



C O U N C I L S U M M O N S

To all Members of Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

to be held at 2.00 pm on

19 February 2025

in the

**MULTI-LOCATION MEETING - COUNCIL CHAMBER, PORT TALBOT
& MICROSOFT TEAMS**

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

Webcasting: This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

--- A G E N D A ---

PART A

1. Mayor's Announcements
2. Leader's Announcements
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Council (Pages 3 - 10)

8th January 2025

5. 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.

PART B

6. Director of Social Services Annual Report (Pages 11 - 82)
7. Changes to Committee Membership (Pages 83 - 86)
8. Contract Procedure Rules (Pages 87 - 156)
9. Mayoral Arrangements 2025/26 (Pages 157 - 160)
10. Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 (Pages 161 - 216)

PART C

11. Notice of Motion under Section 10 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) the Council's Constitution
12. Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules
13. Urgent Items
Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100BA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).



Chief Executive

**Civic Centre
Port Talbot**

Thursday, 13 February 2025

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

8 January 2025

The Mayor: Councillor M.Crowley

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor W.Carpenter

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, T.Bowen, H.C.Clarke, C.Clement-Williams, A.Dacey, H.Davies, O.S.Davies, R.Davies, C.Galsworthy, N.Goldup-John, W.F.Griffiths, S.Grimshaw, J.Hale, S.Harris, M.Harvey, J.Henton, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, N.Jenkins, J.Jones, S.Jones, C.Jordan, D.Keogh, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, C.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, R.Mizen, S.Paddison, D.M.Peters, C.Phillips, R.Phillips, S.Purseley, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.H.Reynolds, G.Rice, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards, P.Rogers, S.Thomas, D.Whitelock, C.Williams, L.Williams, R.W.Wood and B.Woolford

Officers in Attendance: S.Curran, N.Daniel, C.Griffiths, H.Jones, N.Pearce, M.Shaw, A.Thomas and A.Thomas

Representatives of the Translation Service: Present

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished all a Happy New Year for 2025.

It was with sadness that the Mayor informed Council of the unfortunate passing of Council Colleague Shafi Hasan, along with the death of former Councillor Audrey Chaves of the Sandfields West Ward from 2012 to 2017 and former Councillor and Leader Thomas Phillip Noel Crowley.

Council stood to observe a minutes silence.

The Mayor went on to congratulate the following who was honoured in the Kings New Years Honours List. Mrs Janice Victoria Williams, Chair of Swansea Bay Health Board for public service, Mrs Debbie Lane for supporting and saving young lives, Mrs Wendy Ansell Specialist Midwife Nurse for services relating to harmful practices and women seeking sanctuary. Mr David John James for Volunteering Services, Mr Andrew Vaughan John, Chair of Aberavon Rugby Football Club for services to charity and business, Mrs Karen Pitt, for services to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical Skill and lastly Mr Jeremy Mark Vaughan, of South Wales Police.

The awards were acknowledged by Council with a round of applause.

2. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader announced to Council that the draft Budget Consultation for 2025/2026 had been published and was to be considered by Cabinet, Friday the 10th January 2025.

The Leader went on to state that whilst the improved government settlement figure is welcomed there is however a shortfall in funds to address the pressures within Governments in Wales. It has been estimated by the WLGA that the pressures going forward for next year in Wales amounts to £560 million pounds.

Despite the lack of pressure funds, the Leader informed Council that provisional local government funding had been secured to the amount of £253 million pounds, half of which is required.

The Leader finalised by requesting Council members continue to lobby to Welsh Government for an improved final settlement figure. The Leader stated that he would be responding to the consultation and urged members to do the same.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

The following interests were declared in relation to Agenda item 5 – Annual Presentation to Council from South Wales Police.

Councillor Sian Harris – as she has a son who is a serving member for South Wales Police.

Councillor Mike Harvey – as he is a Design and Crime Officer for South Wales Police.

Councillor Chris Williams – as he has a daughter who is a serving police officer for South Wales Police.

4. **Public Question Time.**

There were none.

5. **Annual Presentation to Council from South Wales Police**

The Mayor welcomed to the meeting Chief Superintendent Steve Jones BCU Commander for Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot, who gave a presentation to Council on the current position for South Wales Police.

Following the presentation members asked, of the 13,000 figure of extra officers outlined by West Minister how many would Neath Port Talbot benefit from. Chief Superintendent Jones responded by saying that whilst he was unsure how the 13,000 would currently be implemented, he was keen to keep pushing Welsh Government.

Members gave special thanks to Police Officer Tom Richardson for his continued work within the community of Sandfields West. Members asked for information relating to additional policing staff and of which how many were dedicated to local communities. Chief Superintendent Jones responded by saying that whilst overall numbers did not increase, response officers did. As an example response officers increased in Neath by 10, 2 per shift. Response calls and actions were outlined to Members. Chief Superintendent stated that whilst officers may not be visible in communities, lots of work was still going on behind the scenes.

Members went on to ask a further question, asking how long will the set period be for maintaining officers, including the Police Inspector? Chief Superintendent followed on with a response stating whilst turn arounds in Leadership is often, the force are keen to establish 10 year, however in reality the figure stands at around 3 to 4 years. South Wales Police share Members concerns.

Members requested that the presentation be shared as there was some communities missing from the data. Chief Superintendent explained that this was due to the format of the report but would happy to oblige in sharing the data with Members.

Members thanks the Chief Superintendent for the presentation given at today's Council meeting. The Deputy Leader went on to tell Council of their recent meeting with the new Police Commissioner Emma Wools which was received positively.

6. **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 25/26**

Cllr Simon Knoyle, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Social Justice introduced the report, which was to authorise the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2025/26.

RESOLVED:

That the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 as further amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 and any subsequent amendments that may be required by legislation in relation to The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2025.

That the Council approve the retention of the existing discretionary elements in relation to the Prescribed Scheme:

- (i) That no increase in the backdated period for all claimants be applied from the standard 3 months contained in the Prescribed Scheme.
- (ii) That no increase in the extended reduction period for all claimants be applied from the standard 4 weeks currently contained within the Prescribed Scheme.
- (iii) Apply a 100% disregard for War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and War Widower's Pensions for all claimants.

7. **Corporate Plan Annual Report 23/24**

The Leader introduced the Corporate Plan Annual Report 2023/24 to Council, which provides an account of progress made against the four well-being objectives and actions set out in the council's Corporate Plan 2022/2027: "Recover, Reset, Renew" for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Resolved:

That the Council adopts the Corporate Plan “Reset, Review, Recover” Annual Report for the period: 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

That the Leader of Council be given delegated authority to make such changes as may be needed to the Annual Report prior to publication, provided that such changes do not materially alter the content of the document considered by Council.

8. **Establishment of a Modernisation Group**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services Mr Craig Griffiths introduced the report to Council.

It was proposed that a Modernisation Group within the Council to review and enhance decision-making processes be established. The aim would be to ensure that Council procedures are efficient, transparent, and aligned with best practices.

Resolved:

That members approve the establishment of a modernisation group on the terms identified in the report.

9. **Governance and Audit Committee- Appointment of Voting Lay Member**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Mr. Craig Griffiths introduced the report to Council, which was to obtain approval for the appointment of a voting lay Member of the Governance and Audit Committee following a selection panel that met on the 20th December 2024.

Resolved,

That the individual referred to in paragraph 5, of the report be appointed as voting lay member of the Governance and Audit Committee.

10. **Notice of Motion under Section 10 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) the Council's Constitution**

The Mayor called upon Councillor Goldup-John to introduce his motion put before Council on 'The profit of the Crown Estate'.

Councillor Goldup-John addressed Council.

'Thank you, Mr. Mayor. The profit of the Crown Estate, made from National Resources in Wales should be no different to that of Scotland. Revenue generated from the Crown Estate in Wales was valued at over £600 million pounds at the end of 2022 and has grown since.

The revenue generated by this asset directly flows into the UK Treasury. This money, especially in times of uncertainty could be used to help create well-paid, green jobs, further research and development solutions in all sectors and work to bring down the domestic energy costs.

Noting the opportunity we have here with the development of the Celtic Freeports there could be a benefit to the local community by devolving the Crown Estate to Wales. Profit made from Wales is Natural Resources should be kept in Wales to boost our economy. The revenue from Scottish Assets go straight to the Scottish Government and we should be no different. This Council should support the campaign to devolve management of the Crown Estate and its assets in Wales back to the Welsh Government and the funds raised from this, should be used to support social needs of the Welsh people.

And therefore, accordingly it is resolved that this Council and that the Leader of Neath Port Talbot Councillor Steve Hunt, write to the appropriate Secretary of State and the First Minister of Wales, outlining our support to persuade West Minister on the terms of this motion to devolve the Crown Estate as a matter of urgency. Thank you, Mr Mayor.'

Members followed on by endorsing the statement given by Councillor Gold-up John. Members gave their disbelief on why other nations in the UK could keep hold of their funds but Wales could not.

The Deputy Leader gave his support to the motion, saying there are increasing calls from Local Authorities in Wales to see the devolution of the Crown Estate. Principles including economic and budgetary reasons was mentioned. At present the Crown Estate own large areas of the coast, rivers and landscape in Wales an increase of £21 million to over £150 million in 2024. A result of resources seen across

county areas including energy which the Council have a particular interest in specifically the Celtic Freeport and Flow.

Across the United Kingdom the profit from the Crown Estate went up from £345 million in 2020 to £1.1 billion in 2024. In comparison to Scotland, Wales does not receive a direct proportion of the profit. Scottish Government was in receipt of over £100 million in 2024. It is estimated that Wales would receive over £50 million pounds if the Crown Estate was devolved.

The Deputy Leader went on to say that Councils in Wales between them pay 300,000 to crown estate for the use of their land. Profit has been seen in terms of natural resources.

Several members went on to express their gratitude to Councillor Goldup-John for the motion and gave thanks.

The Leader, Councillor Steve Hunt informed Council he was looking forward to compiling a letter of support to West Minister on behalf of Council Members.

Resolved:

That the motion 'The Crown Estate' be carried.

11. **Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules**

There were no questions received.

12. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

19th February 2025

**Report of the Director of Social Services, Health & Housing –
Andrew Jarrett**

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is for Members to note the work undertaken throughout Social Services and to adopt the Director's Annual Report 2023-24.

Background

The purpose of the annual report is to set out the local authority's improvement journey in providing services to people in their areas, those who access information, advice and assistance, and those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. Under the new requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (SSWB) Act, the report needs to demonstrate how local authorities have promoted wellbeing and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards.

The former reporting requirements for Directors of Social Services in part 6 of the “Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services” (Welsh Government June 2009) have been replaced as a consequence of both the SSWB and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

The requirements are that every local authority must produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions and the report must include:

- an evaluation of the performance in delivering social services functions for the past year including lessons learned (Part 8 Code on the role of the director);
- how the local authority has achieved the six quality standards for well-being outcomes (in a code about measuring social services performance made under s145 of the SSWB Act 2014);
- qualitative and quantitative data relating to the achievement of well-being outcomes (also set out in the code on measuring performance);
- the extent to which the local authority has met requirements under Parts 3 and 4 of the SSWB Act as set out in separate codes covering assessing needs and meeting needs;
- objectives for promoting the well-being of people needing care and support and carers needing support for the following year including those identified by population needs assessments under section 14 of the SSWB Act;
- assurances concerning:
 - structural arrangements enabling good governance and strong accountability;
 - effective partnership working via Partnership Boards;
 - safeguarding arrangements;
- the local authority’s performance in handling and investigating complaints
- responses to any inspections of its social services functions and an update on Welsh language provision;

- how the local authority has engaged people (including children) in the production of the report.

Financial Impact

Not applicable.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for adoption of the Director's Annual Report.

Valleys Communities Impacts

No implications.

Workforce Impacts

No implications.

Legal Impacts

No implications.

Risk Management Impacts

No implications.

Crime and Disorder Impacts

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the Council in the exercise of its functions to have "due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c) Re-offending the area"

There is no impact under the Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts

Section 2(1) of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a general duty where a person exercising relevant functions must have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which:

- (a) increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
- (b) exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

The proposals contained in this report are likely to have no impact on the above duty.

Consultation

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

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note and endorse the Director's Annual Report 23-24 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report for commending to Council for approval.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To ensure Neath Port Talbot Social Services meet the requirements that every local authority must produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions.

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

Director's Annual Report 2023-24 – Appendix 1.

List of Background Papers

No additional papers required.

Officer Contract

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Social Services, Health & Housing Director's Annual Report 2023-24

www.npt.gov.uk

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Foreword



Welcome to my annual report reflecting the period April 2023 to March 2024. It has been another eventful year and one with mixed outcomes. Starting on a positive note, we again saw a reduction in the number of Children Looked After, and we continue to support people fleeing the war in Ukraine as well as refugees from Afghanistan.

However, the social care sector continues to experience the fallout of the Covid pandemic. Our Community Mental Health Teams are seeing increased referrals. A number of providers are still experiencing staff recruitment and retention challenges. More significantly, however, was the closure of the largest older people's care home within Neath Port Talbot, with 90 beds and more than 70 residents.

The challenges faced by public services generally and the social care sector in particular are well-rehearsed, however the next year is likely to be one of the most difficult times any of us working in social services has experienced. Tightening budgets mean that we will have no option but to do things differently. This will almost certainly involve making tough decisions – even to the point of seeing services reduced.

To mitigate this as far as possible we continue to promote new ways of working, such as greater use of Assistive Technology to help people maintain independence in their own homes. But we also have to get smarter in the way we spend taxpayers' money. The last year has seen efforts to save money where possible, including bringing services in-house where we believe this will support the council in gaining better control of services. This is part of Welsh Government's Rebalancing Care agenda, and you will see more progress on this in the coming year.

We are also placing more emphasis on fairness of service provision. Put simply, we want to make sure people are not missing out on essential services as others may be receiving more than they need.

But we in NPT are resilient and innovative, working closely with the Council's Leadership, Members, regional partners and local providers. And we will continue to do everything we can to meet the care and support needs of the vulnerable people of our communities.

Andrew Jarrett
Director of Social Services, Health & Housing

Director's summary of performance

As at the end of the year 2,456 adults had a service and care plan (compared to 2,117 in the previous year), a 16% increase, while those aged 65+ receiving a service was 1,793 (1,788 the year before). The increase is partly due to a greater number of referrals for Mental Health Services and an ongoing consequence of the pandemic. The year also saw 1,948 new assessments completed for adults, almost half (43%) of whose needs could only be met with a care and support plan.

People are typically happiest in their own homes and communities, with minimal intervention from Health and Social Care. Last year the number of reablement packages completed during the year stood at 289, up by 55% on the previous year's 186 packages.

Over 16,300 contacts were received for children during the year, 2,000 more than the previous year. Despite this the number of Children Looked After continues to fall, standing at 251 (of whom 17 were Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children) at the end of March 2024, down from 260 in the previous year.

We also saw a reduction in the average number of days children were on the Child Protection Register during the year, falling from 269 to 228 days.

The Social Care sector is still experiencing challenges in terms of provider stability. During the year two older people's care homes closed, representing over ten per cent of the locally available beds and resulting in dozens of vulnerable people having to be moved to alternative care homes. We continue to work closely with the wider sector to ensure we have sustainable service provision, as domiciliary care providers are still experiencing staff recruitment and retention challenges.

Work is ongoing to promote Prevention and Early Intervention services to help people live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. This includes increasing the uptake of Assistive Technology and the Mobile Response Service to deal with non-emergency calls.

Our support for unpaid carers continues to increase. Last year 304 adult carers assessments were completed, up from 225 in the previous year.

During the year 97% of children's assessments were completed within the target 42 days from point of referral, while the use of children's residential care home placements has remained at the same level as last year.

Reflecting Welsh Government's Rebalancing Social Care agenda, during the year we undertook the necessary preparatory work to bring the Adult Family Placements Service back in-house, with the new service going live on 1st May 2024. This is the first of a number of services anticipated to be brought in-house during the current year.

The overall number of children and young people accessing advocacy services has increased in NPT by 21.2% over the last 12 months due to continued efforts to embed advocacy within local practice.

Although the number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) completed has increased to 293, up from 272 during the previous year, the time taken to deliver (between referral and completion) has gone up from 245 to 325 days. This is due to some longstanding jobs finally being signed off and closed.

Our Commissioning Unit played an active and key role in the closure of an older people's care home during the year. A huge logistical exercise involving the need to transfer around 70 people to alternative care homes in the area. This was unfortunately necessary but highlights the Council's responsibility in ensuring the social care needs of vulnerable people are met.

We continue to work closely with colleagues and partners across the Council as well those in Swansea Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, the third sector and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership.

Further data highlighting a number of measures can be found throughout this document.

We set a number of key priorities for the directorate last year to ensure we continue to meet the care and support needs of the people of NPT. Our progress in meeting those is laid out in the section below.

Priorities for 2023-24: What we said we would do and what we achieved

Children and Young People Services

- **Placement sufficiency:** We are committed to an approach that puts children – and families – first. We will work with families to help them stay together, but we will also ensure there are enough foster placements available for those who need a safe and stable environment.
 - ✓ We continue to develop our recruitment and retention and have a marketing timetable in place
 - ✓ We have seen an increase in enquiries, and we are starting to see a slow pick up in the enquiries proceeding to assessments
 - ✓ We have launched our foster plus to look for step down from residential care foster carers

- **Recruit, retain and develop a highly skilled workforce:** When social workers have the tools and time to do their job well, it makes a huge difference to children's and families' lives. We want a valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child and family who needs one.

We have:

- ✓ Had a very successful year of recruitment
- ✓ Continued to actively promote staff wellbeing as a means of retaining staff; promote a positive work culture with HR support, low caseloads, consistent management support and regular supervisions
- ✓ Attended universities to discuss NPT and recruit. PO has attended in Colleges and Universities, presenting about what it's like to work in NPT, including the strengths-based model, in open days
- ✓ Hosted Jobs Fairs for Newly Qualified Social worker
- ✓ Provided regular training, including senior officers and training officers delivering "in house" training
- ✓ Promoted NPT on a more national level, presenting our outcomes focused model of practice. Resulting in us attracting applicants from all over Wales and England.
- ✓ Had Consultant Social workers present on areas of expertise at universities, overseen by a Principal Officer

- ✓ Introduced year 10 placements for local comprehensives in NPT to build career paths into Social Work early on
 - ✓ Increased the number of practice assessors in the service which means we are able to host more students. Students in their final year of placements choose to remain in NPT to start their careers in social work
- **Demand and complexity:** For the majority of children, the best place for them to be is at home with their family, but some families need support to do this. We will provide specific and targeted support to families facing a range of challenges.

