port Talbot – Council owned.
- 36 Orchard Street, Neath –leased to the Council by Neath Port Talbot CVS.
- Cimla Hospital, Cimla Common, Neath - leased to the Council by the NHS.
- Baglan Resource Centre, Moor Road Baglan – leased to the Council by the NHS.
- Ffrwydwyllt House, Commercial Road Port Talbot – Council owned

In respect of 36 Forge Road and Ffrwydwyllt House, it would be proposed that these are declared surplus to operational requirements and handed over to the Head of Property and Regeneration, where steps will be taken to consider future usage.

In respect of the leased premises, it would be proposed to declare these surplus to operational requirements and delegated authorisation be granted to the Head of Property and Regeneration to continue with the preliminary discussions with the respective landlords and seek to conclude negotiations for early surrender/termination of the leases ideally to comply with the closure date of 31st March 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter. However, in respect of Cimla Hospital, in the short

term, there will continue to be a requirement by Social Services for a lease for up to 6 of the rooms currently included in the lease for specialised training purposes until such time as suitable alternative premises are secured to relocate to.

Financial Impacts:

By undertaking the aforementioned actions, it is proposed that financial savings in the region of £158,000 will be initially obtained. In respect of the freehold buildings, future financial benefits could be realised dependant on future uses. Again these will be subject to reports to members at the appropriate time.

Whilst from preliminary discussions it is not anticipated that there will be any significant dilapidation costs to fund on surrender/termination of the leases any such costs that do arise will need to be funded by existing budgets.

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 has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications.

Workforce Impacts:

The staff currently based in the aforementioned buildings will all be relocated in to other Council offices accommodation buildings. There is, however, one member of the Council's Corporate Cleaning Team will be

impacted by the proposal to close one of these buildings. There is, however, another vacant cleaning post within 3 miles with exactly the same hours of work, this vacancy has been offered to and will be held open to the person to allow time to decide whether to take up the post. Discussions will continue to be had with trade union colleagues on this particular individual

Legal Impacts:

In respect of the leases the Council has entered into they will contain appropriate provisions regarding the surrender of the Council's interests.

Risk Management Impacts:

Failure to take steps to achieve the surrender or address such buildings mean financial savings cannot be realised

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

No implications.

Counter Terrorism Impacts:

No implications.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

No implications.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item. The Local Members for the properties affected have been consulted and

support the proposal. Similarly all impacted staff members have been consulted, together with trade union colleagues.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that having had due regard to the first stage Integrated Impact Assessment, members approve the closure of five of the Neath Port Talbot Council's operational staff based office accommodation buildings (as identified in this report) and declare them surplus to operational requirements with effect from 31st March 2023 and that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Property and Regeneration to serve the appropriate notices surrendering any leasehold interest in such buildings

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure greater rationalising of the Council's accommodation for office based staff and ensure that financial savings can be realised.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

None

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Richard Jenkins – Corporate Facilities Manager
Tel No: 01639 686253; Email: r.jenkins@npt.gov.uk

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Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Proposal to close 5 Operational staff Accommodation Buildings under Phase One of the Accommodation Review
Service Area: Property & Regeneration
Directorate: Environment & Regeneration

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users		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				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.

Disability		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Gender Reassignment		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Race		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Religion/Belief		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's

						employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Sex		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.
Sexual orientation		X				All staff members are being consulted on as part of the proposed changes and if any staff indicate any particular concerns it will be considered in line with the Council's employment policies. There is no indication to date of this protected characteristic being impacted but this will continue to be monitored.

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				No impact, as the proposal only involves relocating staff to alternative accommodation
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		X				No impact, as the proposal only involves relocating staff to alternative accommodation

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				No impact, the proposal only involves relocating staff to alternative accommodation
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		X				No impact, the proposal only involves relocating staff to alternative accommodation.

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			The proposal involves the closure of 5 accommodation buildings and the relocation of circa 190 staff into existing alternative accommodation as part of the Councils ongoing accommodation review which will result in significant costs savings to assist with the Councils budget deficit
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives			The proposal involves the closure of 5 accommodation buildings and the relocation of circa 190 staff into existing alternative accommodation as part of the Councils ongoing accommodation review which will result in significant costs savings to assist with the Councils budget deficit

Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative			A comprehensive review of Councils staff based office accommodation under phase 1 of the ongoing Accommodation Review is continuing. Consultation has been had with trade union colleagues and directorates throughout the Council and discussion has been ongoing with any staff directly impacted by the proposals to understand any concerns. To date, no issues have been raised
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions			A comprehensive review of Councils staff based office accommodation under phase 1 of the ongoing Accommodation Review is continuing. Consultation has been had with trade union colleagues and directorates throughout the Council and discussion has been ongoing with any staff directly impacted by the proposals to understand any concerns. To date, no issues have been raised
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	x		The proposal involves the closure of 5 accommodation buildings and the relocation of circa 190 staff into existing alternative accommodation as part of the Councils ongoing accommodation review which will result in significant costs savings to assist with the Councils budget deficit

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	
Reasons for this conclusion	
The proposal will not have any adverse impact on people with protected characteristics, use of the Welsh language or biodiversity. The overall proposal has a positive impact on wellbeing objectives. The proposal involves the closure of 5 accommodation buildings and the relocation of circa 190 staff into existing alternative accommodation as part of the Councils ongoing accommodation review which will result in significant costs savings to assist with the Councils budget deficit	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Richard Jenkins	Corporate Facilities Manager		
Signed off by	Simon Brennan	Head of Service		



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

CABINET

22nd February 2023

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Wards affected – All

Matter for Decision

Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 – As at end of December 2022

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with information in relation to delivery of the 2022/23 Capital Programme.

Background

On 1st March 2022 Council approved its Capital Programme for 2022/23; the report detailed planned Capital Expenditure totalling £70.415m for the financial year.

The purpose of this report is to update Members as to the delivery of this Programme as at 31st December 2022 and to seek approval for a further updated budget position.

Targeted Achievements

As Members are aware the following achievements are being targeted during this financial year:

- Completion of the build of the new Primary school which will replace Abbey Primary.
- Completion of the build of the third phase of works at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro-Dur, North campus.
- Progress with the regeneration programme including Neath Transport hub and the completion of the Neath Town Centre redevelopment.

- Continued investment in Disabled Facilities Grants.
- Investment in school buildings and ICT.
- The Council's Waste Facility at Crymlyn Burrows will be remodelled as a Transfer Station with enhanced recycling capacity and facilities to accommodate the Council's expanding recycling operation.
- City Deal – Commencement of the homes as power stations and the remainder of the supporting innovation and low carbon growth projects.

Changes to the approved Budget

The updated Capital Programme now totals £54.122m with the main changes proposed being:

- Grant approvals received of £2.756m, predominantly relating to Transport and Welsh Medium.
- Budgets totalling £6.186m had originally been included in 2022/23 for Capital Maintenance for Schools (Previous Years Grants). £3.319m has now been re-profiled into 2023/24 to reflect the profile of the works required.
- In 2022/23 a budget of £1.362m had been included for Pontardawe Arts Centre Cinema. Following a review of the timetable for planned works the updated budget for 2022/23 is now £0.062m with £1.300m re-profiled to 2023/24.
- In 2022/23 a budget of £2.666m had been included for Universal Primary School Meals. £1.555m has now been re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect the planned works.
- Budgets totalling £2.531m had originally been included in 2022/23 for the City Deal Homes as Power Stations Project. £2.351m has now been re-profiled into 2023/24 to reflect the profile of the works required.
- In 2022/23 a budget of £2.202m had been included for Neath Transport Hub. Following a review of the timetable for planned works the updated budget for 2022/23 is now £0.010m with £2.192m re-profiled to 2023/24.

Further details of the Budget changes are shown at Appendix 2.

Impact of COVID

The Covid pandemic has resulted in increased costs for some contracts due to the requirement to provide increased facilities on sites i.e. additional welfare provision to facilitate social distancing. Currently these increased costs are being met from existing budget resources.

2022/23 Capital Expenditure

Details of capital expenditure as at 31st December 2022 is outlined in Appendix 1 of this report

Financial Impact

All relevant details are set out in the body of the report.

Valleys Communities Impact

The Capital Programme provides investment in assets across the County Borough.

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts arising from this report.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

Risk Management

The capital programme is actively managed by managers and the Capital Programme Steering Group to comply with all relevant planning conditions, legislation, regulations and health and safety.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet approves and commends to Council:

- The approval of the updated proposed 2022/23 budget totalling £54.122m;
- And note the position in relation to expenditure as at 31st December 2022.

Reason for Proposed Decision

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

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Details of Capital Expenditure as at 31st December 2022

Appendix 2 – Details of Budget Changes as at 31st December 2022

List of Background Papers

Capital Programme working files

Officer Contact

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Finance Officer

e-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mr Ross Livingstone – Group Accountant - Capital and Corporate

e-mail: r.livingstone@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Capital Budget and Spend 2022/23 as at 31st December 2022

	Current Budget £'000	Proposed Budget £'000	Actual @ 31 st December £'000
Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning			
Abbey Primary	948	948	750
Cefn Saeson	1,253	1,253	1,153
Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur (North Campus)	979	979	962
Ysgol Newydd Swansea Valley	500	500	259
Capital Maintenance - ELLL	1,429	1,302	628
Capital Maintenance for Schools Previous Years Grants	6,186	2,867	2,623
Universal Primary Free School Meals	2,666	1,111	186
Supporting Learners with Additional Needs	889	889	0
Community Focused Schools	889	889	0
Childcare Offer Grant - Cwmavon, YGG Blaendulais & Small Grants	250	440	50
Welsh Medium - Mynachlog Nedd & YGG Trebannws	0	1,010	479
Hwb IT for Schools (Grant)	455	455	0
Leisure Investment	226	226	42
Margam Park Activity Investment	384	53	52
Margam Park Stonework Repairs	328	600	93
Pontardawe Arts Centre Cinema	1,362	62	24
Music Support	209	209	202
Other – Education & Leisure	360	360	-10
Environment			
Highways and Engineering Maintenance	2,279	2,420	1,807
Match funding for grants (including flood prevention)	80	0	0
Additional major engineering works (Norton & Bevan Terrace)	250	64	21
Additional Highway Improvements Water Street	512	512	361
Drainage Grants	3,606	3,715	1,208
Additional Highway Works	342	222	89
Public Highway Works	750	753	753