We have:

- ✓ Continued to provide early offers of support to children and families
- ✓ Continued to work collaboratively with partners to ensure that families access the right support at the right time
- ✓ Continued to support families to achieve their outcomes
- ✓ Continued to work to the ethos that children's needs are best met by their own families and provide support for this to be achieved safely
- ✓ Developed a 'Be Safe' service in response to increasing concern around young people carrying knives and being at increased risk of exploitation, to disrupt these behaviours and provide awareness and support. Working in partnership with other agencies the Be Safe service has supported young people, their families and staff on the risks associated with exploitation, violence and knife crime
- ✓ Established the Working Together Service, which specialises in supporting families where there are concerns around neglect and/or home conditions. This service offers practical support as well as using motivations interviewing to develop the confidence of families and build their skills. Given the increased cost of living and the impact of poverty/deprivation, this service has continued to be integral in supporting families
- ✓ Continued to see an increase in demand in our referral rates as needs of families become more and more complex, up 15% year on year to over 20,000 referrals
- ✓ Seen the wider impact of the increased cost of living. The emotional and mental wellbeing of young people is an ongoing need and there is

a gap in services supporting these young people. There are regional groups set up to look at how we meet the emotional wellbeing needs of young people

- ✓ Seen added pressures in schools with an increase in young people being on reduced timetables/excluded which increases the risks outside of the family home
- ✓ Resourced our Single Point of Contact in order to respond to the increase in demand to ensure we are responding proportionately and in a timely manner. All referrals received in the service are seen and actioned by a Social Work team manager within 24 hours

Adults Services

- **Helping people to help themselves:** We will promote self-care and help people to remain in their own communities with minimal intervention.
 - ✓ This overarching theme is centred on empowering individuals to help themselves and supporting them to remain in their own communities with minimal intervention. This is achieved through a multi-faceted approach that includes promoting self-care through education and resource access, offering assistance in navigating services with tailored support plans, minimising intervention through preventative measures like home safety assessments and health monitoring, building community support networks, and empowering individuals through assistive technology. By focusing on these key areas and leveraging the expertise of social workers and occupational therapists, the department aims to enhance the quality of life for individuals while also contributing to the sustainability of health and social care systems by reducing the need for more intensive services.
- **Building relationships and making connections:** People are the most important asset we have in NPT. It is the relationship between family and friends, between the cared for and the carer, within communities, and between businesses, employees, and customers that has the biggest impact on people's lives.
 - ✓ NPT's collaborative approach includes conducting comprehensive short-term assessments, empowering individuals through accurate information, providing personalised advice, offering supportive assistance, building strong relationships with individuals and the

community, and promoting community connections to enhance well-being and reduce isolation. By prioritising relationships and community connections, NPT aims to help individuals maintain their independence and thrive with minimal intervention, ultimately making a positive impact on their lives and well-being.

- **Living the life you want:** We will continue to promote prevention and early intervention as well as informal care and support. But there will always be people who need more formal care and support. This should put the individual first so that their desired outcomes - how they want to live - are met.
- ✓ Our mission is to empower individuals to live their desired lives by focusing on their personal goals and outcomes. We emphasize prevention, early intervention, and informal care to ensure minimal reliance on formal support. Our holistic assessments, conducted by social workers and occupational therapists, prioritise individual needs and goals. By providing comprehensive information and advice, we enable informed decision-making and self-management, fostering independence. Early intervention and support networks help address issues promptly, while home adaptations and health programs enhance safety and well-being. Our tailored support plans ensure minimal intervention, promoting autonomy and quality of life. This integrated approach supports individuals in maintaining their independence and living comfortably in their own homes.

Housing and Homelessness Services

Implement a more strategic approach: We will work more closely with partners and other Council departments to ensure we make best use of our resources.

- ✓ In the past year, our Housing and Homelessness Services have adopted a more strategic approach, working closely with partners and other Council departments to optimise our resources effectively. Our inter-disciplinary team, including social workers, occupational therapists, and a newly appointed housing consultant social worker, focuses on helping individuals remain in their homes with minimal intervention. Through comprehensive short-term assessments, we identify specific needs and

provide tailored support plans to enhance independence. Our holistic evaluations and adaptive solutions, such as home adaptations and assistive devices, ensure safety and mobility. We also offer detailed information, advice, and assistance to empower individuals and their families. The housing consultant plays a crucial role in assessing housing suitability, recommending modifications, and liaising with housing services. Strategic collaboration with Council departments and strengthening community partnerships have been key to our success, ensuring integrated, efficient service delivery. Additionally, we aim to reduce homelessness by ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring. This comprehensive, collaborative strategy not only promotes independence but also enhances the quality of life for those we serve. We want to make sure that homelessness is rare, and when it does occur it is brief and doesn't happen again.

- **Increase access to appropriate affordable housing:** We want to work with landlords and others to increase the amount of available accommodation.
- ✓ **Empty properties:** In response to the number of long-term empty properties across Wales, the Empty Homes Scheme was developed by Welsh Government (WG) to provide grant aid to owners of long-term empty properties for them to undertake the required works to bring them back into use.
- ✓ WG have made an allocation of £50 million across Wales to fund the Scheme for a period of two years. Each participating Local Authority has been allocated a percentage of the funding based on the number of empty properties registered in the Authority area.
- ✓ NPT has been awarded 4.8% of the available £50 million, which equates to £2.4 million over the two years of the Scheme with a required contribution from the authority of 10%. This Scheme could potentially result in over 100 empty properties being brought back into use across Neath Port Talbot over the period of the Scheme.
- ✓ For the Financial Year 54 schedules were prepared and passed for processing, equating to £1.6m worth of work carried out.
- ✓ **Leasing scheme:** There has currently been no take up from Private Landlords, the scheme has generated a large number of enquires which have been followed up by 28 expressions of interest. The main reason for no landlords participating in the scheme is due to WG capping the rent at the local housing allowance. Private Landlords can have a much better

return sourcing their own clients or using a high street letting agent, therefore this is not seen as a viable option. (*Estimate - £750-£1200*).

- ✓ To attempt to stimulate the market a 'Private Rented Landlord Forum Event' was held and proven to be incredibly positive. Over 100 landlords attended, and useful feedback was received, and these events will continue. WG property standards have been reviewed which may now be more attractive to landlords and contact is being made with landlords that were originally rejected based on previous standards.

Support those with social care needs to live well in their communities: We will offer new models of care to help people live in their communities longer, whether they are older, disabled or are young people leaving care.

- ✓ We are committed to supporting individuals with social care needs to live well in their communities through innovative and comprehensive strategies. Our approach includes proportionate assessments by social workers and occupational therapists to identify minimal yet impactful support, personalised information and advice, and holistic support plans developed collaboratively. We are also exploring innovative housing solutions with the assistance of housing consultant social workers and promoting adaptable living spaces. Community-based supports such as local services and volunteer networks play a crucial role in reducing isolation and enhancing daily living. Furthermore, we are integrating technology to boost safety and independence through smart home devices and health monitoring tools. For long-term community living, we focus on sustainable support systems with ongoing monitoring and reassessments, and we provide resources for family and caregiver support. By leveraging these comprehensive efforts, we aim to create a supportive environment that enables individuals with social care needs to maintain their independence and enjoy a higher quality of life in their own homes.

How are people shaping our services?

This is about how we find out what people think about our services so we can build on good practice.

As a Local Authority it is important that we consistently capture and hear the voice of those we support. We want to ensure that we offer the best opportunity to listen and respond to people's views. Participation is an integral part of our planning and development of services. Therefore, in Social Services we have a strategic lead for Engagement and Participation, and a dedicated officer for both children and adult services to promote collaborative working. In Neath Port Talbot we work in an outcome focused way and ensure that we have 'what matters conversations' with those that we support.

Engagement and Participation across Children and Young People's Services.

The Engagement & Participation Team works across Children's Services to embed children's rights into our daily practice. It provides opportunities for children and young people up to the age of 25 to develop the confidence and skills to understand and exercise their rights, co-produce services and have a voice in matters that affect them and aims to advance the education of duty bearers to understand their role in enabling children and young people to access their rights. The Engagement and Participation Team support a wide range of children and young people with different backgrounds, needs and experiences.

Throughout the last year, we have supported a wide range of activities, trips, projects, consultations, established groups and training to actively seek the voice of the child. This report outlines the work undertaken.

Children's Rights Champions

Children's Rights are everyone's responsibility and in order to embed children's rights into practice Children's Services committed to the concept of 'Children's Rights Champions'. In 2021 'Champions' were recruited and committed to a list of actions they set to embed children's rights into practice in their specific roles. Implementation of actions is overseen by the Quality Practice Group and the Practice Improvement Group, and we meet 'Champions' every six months to review progress and support with future plans. To further support the work of the Engagement and Participation Officer a Participation Champions group meets quarterly and is made up of staff from across the Service. It is an

opportunity to share good practice, promote events and discuss common themes. The Engagement and Participation Team deliver an 'Introduction to Children's Rights' session during new staff's induction. The session also provides an opportunity to share the work of the Team and promote upcoming opportunities.

Children and Young People's Consultation Event at Plantasia



In collaboration with the Looked After Children's Team a consultation event was held at Plantasia to give children and young people the opportunity to re-name the LAC Team. As part of the ongoing 'Language We Use' work the children and young people highlighted the need for change. A friendlier name is needed to reflect the ethos of the Team. To facilitate the event, spoken word artist Duke Al Durham delivered a creative session to provoke thought and discussion and help find an appropriate name. Next steps include collating the ideas, sharing the outcome and with approval re-

naming the Team. The wonderful location lent itself to some promotional opportunities for the new Comments, Compliments & Complaints process for care experienced children and young people. Children and Young People's Services have developed a leaflet, informative postcard and magnet to ensure all our children know how to contact us. Over the coming months the material will be promoted to Foster Carers, Staff, Children and Young People.

Neurodivergence Strategy

We have worked closely with partners and stakeholders, including Education and Health, to draft NPT's Strategic Plan for Neurodivergence (Autism and Other Conditions) 2024-27. Our aim is to create an inclusive and understanding culture, which supports neurodiverse children, young people, adults, families and carers within their communities, and across the County.

Quality Standard 1 - Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

This is about how we work in partnership to help people achieve positive outcomes.

NPT is a member of the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership, alongside City & County of Swansea Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, as well as representatives from across the third and independent sector partners, members of the community, and unpaid carers.

Regional working for Wales is an important part of a wider reform of the way public services are managed. The Partnership has developed a five-year Learning Disability Strategy, which represents a regional response to the needs of adults with learning disabilities and describes the commitment to a long-term strategic mission for meeting their needs within the context of national legislation and guidance, regional plans, and available resources.

Work has already begun to ensure that people living in NPT, and across the wider region, have access to the right care and support, accommodation, transport and employment opportunities to enable them to live the lives they want to.

Co-production and Involvement of People with Lived Experience

The Council receives a grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (via the Home Office) which pays for a Service User Engagement Officer (SUEO) for the Area Planning Board to increase participation with people who use substance use services across NPT and Swansea and NPT. Our officer commenced work in September 2023.

During the year the SUEO coordinated the Peer Interventions Project that delivers all three specialist harm reduction interventions across the region to provide advice support and guidance and distribute naloxone kits and needle and syringe kits and carry out dry blood spot testing for Blood Borne Viruses.

They also established two Co-Production Forums run monthly in both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. The groups have developed appropriate governance arrangements so people with lived and living experience can engage with the Area Planning Board in line with co-production guidelines. The forums are looking at work plans



Co-Production Forum meeting, January 2024

in going forward and these will help shape the ongoing work. The forums are working to the mantra of “nothing about us, without us”.

Working across all organisations the post holder is scoping what currently exists in terms of Service User engagement, and then work with partner organisations in developing a coherent joined up approach that ensures Service Users have a voice in the future development and delivery of services.

The SUEO is supporting on a wide range of other work streams, strengthening the views and opinions for those with lived and living experience.

Reducing social isolation

A Local Area Coordinator working in the Upper Valleys identified a number of elderly individuals who were isolated and lonely and desperately seeking ways to improve their quality of life. The Community Connection Team were keen to get involved and Thursday Lunch Club was born!

The first Lunch Club took place in August of last year, with around 15 people attending. This now varies from anything from 15 to at our highest at 22 attending. Each week, everyone gathers for teas, coffees and biscuits in the morning for a quiz, followed by a light lunch ordered in from one of the local cafes. We order from a different cafe each week so that we keep the menu choices varied but this also helps to support the local businesses. In the afternoon we either have a game of bingo, or an activity. So far, we have had pottery sessions, willow weaving, wreath making, visits from Citizen’s Advice and the Tackling Poverty Team, Tai Chi, the RNIB, Digital enablement, Multiply craft sessions and regular visits from Dan from Ageing Well, which are proving

very popular. Very soon we have Defibrillator training planned as well as a visit from the Fire Service, Greyhound Rescue and a Paint Along Session.

Weekly visits from the Digital Inclusion Team have been arranged, so that people can access support with any IT, mobile phone and other related issues. The group have got to know Neil from the team really well and he has had a good response, with a number of people bringing tech-related problems for him to solve each session.

We enjoyed a fantastic Christmas lunch in December, supplied and served by one of the local cafes, with children from the local school coming along to entertain us with Christmas carols.

The group have a lot of fun and it has helped mend some previously broken friendships along with forge some new ones. For many individuals the group is the only social event of their week and as such, it means a lot to them to attend. One of my gentlemen has macular degeneration, he lives alone and has no family. Prior to coming to the group, he was completely isolated in his flat, willing the time to go by. He's now reunited with an old friend that he had not seen for years, and the highlight of his week is meeting up with him for a chat on a Thursday. Having seen how enriched his life can be with people around him and activities to engage in, he's looking forward to visiting a residential home this week, with the hope of securing a placement. We have already managed to secure Community Transport if he does make the move, which will enable him to continue to attend the club on a Thursday.

The club has helped those who attend to find out about events and services that they would never have been aware of, which they say as helped to improve their quality of life and increase their social circle. So much so, that some meet a couple of times a week, to attend other groups, go shopping, or meet at one of the local cafes for a chat. Some of them have even arranged to go on day trips and holidays together.

Unpaid Carers

Internal Review: We have continued our comprehensive internal review of support for unpaid carers, engaging with various council teams and gathering insights from 224 carers across Neath Port Talbot.

Pilot Project: Based on our learning we initiated a pilot project within the Neath Network Team. A new dedicated role was created to bridge the Prevention & Early Intervention and Social Work Teams, enhancing the operational link between carer support and social services provided to those they care for. The feedback from carers and staff on the pilot was overwhelmingly positive, leading to the role's adoption as a permanent feature across our other two Networks.

Carers Assessment Form and Procedures: As part of the pilot, we revamped our carers assessment form and procedures, significantly reducing waiting times for assessments.

- **Pilot Successes:**

- Raised the profile of carers within teams.
- Promoted early identification of carers.
- Reduced waiting lists.
- Ensured a holistic consideration of both statutory and non-statutory support for carers and those they care for.

Carers Assessments

In our ongoing commitment to enhance the support provided to unpaid carers, we have significantly revamped our assessment process to focus on “what matters” conversations with adult unpaid carers. This approach aims to better understand the unique needs of each carer, enabling us to identify and provide the necessary support earlier, ensuring they can continue in their vital caring roles.

To further strengthen our support network, we have appointed Carers Development Officers within each of the cluster networks. These officers act as unpaid carer champions, conducting comprehensive unpaid carers needs assessments and fostering stronger connections to short break provisions and broader early help support services.

We are also in the process of formalising a comprehensive training program for our staff. This training will be rolled out shortly and will emphasize the identification and support of unpaid carers, equipping our staff with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively assist carers in their roles.

In addition, we are enhancing our partnership with Primary Care Clusters, particularly in the Upper Valleys, and local pharmacies. This collaboration aims to identify opportunities for training, improve the identification of unpaid

carers, and establish clear pathways of support. By working closely with these partners, we aim to create a more integrated and supportive environment for unpaid carers.

These initiatives reflect our dedication to providing timely and effective support to unpaid carers, ensuring they receive the recognition and assistance they deserve.

What Matters Youth Housing Consultation – Phase 2

Throughout 2023 the Engagement and Participation Team assisted colleagues within the Contract and Commissioning Team on a consultation on Youth Homelessness and Housing. This included conducting interviews with Young People who were homeless and living within one of the commissioned Housing Providers within the Local Authority and was considered Phase 1 of the consultation process. The Engagement and Participation Officer held one workshop with Stakeholders and two workshops with ten Young People across the Dewis and Clarewood provisions to further explore the themes identified in Phase One. The findings of all three workshops were presented in two reports and informed the next phase of the consultation which will consist of further workshops to facilitate the Young People designing an information pack and webpage, intended to be provided at the initial stage of homelessness.

Outcomes survey

The Engagement and Participation Team undertook the completion of an Outcomes Survey on two occasions in January and June 2023. The survey was a telephone survey conducted with Children and Adults who receive care and support from Children's or Adult services. The survey was an optional opportunity for individuals to provide feedback on their experience with Social Services, with particular focus on their individual outcomes and What Matters conversations. The survey questions explored whether they felt that these outcomes were being met and whether their strengths were recognised.

The Engagement and Participation Team conducted the Child Protection Rapid Review Survey with the Parents/Guardians of children on the child protection register. The aim of the National Survey was to gather a multi-disciplinary perspective on child protection arrangements. Care Inspectorate Wales will

consider responses alongside other review activities to support the completion of a national report.

Most Significant Change Interviews

From May 2023 the Engagement and Participation Team conducted Most Significant Change interviews that focused on a number of specific interventions and processes. The interviews reflected the Most Significant Change template and training that the Team attended with Nick Andrews of Swansea University. The interview process continued throughout the course of the year with varying topics of focus and culminated with the Most Significant Change Panel, held in December 2023. The Panel was comprised of The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, The Heads of Children's and Adult Services, representatives from the PAN Parent Network, Consultant Social Workers and the Engagement and Participation Officer. The panel was an opportunity to explore the stories and engage in dialogue to identify which Story individuals thought was Most Significant and why, sharing good practice and success stories.

Care Home Surveys – Ongoing

Throughout 2023 and currently ongoing, the Engagement and Participation Team provided support to the Adult Services Contract and Commissioning Officers in their monitoring processes of commissioned Care Homes. The E&P Officers build, monitor and compile surveys and offer in-person support in going out to the Care Homes to assist residents, relatives and staff in completing the surveys in-person.

Quality Standard 2 – Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being
This is about how we help people to look after their physical, mental and emotional health.

We continue to use technology in supporting people to achieve their personal outcomes.

Remodelling and refurbishment work to provide a Digital Solutions Suite was completed. This facility was formally opened in August 2023 to showcase and demonstrate how mainstream digital technology can support independent living, and/or enhance other care/telecare support. Guided tours of the Digital Solution Suite can be booked by all NPT residents, carers and staff, and since opening we have received more than 150 visitors.

A successful bid for SPF (Shared Prosperity Fund) funding has enabled a cross-departmental project to provide wraparound services supporting Digital Inclusion and Digital Enablement. The project is managed by the Prevention & Early Intervention Team in collaboration with Adult Learning and the Youth Service.

The Prevention and Early Intervention Team have continued work to develop a digital platform to support community connections, reduce loneliness and isolation, and provide easy access to helpful resources to support self-management and wellbeing both online and in their communities. This is undergoing beta testing and is anticipated to launch in summer of 2024.

We are on target regarding our planned programme for upgrading all Lifeline units to be ready ahead of retirement of analogue telephone lines and switch to digital by December 2025 – maintaining a service for 2,500 residents.

Working closely with the Community Medicines Management Team we continue to support individuals to safely take their medicines using reminder and /or automatic dispensing devices.

We continue to work with supported living residents to identify how technologies can support their independence, quality of life and personal outcomes.