	Current Budget £'000	Proposed Budget £'000	Actual @ 31st December £'000
Additional Works - Other	0	210	0
Village Road – Road Safety	0	180	0
Resilient Roads Fund - Castle Drive Cimla	484	684	137
Local Transport Fund (multiple locations)	912	912	244
Road Safety (multiple locations)	432	1,337	208
Active Travel Fund (multiple location)	716	716	191
Decarbonisation Strategy (DARE)	250	0	0
Covid Recovery	1,029	1,029	249
Covid Recovery - Catch Up, Clean Up, Green Up Capital Works	750	0	0
Major Bridge Strengthening - A474 Neath	295	11	1
Health & Safety	955	955	310
Neighbourhood Improvements	459	513	413
Pavilions	231	231	62
Disability Access	274	194	87
Street Lighting	345	345	59
Crymlyn Burrows Transfer Station - site improvements	6,158	5,974	3,351
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	1,060	700	44
Vehicle Replacement Programme	794	1,029	560
Environment Street Scene Works	974	907	270
Coal Tip Safety	1,417	1,417	133
Regeneration: Match Funding for WG & UK Government Funding Streams	1,484	284	0
Regeneration: Harbourside Infrastructure	485	50	30
Regeneration: Margam Country Park EV Charging and Public Facilities	373	250	21
Regeneration 6 Station Road	167	167	0
Regeneration: Neath Town Centre Redevelopment	3,451	3,451	3,176
Regeneration: Community Self Build Housing	150	0	0
Regeneration: Crown Buildings	855	855	612
Regeneration: Neath Transport Hub	2,202	10	5
Regeneration: Place Making 2	250	80	1

	Current Budget £'000	Proposed Budget £'000	Actual @ 31st December £'000
Regeneration: Employment & Business Start Up Space	484	20	0
Regeneration: Neath Strategic Hub	250	0	0
Regeneration: Valleys Task Force	132	132	125
Regeneration: Commercial Property Grant	232	232	21
Regeneration: Other	1,031	651	282
City Deal: The Technology Centre	383	383	194
City Deal: SWITCH Building at Harbourside	1,000	50	13
City Deal: Advanced manufacturing production facility at Harbourside	749	49	0
City Deal: Low Emission Vehicles (LEV)	500	25	0
City Deal: Air Quality Monitoring	415	211	78
City Deal: Hydrogen Stimulus	1,500	1,500	0
City Deal: Homes as Power Stations	2,513	162	36
Other - Environment	484	401	148
Social Services Health & Housing			
Capital Maintenance	318	318	66
Hillside Secure Unit Improvement Works	799	799	704
Supported Living New Build	1,266	0	0
Efficiency & Warm Homes	70	81	81
Enable – Support for Independent Living	281	281	233
Disabled Facilities Grants	4,230	3,300	2,163
Other – Social Service & Housing	116	115	8
Other Services			
School IT/ Vehicle Financing	300	50	19
CCTV Replacement	223	223	187
Civic Accommodation Modernisation	250	0	0
Other - Corporate Services	44	103	198
Contingency	886	706	0
Total	72,540	54,122	26,452

Capital Budget Changes to 31st December 2022

Budget Changes	£'000	Comment
Approved Budget as at 30th September 2022	72,540	
Budget Changes		
Capital Maintenance - ELLL	-127	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Capital Maintenance for Schools Previous Years Grants	-3,319	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Margam Park Activity Investment	-331	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Pontardawe Arts Centre Cinema	-1,300	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Universal Primary Free School Meals	-1,555	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Additional Highway Works	-120	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Additional major engineering works (Norton & Bevan Terrace)	-186	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Childcare Offer Grant - Cwmavon, YGG Blaendulais & Small Grants	190	Cwmavon, YGG Blaendulais - re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend. Small Grants – new grant awarded
Margam Park Stonework Repairs	272	New grant awarded
Welsh Medium - Mynachlog Nedd & YGG Trebannws	1,010	New grant awarded

Budget Changes	£'000	Comment
City Deal: Advanced manufacturing production facility at Harbourside	-700	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
City Deal: Air Quality Monitoring	-204	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
City Deal: Homes as Power Stations	-2,351	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
City Deal: Low Emission Vehicles (LEV)	-475	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
City Deal: SWITCH Building at Harbourside	-950	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Covid Recovery - Catch Up, Clean Up, Green Up Capital Works	-750	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Crymlyn Burrows Transfer Station - site improvements	-184	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Decarbonisation Strategy (DARE)	-250	Budget transferred to Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	-360	Part of budget transferred from Decarbonisation Strategy and re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Disability Access	-80	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Environment Street Scene Works	-67	Budget transferred to Highways and Engineering Maintenance to fund Carriageway Resurfacing schemes
Major Bridge Strengthening - A474 Neath	-284	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Match funding for grants (including flood prevention)	-80	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend

Budget Changes	£'000	Comment
Public Highway Works	3	Part of the additional General Capital Grant received at the end of 2021/22 that the Authority was able to carry forward to future financial years
Neighbourhood Improvements	54	Budget increased to reflect spend
Drainage Grants	109	Additional grant awarded
Highways and Engineering Maintenance	141	Budget increased to reflect additional spend on Carriageway Resurfacing and Drainage works
Village Road – Road Safety	180	New scheme funded from Contingency (see below)
Contingency	-180	Budget transferred to fund Village Road – Road Safety (see above)
Resilient Roads Fund - Castle Drive Cimla	200	Additional budget to fund scheme
Additional Works - Other	210	Part of the additional General Capital Grant received at the end of 2021/22 that the Authority was able to carry forward to future financial years
Vehicle Replacement Programme	235	Budget increased to reflect vehicle purchases
Road Safety (multiple locations)	905	New grant awarded
Regeneration: Community Self Build Housing	-150	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Regeneration: Employment & Business Start Up Space	-464	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Regeneration: Harbourside Infrastructure	-435	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend

Budget Changes	£'000	Comment
Regeneration: Margam Country Park EV Charging and Public Facilities	-123	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Regeneration: Match Funding for WG & UK Government Funding Streams	-1,200	Re-profiled to 2023/24 for Match funding
Regeneration: Neath Strategic Hub	-250	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Regeneration: Neath Transport Hub	-2,192	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Regeneration: Place Making 2	-170	Budget reduced to reflect project schemes
Regeneration: Other	-380	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Other - Environment	-83	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Disabled Facilities Grants	-930	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Efficiency & Warm Homes	11	Budget increased to reflect spend
Supported Living New Build	-1,267	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
Civic Accommodation Modernisation	-250	Re-profiled to 2023/24 to reflect planned spend
School IT/ Vehicle Financing	-250	Budget reduced to reflect spend
Other - Corporate Services	59	Budget increased to reflect additional spend and additional grant awarded
Updated Budget as at 31st December 2022	54,122	

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CABINET

22nd February 2023

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Wards affected – All

Matter for Decision

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 – As at end of December 2022

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with information in relation to the Council's projected revenue budget position.

Background

This report sets out the Council's projected budget position based on information available as at 31st December 2022. The forecast is based on a number of assumptions around activity levels over the remaining three months of the financial year.

Budget Management Responsibility

Under the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules Corporate Directors are responsible for managing their Budgets within the overall cash limit approved by Council.

A Corporate Director may exercise virements on budgets under his or her control for any amount on any one budget head during the year, following notification to the Chief Finance Officer provided that:

- a) overall expenditure and income is contained within the cash limit
- (b) except where virement would involve a significant variation in the level or nature of the delivery of the service approved by Council in the Revenue Budget.

Summary

When the Council set its budget for 2022/23 it appeared that the immediate future looked more settled. An increase in funding through the Local Government Settlement of 8.8% for 2022/23 followed by indicative allocations of 3.5% for 2023/24 and 2.4% for 2024/25 meant that for the first time in a long time the Council had an idea of the resources available to it for a three year period and could plan with a greater degree of certainty.

However, within weeks of agreeing the 2022/23 budget, Russia invaded Ukraine and what has unfolded since has materially changed our operating environment. This has included escalating energy prices and other inflationary pressures. The 2022/23 pay award added £12m to the Council's costs and if it wasn't for the availability of some central budgets would have led to a potential £10m overspend, as detailed in the September budget monitoring report.

The most recent budget monitoring report to Cabinet (19th October 2022), which was the position as at 30th September 2022, detailed a projected overspend of £2.9m. This represented a structural overspend of £4.3m arising from the impact of the unfunded pay award which reduced to £2.9m due to a number of one off savings.

At that point in time budget holders were reminded to maintain a tight discipline in terms of minimising expenditure and increasing income to the maximum extent possible. It is pleasing to note that the latest projection is that that the Council's overspend (excluding schools) has reduced to £86k after reserve movements as detailed in the table below.

Summary 2022/23	Original	Revised	Projected		December	Variance
	Budget	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Reserves	after virements/ reserves
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning - Schools	96,074	96,074	96,074	0	0	0
Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning - Other	29,005	29,562	29,784	222	-66	156
Social Services Health & Housing	93,640	94,438	94,897	459	750	1,209
Environment	43,808	44,525	46,755	2,230	-1,298	932
Chief Executives	20,403	21,587	21,221	-366	232	-134
Directly Controlled Expenditure	282,930	286,186	288,731	2,545	-382	2,163
Fire Authority	8,503	8,503	8,513	10		10
Capital financing	20,496	20,514	20,514	0		0
Central Services	6,470	3,196	3,881	685	-1,439	-754
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	19,621	19,621	18,288	-1,333		-1,333
Net Budget	338,020	338,020	339,927	1,907	-1,821	86
Overspend / (underspend)						86

Schools delegated budget

The delegated schools budget for 2022/23 is £96.074m. Any under or overspends in relation to this budget are funded via contributions to/from the delegated school reserves.

Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning

The Education, Leisure and Lifelong budget for 2022/23 is £29.562m Presently the directorate is projected to overspend by £156k.

There is a pressure within the home to school transport budget where currently costs are expected to exceed the budget by £935k. This pressure has arisen due to a number of reasons including a lack of operators, rising fuel costs and rising wages which has resulted in an increase in retendered contracts of between 16% and 25%.

Presently there is a £220k underspend in the out of county placements budget which is being used to offset the current overspend position. This is due to two out of county placements remaining vacant to date.

The management of change base budget includes core funding of £200k to cover the costs of school staff leaving under the early retirement scheme. There are no costs committed at present and this has resulted in an underspend of £200k.

Additional funding had been invested to expand the school based counselling service in response to increased demand for support within our schools. Due to external factors the majority of the new posts were not recruited until September 2022. The service is still looking fill the final two posts in what is a challenging and competitive labour market.

This has resulted in a £124k in year underspend. A number of core funded posts have been offset against grants which has led to an underspend of £180k in the education support strategy budget.

Free school meal rollout in primary schools has started to take place from September 2022 for all reception children in primary schools. Funding of £855k has been allocated to Neath Port Talbot, with monthly claims being submitted to WG in arrears for meals provided. Welsh Government are currently reviewing the rate received per meal to ensure the funding is sufficient.

Regular meetings with Celtic leisure are taking place in readiness for the transfer of services into the Council from April 2024. Presently, it is estimated that the council will need to make a circa £1.2m contribution to fund the Celtic leisure operating deficit for the financial year 2022/23. This pressure will be funded from corporate reserves.

As in previous years it is anticipated that the Local Authority will need to make a contribution towards the legal and suspension costs of an ongoing investigation at a Neath Port Talbot school. It is estimated that this will be approximately £430k

Social Services, Health and Housing

The Social Services budget for 2022/23 is £94.438m. Presently the Directorate is projected to net overspend by £1.209m. This overspend includes an estimated £1.2m for the additional pay award over and above what was funded for 2022/23.

The main service area experiencing budget pressures is the children's residential care budget where there is a £1.063m overspend. Step down provision is being explored for a number of placements which would ease the pressure, however there is no assumption in the forecast that step down will occur and there is no provision for additional placements. The current overspend is after taking in to account additional health income (£275k) which has been received following the development of a regional protocol on children with complex care.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to place children with more complex needs, this has been considered as part of the recruitment strategy and the amended foster plus scheme. By increasing the foster allowance, it should attract foster carers who are able to provide placements for young people whose needs are more complex. Out of the young people

placed in residential care, three young people could step down into a foster care provision, however to date despite extensive searches both internally and externally no suitable matches have been identified.

Children's social work budget is overspent by £328k due to an increase in direct payments, funding for family support Wales to support children with disabilities and an increase in discretionary/section 17 spend used to prevent children entering the care system.

There is also a projected overspend within the mental health external placements budget of £577k. This projection only includes any placements where costs have been agreed. It does not include placements agreed in principle and out to brokerage (currently 12), on the assumption that the additional cost will be offset by placement discharges. The projection only includes health funding that has been agreed.

The housing advice/supported tenancies service is presently predicting an over spend of £656k. At the start of the pandemic WG changed the policy relating to homelessness to ensure no-one was sleeping rough. The policy change resulted in a much higher than average demand for temporary accommodation and meant that a significant amount of additional accommodation needed to be sourced urgently.

That specific change in policy has now been integrated into the Housing Wales Act via a secondary legislation change, therefore the majority of households presenting are now eligible for temporary accommodation so demand is likely to remain at current levels for some time.

Prior to the pandemic, average number in temporary accommodation at any one time was 50 households. In October, 179 people were in temporary accommodation.

Work is ongoing to implement the Rapid Rehousing Plan which will ultimately reduce the use of temporary accommodation in the longer term and increase the stock of social housing across the borough, however this will develop over a period of between 5 – 10 years. Welsh Government have awarded NPT an additional 3371k towards the cost of temporary accommodation.

The learning disabilities external placement budget currently has a £400k overspend based on placements agreed. The projected costs are offset by the assumption that 25% (£544k) health funding will be agreed

for 14 clients, this follows the work on the Joint Working Protocol for Adults with Complex Needs, in collaboration with Swansea Council and Swansea Bay University Health Board.

The elderly residential care budget is projected to overspend by £760k due to the additional investment £667,000 for older people care home providers. An additional fee of £30 per person is being paid to care providers who deliver residential and/or nursing care services on behalf of the council. The increase is to cover the anticipated rise in inflation caused by the cost of living crisis and to enable providers to pay their staff the Real Living Wage. Elderly direct payments is overspent by £173k due to an additional seven users over and above the budget receiving direct payments.

Hillside is overspent by £180k due to the cost of the current education provision and reduced income for 6 months of the year.

A number of service budgets are underspent at the moment, which is helping the overall Social Services, Health and Housing budget to help offset areas experiencing pressures. Domiciliary Care is currently £1.34m underspent due to the reduction in placements in the external domiciliary care market.

Community independence is currently predicting a £188k underspend due to vacant posts in the first quarter and additional grant funding. The service anticipates that these posts will be filled throughout the year.

Community Care Management is £182k underspend based on the number of deprivation of liberty assessments (DOLS) carried out to date. Child & Family Management is £136k underspend due to a reduction in external legal fees.

The adoption service is £502k underspent based on the number of adoptions made to date and the expected placements to the end of the year.

Physical & Sensory Disabilities - External Placements is £136k underspent due to a reduction in number of placements compared with budget.

Community Care Social Work is £451k underspend due to vacancies at the beginning of the year which have now been filled (£347k) and

additional grant income to fund deprivation of liberty (DOLS) assessments.

The following risk areas are currently being managed within the above directorate position but are listed here for information.

Within the domiciliary care service the increased cost of fuel and relatively low pay for demanding work is leading to difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. This is resulting in an inability to allocate care packages with approximately 150 people waiting for care at any one time and demand is likely to increase over winter. Neath Port Talbot are giving support to providers to enable them to pay 45p per mile but given the increase in fuel costs this is unlikely to be sufficient.

Residential care providers are also facing increased costs, particularly in energy and food which is placing them in financial difficulty, this potentially could lead to home closures. Low pay for demanding work leading to difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. A number of care homes have empty beds but cannot accept new residents as they do not have enough staff. In November, NPT increased its fees paid to providers by £30 per week-it is too soon to assess the impact this will have on homes and staff recruitment/retention.

Increased demand for people with complex dementia and care homes cannot accept the admission as they cannot meet the person's needs within the fees we pay. Care homes need to employ higher numbers of staff to keep people safe.

It's been eight years since the authority undertook a whole scale review of residential care home fees. There is now a need to carry out an open book exercise however this has the potential to significantly increase fees paid to homes.

Within the supported living budget, NPT have a high number of historically low fees that need to be reviewed our average hourly rate is around £17 but some fees as low as £15.80 and the average in other local authorities is about £19. Providers are struggling to recruit and retain staff

Environment

The Environment budget for 2022/23 is £44.525m. Presently the Directorate is projected to net overspend by £932k.

Car Parking is anticipating a £211K overspend to the end of the financial year. This is due to a reduction of footfall in town centres resulting in reduced use of car parks, a reduction in civil enforcement tickets issued and increased running costs of the car parks.

A number of services are experiencing overspends due to the pay award over and above the 4% funded, including neighbour services £239k, parks and open spaces £182k, refuse collection £210k and building cleaning £104k. These service areas will be fully funded in next year's budget.

The refuse service is also experiencing an over spend of £378k due to increased fuel and agency costs.

Alongside this an increase in the cost of gas and electricity, especially within the Quays building due to a new supplier, has led to a pressure of £211k within the civic buildings budget.

Building maintenance is £99k over budget due to increased sub-contractor costs due to inflation.

Planning policy is £128k underspent and support services £128k underspent due to core posts being offset against the Earth project. Waste disposal is also underspent by £260k due to a fluctuation in income which is being closely monitored.

A potential increase in material prices has been identified which will impact upon the building maintenance and highway maintenance budgets in particular. The value of this increase is hard to quantify and will affect numerous budgets, it is being closely monitored.

Chief Executives

The Chief Executives budget for 2022/23 is £21.587m. Presently the Directorate is projected to underspend by £134k.

Financial services are currently overspent by £107k due to the unfunded element of the pay award and an increase in Welsh Audit Office fees.

Central budgets

There are a number of budget areas which are not managed by Corporate Directors and these are known as 'Central Budgets'. They consist of the following areas and are overseen by the Chief Finance Officer:

	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000
Levies and contributions		
Fire Authority	8,503	8,503
Other levies and contributions	270	270
Other Expenditure		
Capital Financing	20,496	20,496
Council Tax Support	19,621	19,621
MTFP equalisation	2,200	896
Contingency	1,500	500
Covid hardship fund cessation	2,500	1,530

The central budgets are currently estimating to underspend by £2.077m. The majority of this relates to an underspend of £1.3m in relation to funding allocated for the Council tax support scheme (CTRS). This is due to a reduction in the number of claimant from 17,500 at the height of the Covid pandemic to the current number of 15,800.

Pay award 2022/23

Pay awards for green book staff and teachers has now been agreed. Teachers pay award is 5% from September 2022 and green book staff have all received a set £1,925 per scp from April 2022. This back pay was paid out in November and is included in all the current projections.

The WG settlement allowed for a 4% pay award and this is what has been allocated to individual service directorates. In the base budget for 2023/24, the full pay award has been included.

National Insurance / Social Care Levy

At the mini budget announcement on Friday 23rd September, the Chancellor confirmed the national insurance rise introduced earlier this year will be cancelled from 6th November. This has equated to an

approximate £550k saving in year to the council which is included within the projections shown in this report.

Virements

Please see below proposed virements which will need to be agreed as cross directorate budget transfers.

Virements across directorates for information			
Directorate	Service Area	Value	Reason
To Chief Executives from Education, leisure & Lifelong Learning	Mobile Phones	£ 25,000	Centralisation of digital services
To Chief Executives from Social Services & Housing	Mobile Phones	£ 142,000	Centralisation of digital services
To Chief Executives from Environment	Mobile Phones	£ 50,000	Centralisation of digital services
To Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning from Chief Executives	Photocopying/Telphones	£ 25,000	Correction of previous virement
		£ 242,000	

Council Reserves

Under the Council’s constitution the use of existing reserves by Corporate Directors requires prior consultation with the Chief Finance Officer. The current position in relation to reserve balances as at 1st April 2022 and commitments agreed to date is detailed in Appendix 1 of this report

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an integrated impact assessment as this report summarises the Council’s financial position

Valleys Communities Impacts

No Impact

Workforce Impacts

No Impact

Legal Impact

No Impact

Risk Management Impact

Due to the cost of living crisis, rising energy prices, inflation and post covid recovery, there is risk within the current budget projections which could result in significant variances.

Consultation

This item is not subject to external consultation

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- **Note** the contents of this report in relation to the current projected budget outturn and reserves position
- **Approve** the virements set out in the main body of this report.

Reason for Proposed decision

To comply with the Council's constitution in relation to budget for virements.