Collaborative working is ongoing with our day service BSpoked and the individuals they support to identify opportunities for technology to help achieve personal outcomes and independent living skills. We have provided training and

installed mainstream digital and Assistive Technology in the Independent Living Suite which has been well received, and we will continue to develop and include this in work plans for 2024-2025.

Initial pilot of a response service in the Afan Cluster area has been completed and demonstrated positive impact on wellbeing for non-injurious falls and other non-medical emergencies. Funding has been allocated to undertake a further 1-year pilot from 2024-2025, to roll out a Mobile Response Service to all NPT Lifeline users which will inform models for ongoing service provision.

Short breaks

There are occasions when the role of therapeutically parenting a child is exhausting and this has an impact on the effectiveness of the foster carers to parent effectively. To support relationships and placement stability, we have supported foster carers by matching the children with another household and providing short breaks.

Hospital Team

Last year the Team won a joint award with the Local Health Board for its multi-agency working within Home First. The functions of this team include preventing unnecessary hospital admissions by working across the community and hospital; facilitating discharge from hospital in a timely manner; implementing national guidance on discharge requirements; and ensure patients are supported in the community post discharge to reduce readmissions. The team has expanded over the past year, with a base in Morriston Hospital as well as Neath Port Talbot.

The Team is working towards improving the time taken to respond to referrals and support a D2RA (Discharge to Recover and Assess) response, with plans to further focus on early intervention to identify support needs earlier in an individual's journey through hospital.

Community Wellbeing / Reablement Team

An inspection of the Community Wellbeing Team (CWT) took place in November 2023 and noted a positive working relationships between Social Care and Health; strong management support; caring and supportive staff; personal plans meet people's needs; people are safe from abuse and neglect; and that robust systems are in place to regularly check on the quality of care and support.

Assistive Technology

Working with people's strengths, Assistive Technology (AT) can be used to promote health, wellbeing and self-management, and has potential to enable more resilient communities, thus reducing demand/reliance on more traditional support services. Installations, maintenance and decommissions of equipment are now delivered in house from February 2024. This has enabled efficiencies in the service which will ensure adequate capacity for digital upgrades and reduce waiting times for the service.

Negotiating the switch from analogue telephone lines to digital by December 2025 is a key priority for the service is to ensure all lifeline and telecare equipment is replaced ahead of this time to ensure a smooth and safe transition as individuals are migrated from analogue phone lines to digital voice networks. We have now entered stage 2 of the roadmap and are on track as planned to achieve this 'digital switch' for 2,500 users of the service, and 56% of clients having been upgraded so far.

We continue to link with communication companies to ensure safe migration of lifeline & telecare clients as we move to phase 2 of our digital switch roadmap. Our upgrade programme will pick up pace over the next year and we are well on target to have upgraded all equipment ahead of the original December 2025 deadline.

The Mobile Response Service pilot provides timely support for individuals at home who experience non-injurious falls and other non-medical emergencies. The majority of call outs are responded to within the hour, which means fallers avoid a long lie and associated negative outcomes and are less likely to be admitted to hospital. The service also reduces carer burnout and gives confidence for individuals to continue stay in their own home.

The SPF funded NPT Digital Inclusion and Digital Enablement project seeks to improve the lives of individuals by helping them stay connected, manage daily activities and be more independent and engaged. The project develops and scales up existing work to reduce digital inequality for disadvantaged groups, increasing access to digital technologies which enhance daily living/ ageing well, and supporting digitally excluded citizens to access services they need.

A multifaceted approach includes:

- A network of Digital Inclusion/Enablement staff and volunteers providing targeted support for individuals, including those with additional learning or access needs.
- Enabling affordable/free access via Equipment Loan Library and Databank Scheme.
- Delivery of interactive course to support digital and life skills with a qualification to improve future prospects for targeted school year 11 students.

Case study

“I am almost 85 years old, and I have only just had my first mobile phone where I am looking forward to the next step of being shown how to use it.

I am now using my iPad every day. I would say that the iPad is a lifeline to me. It has opened the world up for me. I feel less lonely, as it's widened my social life as I can now see people on the screen not just hear their voice on the telephone which has made a massive difference. I feel like I have regained my independence as I can now shop online, Google any information I need and check my online banking.”

Substance Use

The Area Planning Board Support Team works on a regional basis across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, governed by the Area Planning Board (APB) and hosted by NPTCBC acting as the banker for the Substance Misuse Action Fund (SMAF). NPTCBC is a voting member of the APB as one of the responsible authorities.

We are the only region in Wales that routinely reviews non-fatal drug overdoses. Our process involves assessing each case and assigning it to the appropriate service to make contact within 72 hours of the overdose being picked up. These professionals provide guidance, support, naloxone, and referrals to specialised

services. The progress of each person is closely monitored until identified risks are mitigated.

The Team plays a pivotal role in coordinating and facilitating the Independent Review Panel (IRP) for suspected drug-related deaths. The primary objective is to identify recommendations, learning points, and best practice from these cases. Subsequently, we share the findings with relevant services, enabling them to adapt their practices and improve service provision.

Service Development and Transformation

The APB is embarking on a programme of transformation to create an integrated Public Health approach to the prevention of and treatment for substance use. During 2023/24 a Programme Manager commenced and partners agreed a Business Case to implement a new ‘whole system approach’ to replace the current range of substance use services through commissioning an integrated highly visible, accessible and effective substance use service that delivers integrated treatment and support to meet the needs of the diverse population of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. We have included people with lived/living experience, staff working in the services, current providers and commissioners to attend workshops, where partners have had the opportunity to co-design the new service across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. The Commissioning exercise will commence in the summer of 2024.



Stakeholders at an Alliance Development Workshop, March 2024

The Western Bay Drug Commission established to investigate why the region had been suffering with high levels of drug related deaths and harms associated with substance use. It has worked throughout the year to gather evidence. This independent panel held several public facing meetings and heard from a wide range of invited guests on identified key themes. The Commission will publish its report in the summer of 2024. The recommendations will be used to improve systems and will inform the development of the new whole system approach.

Mental Health & Learning Disability Services

Our services are continuing to see increased demand which is proving challenging both in terms of a lack of suitable service provision and the high costs attached to making placements.

Mental Health Services

Challenges facing Mental Health Services include:

- Absence of a range of models of accommodation and care. This results in over-reliance on high-cost placements to manage risk to self and others, and wider public safety.
- Lack of providers who are confident to manage individuals with forensic risk therefore no alternative but to utilise high-cost placements
- Managing risk - Expectation from partner agencies to safeguard individuals and those who present risk to others, as a single agency
- Gaps in service – Mental Health and Therapeutic interventions.
- Shortage of domiciliary care providers that specialise in supporting individuals with mental health needs.
- The Mental Health Act (MHA) places on local authorities the duty to provide Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) services. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that enough AMHPs are available to carry out their roles under the MHA. There are challenges in being able to provide a 24-hour service that can respond to patients' needs in a timely way. There is a dwindling number of AMHP, and difficulties with recruitment and retention of AMHP workforce.

Learning Disabilities Services

- The service is increasingly supporting individuals with more complex health care needs. Budgetary and resource pressures are being passed down to the local authority which typically would have sat with the NHS. As a result, we are seeing escalating placement costs for meeting complex needs.

- We have seen an increase in the number of individuals who have an autism diagnosis, where offering practical support often falls solely to the local authority. Recent analysis of young people moving through transition to Adult Services indicated around 50% had an autism diagnosis. There is also a lack of services able to meet the diverse needs of autistic individuals.
- Service scarcity is impacting on the ability to offer individual's choice and control.
- Management of behaviours is becoming more challenging to meet, with a lack of trauma informed services and practice approaches. This results in the local authority having to become experts where we would have previously relied upon close relationships with partner agencies to provide that expertise. Local authorities are now plugging the gap in service delivery.
- Lack of resource, skills set and environment to meet the needs of individuals who present with behaviours that challenge.

Quality Standard 3 – Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

This is about helping to protect people who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation.

Our approach to Safeguarding across Children and Adults continues to be streamlined and strengthened by the following:

- ✓ We continue to develop the quality of our strategy discussions by ensuring all key partners are involved at the outset.
- ✓ We have introduced outcome strategy meetings post S47 enquiries to ensure all those, including parents and children, who contribute to the enquiry have sight of the final report, which allows them to understand how decisions are reached and affords an opportunity to challenge.
- ✓ We continue to engage parents, family and carers as partners in all safeguarding forums.
- ✓ Our offer of Family Group Conferencing continues to be well received, and we have extended the offer of Family Group Conferencing to those families who are separating and not open to the Local Authority.
- ✓ Over the course of the last year Mental Capacity Act training has been rolled-out across Children's and Adults Social Care to ensure consistency in assessment and subsequent intervention.
- ✓ Our response to harm outside the family home has been strengthened by the SAFE Strategic Partnership and oversight of responding to this form or risk and harm.
- ✓ We are due to deploy our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Tracker (MAST) to ensure partnership systems are interfaced to identify and respond to risk and harm.
- ✓ More young people have transitioned to adult services owing to concerns of risk and harm and we will continue to develop our response to harm outside the family home across the life-course.
- ✓ We have concluded the review of our response to DVA (Domestic Violence and Abuse) across Social Care and will now convert the findings

into an Action Plan to strengthen our response to DVA, with our partner agencies across social care.

- ✓ Our rapid response to suspected suicide has been extended to respond to significant suicide attempts, which allows us to ensure support is targeted and learning elicited.
- ✓ The regional Parent Peer Advocacy Service, the first in Wales, will be delivered by Mental Health Matters and is due to go live in July 2024.
- ✓ Our Parent Advocate Network (PAN) continues to go from strength to strength supporting parents and their families across Neath Port Talbot.
- ✓ We remain committed to make Neath Port Talbot the safest place in Wales for citizens and are working closely with the many partnership boards: Community Safety, Area Planning, VAWDASV, Serious Organised Crime, Youth Justice Board, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Regional Safeguarding, Junior Safeguarding and CONTEST to achieve this goal.

Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

The safeguarding component of the SPOC team's work saw 432 Adult at Risk referrals, with 36 cases escalating to the level of a s126 enquiry. The remaining 396 cases were either stepped down to proportionate assessments or resolved by managerial enquiries, indicating a robust triage process that ensures only the most critical cases receive intensive investigation.

The multidisciplinary composition of the SPOC team, which includes social workers, occupational therapists, a specialist nurse, and a newly added housing consultant social worker, has been pivotal in addressing a wide range of needs. The plan to integrate a police officer into the team will likely bolster the safeguarding efforts further. Overall, the SPOC team has demonstrated a comprehensive and efficient approach to managing social, physical, and health-related needs while maintaining a strong focus on safeguarding.

Community Safety Team

The Community Safety Team help to ensure the residents of Neath Port Talbot feel safe and are safe, by delivering effective crime prevention initiatives and support across the borough. The team deliver appropriate, relevant initiatives through a variety of means, doing so in partnership with other organisations. Community Safety ensure that the effect any Crime and Disorder has on our local communities is minimised; with oversight, problem solving and providing support on key issues such as Domestic Abuse, Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime, County Lines, Scams, Community Tensions, Business Crime, Terrorism.

The Community Safety Partnership Board's six agreed priority areas for 2024-2027 are:

- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Community Cohesion
 - Serious Violence
 - General Crime Prevention (including Community Engagement & Acquisitive Crime
 - Substance Use
- (The substance use priority being led on by the Area Planning Board and its Team, on behalf of the CSP, rather than the Community Safety Team itself)*

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

The NPT VAWDASV Leadership Group is coordinated by the Community Safety Team. The Group continues to meet quarterly and oversees the implementation of our local VAWDASV strategy for 2023-2026. Excellent progress has been made in the 7 areas of work: Communications & Engagement / Children & Young People / Perpetrator Interventions / Early Intervention & Prevention / Staff Training / Accessible Services / Courts and Criminal Justice.

Our Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) Service within Community Safety supported **615** high risk victims of domestic abuse during the year. This compares to **650** in the previous year. This drop in numbers can be attributed to a change in our approach when referrals are received, one change being all male victims now being supported by Calan DVS. The nature of the cases received into

the service remains very complex in many instances, which requires a careful and measured approach by the team.

The Community Safety Team were successful in receiving funding to purchase target hardening items to help victims feel safer and be safer. This funding allowed us to buy Ring Doorbells, Dash Cams, mobile phones, window locks, door jammers and Personal Safety Alarms. It was reassuring for staff to give physical items to the individuals they support, as well as the holistic support and safety planning they offer. Items were so gratefully received by the families we are working with.

The team have responsibility for coordinating the Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) forum. In the year there were **1,223** referrals into MARAC. There were **2,045** children linked to these referrals. **426** of the referrals were repeat cases, having been discussed at MARAC before.

The NPT MARAC Steering Group was setup in 2022/23 and has continued throughout 23/24, this year implementing the new MANTA system which has changed the way in which the meetings are coordinated and how they function. This is a long-awaited development, and the MARAC Coordinator from Community Safety has been instrumental in its early successes, with support from our partners.

One of the work streams of our VAWDASV strategy '*Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities*' is centred on Communications & Engagement, ensuring we raise awareness of all forms of domestic abuse, encouraging people to seek help and support. The Communications & Engagement subgroup organised a successful White Ribbon campaign during November 2023 – holding our annual engagement event at NPT Hospital and running a successful '16 days of action' on our Safer NPT social media platforms.

We continue to deliver age-appropriate Healthy Relationship lessons into all schools and colleges, to ensure young people have an awareness of what an unhealthy relationship looks like, and where to seek support if they need it – whether that is for themselves, a friend or family member. During 2023/24, **3,716** young people received this lesson.

Asylum Dispersal

Following the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, UK policy has been to relocate asylum seekers to a series of 'dispersal areas' in regional urban centres. The Home Office has mandated that all Councils receive asylum seekers under the national housing dispersal scheme. The Home Office commissions a company called Clearsprings to source properties and to provide limited support. A number of families have been dispersed to this area.

Afghan Resettlement Scheme

We continue to commission British Red Cross to support four families settle under the Afghan resettlement scheme for locally employed Afghan staff. One family arrived through a find your own accommodation route, and a further person as family reunification. In the first year, people receive intensive orientation support, but this tapers off in years 2 and 3.

Ukraine response

NPT continues to provide extensive humanitarian support to people who have fled the conflict in Ukraine

Last year I highlighted that the Council had helped Welsh Government set up a Welcome Centre and Temporary Accommodation for people fleeing the conflict, and I acknowledged the incredible work to settle and orientate families.

Although the welcome centre and hotel have since closed, ongoing extensive work has been undertaken to support Ukrainians within NPT. Many of these families were supported to move from their temporary accommodation into private rental, settling and building homes within our communities. The Ukraine response team have been highly successful in preventing people from needing statutory services such as homelessness. Additionally, some people moved out of the hotel/welcome centre to live with sponsor households within the borough and we will need to work with them to find further settled accommodation.



The orientation support given by the team covers many aspects of support from school enrolments, seeking employment opportunities, managing tenancies, health care and community engagement. This required great partnership work and coordination with both internal and external partners.

People have continued to arrive via Homes for Ukraine into NPT both through Welsh Government super sponsor route but also individual sponsor (where a resident offers an additional room) for Ukrainian families to seek sanctuary. The team have supported many people via the individual route to move on from hosted accommodation into more permanent accommodation and will continue to do so.

To date, we have settled 175 people within NPT who are living and managing independently. From arrival, the team support the guests to embed within their local communities and start to rebuild their lives; a lot of people arriving with little to nothing. Part of the work is around community links and ensuring people have a network of support, lessening the pressure on statutory services.

Strong links with the health board have been formed to ensure trauma-informed practise is embedded throughout the work. This was also offered and rolled out to colleagues within other sections of the council, providing consistency in the way we support people who have experienced trauma.

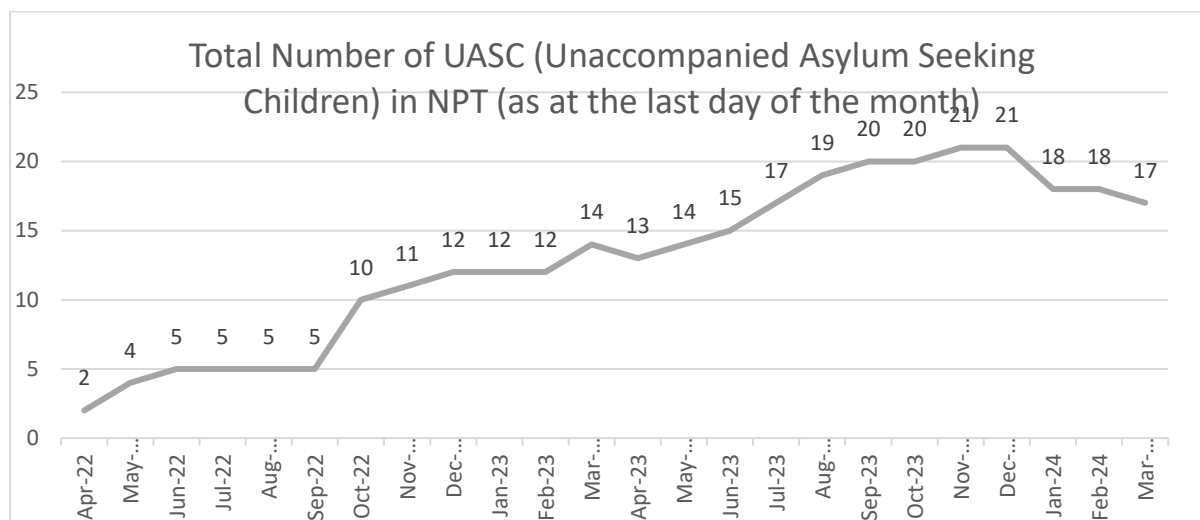
There continues to be a Team NPT approach when providing support, pulling in expertise from colleagues across the council.

“We don’t know how our lives will turn out in the future, but at this stage we are safe and happy. We are eternally grateful to all the people who help Ukrainians stay safe, live, work and grow our children under peaceful skies.”

Ukrainian family supported by NPT

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children & Young People (UASC)

Neath Port Talbot have continued to receive referrals for UASC under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). This is a new area of practice for NPT and the numbers of young people have continued to grow. Along with this so has our knowledge in this area. As of the end of March 2024 we are supporting 17 UASC, 3 of whom are placed in foster care with the rest being supported in Supported accommodation. All young people are 16+. One of our Local Authority foster carers has supported UASC and it interested in supporting future placements.



As part of Neath Port Talbot's commitment to UASC as part of the National Transfer Scheme, activities and experiences have been organised throughout the summer in order to help the young people settle into their new environment, improve their language, look after their well-being and educate them on Welsh culture and explore the area. Working closely with the UASC Team and established partners in the community the Engagement and Participation Officer organised weekly events throughout the summer holidays. These included rock climbing at Dinas Rock, gorge walking, canyoning, coastering on the Gower and paddle boarding. There have been arranged visits to Bulldogs Community Gym to engage in activities and emotional and well-being support offered by the Bulldogs Team. All activities helped build rapport with staff and going forward the UASC Team and Engagement and Participation Officer will be facilitating young person consultations to give our UASC a voice and improve services and assist us with developing our practice guide.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The **Street Vulnerability MARAC** meetings are coordinated by the Community Safety Team and chaired by South Wales Police. The group meet bimonthly to discuss some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, ensuring everyone has access to the most appropriate services for their needs. In 2023/24 the group discussed **19** cases, of which **8** were new referrals into the forum. The meetings are well attended and well supported by partners, with good engagement. There continue to be concerns regarding availability or access to mental health support, and the lack of suitable, available accommodation.