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Reserve Schedule

Background Papers

Budget Working Papers

Officer Contact

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Appendix 1 – Reserve Schedule

Description	Reserve Balance at 1st April 2022 £	Original budget reserves 2022/23	Additional movements to June 2022 £	Additional movements to September 2022 £	Additional movements to December 2022 £	Committed	Total Committed £	Uncommitted reserves
Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning								
<u>Delegated Schools Reserves</u>								
ERVR Primary	Cr8,161	0	0				0	Cr8,161
Primary Schools	Cr6,888,981	4,989,213	0				4,989,213	Cr1,899,768
Secondary Schools	Cr3,525,205	1,687,049	0				1,687,049	Cr1,838,156
Special Schools	Cr734,244	152,222	0				152,222	Cr582,022
Middle School	Cr1,471,681	962,076	0				962,076	Cr509,605
Repair & Maintenance	Cr161,160	0	0			0	0	Cr161,160
	Cr12,789,433	7,790,560	0	0	0	0	7,790,560	Cr4,998,873
<u>Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Other</u>								
Additional learning needs reserve	Cr1,051,000	0	0		Cr400,000		Cr400,000	Cr1,451,000
Equalisation Account-Education	Cr2,409,500	25,000	100,000	50,000	Cr120,000	462,462	517,462	Cr1,892,038
Home to School Transport	Cr290,570	38,000	252,570				290,570	0
	Cr3,751,070	63,000	352,570	50,000	Cr520,000	462,462	408,032	Cr3,343,038
Total Education Leisure & Lifelong Learning	Cr16,540,503	7,853,560	352,570	50,000	Cr520,000	462,462	8,198,592	Cr8,341,911
<u>Social Services, Health and Housing</u>								
Homecare ECM Equipment reserve	Cr96,756	0	0				0	Cr96,756
Community Care Transformation Reserve	Cr4,206,561	66,000	0	2,640,900	Cr750,000		1,956,900	Cr2,249,661
Children's Residential Placements	Cr276,000	0	0	276,000			276,000	0
SSHH IT Renewals Fund	Cr1,900,000	0	0				0	Cr1,900,000
Social Services Equalisation	Cr5,700,114	2,330,000	0				2,330,000	Cr3,370,114

Description	Reserve Balance at 1st April 2022 £	Original budget reserves 2022/23	Additional movements to June 2022 £	Additional movements to September 2022 £	Additional movements to December 2022 £	Committed	Total Committed £	Uncommitted reserves
Community Resilience Fund	Cr1,750,000	0	0				0	Cr1,750,000
Housing Warranties Reserve	Cr220,000	0	0				0	Cr220,000
Hillside General Reserve	Cr581,098	0	0	150,000			150,000	Cr431,098
Ring fenced homecare funding	Cr450,000	0	0	216,000			216,000	Cr234,000
Youth Offending Team Reserve	Cr167,897	0	0				0	Cr167,897
Adoption Service	Cr500,000	0	0				0	Cr500,000
Total Social Services, Health and Housing	Cr15,848,426	2,396,000	0	3,282,900	Cr750,000	0	4,928,900	Cr10,919,526
<u>Environment</u>								
Transport Reserve	Cr281,541	60,000	0		Cr52,612		7,388	Cr274,153
Asset Recovery Incentive Scheme	Cr125,894	81,301	0				81,301	Cr44,593
Swansea Bay City Deal	Cr333,786	112,786	0				112,786	Cr221,000
Local Development Plan	Cr365,014	31,890	0		Cr30,000		1,890	Cr363,124
Parking improvement	Cr190,000	0	0	47,000	80,000	0	127,000	Cr63,000
DARE Reserve	Cr2,000,000	0	0				0	Cr2,000,000
Waste Reserve	Cr898,152	0	Cr90,000				Cr90,000	Cr988,152
Winter Maintenance Reserve	Cr604,429	0	0				0	Cr604,429
Neath Market	Cr253,107	0	0				0	Cr253,107
Baglan Bay Innovation centre - dilapidation reserve	Cr177,517	100,000	0				100,000	Cr77,517
Renewable Energy Reserve	Cr17,959	0	0				0	Cr17,959
Environmental Health - Housing Equalisation	Cr130,000	35,000	0				35,000	Cr95,000
LAWDC Contingency Reserve	Cr815,177	0	0				0	Cr815,177

Description	Reserve Balance at 1st April 2022 £	Original budget reserves 2022/23	Additional movements to June 2022 £	Additional movements to September 2022 £	Additional movements to December 2022 £	Committed	Total Committed £	Uncommitted reserves
Workways - NPT	Cr290,435	0	0				0	Cr290,435
Environment Equalization Reserve	Cr1,065,291	287,278	221,500		Cr140,000		368,778	Cr696,513
Metal box Reserve	Cr930,327	776,418	Cr150,000	Cr476,000			150,418	Cr779,909
Pantteg Landslip Reserve	Cr500,000	0	0				0	Cr500,000
							0	0
<u>Trading Account</u>							0	0
Operating Account -Equalisation	Cr36,043	0	0				0	Cr36,043
Vehicle Tracking	Cr92,186	0	0				0	Cr92,186
Vehicle Renewals	Cr2,330,047	Cr1,196,081	Cr177,600		622,244		Cr751,437	Cr3,081,484
Total Environment	Cr11,436,905	288,592	Cr196,100	Cr429,000	479,632	0	143,124	Cr11,293,781
<u>Chief Executives</u>								
Elections Equalisation Fund	Cr350,139	Cr15,000	0				Cr15,000	Cr365,139
Health & Safety/Occupational Health	Cr40,501	0	0				0	Cr40,501
Digital Transformation Reserve	Cr1,170,000	0	0		0		0	Cr1,170,000
Schools IT Equalisation (HWB)	Cr600,000	0	0	330,000			330,000	Cr270,000
Development Fund for Modernisation	Cr76,032	0	0				0	Cr76,032
Digital renewal reserve	Cr1,233,394	400,000	0		Cr430,000		Cr30,000	Cr1,263,394
Chief Executives Equalisation Reserve	Cr164,236	50,500	0		Cr67,000	0	Cr16,500	Cr180,736
Organisational development reserve	Cr5,020,936	0	0		278,000	1,222,000	1,500,000	Cr3,520,936
Building Capacity	Cr155,295	138,000	Cr10,000		Cr32,000		96,000	Cr59,295
Voluntary Organisation Reserve	Cr86,430	0	0				0	Cr86,430
Total Corporate Services	Cr8,896,963	573,500	Cr10,000	330,000	Cr251,000	1,222,000	1,864,500	Cr7,032,463

Description	Reserve Balance at 1st April 2022 £	Original budget reserves 2022/23	Additional movements to June 2022 £	Additional movements to September 2022 £	Additional movements to December 2022 £	Committed	Total Committed £	Uncommitted reserves
<u>Corporate Other</u>								
Insurance Reserve	Cr4,725,382	280,000	0	0			280,000	Cr4,445,382
Covid recovery	Cr2,800,000	0	0	0	1,679,000	638,000	2,317,000	Cr483,000
Income Generation Reserve	Cr1,713,230	0	0	0			0	Cr1,713,230
Members Community Fund Reserve	Cr513,633	0		0		513,633	513,633	0
Capital support reserve	Cr683,447	0	0	0			0	Cr683,447
Hardship relief scheme	Cr2,000,000	0	0	0		2,000,000	2,000,000	0
Service resilience	Cr2,000,000	1,435,722	0	Cr148,294	Cr187,500	1,500,000	2,000,000	0
Discretionary fund	Cr1,401,836	0	0	0	1,401,836	0	1,401,836	0
Corporate Contingency	Cr4,567,000	702,000	Cr48,000	249,685	Cr32,150	1,391,000	2,862,4635	Cr1,704,537
Treasury Management Equalisation Reserve	Cr8,594,046	325,000	0	500,000		0	825,000	Cr7,769,046
Accommodation Strategy	Cr2,273,580	0	0	0			0	Cr2,273,580
Total Corporate Other	Cr31,272,154	2,742,722	Cr48,000	601,391	2,861,186	6,042,633	12,199,932	Cr19,072,222
<u>Joint Committee</u>								
Margam Discovery Centre - Building - Maintenance Reserve	Cr59,774	Cr57,333	0				Cr57,333	Cr117,107
Workways - Regional Reserve	Cr167,991	0	0				0	Cr167,991
Environment Legacy Reserve (SWTRA)	Cr59,728	0	0				0	Cr59,728
Substance Misuse Area Planning Board	Cr34,847	0	0				0	Cr34,847
WB Safeguarding Board Reserve	Cr113,265	0	0				0	Cr113,265
Intermediate Care pooled fund	Cr192,925	0	0	192,925			192,925	0
Total Joint Committee	Cr628,530	Cr57,333	0	192,925	0	0	135,592	Cr492,938

Description	Reserve Balance at 1st April 2022 £	Original budget reserves 2022/23	Additional movements to June 2022 £	Additional movements to September 2022 £	Additional movements to December 2022 £	Committed	Total Committed £	Uncommitted reserves
Total All Earmarked Reserves	Cr84,623,481	13,797,041	98,470	4,028,216	1,819,818	7,727,095	27,470,640	Cr57,152,841
General Reserve	Cr20,150,693	0	0			400,000	400,000	Cr19,750,693
TOTAL ALL REVENUE RESERVES	Cr104,774,174	13,797,041	98,470	4,028,216	1,819,818	8,127,095	27,870,640	Cr76,903,534

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER – HUW JONES

22nd February 2023

Matter for Monitoring

Wards Affected - All

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2022/23

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out treasury management action and information for 2022/23.
2. This report will also be forwarded to the next Governance and Audit Committee in line with the Council's Treasury Management Practices Scrutiny arrangements.

Rates of Interest

3. Over the past year, the cost of living has risen sharply. The speed of this increase is called the 'rate of inflation'. It is the job of the Bank of England to keep this rate around their target of 2%, however, it is currently above this – mainly due to the higher price of goods coming in from abroad along with the increase in the cost of energy.
4. To reduce the rate of inflation, the Bank of England increase their interest rates. Since December 2021 the interest rates have increased as per below:

Effective Date	Bank Rate
19 th March 2020	0.10%
16 th December 2021	0.25%
4 th February 2022	0.50%
16 th March 2022	0.75%
5 th May 2022	1.00%
16 th June 2022	1.25%
4 th August 2022	1.75%
22 nd September 2022	2.25%
3 rd November 2022	3.00%
15 th December 2022	3.50%
2 nd March 2023	4.00%

5. The following table provides examples of external borrowing costs as provided by the Public Works Loans Board (certainty rate) as at 20th January 2023:

	Equal Instalments of Principal		Annuity		Maturity	
	Previous 05Oct22	Current	Previous 05Oct22	Current	Previous 05Oct22	Current
	%	%	%	%	%	%
5-5.5 years	4.93	4.20	4.93	4.20	4.96	4.13
10-10.5 years	4.96	4.12	4.95	4.12	4.87	4.26
20-20.5 years	4.87	4.26	4.88	4.32	5.04	4.58
35-35.5 years	5.02	4.55	5.04	4.59	4.80	4.44
49.5-50 years	5.01	4.57	4.86	4.48	4.52	4.25

General Fund Treasury Management Budget

6. The following table sets out details of the treasury management budget for 2022/23 along with outturn figures for 2021/22. The budget consists of a gross budget for debt charges i.e. repayment of debt principal and interest, and interest returns on investment income.

2021/22 Outturn £'000		2022/23 Original Budget £'000
20,266	Principal and Interest charges	20,946
	Investment Income	
(167)	- Total	(200)
35	- less allocated to other funds	75
(132)	Subtotal Income	(125)
(291)	Contribution from General Reserves	(325)
	Contribution to General Reserves	
(176)	Contribution to/(from) treasury management reserve	
19,667	Net General Fund	20,496

NB: Other funds include Trust Funds, Social Services Funds, Schools Reserves, Bonds etc.