Problem Solving Groups continue - one for Neath & Pontardawe and one for Port Talbot. The Community Safety Team assist with the coordination of these meetings, whilst South Wales Police Chair. These forums allow us, the Police and partners to bring ongoing community issues to the table, for a partnership discussion and action plan. Issues raised here that cannot be resolved are then escalated to the Community Safety Partnership Board. The group helps to inform campaigns of the Community Safety Engagement Team.

Shared Prosperity Fund – During 2023/24 we were successful in securing £98,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to allow us to continue with our youth ‘Hangout’ provision. Following outreach work with young people they told us they wanted somewhere to hang out with friends, where there were no prescribed activities, but rather phone chargers, Wi-Fi, music and food. With funding from the Police & Crime Commissioner we were able to pilot ‘The Hangout’ with support from Youth Justice, South Wales Police, the Youth Service and ‘Be Safe’ Team. This additional funding will also allow us to purchase a mobile unit, to be responsive to emerging hotspots of youth related anti-social behaviour, rather than our services being at a fixed site. A small portion of the money will also be used to develop a food bank run by young people, for young people. This will enable young people to develop their skills and work towards accreditation, whilst also removing the stigma they feel is attached to using a foodbank.

Safer Streets – During the year we were successful with our Home Office Safer Streets funding bid, securing £51,000. The focus of this funding is to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls, to reduce anti-social behaviour and to reduce acquisitive crime. Eligible areas were those with the highest recorded incidents of this nature. The funding has been utilised to:

- Employ two street marshals in Neath town centre during weekends
- Purchase home security kits for the Neath North ward
- Introduce a 'My Green Town' initiative, implemented by Adferiad – allowing their service users to contribute to community-based activities such as litter picks and developing community gardens
- Design and implement a 'Safe Routes Home' campaign

Operation Sentinel – We were successful in our application for £34,000 to support the work of Operation Sentinel, to ensure an increased presence in recognised anti-social behaviour hotspots. This money was split between Community Safety, the Youth Service, and Be Safe Team to provide community events and engagement, joint patrols, and outreach. South Wales Police also received funding to carry out additional patrols in the hotspot areas, and our element of the funding enabled us to complement the additional police presence, with funding will continuing into 2024/25.

Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week - The team supported ASB Awareness Week – a national campaign to raise awareness of anti-social behaviour and to encourage victims to report incidents through to the right channels.

The team held engagement events across the borough and held a social media campaign. Partnership events prove really useful in speaking to many members of the public and local businesses. Colleagues from South Wales Police, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Tai Tarian, Coastal and Pobl attended these events alongside us.

Community Cohesion

Our Community Cohesion Officer within Community Safety is helping to implement the Welsh Government's Community Cohesion Programme in our local area, alongside colleagues across the region in Swansea Council and Bridgend Council. The Officers ensure a regional programme of events to promote cohesive communities, and work to reduce any community tensions.

These are some of the NPT events that took place during the year:

- **Windrush Coffee Morning**

A coffee morning was held in Port Talbot Library to mark the 75th anniversary of Windrush. Keynote speakers gave a presentation on Windrush history, followed by an arts and crafts session with flag keyring making.

- **NPT Pride**

NPT's first Pride weekend took place, with many local businesses on board with Pride themed events over the weekend including flash mobs, drag queens, art competitions and film screenings. There was also a parade on Aberavon beach front.

- **Channel Panel**

The team continue to coordinate all PREVENT related work for the Local Authority, which aims to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. As part of this work, the team coordinate monthly Channel Panel meetings where individuals of low level concern are referred in and provided with appropriate support and interventions to reduce any risks. This acts as Early Intervention and Prevention, complimenting the work that South Wales Police and Counter Terrorism policing conduct with any higher risk individuals.

Referrals remain low, but we cannot assume this means there are no concerns; we must continue to raise awareness with staff and partners of the concerns to look out for, and how to refer individuals of concern into the process.

- Our **Community Cohesion Officer** provides support two days per week to the NPT BME Association – assisting them with funding applications, their board meetings, and the development of a quarterly newsletter.

Engagements

The Crime & Disorder Act places a duty on local authorities to ensure they work in partnership to reduce and prevent crime in their local area. One of the best ways for us to raise awareness of crime prevention campaigns and initiatives is to actively engage with our local communities whenever and wherever possible.

In order to achieve this, the team ensure delivery of a programme of suitable events and community talks in varying areas of the borough.

During 2023/24 the team organised and / or attended **43** community engagement events. During these events we promote crime prevention campaigns and initiatives and talk to residents about any crime or anti-social behaviour issues that are affecting them.

We use the opportunity to talk to residents about Crime Prevention, Domestic Abuse, Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime, County Lines, Scams, Community Tensions, Business Crime, Terrorism.

We use the anecdotal information from these events to steer our future work and campaigns. Information is also fed back to any relevant forum like Tasking, Problem Solving Groups, or the Community Safety Partnership Board itself.

The team continue to host 'A Safer' events which are bespoke to the area they are delivered in. During the year we hosted six of these events, with support from relevant partner agencies to respond to any emerging issues of crime or antisocial behaviour. These events were held in; Dulais Valley, Cadoxton, Glynneath, Sandfields, Ystalyfera, Aberavon. Other areas will be visited during 24/25, starting with 'A Safer Pontardawe'.

The team also deliver talks to local community groups to provide information on home security and to promote our Feel Safe Scheme, which offers home security surveys and appropriate safety items to those who are vulnerable, on a low income and / or are impacted by domestic abuse.

The team produced 'Safe and Sound' newsletters every quarter, which were shared with local Cllrs, members of our CSP Board, partner agencies and the general public. These newsletters help to further raise awareness of crime prevention messaging and campaigns, as well as notify residents of any emerging trends or matters to be aware of.

The team runs the Safer NPT Facebook page which has **now reached 2,900** followers during 2023/24.

CRUCIAL CREW is Community Safety's flagship event in our annual calendar. It sees **1,600** Year 6 pupils visit us over a 2-week period, to receive personal safety workshops from a number of partner agencies, before the young people transition to secondary school.

Its aims are to **encourage good citizenship and reduce** accidents, injury and crime, and protect young people through education and awareness.

The event is designed to educate pupils to make informed decisions when faced with danger and respond effectively to emergency situations and accidents.

The 2023/24 Crucial Crew event took place at Ffrwydwyllt House in Taibach.

Some of the workshops covered were:

- Healthy Relationships – delivered by Thrive, Calan DVS and Hafan Cymru
- Water Safety – by RNLI
- Railway Safety – Network Rail
- Food Hygiene – By Food Standards Agency
- Electrical Safety – By Western Power
- Fire Safety – MAWW Fire and Rescue Service
- Online Safety – South Wales Police
- Staying Safe Around Dogs – By Dogs Trust
- Road Safety – By NPT Road Safety

Paws on Patrol

We have been coordinating the Paws on Patrol scheme for nine years, and it continues to go from strength to strength.

Paws on Patrol asks dog walkers to be our eyes and ears in their community whilst on their regular dog walks. It is usually dog walkers who will spot a change in their local area, such as graffiti, fly tipping, faulty street lighting, and anti-social behaviour. Dog walkers are also often the first on the scene of a crime or may witness a crime taking place. We want to capture all of this information and empower our residents to report the issues they see.

The scheme has over **1,572** members, **111** of those signing up during 2023/24.

Members receive quarterly newsletters or latest advice and information, as well as any crime trends or issues to be aware of.

The team regularly promote the scheme via social media and at regular engagement events. The scheme offers us a 'light touch' way of engaging with our residents about more serious matters, that they perhaps may not otherwise discuss, such as domestic abuse or hate crime.

Our Paws on Patrol Facebook page has **1,500** followers, with some individual posts reaching as many as **70,000** people.

During the year we were able to utilise some Target Hardening funding to provide our members with exclusive personal safety items. These reward members for their loyalty and support, but also act as an incentive to encourage new members to sign up.

We also launched the **‘Respect The Lead’** campaign in response to legislative changes around some dangerous dogs, and feedback from our local residents about their feelings of safety whilst out in the community. This campaign has been well received and well supported by local Councillors.

Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP)

The BCRP sits within the Community Safety Team and is a partnership approach to help reduce crime against businesses in our town centre areas. This is a partnership with South Wales Police, the Fire Service and others. Town centre businesses can sign up to our scheme at a small cost, which gives them access to a Storennet Radio, and an app which provides information on the most prolific offenders in our area. Members of the scheme can make decisions on excluding prolific offenders from their premises.

Our monthly walkabouts were introduced to ensure we are visible to local businesses, and so that they have regular opportunities to see us and report in any concerns they may have, aside from the usual telephone or email contact.

The BCRP Steering Group, coordinated by Community Safety, continues to ensure we have a scheme that is fit for purpose and is meeting the National BCRP standards.

Hillside Secure Children’s Home

Hillside Secure Children’s Home continues to be the only secure establishment in Wales of its kind, providing trauma informed and trauma responsive care to the most vulnerable, traumatised and complex children in Wales and England.

As a therapeutic placement we provide care for children between the ages of 10-18 years old of either gender. In line with the Corporate Strategic Objective of the local authority, Hillside aims to “Improve the well-being of children and

young people” to empower “All of our children and young people to have the best start in life, so they can be the best they can be”. We believe that creating stronger bonds with children and young people helps to create better futures, this is achieved through an approach centred on healthy relationships and meeting basic needs.

To continue to grow as a centre of excellence and support the children accordingly, we are striving for all the staff to be trained to a diploma level in trauma. As a result, the children will feel loved and thrive in a home where they feel a sense of belonging and are valued.

The Engagement & Participation Officer collaborates with Hillside staff to ensure Children who reside there have equal opportunity to have a voice and be listened too. Children are encouraged to complete questionnaires at the start and end of their stay to help improve services. A young person’s action group called LOVE has been established by Hillside staff to promote children’s rights. In November 2023 young people worked with a Spoken Word Artist to share their thoughts and feelings and enjoy a number of fun challenges. Staff at Hillside prioritise wellbeing through fun and engaging events. More recently all the staff and young people dressed up to celebrate World Book Day.

Quality Standard 4 – Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

This looks at how we help people to learn and interact with other people so they can be part of their communities.

Engagement and Participation across Adult services

Sandfields Library of Things

Launched in November 2023, the Sandfields Library of Things was developed to provide tangible volunteering opportunities for local residents, many of whom had physical, emotional or mental health disabilities that they advised discouraged them from accessing opportunities outside of their local area.

Following the success of the weekly Multi Agency Drop/coffee morning developed by the Local Area Coordinator, people became connected in their community and as a result developed confidence to progress into other community-based opportunities. To date over 20 people attend the coffee morning having engaged with their LAC. The volunteering opportunities have been a regular topic of conversation between the Local Area Coordinator, Library staff and residents. Through Co-Production, the concept of a Library of Things was discussed and agreed using Sandfields Library (the beating heart of the community) as the natural place-based facility that would aim to encourage local residents to borrow a range of equipment that would not only help people in a disadvantaged community during a financial crisis to borrow, not buy, but in turn, would help our environment through a circular economy.





Working in partnership with Awel Y Mor Primary School whose ambition is to become a community focused school, the Local Area Coordinator (who has used his Community Regeneration background to help the school) was able to access financial support to make the project a reality. Engaging with local residents and working in partnership with Benthg Cymru, various items were

purchased, including jet washer, strimmer, carpet cleaner, hedge trimmer and various other gardening and hand tools.

To date, 12 local residents have accessed the Sandfields Library of Things. We have 6 volunteers all of whom have completed Manual Handling Training and have signed up with the council's Safe and Well programme. The project is also working in partnership with the recently launched Repair Café (Adult Learning Wales) who will maintain and PAT test the equipment, whilst its success has generated further discussion around developing a mixed-use community garden at the library. Phase 1 has recently been completed thanks to Community Benefit support from Tai Tarian. This overarching project has a working title of Lend, Mend and Tend.

Bird Boxes Inter-generational project

The NPTCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 outlines priority 5:2 – our communities will enjoy increased social and community cohesion. Since December 2022 the Engagement and Participation Officers have attended the Men's Shed project in Skewen on a regular basis. The Team identified the opportunity to conduct an inter-generational project between the



Men's Shed and Looked After Children in the existing 'Beaches 2 Beacons' project which includes placing Bird Boxes in nature around Neath Port Talbot.

The Men’s Shed cut wood that the Engagement and Participation Team provided to size so that the Children and Young People who attend the Beaches to Beacon events could construct them, resulting in a Bird Box constructed by both Elderly and Young people that were later placed within various areas around the Local Authority. This contributed to a sense of shared achievement, belonging and community cohesion.

Community Development: Local Area Coordinators and Community Connects Team

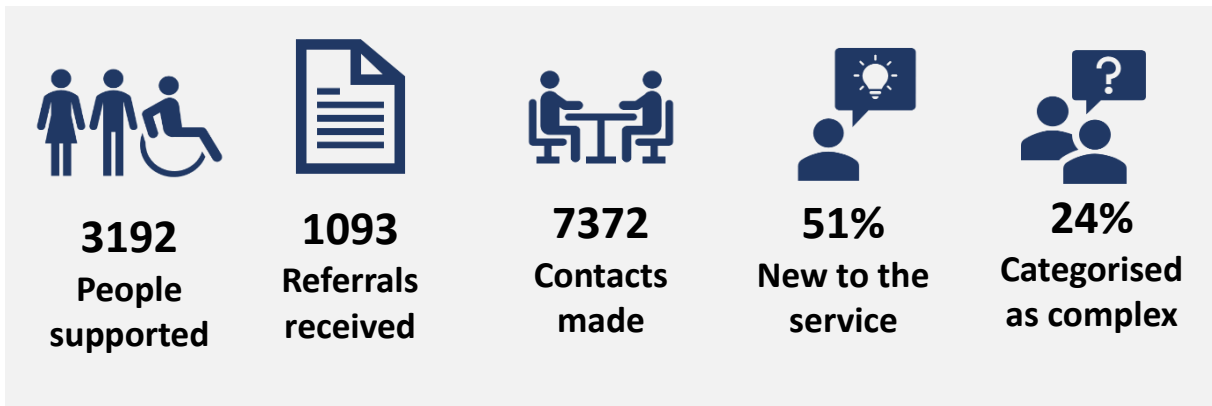
Our Local Area Coordinators and Community Connects Team have continued to engage with people and communities to reduce social isolation and help people maintain their independence. This has included:

- ✓ Direct support of Local Area Coordinators to **a minimum three individual Community Groups** each area on a weekly basis whilst they develop
- ✓ Circa **54 individuals** case managed to access community groups (CCT)
- ✓ Presence at least **65 other community groups** across the county on an ongoing basis.
- ✓ Around **450 additional individuals** access groups whilst regaining their confidence who seek support from the LACs at these groups as required.
- ✓ On average, the LACs workload is split **70 / 30 (1:1 vs Community) although this varies by area and demand.**

Reasons for referral (Local Area Coordination)

Reason	Percentage
Community Engagement	20%
Loneliness/Isolation	15%
Mental health	8%
Physical issues/disability	7%
Low confidence	7%
Anxiety	5%
Food poverty	4%
Housing/homeless	4%

Prevention & Early Intervention Overall Service Activity (2023/2024)



	Total
Number of Volunteer hours provided	2279
Number of new Local Area Coordination referrals	617

Experience



It's been an excellent service thank you and lots of information I didn't know about . Thankfully I didn't have to move thank you so much its been wonderful.

It's great to be back out and about again - thank you so much

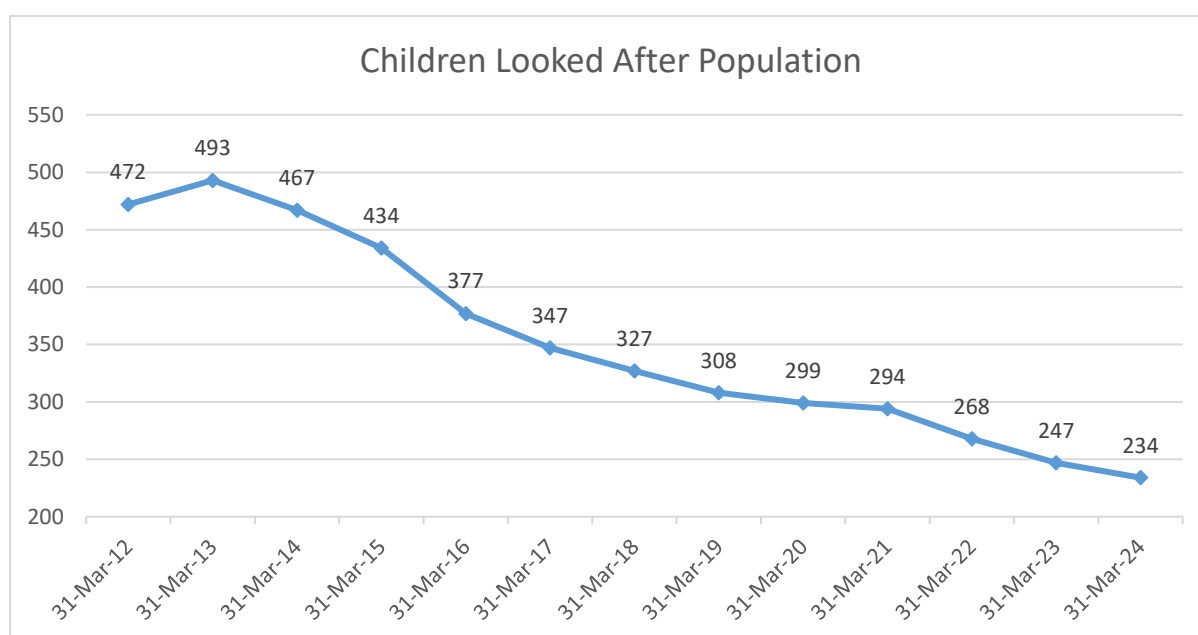
Supported me and my children and grandchildren during the hardest time of my life

Quality Standard 5 – Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

This is about helping people to achieve healthy relationships at home and with the people they are close to.

Looked After Children

The number of Children and Young People Looked After in Neath Port Talbot has continued to decrease year on year from 2012. From 472 in March 2012 to 234 at the end of March 2024. (This figure does not show the number of UASC young people accommodated)



We have continued to review the plans for our children looked after and have ensured that only those children that need to be looked after are looked after. We have invested and continue to invest in early intervention and prevention to ensure that families receive the right support at the right time which prevents escalation of risks and concerns. We work collaboratively with families in an outcome focused way to build resilience and prevent problems from escalating. When children and young people are on the edge of care, we are very reactive in our response to support. We ensure that we consider plans and support permanency for children and young people outside of the care system wherever it is possible to do so. This has been instrumental in reducing the children looked after population. However, where it is deemed appropriate for children and young people to come into care, they will continue to do so. All the admissions into care were fully considered in Admissions Panel, taking into account the best interests and level of vulnerability of each individual young person. Fortnightly

meetings are chaired by the Principal Officer to review the care plans for children and young people looked after.