Borrowing

7. There has been no new loan agreements entered into since the last quarterly report to Cabinet.

Investments

8. The following are a list of investments as at 31st December 2022:

<u>Counterparty</u>	<u>Value (£)</u>	<u>Investment type</u>	<u>Investment start</u>	<u>Investment maturity</u>	<u>Interest rate</u>
Goldman Sachs International Bank	£5,000,000	Fixed	17 th Aug 2022	17 th Feb 2023	2.50%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	£5,000,000	Fixed	23 rd Dec 2022	23 rd Jun 2023	3.85%
Santander UK	£5,000,000	Fixed	20 th Jul 2022	20 th Jan 2023	2.28%
Nationwide Building Society	£5,000,000	Fixed	9 th Dec 2022	9 th Mar 2023	3.21%
Cambridgeshire C.C.	£5,000,000	Fixed	6 th December 2021	6 th December 2023	0.40%
Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside	£5,000,000	Fixed	5 th May 2022	4 th May 2023	1.20%
Plymouth City Council	£5,000,000	Fixed	8 th Sep 2022	7 th Sep 2023	3.05%
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham	£5,000,000	Fixed	17 th Nov 2022	17 th Jan 2023	2.88%
DMO	£7,100,000	Fixed/ Overnight	N/A	N/A	3.03% - 3.195%
Santander	£7,400,000	Call Account	N/A	N/A	3.00%

9. Please note – the Council’s investment criteria (appendix 1) allows for a maximum investment for an F1 rated counterparty to be £15m. Santander are currently an F1 rated counterparty – however, the policy also allows for this to be temporarily exceeded in exceptional circumstances.

Investment Income

10. In line with the Council's Investment Strategy, the 2022/23 original budget target for investment income is £200k, income for the financial year to date totals £734k. The interest rate forecasts are higher than used in the original budget calculation, so we are suggesting a revised budget of £1m for the financial year. This additional income will lead to a removal of the budgeted reserve contribution with further balances being contributed into reserves.
11. Members should note that the majority of investments are classified as 'specified' i.e. up to 12 months and are currently deposited with Local Authorities, Police, Goldman Sachs International Bank, Nationwide Building Society and Santander Bank.
12. The Council policy will allow investments up to a maximum of £25m for periods of more than 1 year and up to 5 years, and this will be considered when decisions on investing surplus funds are made. The Council has no such investments.

Financial Impact

13. All relevant financial information is provided in the body of the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

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

Valleys Communities Impacts

15. No implications

Workforce Impacts

16. There are no workforce impacts arising from this report.

Legal Impacts

17. There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

Risk Management

18. Borrowing and investment decisions are made in line with the Council's Treasury Management Policy. The Council has appointed Link Asset Services to provide support and advice in relation to this policy.

Consultation

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

Recommendation

20. It is recommended that Members note the contents of this monitoring report.

Appendices

21. Appendix 1 - Specified Investments

List of Background Papers

22. PWLB Notice Number 028/23

Officer Contact

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Finance Officer
E-mail - h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mr Ross Livingstone – Group Accountant – Capital and Corporate
E-mail – r.livingstone@npt.gov.uk

Specified Investments

	Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria	Funds Managed	Max Amount	Max Duration
Term deposits				
Term deposits - Debt Management Office	N/A	In-house	Unlimited	1 year
Term deposits – local, police and fire authorities	N/A	In-house	£10m	1 year
Term deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+, F1	In-house	£20m	1 year
Term deposits – UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+	In-house	£20m	1 year
Term deposits – UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1	In-house	£15m	6 months or 185 days
Callable deposits				
Callable deposits – Debt Management Agency deposit facility	N/A	In-house	Unlimited	
Callable deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+, F1	In-house	£20m	
Callable deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F2	In-house	£10m	
Callable deposits - UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+ or F1	In-house	£15m *	
Term deposits – non UK banks	Fitch short-term rating F1+	In-house	£5m	6 months or 185 days

* Where necessary this limit may be temporarily exceeded with the Authority's bankers only.

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER HUW JONES

22nd February 2023

MATTERS FOR: MONITORING

WARDS AFFECTED - ALL

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REVIEW REPORT 2022/23

Purpose of the Report

1. To review treasury management activities for the 6 month period to 30th September 2022.

Background

2. The Council operates a cash balanced treasury budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering maximising investment return.
3. The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending operations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt

previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

4. As a consequence treasury management is defined as:

“The management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. ”

Introduction

5. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2011) was adopted by this Council at the Council meeting in 28th February 2013.

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

- (i) Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council’s treasury management activities.
- (ii) Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices set out in the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
- (iii) Receipt by the full Council of an Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement – including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy – for the year ahead, a **Mid-year Review Report** and an Annual Report (stewardship report) covering activities during the previous year.
- (iv) Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
- (v) Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body. For this Council the delegated bodies are the Audit and Policy and Resources Committees.

Scheme of Delegation

Area of Responsibility	Council/ Committee	Frequency
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy	Cabinet for approval by Full Council	Annually before the start of the year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – mid year report	Cabinet	Mid year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – updates or revisions at other times	Cabinet for approval by Full Council	Periodically
Annual Treasury Outturn Report	Cabinet	Annually by 30 th September after the end of the year
Treasury Management Monitoring and Performance Reports	Cabinet and Audit Committee	Quarterly Quarterly
Treasury Management Practices	Cabinet for approval by Full Council	Annually
Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy	Cabinet (and Audit Committee)	Annually

6. This mid-year report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice, and covers the following:
- An economic update for 2022/23;
 - A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
 - The Council's capital expenditure (prudential indicators);
 - A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2022/23;
 - A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2022/23;
 - A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2022/23;

- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2022/23.
- Revised Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

7. There have been no changes to the approved Treasury Management and Investment Strategies for the 6 months up to 30th September 2022

Economic Update

8. Against a backdrop of stubborn inflationary pressures, the easing of Covid restrictions in most developed economies, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and a range of different UK Government policies, it is no surprise that UK interest rates have been volatile right across the curve, from Bank Rate through to 50-year gilt yields, for all of 2022.

This volatility is shown by the increase in the Bank of England base rate from 0.25% at the start of the calendar year to 2.25% at the end of September, with this rate expected to increase again over the coming months.

Market commentators' misplaced optimism around inflation has been the root cause of the rout in the bond markets with, for example, UK, EZ and US 10-year yields all rising by over 200bps since the turn of the year.

Interest rate forecasts

9. The Council's treasury advisor, Link Group, provided the following forecasts on 27th September 2022

Link Group Interest Rate View 27.09.22												
	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25
BANK RATE	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.75	2.50
3 month ave earnings	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.80	3.30	3.00	2.80	2.80	2.50
6 month ave earnings	4.70	5.20	5.10	5.00	4.60	4.10	3.90	3.40	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.60
12 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.00	4.70	4.20	4.00	3.50	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.70
5 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.20	3.90	3.70	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.20
10 yr PWLB	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.30	4.10	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.20
25 yr PWLB	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.50	4.30	4.10	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.40
50 yr PWLB	4.80	4.60	4.50	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.60	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.10

The Council's Capital Position (Prudential Indicators)

10. This part of the report updates:
- The Council's capital expenditure plans;
 - How these plans are being financed;
 - The impact of the changes in the capital expenditure plans on the prudential indicators and the underlying need to borrow; and
 - Compliance with the limits in place for borrowing activity.

The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing 2022/23

	2021/22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Estimate £'000	2022/23 Current Estimate £'000
Capital expenditure	70,624	70,415	72,540
Resourced by:			
• Capital receipts	2,693	401	486
• Capital grants & contributions	48,105	44,424	46,064
• Capital reserves + DRF	2,810	3,088	3,204
Capital Expenditure to be financed from borrowing	17,016	22,502	22,786

11. The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and what resources have been used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the unfinanced capital expenditure, and prior years' unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.
12. Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLb] or the

money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.

13. Reducing the CFR – the Council’s underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.
14. The total CFR can also be reduced by:
- The application of additional capital financing resources (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
 - Charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).
15. The Council’s 2022/23 MRP Policy (as required by CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management) was approved by Council as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2022/23 on 28th February 2022.
16. The Council’s CFR for the year is shown below, and represents a key prudential indicator.

CFR	2021/22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Estimate £'000	2022/23 Current Estimate £'000
Opening balance	343,055	354,215	349,573
Add unfinanced capital expenditure (point 10)	17,016	22,502	22,786
Less MRP/Set aside receipts	(10,498)	(10,755)	(10,695)
Closing balance	349,573	365,962	361,664

The borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for net borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

17. Net borrowing and the CFR – in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term the Council’s external borrowing, net of investments, must only be for a capital purpose. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. Net borrowing should not therefore, except in the short term, have exceeded the CFR. This indicator allows the Council some flexibility to borrow in advance of its immediate capital needs in 2022/23. The following table highlights the Council’s net borrowing position against the CFR. This shows the Council is complying with this prudential indicator as projected net borrowing is less than the CFR.

	2021/22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Estimate £'000	2022/23 Current Estimate £'000
External Debt (Gross) Less Investments	310,517 (73,300)	283,961 (52,500)	283,866 (52,500)
Net Borrowing Position	237,217	231,461	231,366
CFR	349,573	365,962	361,664

18. The authorised limit – the authorised limit is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council does not have the power to borrow above this level.
19. The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary is acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

	2021/22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Estimate £'000	2022/23 Current Estimate £'000
Authorised Limit	399,573	415,962	411,664
Operational Boundary	379,573	395,962	391,664
Gross Borrowing *	310,517	283,961	283,866

* Total maximum long term and short term

20. This report confirms that during the first 6 months of 2022/23 Council has maintained gross borrowing within the Authorised Limit.

Investment Portfolio 2022/23

21. In accordance with the Code, it is the Council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity, and to obtain an appropriate level of return which is consistent with the Council's risk appetite. Due to the increase in the Bank of England base rate previously mentioned, this will lead to an increase in the expected return on investments made – albeit making sure we remain consistent with the Council's risk appetite.
22. It is confirmed that the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy have not been breached during the first six months of 2022/23.
23. The Council's original budget for investment return for 2022/23 has been set at £200k. However, due to the increase in the Bank of England base rate, it has been decided to increase this target to £800k. This is being reviewed regularly and if there is any shortfall the balance will be funded from the Treasury Management Reserve.
24. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2022/23, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:
- Security of Capital
 - Liquidity
25. There has been no change in the Council's Investment Strategy aims from those approved on 28th February 2022. The aim continues to be to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to keep an adequate level of investments which can be instantly accessed to cover short term cash flow needs. The Council also seeks out value where available in significantly higher

rates in periods up to 12 months with approved institutions that meet the Council's stringent credit rating assessment.

26. Investment rates available have continued at historically low levels. The average level of funds available for investment purposes during the period was affected by the timing of precept payments, receipt of grants and progress on the Capital Programme.

Investment performance to the 30th September 2022

27. The Council held £75.8m of investments as at 30th September 2022 and the investment portfolio yield for the first six months of the year is 1.07%. This yield is also expected to increase in the second half of the year due to the increased interest rates.

A full list of investments held as at 30th September 2022 is provided in Appendix 1.

Investment counterparty criteria and proposed amendments

28. The current investment counterparty criteria approved by Members earlier this year are detailed in Appendix 3 of this report.

Borrowing

29. The Council's agreed Strategy in relation to borrowing is set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Report as approved by Council. This strategy outlined that consideration would be given to entering into new external borrowing if PWLB (or money market) rates became more favourable.
30. During 2022/23 the Council has not entered into any new loans with the PWLB.

Borrowing in advance of need

31. The Council has not borrowed in advance of need during the six month period ended 30th September 2022. Members should note that the total external debt projection for 31st March 2023 is as follows:

	£'000
Public Works Loans Board (PWLB)	216,446
Market Loans	62,500
WG Town Centre Loan	1,500
Salix (Public Lighting) Loan	1,846
Temporary Borrowing	1,574
Total	283,866

Debt Rescheduling

32. Debt rescheduling opportunities have been non-existent during 2022/23 due to the penalties involved in entering into such arrangements.

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

33. It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the affordable borrowing limits. The Council's original approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators (affordability) limits were included in the approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement as reported to Council on 28th February 2022.
34. During the financial year to date, the Council has operated within the Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and in compliance with the Treasury Management Practices. The Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2022/23 onwards have been revised and are presented in Appendix 2.

Financial Impact

35. All relevant financial information is provided in the body of the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

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

Valleys Communities Impacts

37. No implications

Workforce Impacts

38. There are no workforce impacts arising from this report.

Legal Impacts

39. There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

Risk Management

40. There are several risks associated with the treasury management activities. These include interest rate fluctuations, counter party investment, international economic and political etc. The treasury management strategy is included within the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

Consultation

41. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

42. Members **note** the Treasury Management activities to date this financial year, and how they relate to the proposed activities within the original 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy Statements.

Appendices

43. Appendix 1 – Investment Position as at 30th September 2022
Appendix 2 – Prudential Indicators
Appendix 3 – Specified Investments - Current Criteria

List of Background Papers

44. Link Asset Services Mid-year Reporting Template
Investment and Borrowing Records 2022/23

Officer Contact:

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E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mr. Ross Livingstone - Group Accountant (Capital and Corporate)
E-mail: r.livingstone@npt.gov.uk

Investment Position as at 30th September 2022

Borrower	Maturity	Rate %	Total £'000
<u>Banks and Building Societies</u>			
Goldman Sachs	23 rd Dec 2022	2.27	5,000
Goldman Sachs	17 th Feb 2023	2.50	5,000
Santander	20 th Jan 2023	2.28	5,000
Nationwide BS	3 rd Nov 2022	1.69	5,000
Nationwide BS	15 th Nov 2022	1.80	5,000
<u>Other Local Authorities</u>			
Cambridgeshire CC	6 th Dec 2023	0.40	5,000
East Ayrshire CC	13 th Dec 2022	0.45	5,000
Police and Crime Comm for Merseyside	4 th May 2023	1.20	5,000
Cornwall Council	17 th Oct 2022	1.73	5,000
Plymouth CC	7 th Sep 2023	3.05	5,000
<u>Call Deposit</u>			
Santander	Instant Access	1.75	9,100
DMO	various	various	16,700
Total			75,800

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Original Estimate	2022/23 Revised Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Expenditure	70,624	70,415	72,540	74,251	31,812
Capital Financing Requirement	349,573	365,962	361,664	366,628	356,824
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	6.46%	6.08%	5.73%	6.17%	6.21%

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Original Estimate	2022/23 Revised Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Authorised Limit for External Debt: Borrowing and other long term liabilities	399,573	415,962	411,664	416,628	406,824
Operational Boundary for External Debt: Borrowing and other long term liabilities	379,573	395,962	391,664	396,628	386,824
External Debt (Gross)	310,517	283,961	283,866	280,148	274,736
Less Investments	(73,300)	(52,500)	(52,500)	(52,500)	(52,500)
Net Borrowing Position	237,217	231,461	231,366	227,648	222,236

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

	2022/23 limit
	£'000
Upper Limit on Fixed Interest Rate Exposure Lower Limit on Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	349,573
Upper Limit on Variable Rate Exposure Lower Limit on Variable Rate Exposure	174,787
Upper Limit for Total Principal Sums Invested for Over 364 Days (per maturity date)	£25m

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing During 2022/23	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate		
	%	%	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
Under 12 months	9	3	15	0
12 months to 2 years	2	2	15	0
2 to 5 years	3	1	40	0
5 to 10 years	5	8	60	0
10 years and above	81	86	100	15

Specified Investments Criteria

	Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria	Funds Managed	Max Amount	Max Duration
Term deposits				
Term deposits - Debt Management Office	N/A	In-house	Unlimited	1 year
Term deposits – local, police and fire authorities	N/A	In-house	£10m	1 year
Term deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+, F1	In-house	£20m	1 year
Term deposits – UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+	In-house	£20m	1 year
Term deposits – UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1	In-house	£15m	6 months or 185 days
Callable deposits				
Callable deposits – Debt Management Agency deposit facility	N/A	In-house	Unlimited	
Callable deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+, F1	In-house	£20m	
Callable deposits – Nationalised & Part Nationalised UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F2	In-house	£10m	
Callable deposits - UK banks/Building Societies	Fitch short-term rating F1+ or F1	In-house	£15m *	
Term deposits – non UK banks	Fitch short-term rating F1+	In-house	£5m	6 months or 185 days

* Where necessary this limit may be temporarily exceeded with the Authority's bankers only.

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER – HUW JONES

22nd FEBRUARY 2023

Matter for Monitoring

Wards Affected - All

202/23 Risk Register Monitoring

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on the Council's Strategic Risks.

Executive Summary

2. The Council's Risk Management Policy was approved by Cabinet on 27th June 2018. This policy requires that, on a 6 monthly basis, Cabinet:

- Reviews and monitors the Strategic Risk Register

This report ensures compliance with that Policy.

Strategic Risks

3. The Strategic Risk Register is included at Appendix 1 of this report. Members should note the register has been updated since it was last reported to Cabinet and now contains 17 strategic risks.

Integrated Impact Assessment

4. There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment as the report is for monitoring purposes only.

Valleys Communities Impacts

5. No Impact.

Workforce Impacts

6. There are no workforce impacts arising from this report.

Legal Impacts

7. There are no legal impacts arising from this report.

Risk Management Impact

8. This report ensures compliance with the approved Risk Management Policy.

Consultation

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

Recommendations – NOT FOR DECISION

10. It is recommended that Cabinet monitor the risks set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

Appendices

11. Appendix 1 - Strategic Risk Register

Background Papers

12. Risk Management Policy – Cabinet 27th June 2018

Officer Contact

13. For further information on this report item, please contact:

Huw Jones – Chief Finance Officer

E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Caryn Furlow-Harris – Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support