It is our aim to ensure that children and young people are placed as far as possible in their own community with Neath Port Talbot Foster carers. When children and young people come into our care our priority is securing their protection from harm. However, wherever possible, we are committed to ensuring that they are able to leave our care and be reunited with their families where it is safe and appropriate to do so. Early and robust care planning ensures we work with families proactively and explore options for children and young people's safe return home.

Fostering Panel

The Fostering Panel makes a recommendation on whether to approve prospective carers or recommend continued approval of existing carers following a foster carer review being presented at panel. This recommendation goes to the Agency Decision Maker (a Senior Manager in Children Services). They either ratify or reject the recommendation, and this is referred to as the 'Qualifying Determination'. If the ADM does not give approval the applicants have the right to challenge the 'qualifying determination', either requesting a return to Panel for the case to be reheard on the basis that there is new or different information that the panel need to consider, or to apply through the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) for Wales who will hold their own panel independently of the Local Authority and give their recommendation. The outcome of this panel is then returned to the original ADM for their final decision.

There are currently 13 panel members on the central list (not including the Panel Chair). This consists of 7 independent panel members and 6 Social Workers. The Panel Chair is Social Work qualified.

Transition from childhood to adulthood

The transition period, from children's to adults' services, usually between the ages of 14-25 years, can involve a wide range of professionals working across a number of different agencies. This includes social services, education and health. Ensuring a seamless transition from children's to adults' services has

been a challenge but one that we are committed to working towards achieving. We work in a person centred, strengths-based way to support children, young people and young adults and their families/carers to achieve their personal outcomes.

At the start of 2020, we commenced a review of transition arrangements in Neath Port Talbot Social Services. Following the COVID-19 pandemic it was apparent that there was an increase in vulnerability, with an impact on emotional wellbeing, lack of social opportunities and increased social isolation.

As part of this work, it became clear that there was no standard pathway for transition between children and adult services with varied approaches within different adult services teams/geographical areas. This was especially evident for young people who do not have a diagnosed learning disability.

Therefore, to support a successful transition to adult services, a decision was made for transition to be managed within the Complex Disability Team, with designated transition Social Workers. The shift was in consideration of how we improve and deliver a consistent service to enable a young person to make a successful transition to adulthood. We also improved our data to ensure that young people were identified at the age of 14 if they were likely to need support from adult services in the future. This has enabled us to look at the resources that are available and required to meet this need. We have also recognised that there is further work to do in respect of prevention early intervention and the support that Local Area Coordinators can provide in the community outside of statutory involvement.

We have worked to identify and map the accommodation and care needs of young people transitioning to inform the future commissioning of services. This will enable us to work towards solutions and to identify gaps in provisions and pathways. This has provided us with a far better understanding of those children and young people transitioning.

We have been able to undertake joint capacity assessments at an earlier point to inform care planning. There is early planning, sharing of information via existing well-established pathways. There are monthly transition meetings between children and adult services for information sharing. There is an interface meeting with education in respect of young people in transition particularly from Ysgol Maes Y Coed. We have been working with Education in respect of the Additional Learning Need (ALN) development and attend the 16

plus education group to develop services. Work is being undertaken in respect of developing children and young people's independent living skills.

Systems are in place to identify young people who will move from Children's to Adults' Services (aged 14) and to start involving them and their families or carers in planning their transition by the age of 16. The current pathway planning is also to inform commissioning priorities.

There are currently 40 referrals open to the Complex Disability for young people under 18 and there are 86 young people between the ages of 18-21 who are being supported (most but not all of whom will have been referred through a transition pathway). There are 32 young people aged between 18-21 who are known and supported by the Clinical Learning Disability Team.

For some young people who leave residential care, moving to a foster family is not the right care plan for them. Some young people's needs are better suited to a supported housing provision. We have been developing young people's independent living skills in readiness for this. We have seen some young people successfully step down to these arrangements. We are currently undertaking a placement sufficiency exercise and considering the in-house and external commissioned market options to provide this accommodation for young people aged 16 plus.

Pressures facing Children's Services

Placement Sufficiency

This relates to having sufficient fostering, residential and supported accommodation placements to meet demand and the needs of children and young people. Cabinet will be approving our revised placement commissioning strategy which includes an action plan to address this issue. We also have transformational projects underway to help address this challenge.

Eliminate Profit from Children's Care

Our challenge is from the impact of the Welsh Government's programme of eliminating profit from children's care. Providers are reporting uncertainties with what the market impact will be. Officers are monitoring the situation closely and we are working regionally and with Welsh Government to fully embrace the eliminate profit agenda.

Budgets

The commissioning landscape is one where service providers are facing increasing costs whilst our budgets are under significant pressure. This is a key challenge officers will seek to effectively manage with commissioned providers.

Training support

In order to build a resilient fostering community, the Training Officer (TDO) has spent time developing a new wellbeing programme “Mindful Mondays”. This has 30 bite size learning points, a course workbook and reflective journal, on essential skills for foster parents, to resolve feelings of anxiety and intense emotions often felt when parenting children and young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma. The trainer is utilising the knowledge and skills acquired having qualified as a TISUK Trauma and Mental Health Practitioner in March 2023. Additionally, the TDO has developed a new training session, again to support foster parent resilience when working with children and young people affected by trauma, social, emotional and mental health-based behaviour, Understanding the Behaviour Assessment Impact and Resolution Tool. The Fostering Team and Therapeutic Service also had training on using the tool.

Quality Standard 6 – Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

This is about helping people to improve their income, benefit from a social life and have a suitable place to live.

Engagement with Private Landlords in Housing & Communities

Housing & Communities recently held a Private Landlord Forum Meeting in partnership with Environmental Health. The event was held to engage with private landlords within NPT and a number of guest speakers (National Residential Landlords Association, Rent Smart Wales, Welsh Government) attended. The event was held at Neath Civic Centre, working on a collaborative approach with the NRLA and Rent Smart Wales to publicise the event. Over 100 attendees took part, an increase from the six that attended a similar event a few years back. The private rented sector has a crucial role to play in us delivering our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and this event has provided us with a platform to engage with landlords in a way they want to be engaged with, and the next steps are to adopt a co-production/design phase with landlords.

Disabled Facilities Grants

The number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) completed increased to 293, an 8% increase on the 272 completed in the previous year. However, the time taken between referral and completion increased from 245 to 325 days as some longstanding jobs were finally signed off and closed.

Contractors that carried out larger works were still very busy in the private housing market which is still causing a delay in larger work starting on site, while smaller works such as shower conversions are being delivered quickly.

The rise in building material costs is still having a significant impact on the budget, with extensions costing 50% more than pre-pandemic, such that larger extensions are now exceeding the maximum value for a grant. Due to this there are less extensions in the system.

Due to a combination of increased demand and increase in costs, the service is already starting to commit the budget for financial year 2025/26.

The service has received a number of compliments from applicants where the new adaptations have made a huge difference in their lives by making their property a far safer place for them to live in, or the installed adaptations have given them more independence in the home.

Housing Options

The year 2023/24 saw a total of 2,460 presentations to the service. Of that figure, 1085 resulted in an assessment with 1,375 contacting the service for advice/not being homeless at the point of contact.

The overall presentation figure was down 180 from the previous year. This was not unexpected as the implementation of the Renting Homes Wales Act in December 2022 saw an increase in demand due to private sector landlords leaving, however this was expected to have settled by the end of the first year with fewer households being served notice for that reason.

Homelessness Prevention

Some 343 assessments resulted in a S66 prevention duty being owed. Of those, 210 had their homelessness successfully prevented and an overall success rate of 60.9% was reached for the year compared to a 60% target. This is an increase from 53.7% in 2022/23. The prevention was successful due to the following:

- 16 applicants were able to remain in their current property
- 73 were rehoused in RSL accommodation before becoming homeless
- 3 moved into supported accommodation
- 43 moved into the private rented sector
- 11 returned home or moved in with other family/friends
- 64 provided with other forms of support

Temporary Accommodation (TA)

TA numbers continue to increase, with 233 households in TA at the end of the financial year. Despite the numbers not currently reducing, an average of 7

households per week move on from TA into longer term, sustainable accommodation.

The average stay in TA is currently 39 days which is a reduction from 137 days at the end of 2022/23. It remains that there are a small number of longer-term TA residents that cannot be moved on due to barriers, but work is ongoing to reduce those barriers and maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Currently there is an average split of 85% single people/adult households and 15% families with dependent children. This is a small decrease from the previous year where families were accounting for 20% of all households in TA.

A significant amount of work has also been carried out to reduce the reliance and use of hotels for families. At its peak in July 2023 there were 28 families, including 39 children in hotels. During the same month a total of 142 children were at some point placed in TA. Families in hotels are now in single figures and only used for a short period of time while a dispersed unit is being prepared.

Dispersed units

To be able to reduce reliance on hotels, particularly for families it is crucial that we increase the number of TA units managed by ourselves. Over the past year this has been continually increasing and numbers are now as below:

- 18 units owned by the council
- 9 units leased as hostels
- 67 leased dispersed units
- **Total of 94 council managed units**

Prior to Covid the leased units were in single figures so there was a maximum of 34 managed units at any one time. There has therefore been an increase of almost 300% over recent years and a significant factor in reducing hotel use for families.

Social Housing Grant (SHG)

The SHG is the main capital grant provided by Welsh Government for the provision of affordable housing. It is used to fund housing schemes that meet local housing need and priorities as identified by the Local Authority. Local

Authorities are responsible for choosing their Housing Association partners, who are paid SHG to develop, own and manage the affordable housing.

Examples of SHG Approved Schemes are:

- Social Rent, Intermediate Rent or in some instances Tenure Neutral.
- General needs, older persons, wheelchair adapted, supported housing, extra care, Homebuy or mortgage rescue.
- New build, rehabilitation (or a combination) and existing dwellings/empty properties.
- A variety of procurement routes ranging from conventional tender, design and build, and package deals to off-the-shelf projects.

Assuming there are no unforeseen issues or delays, SHG schemes typically take around 2-3 years to develop from start to finish, with an RSL (Registered Social Landlord) drawing down a portion of their allocated SHG to purchase a plot of land (*acquisition*) in year 1, the remainder drawn down in year 2 and or 3 (*construction/construction part payment*), with build completion the following year.

Along with our apportioned 2023/24 NPT SHG budget (**£12.8m**) we also applied for and were awarded an additional **£9.4m** in slippage monies bringing to the total amount of SHG awarded in 23/24 to **£22,227,302** compared to **£8,294,190** in 22/23, an increase of circa **£14m** (+166%).

We are currently projected to fund a total of **428** affordable homes via the SHG scheme during the period 2024/25 to 2026/27.

Recycled Capital Grant (RCG)

Recycled Capital Grant (RCG) is Social Housing Grant (SHG) that is recycled by an RSL, usually following the sale of land or property. All schemes are subject to 50% homelessness nominations.

There is no timescale in which to spend RCG, however, Welsh Government encourage RSLs to spend it sooner rather than later.

£1.5m of RCG was spent during 2023/24: Approximately half towards a scheme within the 2023/24 SHG Programme Development Plan (PDP) and the remainder to purchase six properties from the open market.

Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP)

TACP provides grant funding to Local Authorities and RSLs to bring forward longer term accommodation at pace to support those in temporary accommodation. All schemes are subject to 100% homelessness nominations.

NPT received circa **£2m** via TACP in the year resulting in 20 affordable homes: 14 Acquisitions (*properties purchased from the open market*) and 6 Voids (*RSL properties unoccupied for a period of time*).

Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights Unit (The Unit) is a specialist section, which deals with supporting people claim the Welfare Benefits, to which they are entitled. The Unit helps local residents via a self-referral, Social Services or other support services; advice support is provided on their benefits entitlement. The Unit offers a public helpline 5 days a week, support with form filling and representation at appeals tribunals; the Unit is able to advise on entitlement via our advice line service or at one of our 7 outreach advice surgeries situated throughout the county borough.

The Unit also continues to work in partnership with Macmillan, who provide funding for Macmillan benefit advisors.

The Unit has been successful in gaining an advice quality standard award in recognising excellence. The Unit has successful partnerships working with our in house teams and Elected Members, along with various third party organisations such as The Wallich, Thrive Women's Aid and JobCentre Plus. The Unit has a 90% success rate at overturning decisions at Benefit appeal Tribunals. The Unit has represented at 110 benefit tribunals during the year.

The advice line is extremely popular with over 1,002 service users receiving advice in the financial year 2023-24. There are **837** cases open to the Unit, with over **3,468** cases opened in the last financial year.

Welfare Rights have raised **£10,554,113.00** in the last financial year, which has exceeded previous year's monies of **£7,032,076.80** in 2022-23 and **£6,708,763.50** in 2021-22.

Welsh Language

Social Services continued to consolidate arrangements in relation to the Welsh Language and ***More Than Just Words***; Directorate senior officers work with corporate colleagues to promote and support the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards and the development of the Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (WLPS) 2023-28.

The Directorate received no Welsh language complaints during the year.

How we do what we do

This is about how we support our workforce, make best use of our resources and financial planning, as well as our governance arrangements.

Our workforce and how we support their professional roles

We continue to offer a blended approach to training across Adults and Children's Services, which has been beneficial in both supporting the recruitment of staff to the sector, as well as the continuing professional development of existing staff to support their re-registration with Social Care Wales. We have continued to raise the profile of the various roles within Social Care and worked with Neath College to offer Health and Social Care students work experience opportunities in the Community Wellbeing Team; their experience was further reinforced by access to other training that supports the role of a Social Care Worker, such as Client Manual Handling.

A health and safety programme of training has been made available across the Directorate allowing staff to learn the knowledge and skills to keep themselves and others safe in their workplaces. For some courses we continue to offer an accredited eLearning alternative to face to face learning or used eLearning as part of a blended approach to delivery of training to reduce the time staff need to be available in a classroom. Competency assessments in the workplace take place where possible, a new refreshing way of assuring knowledge and competence over traditional classroom-based methods.

In Adult Services we continue to ensure that relevant internal staff complete the PBS eLearning module and have been attending a 2-day workshop for Positive Behaviour Management (PBM) Theory and PBM Practical Breakaways. This is an ongoing training programme to support the service in the quality and safety of their delivery. This includes a blended approach of both eLearning and then face to face Theory and Practical training with some bespoke training for identified

individuals whose presentations are more complex. In the past year **135 staff** have received training in this area in both the theory and practical elements.

We continue to support internal services and our commissioned providers with a suite of training opportunities to ensure they have access to timely training opportunities to drive up the skills and knowledge of the workforce to enable them to provide good standards of care. These range from dementia, safeguarding, recording and reporting, to pressure ulcers, catheter care and other health related areas of care and support. Dementia training continues as an area of focus and a suite of courses have been identified through consultation with the providers and the Care Home In-Reach Team (CHIRT) to address what they need to support them. The Training Officer in this area has continued to upskill her knowledge and practice to ensure this is passed on through training to the staff. The opportunity for Dementia Care Mapping continues to be made available, which provides the service with an action plan for staff to adapt how they provide care and support to individuals living with Dementia to avoid placement breakdown. **163** staff have undertaken training in these areas.

During 2023/24 a total of 4,928 training places were accessed by staff across Adult Social Care Services.

In Children & Young People's Services (CYPS) there has been a continued emphasis on an outcome focused care and support approach. Using the NPT Strength Based Model of Practice 'Working to achieve outcomes', bespoke training has been developed to improve joint understanding of communities and strengthen collaborative working and relationships between multiagency practitioners.

A new eight-day strength based, outcome focused training programme has been developed and delivered by Consultant Social Workers (CSWs) and Managers to synthesise existing training on the outcome focussed approach, to include the integrated family support services model, outcome focused case recording, scaling, direct work skills and motivational interviewing. Attendees have said that they have found it useful to develop new skills regarding motivational interviewing and put these into practice between sessions. It has also helped to give clarity regarding how social services work and will therefore hopefully create consistency across the service.

Almost 100 Children's Services workers have attended training on outcome focused care planning. Formal audits have been conducted and a marked difference was found by staff who had undertaken the training, particularly in respect of the voice of the individuals being captured and simplified or clean

language being used. It was noted that this was the beginning of the process, and we need to continue to offer training and development around this particularly when the new MOSAIC system is implemented.

Some 16 Social Workers have been trained in the Most Significant Change Model (MSC) by Nick Andrew, Research and Practice Development Officer for Developing Evidence Enriched Practice with Swansea University. This storytelling technique was also facilitated by consultant social workers at a “Championing Research Culture” conference for NPT partner agencies in November with 86 attendees.

Further training has been provided in response to recommendations around work with child sexual abuse, sessions have been provided on women who sexually abuse, understanding and preventing online child sexual abuse, sibling abuse, and understanding and assessing the protective carer in the context of child sexual abuse. Specific sessions have been delivered directly to parents. Four trainers have been accredited to deliver the Brook Traffic Light Tool and roll out of the tool for Sexual Behaviour in children and young people will commence in the second half of the year following additional specialist training for 12 CYPS practice leads from the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse. This training will be reinforced with access to the electronic tool and further eLearning.

A suite of Lucy Faithful Stop It Now “practitioners protect” training has been delivered to 113 regional multiagency partners. The outcome has been to support both parents and practitioners in understanding the issues around child sexual abuse, provide information and resources to help in confidently protecting children. Also, to explore how to engage families in abuse prevention, develop knowledge of conversation starters for parents and carers to use with increased confidence in giving prevention advice and encourage practitioners to effectively use the toolkit in their role. 9 professionals were trained to deliver the “parents protect” programme to parents within their communities.

We have also made significant strides forward ensuring Children’s Services has a trauma informed workforce. 48 members of staff attended an event on Trauma and Mental health informed schools and communities. Eight experienced Children Services’ workers have been trained by Dr Sheena Webb of the Tavistock Institute to deliver workshops on “Working with trauma experienced parents”. This was developed as a structured reflection to support

practitioners working with parents who have experienced complex and/or sustained trauma.

During 2023/24 a total of 1,701 training places were accessed by staff across Children's Social Care Services not including independent, third sector or partner agencies.

Social Work Education & Training

During 2023/24, we have provided 44 Social Work Degree Practice Learning Opportunities (placements) across Levels 1-3, for students from Cardiff Met and Swansea University. This includes 19 students that are seconded from Neath Port Talbot to the social work degree programme through the Open University across Levels 1-3. Social work teams across Adult and Children's Services have been invaluable in offering high quality placement experiences and, for the second year running we have had sufficient internal practice educators, which meant that we have not had to outsource to independent external practice educators. This is because of the continued support to the Practice Educator Award. In 2023/24 we supported seven social workers achieve the award through Swansea University. Our Social Work Education Co-ordinator has taught two sessions as part of this course. Fourteen Practice Educator candidates also completed the qualification in August 2023.

All newly qualified social workers who have started with NPT this year have commenced the First Year in Practice Programme. They have also had the opportunity to attend Newly Qualified training programme arranged by BASW.

Research, Development and Innovation across the Directorate

Our research, development, and innovation activity across the directorate, overseen by the Quality Practice Strategic Group, provides confidence to the department and other stakeholders that its processes and services are being well managed. It validates the consistent use of procedures and standards and ensures that staff have the correct knowledge, skills, and attitudes to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in a competent manner. This is undertaken through the Quality Practice and Learning Framework, which sets out how NPT will learn from all activity completed to ensure that children, adults, families, and carers

are being supported in the right way at the right time and understand what difference has been made.