Email: c.furlow@npt.gov.uk

Louise McAndrew – Corporate Strategic Planning & Governance Officer

Email: l.mcandrew@npt.gov.uk

Risk Reference	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Mitigation Plan	Mitigation Plan - Progress of Each Item. Complete / In progress / Not started	Responsible person	Inherent		Revised			Please indicate whether there has been any change in risk rating since last report	Risk Owner Comment
						Impact	Likelihood	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating		
SR01	IF there is insufficient investment in the Council's major infrastructure THEN it is at risk of failure	Nicola Pearce	Cymer Bridge - Secure an alternative route for Cymer Bridge to avoid community severance.	In progress	David Griffiths	Medium / High	Very Likely	Medium	Likely	Medium		Alternative route designed. Consultation is on-going ABMU Health Centre re-location to facilitate scheme. Capital Funding to be identified to deliver scheme, awaiting outcome of grant application which is subject to Welsh Government Roads infrastructure review.
			Bridges & Retaining Structures Highway Asset Management Plan	In progress	David Griffiths							Rolling programme of Statutory Principle and General inspections and surveys are understand to determine condition of assets and identify areas that require further investigation and mitigation to avoid structural failure. Prioritise programmes of work and where possible, remove/replace/re-construct and refurbish the highest risk assets.
			Cwmafon Landslip Area - Stabilise area and reopen highway network	Complete	David Griffiths							Area partially stabilised and highway reopened. Landslip area remains a medium risk and will require further stabilisation in future years. Visual inspections on-going. *Capital Funding to be identified to address future works (Circa £5 Million).
			Fleet Asset Management Plan. Renewals Programme and Investment Plan in place. Annual reports to Streetscene & Engineering Cabinet Board for Scrutiny and approval of procurement programme. All vehicles and plant purchased off National and Regional Framework, or Council's approved list of suppliers. Internal Health & Safety Audits of plant and equipment, risk assessments and workshop perating procedures. Vehicle and Plant disposals via Auctions.	In progress	David Griffiths							Ongoing - Low emission Fleet Transition programme approved by Cabinet Board Jan 2022. to achieve WG targets by 2025/2030.
			Asset management of non-highway civil engineering infrastructure (such as countryside bridges and dams) - Produce single inventory of assets vested with Streetcare, Property and Regeneration, and Planning & Public protection, obtain preliminary condition data, undertake an initial prioritisation exercise, and produce a programme to address high priority issues	In progress	Mike Roberts							Inventory produced. Process of gathering condition data and prioritising now ongoing. Initial prioritisation and some high priority work completed. Cycles of data gathering and prioritisation will now continue
			Highway Asset Management - undertake a rolling programme of surveys and inspections to understand adopted highway infrastructure condition (aside from Bridges) that require further investigation and action. Prioritise issues and produce programmes of work annually	In progress	Mike Roberts							Inspections & surveys ongoing. Update of HAMP currently due, delayed by staff resource issues
SR02	IF action is not taken to respond to the technical surveys showing that there is a risk of landslip at Panteg THEN there could be harm or death caused to people	Nicola Pearce	Council opinion to be sought on extent of on going liability due to large area of land in private ownership and having regard to the Councils duties as outlined in the legislation relating to housing and drainage.	Complete	Nicola Pearce	High	Very Likely	Medium / High	Very Likely	High		
			Hazard & Risk Maps of the area finalised	Complete - published	David Griffiths							
			Public meeting held Jan 18 with further meetings thereafter as required.	Complete	Nicola Pearce							
			Monitoring & slope analysis complete informed final report.	Complete - final report published	David Griffiths							
			Sharing of information with public via Councils Internet site.	Ongoing - Several reports published	David Griffiths							
			Land tribunal hearing held to consider householders concerns on council action	Complete	Ceri Morris							
			Discussions are ongoing with the insurance companies representing all but one of the owners through a third party consultancy.	On-going	Ceri Morris							Discussions continue with the insurance companies representing all but one of the owners through a third party consultancy
			Discussions are underway with tenants to conclude compensations payments	On-going	Ceri Morris							Discussions continue with tenants to conclude compensation payments
Multi-agency response plan to incident in place (Dragon System).	Complete - published within Dragon system	David Griffiths/Shawn Burgess										
Develop Strategic Planning Framework to inform future development proposals in the area	On-going	Ceri Morris	Work on preparing the Replacement LDP has now commenced. Preferred Strategy to be issued for consultation in 2023.									
SR03	IF there isn't an effective management system to address historic Coal Tips and Quarries on Council Owned Land THEN there will be harm to people and the wider community.	Nicola Pearce	Welsh Government Task Force Established to review current legislation. Over 600 Tips identified within NPTCBC. All high risk category D tips have been identified and jointly inspected by the Coal Authority and Council officers. Welsh Government grant secured 2021/22 to mitigate risks however it should be noted that these risks will continue to remain active and require on-going inspections and maintenance. Inspections currently being undertaken on all category C Tips with a view to securing further WG grants to mitigate the the risk from becoming worse. Category B-C tips to be surveyed thereafter.	In progress	David Griffiths	High	High	High	High/Medium	High		Inspection regime ongoing, with Capital bids made to WG to mitigate high risk category D tips. WG Grant (£1.4 million) secured to carryout surveys, maintenance and / or remediation works to High Risk Tips during the financial year 2022/2023. Future bids to be made for 2023/2024. A recent decision has also been taken by the Council to demolish Godre'r Graig School which is located directly below a nearby Quarry Tip which has been confirmed as actively unstable.
SR04	IF the Council is unable to recruit and retain appropriately skills and qualified employees in sufficient numbers in light of national and local	Sheenagh Rees	The Council has committed temporary additional resources to fund 4 additional recruitment staff for 18 months, to provide additional expertise and support within the HR team and to develop innovative and creative recruitment solution particularly for hard to fill jobs.	Complete	Sheenagh Rees	High	Likely	Medium	Likely	Medium		Recruitment activity has doubled since the additional resources were established and shows no sign of letting up (in the 6 month period 1st April 2022 - 30th September 2022 461 new starters compared with an annual average pre pandemic of 500 new starters). Consideration will made early 2023 as to whether or not this additional resource needs to be retained for a further period, and how this can be funded.
			A Recruitment Taskforce was established in November 2021, Chaired by the Head of People & OD, bringing together resources from across the Council, and working with external partners including DWP, CVS, universities and education providers amongst others, to develop actions to increase capacity in the workforce across the council, with short term actions to recruit immediately and long term actions to develop the future workforce.	Complete	Sheenagh Rees							The Taskforce continue to meet and develop short term and longer term strategies to support recruitment and succession planning.
			The development implementation of a new Recruitment Website in March 2022 creating the brand #TeamNPT ensures that the council has a visible and attractive employer brand, marketing the council as an employer of choice.	Complete	Sylvia Griffiths / Diane Hopkins							Of the 2,672 job applicants in the first 6 months of this year, 48% applied as a result of looking at the new website.
			The succession planning toolkit has been designed to assist managers to plan and develop future workforce requirements. Early in 2022 / 2023 the OD team will provide mandatory accountable manager training to support the development of a succession plan for every service in the council by March 2023. These local plans will then help inform corporate planning and OD actions.	In progress	Lynne Doyle							Mandatory training for accountable managers has taken place with 7 workshops attended by 64 managers. Succession plans to be submitted by 31st March 2023.
			The Corporate Recovery Board developed an outline Future of Work Strategy, informed by feedback from employees, Accountable Managers and Heads of Service. This has been further developed with input from managers into a Future of Work Strategy signed off by Elected Members autumn 2022.	Complete	Sheenagh Rees							Following extensive consultation that took place from August to October, members at Personnel Committee signed of the plan on 24th October 2022.

	recruitment shortages THEN service delivery may be adversely impacted and the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan may not be fully realised.		<p>The Council has committed resource to support the implementation of the Future of Work Organisational Development, funding a delivery team which will be in place by May 2022, and the commissioning of development programmes, and actions linked to employee well-being, reward and recognition and succession planning.</p> <p>Implementation of Phase 2 iTrent HR System, rolling out Employee Self Serve Facility and Performance Management. This will improve data collection, improve customer experience and enable monitoring of performance management, embedding it as a year round activity, not a once a year conversation. It is planned to develop Manager Dashboards, so every manager has at their finger tips key employee data to support their local workforce and succession planning activity.</p> <p>Development of data analytics capacity within the HR team will support the development of evidence based workforce planning.</p> <p>The implementation of the Interim Hybrid Working Framework, embracing flexible, agile and mobile workstyles, to be tested and reviewed prior to confirmation of the workforce model to be agreed and signed off by Elected Members in Autumn 2022, will ensure that the council has an employment offer that keeps pace with the external environment and competitor employers.</p> <p>Commitment to employment security to the maximum extent possible factored into the emerging Medium Term Financial Plan</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Sheenagh Rees</p> <p>Sheenagh Rees</p> <p>Diane Hopkins</p> <p>Sheenagh Rees</p> <p>Sheenagh Rees</p>							<p>Recruitment to the FOW Team has taken longer than anticipated, with fixed term contracts being more difficult to recruit to. The FOW Lead has now been appointed and will start in post in January 2023.</p> <p>Phase 2 Project Board established in September, with stakeholder representation. Pilot of sickness absence Manager Self Serve and Employee Self Serve underway. Project Plan in place.</p> <p>Management of change is currently taking place to create this team within the HR Service. 5 employees are currently studying for a Data Analytics level 4 apprenticeship award at Gower College, a 2 year programme equivalent to year 1 degree course.</p> <p>Review has taken place, extensive consultation and approval given at Personnel Committee on 24th October 2022.</p> <p>Commitment made by senior leadership and Chief Executive, Staff Council and Chief Executive Budget Briefings, November 2022.</p>
SR05	IF the Council does not manage the safeguarding regime safely THEN significant harm will be caused to children and vulnerable people	Andrew Jarrett	<p>Bring together safeguarding arrangements for adult and children's social services under a single line manager</p> <p>Consider whether there is scope to integrate other safeguarding practices across the Council into a shared corporate service</p> <p>Developing practice to better identify priority risks when supporting vulnerable people (including response to DOLS (LPS) and DOLO</p> <p>Developing a Social Services Single Point of Contact to promote more robust and consistent decision making at the "front-door".</p> <p>Develop a "Transitional Safeguarding Pathway" to support vulnerable young people into adulthood</p> <p>Fully embed a Social Services "Quality Assurance Framework", to regularly monitor safeguarding arrangements within the Directorate</p> <p>To Strengthen and develop accommodation for care leavers</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Keri Warren</p> <p>Keri Warren</p> <p>Keri Warren</p> <p>Keri Warren</p> <p>Keri Warren</p> <p>Keri Warren</p>	Medium / High	Likely	Medium / High	Unlikely	Medium		
SR06	IF there are insufficient capital and revenue resources then the Council will have to agree priorities, raise council tax and make cuts in jobs and services to deliver a balanced budget	Huw Jones	<p>A robust Medium Term Financial Plan is being developed to ensure the Council can plan activity in line with estimated resources</p> <p>Financial procedure rules and accounting instructions in place setting out clear roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Monthly budget monitoring undertaken, reviewed by Corporate Directors Group on a monthly basis and reported to the Executive quarterly</p> <p>A review of reserves to be undertaken during 2022/23 to ensure that the purpose of holding each reserve is clear, a responsible Head of Service or Director will be allocated to each reserve</p> <p>Intensive lobbying of UK and WG being undertaken to secure sufficient funding to meet statutory duties</p> <p>Extensive programme of employee, elected member and stakeholder engagement underway to create ownership of the overall budget position and to secure maximum effort to create a sustainable financial and corporate strategy for the next planning period</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>Not started</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Huw Jones</p> <p>Huw Jones</p> <p>Huw Jones</p> <p>Huw Jones</p> <p>Huw Jones</p>	Very high	Likely	High	Likely	High		<p>Awaiting Local Government Settlement due 14th December 2022. Budget consultation to commence 19th January 2023</p>
SR07	IF the council fails to embed a culture of Health and Safety within its workforce THEN accidents and incidents could occur leading to injury and / or death.	Karen Jones	<p>The Corporate Occupational Health & Safety Policy is reviewed annually and includes a signed statement from the Chief Executive. The Policy sets out clear roles and responsibilities in relation to Health and Safety. This policy is issued to every employee as part of the induction process and is available on the council's intranet.</p> <p>A Health and Safety Law poster is displayed prominently in every council workplace.</p> <p>The council has allocated resources to the Health & Safety Team to employ an appropriately experience and qualified Occupational Health & Safety Manager and a team of Health and Safety Officers, to provide advice and guidance in relation to Occupational Health & Safety matters across the council, ensuring that an appropriate policy framework is in place.</p> <p>The council has implemented a Risk Assessment process to facilitate the identification of hazards and mitigating actions which include ensuring employees have the necessary skills and training to undertake their jobs safely, that employees have appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and know how to use it, and that employees know and understand the health and safety rules that apply to their job and workplace and adhere to them. Line managers receive training in relation to the Risk Assessment process and are responsible for ensuring that Risk Assessments are carried out and are up-to-date. Regular auditing by the Health and Safety team takes place.</p> <p>The Council has an agreed process in place to identify and appoint a Responsible Officer for every building in which employees of the council work, and mandatory Responsible Officer E Learning which every Responsible Officer is required to complete.</p> <p>The Council has an agreed Accident and Incident reporting process in place, and keeps records as required of all accidents and incidents.</p> <p>The Health & Safety Team have implemented a proactive model of internal cross auditing which features four elements necessary for success: assessment of conformance to written procedures, assessment of the effectiveness of the process being audited, detection of external elements affecting the process being audited, and documentation of exceptional performance.</p> <p>From April 2022 Quarterly Health & Safety Reports will be provided to the Corporate Director Group to raise awareness of any accidents and incidents, and consideration of any action that may need to be taken as a result.</p> <p>An Annual Health & Safety Report will be provided to the council's Personnel Committee, to raise awareness of any accidents and incidents and consideration of actions that need to be taken.</p> <p>Mandatory IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors E Learning completed by Heads of Service and Corporate Directors February 2022 and to ensure a top down approach to Health & Safety culture.</p> <p>The Occupational Health Unit carry out pre-appointment assessments to ensure that new recruits are fit for appointment, and carry out a programme of health surveillance, and safety critical medicals, as well as supporting attendance management, medical redeployment and rehabilitation processes.</p> <p>Mandatory IOSH Safety for Managers E Learning completed by Accountable Managers March 2022 to ensure a top down approach to Health & Safety Culture.</p> <p>It's My Responsibility' Health & Safety Campaign to be launched and rolled out throughout 2022 / 23, with the aim of embedding Health & Safety Culture throughout the council.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Head of People & OD</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Simon Brennan</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Lynne Doyle</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Lynne Doyle</p> <p>Sheenagh Rees</p>	High	Likely	Medium	Unlikely	Low		<p>In place.</p> <p>In place.</p> <p>In place.</p> <p>In place.</p> <p>In place.</p> <p>In place.</p> <p>On hold due to long term sickness absence of Accountable Manager.</p> <p>On hold due to long term sickness absence of Accountable Manager.</p> <p>On line training available to every Corporate Director and Head of Service.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>On line training available to every Accountable Manager.</p> <p>On hold due to long term sickness absence of Accountable Manager.</p>
			<p>The council has allocated resources to the Emergency Planning Team, employing suitably qualified and experienced officers to support the provision of advice and guidance in relation to Business Continuity Planning.</p> <p>The Emergency Planning Team have an established Business Continuity Planning Framework in place, and provide training and support to Accountable Managers to support the completion of a BCP for every service area.</p> <p>Emergency Planning Team monitor the completion and review of BCPs across the council providing an annual report to Corporate Director Group.</p> <p>The Emergency Planning Team have in place a rolling programme to test corporate disaster recovery and business continuity plans against service plans and a range of scenarios.</p> <p>The Emergency Planning Team assess local risk to identify what the council needs to plan for and then writes and reviews response plans against each identified risk.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>	<p>Sheenagh Rees</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p> <p>Shaun Burgess</p>							<p>Team in place.</p> <p>Renewal process currently underway.</p> <p>Update will be provided following renewal process.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>