This framework provides a level of confidence about service delivery and the positive impact on children, adults, families, and carers in NPT, whilst also measuring impact, such as what difference NPT and its partners are making. Our guiding principles for embedding the Research and Learning Framework are that:

- **Children, young people, adults, families, and carers are at the heart of what we do.** The focus of research, development, and innovation must be on impact and outcomes for the child, young person, or adult in their journey through our social work and safeguarding systems.
- **The approach to Research, Development, and Innovation will be underpinned by Restorative Practice and a desire to examine and capture best practice.** This means that activity is done “with” staff, rather than “to” or “for” them, in ways that build relationships and are characterised by respecting each other’s perspectives, high expectations, high support, and high challenge, to enable us to learn, improve, and change.
- **Throughout the research processes, the views of children, young people, adults, families, and carers are integral to improving our services.** We will gain the voice and stories of those who have received our services and hold story panels to learn, improve and change.
- **Our multi-agency and collaborative working with our partners,** whether statutory or third sector, will be enriched, and where practicable, we will include them within learning activity such as learning reviews and audits.
- We are embedding a culture of research informed practice with the success of the championing a research culture project in Adult Services being replicated across the Directorate.

Our financial resources and how we plan for the future

Excellent working relationships between the 'Rainbow Alliance' political leadership, Councillors and Officers have been maintained, and the Directorate continues to enjoy the advice, support and guidance provided by its Cabinet and Committee Members and, indeed, the wider Council. Partnership working is paramount to the planning and sustainability of service provision, and the Directorate works closely with partners across Health, private and third sector organisations, as well as neighbouring local authorities.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The medium-term financial outlook over the next five years is extremely challenging. Social Services is still feeling the effects of high inflation which peaked at 11.1% in October 2022. With minimum wage rising by 9.8% in 2024/25 there looks to be no let-up in the cost increases facing the Council. In addition, the Directorate is having to support more people with more complexities. The current MTFP to 2028/29 includes pay and inflationary increases, unavoidable service pressures and local growth pressures arising from changing demographics. The Council have continued to support the Directorate financially with considerable growth in the budget. However, it is clear that without significant additional central government funding in coming years the outlook is bleak, and some difficult decisions will need to be made about the prioritisation of services.

After taking account of assumed Welsh Government funding over the period 2024-2029, there remains a significant funding gap. Work is ongoing in relation to developing a number of strategies to close this gap.

Commissioning

Over the last year, the Commissioning Team have faced a number of challenges around market stability. Issues with staffing within the social care sector, continue to add pressures to our Provider support.

The biggest impact was home closure, which resulted in the relocation of 68 residents to alternative homes within the county borough.

As the market continues to show evidence of instability, Officers are working on tightening contractual arrangements with our Providers to strengthen our oversight on sustainability issues and our ability to proactively respond to potential market failure.

Welsh Government's Rebalancing care and support programme, recognises the continuous pressure on Local Authorities managing the external Provider Market and recommends rebalancing social care services with consideration of bringing services in house.

Commissioning have supported this agenda by considering options for insourcing services as part our business planning process. Over the last year we have presented the business case to bring Adult Family Placements service in house, which transferred back to the Council in May 2024.

In addition to this, Commissioning will support with the transformation programme, which includes in sourcing of Trem y Glyn Residential home and diversifying the service options available for Adult Services.

For Children and Young People, the focus has been on strengthening our support for care leavers, young people facing homelessness and eliminating profit from children's residential care.

Our first care leavers project will be delivered in July 2024. The project will support care leavers to manage their own tenancy, develop independent living skills and then move on to independent living. A business case setting out options for a Children's residential home to be delivered in house will be presented this year.

Across both Adult and Young people services, we have reviewed our housing and homelessness support services and over the coming year will make recommendations on any remodelling requirements. In addition to this we are developing internal processes to support streamlined referrals to housing support.

Transformation Programme

Across the directorate, Officers are working on a transformation programme to address the deficits within Social Care, Health and Housing.

The transformation programmes are an ambition programme of work to Rebalance Social Care and remodel services. The programme includes development and in-sourcing of care and support services and diversifying services.

An example of this is the in-sourcing of our Adult Family Placements service, which will be diversified to support a wider cohort of people, including older adults with dementia and adults with mental health support needs.

[Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability](#)

Governance

The Council has adopted the 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework, developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). To comply with the Framework, the Council must publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. Senior Officers from within the Directorate play an active part in the production and monitoring of the AGS.

Complaints & Representations

The Social Services Complaints and Representations Procedure is based upon the good practice guidance issued alongside the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representation Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. The procedure is available to ensure that everyone who makes a complaint about social services in Neath Port Talbot has a right to be listened to properly. Their best interests must be safeguarded and promoted. Their views, wishes and feelings must be heard. Their concerns should be resolved quickly and effectively.

The Complaints Team received **70** formal Social Services Stage 1 complaints during 2023-24 across Children's Services, Adult Services, Housing & Communities and Business Management (including corporate complaints); with a further **three** Stage 2 complaints. Activity in dealing with complainants on an

‘informal’ basis is far greater, with the Team being proactive in supporting Managers to achieve satisfactory outcomes for service users, their families and carers.

The Team also recorded/reported on **114 compliments** received across the Directorate.

West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board



The Junior Safeguarding Board meets every half term in order to determine safeguarding topics that the members would like to champion throughout the year. Meetings have been hosted by Secondary Schools and attract a healthy number of students from across Neath Port Talbot.

Schools are currently engaged in projects to raise awareness of

Sexual Harassment. These projects will lead up to National Safeguarding Week 2024. During National Safeguarding Week in November 2023 a promotional event was held in Ysgol Maes Y Coed to launch the British Sign Language video and widget board to educate frontline emergency service staff to communicate with children and young people with communication difficulties. The event was attended by South Wales Police, Welsh Ambulance & M&WWF&R Service. The students enjoyed exploring the vehicles and services have committed to sharing the resources.

Looking ahead: our priorities for 2024-25

Social care faces yet another challenging year with increasing budgetary pressures. New and sustainable ways of working are paramount to ensure we continue to meet the social care and support needs of vulnerable people. We therefore set out the following as our key priorities for the year ahead:

Children and Young People Services

- All young people leaving care will have access to sustainable and appropriate accommodation.
- There will be a wider range of foster care placements available which will include opportunities for paid carers to support children with the most complex needs.
- Young people identified as having care and support needs when they reach adulthood will be supported into Adult Services appropriately.
- All children and young people will be safeguarded effectively.

Adult Services

- More people feel that they are involved in decision making and are empowered to develop local solutions to address issues that affect them locally.
- There is a wider range of community services able to support the unique needs of people with disabilities and complex needs which draw on a range of community resources and which enables them to enjoy and contribute to community life.
- The needs of people with complex care and support needs are being met in more appropriate ways through a wide range of housing and support services.

Housing Services

- We will have strengthened our partnerships with housing developers and those arrangements are delivering more quality, affordable and low carbon housing.
- More people are prevented from becoming homeless and fewer people are living in emergency and temporary accommodation.
- Empty properties have been brought back into use through the Empty Property Grant, helping to address the demand for housing.

Appendix - Supportive performance data for the quality standards

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 - March 23	April 23 - March 24
PI24	The percentage of assessments completed within 42 days from the point of referral	97.00%	97.10%

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 – March 23	April 23 – March 24
Measure 20a	The percentage of adults who completed a period of Reablement and who have a reduced package of care after completion	18.8%	19.0%
Measure 20b	The percentage of adults who completed a period of Reablement needing no further package of care	70.9%	67.8%
Measure 21	The average length of time in calendar days adults (aged 65+) are supported in residential care homes	786	825
Measure 22	Average age of adults entering residential care homes	84	84
PI30	The percentage of children seen by a dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	21.6%	35.6%
PI31	The percentage of Looked After Children at 31 st March registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	85.2%	81.9%

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 - March 23	April 23 - March 24
New Measure PI27	The percentage of re-registrations of children on the local authority Child Protection Register	14.7%	0.0%
New Measure PI28	The average length of time (in days) for all children who were on the Child Protection Register during the year	269.2 days	228 days

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 - March 23	April 23 - March 24
New Measure PI32	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who has experienced one or more change of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March.	3.6%	1.9%

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 - March 23	April 23 - March 24
New Measure PI33	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who has had three or more placements during the year.	9.30%	6.80%

PI Reference	PI Description	April 22 - March 23	April 23 - March 24
PI25	The percentage of children supported to live with their family	70.90%	67.80%
PI34	The percentage of all care leavers who have completed at least 3 months of education, training or employment in the past 12 months since leaving care	63.3%	63.6%
PI34	The percentage of all care leavers who have completed at least 3 months of education, training or employment in the past 24 months since leaving care	66.6%	53.0%
PI35	The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year	3.52%	2.90%

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**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT**

**COUNCIL
19th February 2025**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC
SERVICES - Mr. Craig Griffiths.**

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

**CHANGES TO POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY AND COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to authorise changes to the allocation of seats on council committees to the political groups.

Amendments to Committee Membership

2. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has been notified of the proposed changes to the membership of Council committees specified below:
 - That Cllr Dan Thomas be removed as a member of the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee.
 - That Cllr Heath Davies be appointed as a member of the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee.

Financial Impact

4. There are no financial impacts.

Integrated Impact Assessment

5. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as the issues within the report relate to constitutional matters only.

Workforce Impacts

6. There are no workforce Impacts.

Legal Powers/Impacts

7. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government Act 2000

There are no legal impacts.

Risk Management

8. There are no risk management issues that require attention.

Consultation

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

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that Council approves the changes to the membership of committees as contained in paragraph 2 of this report.

Reason for Proposed Decisions:

11. To update the Council's membership arrangements.

Implementation of Decisions:

12. The decisions are for immediate implementation.

List of Background Papers:

13. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Constitution.

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

19th February 2025

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – C. Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

Purpose of the Report:

1. To seek approval to implement new Contract Procedure Rules for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (“the Council”).

Executive Summary:

2. The current Contract Procedure Rules were drafted in 2019 and as such require updating so as to reflect the legal and policy changes that have been implemented to date which impact on the Council’s procurement activities, specifically the implementation of the Procurement Act 2023. Procedural aspects of the Council’s procurement activities also require updating at an operational level and this report aims to provide an overview of the proposed new arrangements that officers would wish to implement, subject to approval by Members.

The Community, Finance and Strategic Leadership Scrutiny Committee considered the same on the 9th January 2025.

The rules were approved by Cabinet on the 15th January 2025 and commended to Council for final approval and implementation.

Background:

3. The aim of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules is to ensure the Council has standing orders and procurement procedures providing a corporate framework for the procurement of all goods, services and works for the Council. The overarching

purpose being to ensure that the Council complies with all UK Government and Welsh Government legislation and policy that governs and/or relates to the procurement of goods, services and works and ensure that the Council obtains value for money and the required level of quality and performance in all contracts.

4. The public procurement landscape has changed over the last 4 years following the UK's departure from the European Union and will continue to change over the next year with substantive legislative reform through the introduction of the Welsh Government's Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 and the UK Government's Procurement Act 2023. The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 focuses on social partnership and socially responsible procurement and creates a socially responsible procurement duty. The duty requires the Council to seek to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way.
5. As a result of these legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procedure Rules is now necessary. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules (contained in Appendix 1 to this Report) will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council following the approval of the Council's Procurement Strategy on the 11th September 2024.
6. The overarching focus of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules are to ensure the Council:
 - (a) obtains value for money and the required level of quality and performance in all contracts let;
 - (b) conducts its procurement activity openly, transparently and, where practicable, based on standard approaches and use of common systems that appropriately minimise complexity, cost, timescales and requirements for suppliers;
 - (c) shares information for the purpose of allowing suppliers as well as others to understand the Council's Policies and decisions;
 - (d) has regard to the importance of maximising public benefit;
 - (e) treat suppliers the same unless a difference between suppliers justifies different treatment;
 - (f) complies with all legislation that governs and/or relates to the procurement of goods, services and works and the letting of concession and utility contracts;
 - (g) meets the principles of the Welsh Government's Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS);
 - (h) has regard to the fact that small and medium enterprises and voluntary sector organisations may face particular barriers to participation, and must consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced;
 - (i) achieves the organisational outcomes of the Council's Procurement Strategy and Corporate Plan;
 - (j) considers all relevant guidance issued by Welsh Government including Procurement Advice Notes and the Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in

Supply Chains;

- (k) supports the achievement of the seven well-being goals for Wales as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015);
- (l) supports the achievement of social partnership, sustainable development duties the socially responsible procurement duty under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (Wales) Act 2023 to amongst other things to seek to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way and
- (m) has procurement procedures which, when followed, should protect members and officers of the Council from any allegation of acting unfairly or unlawfully in connection with any procurement by the Council.

6. The pertinent features of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules are set out below:

Definition of Value for Money	Rather than just being focussed primarily on cost, value for money in arrangements should be considered as the optimum combination of whole-of-life costs in terms of not only generating efficiency savings and good quality outcomes for the organisation, but also benefit to society, the economy, and the environment, both now and in the future. Cost will undoubtedly be a factor but it will require consideration of a number of issues.
Exemptions	There will always be some exemptions to when a competitive procurement needs to be undertaken and Rule 4 of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules sets out these objectives which are based on the exemptions set out in law.
Conduct	No member, employee or agent of the Council shall improperly use his or her position to obtain any personal or private benefit from any contract entered into by the Council. When undertaking a Procurement, and throughout all Procurement activities, all Officers must take all reasonable steps to identify and manage perceived and actual conflicts of interest
Welsh Language	Provision is included in the proposed Contract Procedure Rules to reflect the requirements of the Welsh language

	standards issued to the Council by the Welsh Language Commissioner with regard to situations where a tender should be published in Welsh, where a tender may be submitted in Welsh, where interviews under a tender process are to be offered in Welsh and where communications during the tender process are to be issued in Welsh
Procurement Planning	<p>Before commencing any Procurement, the Senior Officer responsible for the proposed Procurement, must undertake (or ensure that it is undertaken) the appropriate level of preparation and planning, proportionate to the proposed value and nature of the proposed contract, taking advice where appropriate and ensuring the requirements of these Rules are complied with.</p> <p>Engagement with suppliers and other persons for the purpose of developing the Council's requirements and approach to the Procurement, designing a procedure, identifying potential suppliers, identifying likely contract terms and building capacity in the market is permitted and encouraged.</p>
Community Benefits/Social Value	<p>Community benefits/social value clauses within contracts are used to build a range of economic, social or environmental conditions into the delivery of a contract and the Council must maximise the social value and community benefits to be obtained through its Procurements in line with any guidance or policies created.</p> <p>All Contracts exceeding £1,000,000 must include a contractual obligation on the successful bidder to deliver community benefits/social value.</p> <p>For all contracts below the figure, the inclusion of community benefits as a contractual obligation is optional but shall be considered</p>

In house Provision	Before any external procurement is considered, it is important to check that no existing in-house provision exists for the goods, services or works required. In-house services must be used unless agreed otherwise
Catalogue of Framework Agreements	A catalogue of various frameworks will be created to ensure that approved sources are used for all goods and purchasing, where possible.
Authority	To ensure appropriate oversight, and in line with current requirements, prior to commencing a procurement and awarding a contract, authority should be in place in the. Authority must be obtained from the relevant decision maker and the details of the decision maker are set out in Rule 15 of the proposed rules.
Thresholds	<p>The Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS) states that the Council shall adopt the principle that procurement will be open, accessible competition. It states that “public bodies should adopt risk based, proportionate approaches to procurement to ensure that contract opportunities are open to all and smaller, local suppliers are not precluded from winning contracts individually, as consortia, or through roles within the supply chain”</p> <p>Ensuring smaller firms have greater visibility of the opportunity and ample opportunity to bid is also in line with the policy approaches of sustainability, seeking to increase the amount of local based procurement and local spend.</p> <p>The following thresholds will be invoked:</p> <p>Goods/Services/Works up to £10,000 - There is no requirement for a quotation or tender process for contracts under £10,000 although there is a requirement for the officer to obtain value for money for the Council.</p>

	<p>Goods/Services between £10,000 and £30,000 - require a minimum of 3 written quotations from competitive sources are to be obtained unless the officer considers this inappropriate in the interests of efficient management whilst at all times ensuring that value for money is obtained for the Council</p> <p>Goods/Services over £30,000 - require advert on Sell2Wales and full competitive tender.</p> <p>Works between £10,000 and £75,000 - require a minimum of 3 written quotations from competitive sources are to be obtained unless the officer considers this inappropriate in the interests of efficient management whilst at all times ensuring that value for money is obtained for the Council</p> <p>Works over £75,000 - require advert on Sell2Wales and full competitive tender.</p> <p>Where the Council utilises a competitively sourced framework agreement or other source then there will be no requirement to following these thresholds as there has already been a competitive process to appoint those organisations to that framework.</p>
Electronic Tendering	From 1 st April 2025 all procurement with a value of £10,000 or above must be conducted using the Council's approved electronic system. Further training is to be implemented with officers to enable them to gain familiarity in using this system
Criteria for performing services to the Council	The Council shall only enter into a Contract with a Contractor if it is satisfied as to the Contractor's competencies, and they are not excluded (to determine whether someone is excluded we have to look to the legal requirements for this).

Transparency Notices	The Council is committed to greater transparency across its operations to enable the public to hold the Council to account. This includes commitments relating to public procurement. Where certain activities are embarked on or awards of contract are made contrary to these Contract Procedure Rules, transparency notices will be required to be published.
Procurement Pipeline	A procurement pipeline of proposed contracts of an estimated value of more than £30,000 for Goods and Services or £75,000 for Works that make up the Council's procurement pipeline over the next 18 months commencing on the first day of the financial year, the first being the 1 st April 2025 will be published on an annual basis and updated quarterly.
Contract Management	The proposed Contract Procedure Rules establish a corporate contract register for all contracts with a value in excess of £25,000 so that the Council can further develop our record keeping for contract spend and to provide up to date lists of all externally sourced services, works and goods. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules allocate responsibility for managing the contract and ensuring that it is carried out in accordance with its terms and conditions.
Key Performance Indicators	At least 3 KPIs must be set for over value contracts as part of the award procedure where a contract is over the value of £1,000,000
Various Requirements	<p>Linking procurement to wider corporate strategies</p> <p>Packaging contracts to make them more accessible, for examples, dividing contracts into lots.</p> <p>Streamlining procurement documentation as far as possible</p>

	<p>Using social and environmental criteria and awarding contracts in a way which is not just dependent solely on price</p> <p>Restricting some tenders to “sheltered workshops” and “social enterprises” (to participate in such tenders 30% of the organisation’s work force must be “disadvantaged”)</p> <p>Continuous spend analysis and outcome monitoring</p>
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7. As part of its adoption a training programme will be implemented with commissioning and contracting officers in all directorates and a user guide/summary will be placed on the intranet for all officers to be aware of. A key summary of provisions will also be prepared that will be made available on the Council’s website highlight pertinent information in an easy read guide.
8. A programme will also be developed where the Corporate Procurement Unit will monitor compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules on a quarterly basis. For example, selecting contracts at random from the contracts register and checking procurement practices associated with them.

Financial Impacts:

9. Decisions as to the expenditure of Council funds will be made through the budget setting process in the usual way.
10. Lowering the contract value threshold to £30,000 for goods and services and maintaining the threshold of £75,000 in respect of works for advertising contracts in order to meet the Welsh Government Procurement Policy and legislation requirements in relation to the requirement for competition could have a financial impact on the Council in that a greater number of officers across all departments will be working with the e-procurement system and, if the Welsh Government determine not to continue funding for the e-procurement system, a cost (presently undetermined) will need to be met by the Council to obtain licences for each officer to be able to use the e-procurement system. Indications at present though are that the Welsh Government are likely to fund the cost for a further 2 years.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

11. 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, a copy of which is included at Appendix 2. The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required for the reasons set out in Appendix 2

Valleys Communities Impacts:

12. As facilitated by the Procurement Act 2023, provision is built into the proposed Contract Procedure Rules to assist in engaging local suppliers in Council run tenders. This addresses the commitment given by this Council in our Valleys Strategy and as part of the work undertaken with the voluntary sector. A local procurement or community wealth building approach encourages the use of local suppliers in order to generate local business growth and keep money spent within the area. This approach also incorporates the principles of sustainability and ethical employment. The desired outcome is to create strong local supply chains and to build wealth in local communities.

Workforce Impacts:

13. As part of the implementation of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules training programme will be implemented with commissioning and contracting officers in all directorates and a user guide/summary will be placed on the intranet for all officers to be aware of. Officers of the Corporate Procurement Unit will also prepare template documents and guidance to assist in compliance.

Legal Impacts:

14. The Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make standing orders with respect to the making of contracts for the supply of goods and materials or for the execution of works. The Local Government Act 2000 requires the Council to include a copy of its standing orders in its constitution. The Local Government Act 2000 (Local Authority Constitution) (Wales) Direction 2023 requires the Council's constitution to contain the rules and regulations governing finance, contractual and legal matters including contracts and procurement rules.
15. Significant public procurement reform through the Welsh Government's Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 (the SPPP Act) and the UK Government's Procurement Act 2023 is due to come into force in February 2025. The UK Act focuses on the processes that the Council will be required to follow in respect to the procurement of works, goods and services. The Wales specific SPPP Act makes provision for social partnership and socially responsible

procurement and creates a socially responsible procurement duty. The duty requires the Council to seek to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way. The Council will do this by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Risk Management Impacts:

16. Failure to have appropriate and up-to-date Contract Procedure Rules in place could increase the likelihood of challenge from the public that there is no transparency as to how contractual arrangements are facilitated. From a corporate governance perspective, such rules are crucial to demonstrate that the Council has in place appropriate procedures and rules to achieve principles of transparency, accountability, value for money and equal opportunity all organisations who wish to contract with us.

Consultation:

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

Recommendations:

19. It is recommended that having due regard to the integrated impact assessment that:
 - (a) Members approve the proposed draft of the Contract Procedure Rules included at Appendix 1 of this Report for implementation on the 28th February 2025;
 - (b) That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Social Justice to make any amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules included at Appendix 1 to meet statutory obligations only.
 - (c) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to update the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council to include these new rules.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

20. To ensure that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules are brought up-to-date so as to reflect the legal and policy changes that have been implemented since the date that the current Contract Procedure Rules were approved and which impact on the Council's procurement activities and ensure the procedural aspects of the Council's procurement activities are updated at an operational level.

Implementation of Decision:

21. The decision is proposed for implementation on the 25th February 2025

Appendices:

22. Appendix 1 – Contract Procedure Rules
Appendix 2 – First Stage Integrated Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers:

23. The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Officer Contact:

24. Craig Griffiths
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Sarah Foster
Corporate Procurement Manager

Katie Lewis
Principal Solicitor - Commercial

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 These Contract Procedure Rules (Rules) provide a framework for the procurement of all Goods, Services and Works for the Council. These Rules also provide a framework for Light Touch, Concession and Utility Contracts (Special Regime Contracts).
- 1.2 The Council **must** strategically manage its spend and Officers shall ensure that they:
- (a) obtain Value for Money and the required level of quality and performance in all Contracts let;
 - (b) conduct procurement activity openly, transparently and, where practicable, based on standard approaches and use of common systems that appropriately minimise complexity, cost, timescales and requirements for Suppliers;
 - (c) share information for the purpose of allowing Suppliers as well as others to understand the Council Policies and decisions;
 - (d) have regard to the importance of maximising public benefit;
 - (e) treat Suppliers the same unless a difference between Suppliers justifies different treatment; providing that the Council takes all reasonable steps to ensure it does not put any Supplier at an unfair advantage or disadvantage;
 - (f) comply with all legislation that governs and/or relates to the procurement of Goods, Services and Works and the letting of Special Regime Contracts (Procurement Legislation);
 - (g) have regard to the principles of the Welsh Government's Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS) as may be amended;
 - (h) have regard to the fact that SMEs and VCSEs may face particular barriers to participation, and must consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced;
 - (i) achieve the organisational outcomes of the Council Policies; Procurement Strategy and Corporate Plan;
 - (j) consider all relevant guidance issued by Welsh Government including Procurement Advice Notes and the Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains;
 - (k) support the achievement of the seven well-being goals for Wales as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)

being; a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of cohesive communities; a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and a globally responsible Wales;

- (l) support the achievement of social partnership, sustainable development duties the socially responsible procurement duty under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 to amongst other things, seek to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way;
- (m) have procurement processes which, when followed, should protect Members and Officers from any allegation of acting unfairly or unlawfully in connection with any Procurement undertaken by the Council.

- 1.3 Contracts, which involve the receipt of income by the Council or the disposal of an asset or an undertaking by the Council, may often require a competitive Procurement exercise.

The reason for this is because they amount to a “concession” or confer a competitive advantage on the Supplier as against its competitors, or the Council needs to be able to demonstrate that it has received an appropriate market value.

Therefore, all references to competitive Tenders and Quotations within these Rules shall apply (with such changes as are appropriate) equally to circumstances where the Contract involves the receipt of income by the Council or the disposal of any asset or undertaking by the Council, as they do to purchases to be made by the Council, unless specifically stated otherwise. Disposal of land is not governed by these Rules (see **Rule 4**).

- 1.4 Prior to commencing disposal of an asset or an undertaking, appropriate advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and/or the Director or Finance **must** be sought.
- 1.5 In the event that a Senior Officer determines that Goods are beyond their economic useful life and therefore of no value, they should arrange for recycling as appropriate or disposal as waste. Appropriate records of disposal **must** be documented in line with the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules and Accounting Instructions & Guidelines.
- 1.6 These Rules govern organisational behaviour in the conduct of a Procurement or those arrangements set out in **Rule 1.3**. It is a given that such behaviour is undertaken in support and delivery of the wider Council

Policies and objectives of the Council and in respect of Officers, this includes the Employees' Code of Conduct.

- 1.7 In conducting any Procurement, integrity **must** be demonstrated at all times.
- 1.8 Where Senior Officers wish to exclude the requirements of these Rules, a report **must** be taken to Cabinet. The report to Cabinet **must** be in the standard template on the Council's intranet. The Head of Service may only proceed with the proposed Procurement or Contract once the decision to exclude has been made by Cabinet and passing of any Call-In period.
- 1.9 In line with UK and Welsh Government Procurement Legislation reform, these Rules take effect on **24th February 2025** and nothing in these Rules affect the validity of any action taken before that date under previous Rules.

Procurements and Contracts commenced prior to **24th February 2025** will be subject to Transitional Arrangements and advice should be obtained from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in relation to such arrangements including where these will expire early as a result of Transitional Arrangements.

- 1.10 Any estimated Contract values or amounts included are **inclusive** of Value Added Tax (VAT) unless specified otherwise.

2 Definitions and Interpretations

- 2.1 In these Rules, the definitions included at **Appendix 1** will apply.
- 2.2 Any dispute regarding interpretation of these Rules shall be referred to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for resolution.
- 2.3 These Rules shall be read in conjunction with the Council's Constitution as a whole and with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Accounting Instructions & Guidelines.
- 2.4 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Corporate Procurement Manager shall periodically undertake a formal review of these Rules.
- 2.5 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services may amend these Rules from time to time, to ensure that they meet all legal requirements.

3 Compliance with these Rules

- 3.1 Every Procurement undertaken by the Council or any other party on its behalf **must** comply with:
- (a) these Rules;
 - (b) Procurement Legislation and to the extent of any conflict between these Rules and Procurement Legislation, the provisions of Procurement Legislation shall prevail;
 - (c) Any grant or funding agreements which the Council has entered into;
 - (d) the Council's Constitution as a whole and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Accounting Instructions & Guidelines;
 - (e) the Council's strategic objectives and Council Policies including its Procurement Strategy and Wellbeing Objectives; and
 - (f) **must** meet the other objectives and requirements listed in **Rule 1.2**.
- 3.2 The Corporate Procurement Manager may from time to time issue procurement guidance, following consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Director of Finance. Senior Officers in each Service Area must ensure that employees in their Service Area are aware of this guidance and **must** ensure compliance with such guidance.
- 3.3 Any failure by Officers to comply with any of the provisions of these Rules or any associated guidance adopted by the Council may result in disciplinary action.
- 3.4 Any Procurement carried out on behalf of the Council may only be undertaken by Officers with the appropriate delegated authority to carry out such tasks (see **Rule 13**) and who have the necessary capability and capacity to undertake the Procurement.
- 3.5 The Procurement Legislation prescribes the circumstances in which certain notices (some of which are referred to in these Rules) must be published and sets out the requirements as to the contents of such notices. The Corporate Procurement Manager shall co-ordinate the publication of such notices.

All Officers involved in Procurement across the Council shall have responsibility for collating information in accordance with procedures, approved by the Corporate Procurement Manager, to facilitate the publication of such notices.

4 Arrangements where these Rules do not apply

4.1 These Rules do not apply to:-

- (a) the acquisition or disposal of land. Any land Contracts which involve development agreements shall be notified to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and legal advice shall be sought prior to any Procurement);
- (b) contracts of employment which make an individual a direct employee of the Council;
- (c) use of the Council's in-house services;
- (d) Grants (Grants are not regulated by Procurement Legislation, as they are not public contracts. Grants are, however, regulated by subsidy control law in the form of the Subsidy Control Act 2022, case-law and statutory guidance, and by general public law controls relating to fiduciary duty and proper spending of public money.

As appropriate, legal and financial advice should be obtained from the relevant Council Officers in relation to the receipt of and administering of Grants and all Grants should be executed under seal and in the presence of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or nominated officer);

- (e) Instructions and briefs to Counsel issued by or on behalf of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services will make arrangements to ensure that appropriate record is kept of all such instructions or briefs together with a record of Counsel's fee;
- (f) Certain other legal services; financial lending services to the Council; arbitration, mediation or conciliation services, or of any other similar services;
- (g) Public transport Contracts where the Contract falls under the definition of a services concession contract for a public passenger transport service under the Public Service Obligations in Transport Regulations 2023. Advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the application of the correct regime.
- (h) Health Procurement if covered by the Health Service Procurement (Wales) Act (2024) and any applicable regulations. Advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the application of the correct regime.

- (i) Schools Contracts where they have carried out their own Procurement (the Council will not be the party to such arrangements);
- (j) Entity controlled by the Council (vertical arrangements) subject to the advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which must be sought on a case-by-case basis;
- (k) Contracts between the Council and another public body (horizontal arrangements) subject to the advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, which **must** be sought on a case-by-case basis.

5 Planning a Procurement

- 5.1 Before commencing a Procurement, the Senior Officer responsible, **must** undertake (or ensure that it is undertaken) the appropriate level of preparation and planning, proportionate to the proposed value and nature of the proposed Contract, taking advice where appropriate, ensuring the requirements of these Rules are complied with and should engage with the Corporate Procurement Manager at the earliest opportunity following consideration of the need to carry out the Procurement.
- 5.2 Officers **must** ensure that they have the necessary authority to carry out the Procurement (see **Rule 13**).

The key tasks at the planning stage include:

- (a) Questioning whether there is a need to undertake the Procurement to begin with;
- (b) Establishing project planning and timeframes, including implementation phases and accounting for a procurement timetable taking advice where necessary;
- (c) Engagement with key stakeholders in order to identify and assess needs – what is being procured and why, including engaging at early stage of the process, for example with Officers in planning; technical, procurement, legal, financial;
- (d) What is the key driver for the procurement? What are the critical success factors? What outcomes are being sought?
- (e) Checking that no existing in-house provision exists for the Goods, Services (including Special Regime Contracts) or Works required;
- (f) Carrying out of options appraisal to look at different ways of meeting, the identified needs (e.g. buy, lease or rent?)

- (g) Undertaking any pre-market engagement in order to establish realistic market cost, availability of supply base, innovative solutions, local economy and SME development etc;
- (h) Determining budget and funding, to define a realistic budget for the Contract to achieve the desired results and then securing the funds to finance and manage the contract, any risk assessments;
- (i) Consideration of any collaborative or partnership working;
- (j) Assess and identify any Conflicts of Interest;
- (k) Selection of the appropriate Procurement process or available public sector Framework Agreements or Dynamic Markets;
- (l) preparing the specification (setting out the requirements), and terms of contract using templates as appropriate as set out in these Rules;
- (m) determine the subsequent Contract management arrangements and Supplier performance criteria;
- (n) where a Contract is to be awarded on both Technical and Commercial (Quality and Price), determining the criteria and evaluation methodology, or establishing such in line with the terms of the relevant Framework Agreement or Dynamic Market.
- (o) considering whether a report is required for budget approval and/or authority to be delegated to the Officer in order to carry out the Procurement;
- (p) considering whether a report is required to award the final outcome of any Procurement.

5.3 The results of this planning stage **must** be properly documented by the Senior Officer responsible for the proposed Procurement (or their nominated deputy) utilising the [Procurement Strategy Document](#). A Procurement Plan is encouraged for all values of Procurement by each Service Area.

5.4 Consideration **must** be given to whether the proposed Contract could reasonably be supplied under more than one Contract, and whether such Contracts could be appropriately awarded by reference to lots. If such Contracts could be appropriately awarded by reference to lots, arrangements **must** be made for the award of the Contract(s) by reference to lots, or reasons for not doing so **must** be recorded.

5.5 Officers shall undertake a Procurement in a planned and transparent manner, and should not discriminate against Treaty State Suppliers. The

Council shall publish a forward-looking Procurement Pipeline and all Heads of Service must provide the Corporate Procurement Manager with their Procurement Forward Workplan when so requested by the Corporate Procurement Manager and update the Corporate Procurement Manager of any changes as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Corporate Procurement Manager will use the Procurement Forward Workplan to populate the Procurement Pipeline.

- 5.6 Engagement with Suppliers and other persons for the purpose of developing the Council's requirements and approach to the Procurement, designing a procedure, identifying potential Suppliers, identifying likely Contract terms and building capacity in the market (together, "Preliminary Market Engagement") is permitted.
- 5.7 All Preliminary Market Engagement **must** be proportionate and relevant to the Procurement and be conducted in accordance with the advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager.
- 5.8 When carrying out Preliminary Market Engagement, steps **must** be taken to ensure participating Suppliers are not put at an unfair advantage and competition is not otherwise distorted.
- 5.9 If it is considered that a Supplier's involvement in Preliminary Market Engagement has put the Supplier at an unfair advantage that cannot be avoided, the Supplier **must** be excluded from the Procurement.
- 5.10 Where the value of the Procurement meets or exceeds **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods or Services (including those under Special Regime Contracts), and meets or exceeds **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works if Preliminary Market Engagement is carried out, a [Preliminary Market Engagement Notice](#) **must** be published before a [Tender Notice](#), or the reasons for not doing so **must** be provided in the [Tender Notice](#).
- 5.11 All proposed utilities contracts **must** be referred to the Head of Legal Services for advice.

6 Advice and Risk Assessment

- 6.1 At the outset of a Procurement, the Senior Officer must refer to the Corporate Procurement Manager all proposed Procurements with an estimated value that meets or exceeds **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods and Services (including those under Special Regime Contracts) and that meets or exceeds **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works, by means of submitting the [Procurement Strategy Document](#). In addition to these Rules, the Senior

Officer **must** follow all guidance issued by the Corporate Procurement Manager in respect of the Procurement.

- 6.2 The advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services **must** be sought on all Procurements with an estimated value that meets or exceeds **£75,000** (inc VAT) and for lower value requirements where the complexity of the Procurement requires, for example; the inclusion of bespoke clauses.
- 6.3 For Procurements with an estimated value that meets or exceeds **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods and Services (including those under Special Regime Contracts) and that meets or exceeds **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works; the Senior Officers shall carry out a risk assessment (proportionate to the nature and value of the proposed Contract). The risk assessment shall be included within the [Procurement Strategy Document](#) at the outset and thereafter maintained and updated throughout the Procurement. The decision maker **must** be informed of any risks identified and of the contingency measures in place.
- 6.4 When carrying out any risk assessment in respect of a proposed Procurement, compliance with these Rules **must** be documented.

7 Personal Data

- 7.1 In carrying out any Procurement, the Senior Officer **must** take all steps, including incorporation of appropriate detail into the Tender documentation and Contract, to ensure that the personal data of individuals is protected in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.
- 7.2 The Senior Officer **must** ensure the Councils' obligations and risks, in respect of personal data, are considered and indemnities are sought where appropriate.

8 Community Benefits / Social Value

- 8.1 Community Benefits / Social Value clauses within contracts are used to build a range of economic, social or environmental conditions into the delivery of a contract and the Council **must** maximise the Community Benefits / Social Value to be obtained through its Procurement activity in line with any guidance or policies created.
- 8.2 All Contracts exceeding **£1,000,000** (inc VAT) or such other value determined by the Council **must** include a contractual obligation on the successful Supplier to deliver Community Benefits / Social Value.

- 8.3 For all Contracts below the figure determined in **Rule 8.2**, the inclusion of Community Benefits / Social Value as a contractual obligation is optional but shall be considered.
- 8.4 In all cases where Community Benefits / Social Value are being delivered, there **must** be a contractual requirement for the successful Supplier to provide monitoring information on the Community Benefits / Social Value and the named contract manager ('Contract Manager') as part of the contract management process should monitor the delivery of Community Benefits / Social Value.
- 8.5 Regard **must** be given to the Welsh Government guidance on Community Benefits / Social Value and such other guidance as may be issued from time to time on the approaches to delivering Community Benefits / Social Value through Council contracts.
- 8.6 Advice and guidance on Community Benefits / Social Value is available from the Council's Community Benefits Officer.

9 Declaration and Conflict of Interest

- 9.1 No member, employee or agent of the Council shall improperly use their position to obtain any personal or private benefit from any contract entered into by the Council.
- 9.2 Members and employees of the Council shall comply with the requirements of Section 117 of the Local Government Act (1972) and, as appropriate, the Employee Code of Conduct and Members Code of Conduct set out in the Constitution in respect of the declaration of interests in contracts with the Council.
- 9.3 Such interests **must** be declared to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services for inclusion in the appropriate registers.
- 9.4 All reasonable steps **must** be taken to identify and keep under review in relation to a Procurement, any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest arises where there is a conflict between the interests of a person acting in relation to or influencing the decisions of a Procurement exercise, and/or those associated with that person, and the interests of the Procurement itself.