SR08	IF the Council fails to comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 THEN in the event of a major incident council services may be significantly adversely affected and the council may be in breach of its statutory responsibilities leading to litigation and reputational damage.	Karen Jones	The Emergency Planning Team represent the council at the South Wales Local Resilience Forum, supporting regional risk assessments and planning.	Complete	Shaun Burgess	Medium / High	Likely	Medium	Likely	Medium	Ongoing.
			A Strategic Officer Duty Rota is in place to ensure that an allocated senior officer is on call 24 / 7 365 days a year, to support the council response in the event of a Major Incident and to represent the council at GOLD or SILVER Strategic Command Group should this be required.	Complete	Shaun Burgess						Ongoing.
			The Emergency Planning Team provide appropriate training and guidance to officers on the Strategic Officer Duty Rota ensuring that they are appropriately prepared to support the council's response in the event of a major incident.	Complete	Shaun Burgess						Ongoing.
			The Emergency Planning Team have a 24/7 365 days a year rota to ensure that tactical support is available to support the council response in the event of a Major Incident, supporting emergency services as necessary.	Complete	Shaun Burgess						Ongoing.
			The council allocated resources in 2022 to enable the establishment of an additional officer to support ENV with risks associated with Coalmines and landslips.	Complete	Shaun Burgess						In place.
			The council allocated additional resources in 2022 to enable the establishment of two additional officers to support the council comply with the PROTECT Duty.	Complete	Sheenagh Rees						In place.
SR09	IF personal/sensitive information is unlawfully disclosed THEN there will be major financial penalty and loss of public confidence.	Craig Griffiths	Continued targeted training; provision of encryption technology; access to secure email transmission and receipt.	In Progress	Craig Griffiths	Medium / High	Likely	Medium / High	Unlikely	Medium	Mitigation plans are ongoing on a constant basis
			Continual review and testing of Perimeter base and Information security	In Progress	Chris Owen / Craig Griffiths						
			GDPR Compliance Group meets as required to consider individual reported cases	In Progress	Craig Griffiths						
			Continued training and refresher training for officers on Data Protection responsibilities	In Progress	Craig Griffiths						
SR10	If the Council does not accurately factor in the demographic profile of its population into its corporate plan and financial planning processes then there is a risk that services will be unable to respond to all need appropriately and budgets will not be in balance	Huw Jones	Build forecast demographic changes into the assumptions underpinning the medium term financial planning model	In Progress	Huw Jones	Medium	Likely	Medium	Unlikely	Low	Corporate Directors Group have been tasked with identifying demographic pressures by 8th December 2022.
			Explicitly consider demographic pressures in devising strategies and policies to respond to changes forecast in the demographic profile of the area	In Progress	Heads of Service						
			Ensure people from all backgrounds are engaged and involved in devising policy and strategy that is intended to meet their needs	In Progress	Heads of Service						
SR11	If there is a disruption in operations or unavailability of technology or services, due to high dependency on tightly coupled technology or external environmental factors (such as total power loss, flood, etc.), then this would have a significant impact on service delivery across the Council	Chris Owen	Business Continuity Plans	In Progress	Chris Owen	High	Medium	High	Low	Medium	Digital operations must ensure a high performing and resilient operation layer across the Councils technical architecture
			Disaster Recovery Plans	In Progress	Jules Payne						
			Operations and Product Roadmaps / Infrastructure review / Fully map all services and dependencies	In Progress	Jules Payne / Ian Vaughan						
			Routine - ITHC, maintenance, patch management, capacity management etc.	In Progress	Jules Payne						
			Data and Systems are secured and replicated across two civic centre sites to provide resilience and swift recovery in the event of systems failure	In Progress	Jules Payne						
SR12	If there is a lack of protection around the digital and data ecosystem, then there is a risk to ensuring confidentiality and integrity of the technology systems and the safeguarding of data	Chris Owen	Cyber Security Strategy	Complete	Jules Payne	High	Medium	High	Low	Medium	We must give assurance to residents, businesses and other stakeholders of the Council's commitment to delivering robust information security measures to protect resident and stakeholder data from misuse and cyber threats. Safeguarding their privacy through increasingly secure and modern information governance and data sharing arrangements - both internally and with partners.
			Cyber Playbooks	Complete	Jules Payne						
			Routine Testing / Bobs Phishing	In Progress	Jules Payne						
			ITHC	In Progress	Jules Payne						
			Layer of technology controls including Nessus, MFA, Intune etc.	Complete	Jules Payne						
			Cyber Essentials (+)	In Progress	Jules Payne						
			Digital forensics	In Progress	Jules Payne						
Consideration of Microsoft enhanced controls such as DLP to further protect	In Progress	Jules Payne									
SR13	If the situation in Ukraine escalates and government planning is insufficient to cater for the numbers of refugees arriving in NPT then there is a risk that local public services and budgets will be overwhelmed	Andrew Jarrett	Early and continuing involvement in Welsh Government planning processes	Complete	Claire Jones	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	
			Clear governance and partnership working established at NPT level to gather community intelligence and formulate agile responses	Complete	Claire Jones						
			Robust safeguarding checks of the circumstances and welfare of people arriving from Ukraine	In progress	Chris Frey-Davies						
			Good quality public information provided which is updated regularly	In progress	Liam Hedges						
			Robust operational and financial systems to capture the number of refugees arriving and the services that are in place to meet their needs	In progress	Claire Jones						
			Mechanisms established to obtain feedback from Ukrainian families settling into the area to inform ongoing planning	In progress	Claire Jones						
SR14	If the council does not put in place sufficient capacity and capability THEN developer interest in the county borough will not be realised losing the opportunity to create new sustainable jobs and grow the local economy and opportunities to lever in funding will be lost	Nicola Pearce	Develop and monitor the place based strategy	In progress	Simon Brennan	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	The Place Plans for the major town centres will be completed shortly with the plans for a number of the smaller town centres following in Spring 2023. These will inform the Regeneration Plan for Summer 2023. With regard to recruitment to improve resilience in the Economic Development/Regeneration area, a number of posts have been filled and the remaining posts will be recruited in early 2023. A number of funding bids have been made, notably for Freeport status in a joint bid with ABP, MHP & PCC. Support is also being given to a number of high profile inward investment opportunities including the Wildfox Resort Development.
			Continue to implement and monitor the Community Benefits toolkit	In progress	Simon Brennan						
			Ensure sufficient capacity to deliver	In progress	Simon Brennan						
			Ensure pipeline of schemes to develop into funding applications to secure allocative and competitive UK Government funding	In progress	Simon Brennan						
			Monitor post construction	In progress	Simon Brennan						
			Ensure alliance to established and emerging Regeneration Strategies wherever possible	In progress	Simon Brennan						
SR15	If there are insufficient resources provided to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in the County Borough THEN outcomes for the population will be poor and the Council may breach its statutory duties.	Andrew Jarrett	A clear analysis of yearly demand and the anticipated resources needed to meet it will be clearly communicated to Senior Officers and Members as a part of annual budget setting considerations	In progress	Andrew Jarrett	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	
			The Director of Social Services health and Housing will advise CDG, Cabinet and Members of any likelihood that the Council could/may breach its statutory duties	In progress	Andrew Jarrett						
			In 2023 Adult Services, Children and Young People Services and Housing Services will clearly set out their strategies for meeting increasing demand in the coming years.	In progress	Andrew Jarrett						
SR16	If officers and members do not adhere to appropriate steps to be undertaken when making decisions, THEN the Council may be challenged on making unlawful decisions which could cause reputational damage	Karen Jones	Ensure appropriate governance awareness training is delivered across the Council and officers and members are aware of the appropriate matters that must be considered when decision making is undertaken.	In progress	Craig Griffiths	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	
	If Schools are not ready to implement the changes needed to implement curriculum reform and if there is a reduction or withdrawal of grants that		Support will be provided from ESOs to ensure schools will have developed a vision for the curriculum for Wales and will be trialling new approaches to teaching	In progress	Chris Millis/Mike Daley						
			Schools will be encouraged to be part of a professional network of school leaders sharing ideas and resources		Chris Millis						

SR17	there is a reduction or withdrawal of grants that support curriculum reform then the Council will not be able to comply with statutory duties and realise the benefits for learners	Andrew Thomas	Evidence gathered to ensure that pupils are effectively developing the four purposes of the curriculum because teaching will have evolved (more teachers will be following the approach to developing higher order thinking as explained in the training and learning and teaching strategy)	In progress	Chris Millis	High	Medium	High	Low	Medium	
			Schools implement the grants appropriately and have a financial spend plan to support recovery and the implementation of the new curriculum.	In progress	Chris Millis/Rhiannon Crowhurst						