All Officers who act in relation to a Procurement or may be able to influence the decisions of a Procurement **must** complete a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Declaration specific to the Procurement.

Advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services where any concerns arise.

10 Welsh Language

- 10.1 Procurement Documentation **must** state that Tenders or Quotations may be submitted in Welsh.
- 10.2 Procurement Documentation **must** be published in Welsh, where the subject matter of the Tender or Quotation suggests that it should be produced in Welsh, or anticipated audience, and their expectations, suggests that the document should be produced in Welsh.
- 10.3 Where a Tender or Quotation has been submitted in Welsh, it **must** be treated no less favourably than a submission in English (including, amongst other matters, in relation to the closing date and time for receiving submissions, and in relation to time-scales for informing Suppliers of decisions).
- 10.4 If a Tender or Quotation has been submitted in Welsh, and it is necessary to conduct interviews as part of the evaluation process, the Council **must** offer to provide a translation service from Welsh to English to enable the Supplier to use the Welsh language at the interview.
- If the Supplier wishes to use the Welsh language at interview, provide a simultaneous translation service for that purpose (unless the Council conducts the interview in Welsh without a translation service).
- 10.5 When informing a Supplier of the decision in relation to a Tender or Quotation, this **must** be in Welsh if the Tender or Quotation was submitted in Welsh.
- 10.6 Where relevant to the subject matter of the Contract, Contracts **must** contain provision requiring the Supplier to comply with all applicable requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards issued to the Council.

11 Pre-Qualification and Exclusion (applies to all)

- 11.1 The Council shall only enter into a Contract with a Supplier if it is satisfied as to the Supplier's competencies.

Conditions of participation **must**:

- (a) be related to a Supplier's legal and financial capacity, or technical ability, to perform the Contract;
- (b) be a proportionate means of ensuring a Supplier's relevant capacity

or ability, having regard to the nature, complexity and cost of the Contract;

- (c) allow for equivalents (when requesting particular qualifications or memberships, for example);
- (d) allow for international equivalents to UK standards;
- (e) be distinct from award criteria: focus only on the Supplier's credentials, and not their Tender;

11.2 Conditions of participation **must not**:

- (a) require Suppliers to submit audited annual accounts unless they're required to under the Companies Act 2006 or an overseas equivalent;
- (b) require Suppliers to have insurances needed to deliver the contract in place prior to Contract award;
- (c) break any rules on technical specifications;
- (d) require particular qualifications without allowing for equivalents;
- (e) require Suppliers to have been awarded a Contract by a specific public body.

11.3 During a Procurement, a Supplier may be identified as an Excluded Supplier or an Excludable Supplier following assessment against the Exclusion Grounds and Exclusion Grounds Guidance Note issued by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. A Procurement may require that a Supplier is assessed against the Exclusion Grounds.

11.4 A Tender submitted by an Excluded Supplier **must** be disregarded by the Council. A Tender submitted by an Excludable Supplier, may be disregarded at the discretion of the Council.

11.5 An assessment of a Supplier against the Exclusion Grounds and a decision as to the exclusion of a Supplier from a Procurement **must** be undertaken in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

12 Estimating Contract Value

12.1 The estimated value of a Contract shall be the value of the whole cost of the Contract, inclusive of value added tax, which the Council expects to be payable under the Contract, including (where applicable) amounts already paid by the Council, over its full duration (not the annual value).

12.2 Where the value of the Contract cannot be estimated, for example because the duration of a Contract is unknown the value of the Contract

shall be treated as an amount of more than the Threshold amount for the type of Contract. If there is uncertainty over calculating the estimated value of the proposed Contract then the advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager **must** be sought.

- 12.3 In determining the value of the whole cost which the Council expects to pay, the Senior Officer shall take account, where relevant:
- (a) the term/period of the proposed Contract;
 - (b) any rights to renew the Contract / extend the Contract period;
 - (c) any prize, payment, premium, fees, commission, interest or other form of remuneration payable under the proposed Contract or in respect of the proposed Procurement (i.e. for Concession Contracts this shall be the maximum amount the Supplier could expect to receive under or in connection with the Contract including where applicable, amounts already received).
- 12.4 No Works or requirements for Goods or Services (or those under Special Regime Contracts) may be artificially split to avoid compliance with these Rules or Procurement Legislation.
- 12.5 In considering if the proposed Contract meets or is over Threshold, due regard **must** be given to the 'methods for calculating the estimated value of a Procurement' set out in Procurement Legislation and advice should be taken from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Corporate Procurement Manager.
- 12.6 When determining the value for Framework Agreements, Dynamic Markets, mixed Procurements or Concessions Contracts, advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Corporate Procurement Manager **must** be sought.

13 Authorisation for Procurement

- 13.1 Prior to commencing a Procurement, authority should be in place.
- 13.2 Authority **must** be obtained from the relevant decision maker as set out in the table below. For Special Regime Contracts not at Rule 13.3 (Utility Contracts), authority should be made by Cabinet as the decision maker.
- 13.3 The relevant decision maker is as set out in the table below:

Contract type	Estimated Contract Value or Actual Contract Value	Decision Maker
Goods / Services	£0 up to £300k	Head of Service
Goods / Services	£300k up to £2m	Head of Service in consultation with Cabinet member
Goods / Services	£2m and above	Cabinet
Works / Concessions / Light Touch Contracts	£0 up to £300k	Head of Service
Works / Concessions / Light Touch Contracts	£300k up to £5m	Head of Service in consultation with Cabinet member
Works / Concessions / Light Touch Contracts	£5m and above	Cabinet (Delegated authority may be granted, if so authorised by Cabinet to the Chief Executive, Director or Head of Service to make the final award if so determined by Cabinet)

14 Notices (to be published on Sell2Wales)

- 14.1 The Corporate Procurement Manager shall co-ordinate any notices required to be published dependent on the Procurement and will provide advice to Officers where a notice will be required (see **Appendix 3**).
- 14.2 A **Below Threshold Tender Notice** **must** be published to advertise a Contract of an estimated value of **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods and Services, including Light Touch Services and **£75,000** (inc VAT) and above, for Works Contracts, unless Officers intends to invite Quotations or Tenders from a closed group of pre-selected suppliers, (i.e. suppliers on a Framework), so long as Officers do not advertise the Procurement in any

other way (for example in a newspaper or on a local website or portal). In these circumstances, only the [Contract Details Notice](#) is mandatory once the Contract is awarded (see **Rule 14.3**).

- 14.3 A [Contract Details Notice](#) **must** be published as soon as reasonably practicable after entering into a Contract with an estimated value of not less than **£30,000** (inc VAT), whether Goods, Works or Services (including those Light Touch services).

15 Circumstances where Contracts may be awarded without a new competition

- 15.1 A Contract may be awarded directly to a Supplier that is not an Excluded Supplier where any of the following justifications apply:

- (a) Production of a prototype, or supply of other novel Goods or Services for the purpose of testing such novel Goods or Services, researching the validity of such novel Goods or Services, or otherwise for the purpose of other research, experiment, study or development;
- (b) The creation or acquisition of a unique work of art or artistic performance;
- (c) Where the Supplier, and only the Supplier, enjoys an exclusive right, including any intellectual property right, to provide or supply the Goods, Services or Works, and where there are no reasonable alternatives to those Goods, Services or Works;
- (d) Where there is an absence of competition for technical reasons, such that only a particular Supplier can supply the Goods, Services or Works required, and where there are no reasonable alternatives available to those Goods, Services, or Works;
- (e) The supply of additional or repeat Goods, Services or Works by an existing Supplier to the Council, which are intended as an extension to, or partial replacement of, the existing Goods, Services or Works already supplied, and where a change of Supplier would result in the Council receiving Goods, Services or Works that are different from, or incompatible with, the existing Goods, Services or Works; and either:
 - (i) the difference in incompatibility would result in disproportionate technical difficulties in operation or maintenance; or
 - (ii) the difference in incompatibility would result in significant

additional costs to the Council such that supplying the additional Goods, Services or Works from the existing Supplier can be shown to represent Value for Money.

- (f) The supply of Goods, Services or Works (including Special Regime Contracts) by an existing Supplier that are similar to existing Goods, Services or Works where:
 - (i) the existing Goods, Services or Works were supplied under a Contract that was awarded in accordance with a Competitive Tendering procedure within the period of **5 (five)** years ending with the day on which the [Transparency Notice](#) was published; and
 - (ii) the [Tender Notice](#) or any Tender document in respect of that earlier Contract set out the Council's intention to carry out a subsequent procurement of similar Goods, Services or Works in reliance on this Direct Award justification.
- (g) The supply of Goods on a commodity market;
- (h) The award of the Contract to a particular Supplier will ensure terms particularly advantageous to the Council due to the fact that a Supplier, whether or not the one to whom the Contract is to be awarded, is undergoing insolvency proceedings;
- (i) Urgency where the Goods, Services or Works to be supplied under the Contract are strictly necessary for reasons of extreme and unavoidable urgency (urgency is unavoidable if it is not attributable to any act or failure to act by the Council); and as a result the public Contract cannot be awarded on the basis of a competitive tendering procedure;
- (j) Direct Award to protect life where secondary legislation has been made authorising the Direct Award;
- (k) Switching to a Direct Award where no or no suitable tenders or requests to participate have been received in that competitive Tendering procedure and the Council considers that the award of a Contract using a competitive tendering procedure is not possible;
- (l) Contracts awarded under an established Framework Agreement, Dynamic Market or orders placed under an established Contract where these are compliant with Procurement Legislation and where the award is in accordance with the terms of the Framework Agreement, Dynamic Market or Term Contract

These may be external Framework Agreements where the Council is named as able to use it, or internal (i.e. Council established) Framework Agreements, Dynamic Market or Term Contracts in accordance with **Rule 14**.

For all external arrangements, the Corporate Procurement Manager should be consulted prior to the Procurement.

- (m) Goods, Services and Works procured by another public body on behalf of, or for the joint benefit of the Council and other parties, and provided that, in such case, the other public body's Procurement or Contract Procedure Rules and Procurement Legislation is complied with. Advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the establishment or review of any collaboration or joint working arrangements in this instance.
- (n) Light Touch Contracts that are supplied for the benefit of a particular individual and in respect of which the Council would, in awarding a Contract for their supply, be required legally to have regard to the views of the individual or a person providing care to the individual (their carer), in relation to who should provide the Services, and the individual or carer has expressed a preference as to who should supply the Services, or the nature of the Services is such that only one supplier is capable of providing the Services and the Council considers that it is not in the best interests of the individual to award the Contract under a competitive tendering procedure.

15.2 When placing reliance on the exemptions stated above the Senior Officer should ensure that the best possible Value for Money is obtained for the Council and for Procurements with an estimated value meeting the Threshold or exceeding it, advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

16 Framework Agreements or Dynamic Markets

16.1 The Council is able to access a number of its own as well as external Framework Agreements and Dynamic Markets for types of Goods, Services and Works (including Light Touch services).

16.2 The Corporate Procurement Manager will maintain a register of the arrangements in **Rule 16.1**, which may be referenced against the Council's own Corporate Contracts Register, referenced in **Rule 37**, and can provide advice on their use and any exceptions granted.

- 16.3 It is the responsibility of the Service Area requiring the Procurement to ascertain whether there is a compliant arrangement or other corporate purchasing agreement in place by liaising with the Corporate Procurement Manager. If such arrangement exists, then Service Areas **must** use these unless deemed appropriate to use an alternative source by the relevant Senior Officer of a Service Area.
- 16.4 When using external or Council Framework Agreements or Dynamic Markets, all guidance issued in relation to their use **must** be followed by the Service Area. The stated award criteria, weightings and the Terms and Conditions specified **must** be used in order to be compliant with Procurement Legislation. It is the responsibility of the Service Area requiring the Procurement to ensure that all supporting documentation necessary, including any risk assessment and/or business case for Direct Award without competition, is assembled and completed, before placing reliance on it.
- 16.5 Where Goods, Services (including those under Light Touch) or Works are regularly required, and arrangements described in **Rule 12** are not available, consideration **must** be given to establishing a term arrangement, either by means of a Framework Agreement, Dynamic Market, or Term Contract, and the advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager **must** be obtained.

17 Collaborative and Joint Working Arrangements

- 17.1 Any consortia procurement arrangements **must** be approved for use by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services before reliance is placed on such arrangement.
- 17.2 Before proceeding with any proposed joint working arrangements, legal advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

18 Process for carrying out Procurement

18.1 Where possible, Goods, Services and Works (including those under Special Regime) **must** be obtained via existing approved arrangements including:

- (a) Council Framework Agreements or Dynamic Markets; and
- (b) Framework Agreements, Dynamic Markets and other corporate arrangements approved for use by the Corporate Procurement Manager.

18.2 Goods and Services - Value up to £10,000 (inc VAT)

18.2.1 For Procurements with an estimated value of up to **£10,000** (inc VAT):

- (a) the minimum requirement is that **1 (one)** written Quotation is obtained although competition is encouraged. It is, however, still necessary for the Service Area to be satisfied and able to demonstrate that it has obtained Value for Money;
- (b) The Service Area **must** keep an appropriate file record evidencing matters, including that relevant competency and capability assessments have been undertaken.

18.3 Goods and Services – Value £10,000 up to £30,000 (inc VAT)

18.3.1 For Procurements with a value of **£10,000** up to **£30,000** (inc VAT) then:

- (a) a minimum of **3 (three)** written Quotations must be requested from suitable Suppliers.
- (b) It is considered to be in the interests of the Council to seek **3 (three)** written Quotations however **1 (one)** written Quotation may be relied upon in circumstances where limited response is received providing the Senior Officer is satisfied and able to demonstrate that Value for Money has been obtained.
- (c) The Service Area **must** keep an appropriate file record evidencing matters, including that relevant competency and capability assessments have been undertaken.

18.4 Goods and Services (including Light Touch) – Value £30,000 (inc VAT) and Concession Contracts – Value £250,000 (inc VAT) up to the UK Threshold for Goods and Services and Special Regime (see Appendix 2)

18.4.1 For Goods and Services (including Light Touch) Procurements with an estimated value of **£30,000** (inc VAT) and for Special Regime Procurements with an estimated value of **£250,000** (inc VAT) up to the UK Threshold for Goods and Services then:

- (a) all requirements **must** be advertised on Sell2Wales and conducted via the Council's approved eTendering system as per **Rule 19**.
- (b) the Council's [Procurement Strategy Document](#) and [Contract Award Form / Report](#) **must** be used to record the Procurement actions taken and submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team.

18.5 Above UK Threshold for Goods, Services and Special Regime Contracts

18.5.1 For Procurement processes with a value above the UK Threshold , the advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager and Head of Legal and Democratic Services **must** be sought at the outset to determine the Procurement to be followed by completing a [Procurement Strategy Document](#) and [Contract Award Form / Report](#) submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team;

- (a) the Procurement will be carried out in accordance with the advice received; and
- (b) the requirements of Procurement Legislation will take precedence over any requirements set out in these Rules.

18.6 Works Value up to £10,000 (inc VAT)

18.6.1 For Procurements with an estimated value of up to **£10,000** (inc VAT) the minimum requirement is the **1 (one)** written Quotation is obtained, although where practical, competition is encouraged.

It is, however, necessary for the Service Area to be satisfied and able to demonstrate that it has obtained Value for Money.

18.6.2 The Service Area **must** keep an appropriate file record evidencing matters, including that relevant competency and capability assessments have been undertaken.

18.7 Works Value £10,000 up to £75,000 (inc VAT)

18.7.1 For Procurements with a value of **£10,000** up to **£75,000** (inc VAT):

- (a) a minimum of **3 (three)** written Quotations must be requested from suitable Suppliers.
- (b) it is considered to be in the interests of the Council to seek **3 (three)** written Quotations however **1 (one)** written Quotation may be relied upon in circumstances where limited response is received providing the Senior Officer is satisfied and able to demonstrate that Value for Money has been obtained.
- (c) the Service Area **must** keep an appropriate file record evidencing matters, including that relevant competency and capability assessments have been undertaken.
- (d) the Council's [Procurement Strategy Document](#) and [Contract Award Form / Report](#) **must** be used to record the Procurement actions taken and submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team.

18.8 Works Value £75,000 (inc VAT) up to UK Threshold

18.8.1 For Procurements with a value of **£75,000** (inc VAT) up to the UK Threshold for Works:

- (a) All requirements **must** be advertised on Sell2Wales;
- (b) the Council's [Procurement Strategy Document](#) and [Contract Award Form / Report](#) **must** be completed to record the Procurement actions taken and submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team.

18.9 Above UK Threshold for Works

18.9.1 For Procurements above the UK Threshold for Works:

- (a) the advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager and Head of Legal and Democratic Services **must** be sought at the outset to determine the Procurement Process to be followed and at all subsequent stages of the Procurement;
- (b) the Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the advice received as a above;

- (c) the requirements of Procurement Legislation will take precedence over any requirements set out in these Rules; and
- (d) the Council's [Procurement Strategy Document](#) and [Contract Award Form / Report](#) **must** be completed to record the Procurement actions taken and submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team.

19 Electronic Tendering

- 19.1 From **1st April 2025** (or such latter date as the Corporate Procurement Manager may direct), all Procurements with a value of **£30,000** (inc VAT) or above for Goods and Services including those under the Special Regime or **£75,000** (inc VAT) or above for Works **must** be conducted using the Council's approved eTendering system. It is the responsibility of the Senior Officer of each Service Area to ensure that their staff comply with this rule.
- 19.2 Any Officer required to use the Council's approved eTendering system must notify the Council's Procurement Team so that they may be given access to the system. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the relevant Senior Officer to notify the Corporate Procurement Manager of changes to any Officer's eligibility to use the system (e.g. staff leaving or disciplinary measures) at the earliest opportunity so that the user access can be deactivated.
- 19.3 Where **Rule 19.1** applies, all Tenders including all supporting documentation **must** be received via the Council's approved eTendering system.
- 19.4 In exceptional circumstances, and only with the prior agreement of the Senior Officer of the Service requiring the Procurement, the Corporate Procurement Manager and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, hard copy Tenders may be accepted and the provisions in these Rules complied with.

20 Contents of Tenders

- 20.1 The ITT must include details of the Council's requirements for the particular contract including:
- (a) instructions for completion;
 - (b) rules for submitting Tenders;
 - (c) a specification of the Services, Goods or Works being procured and

instructions on whether any variants are permissible;

- (d) the Procurement timetable including the Tender Closing Date and Time, which shall allow a reasonable period for the Suppliers to prepare their Tenders;
- (e) the Council's Standard Terms and Conditions;
- (f) the evaluation criteria including relevant weightings;
- (g) form and content of method statements to be provided;
- (h) pricing mechanism;
- (i) whether the Council is of the view that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) will apply;
- (j) any further information, which will inform or assist Suppliers in preparing Tenders.

20.2 Every Supplier submitting a Tender will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that:

- (a) they have not and will not inform any other person of the amount of their Tender;
- (b) they have not fixed the amount of any Tender in accordance with a price fixing arrangement;
- (c) they accept that the Council is entitled to cancel the Contract and to recover from them the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation if it is discovered that there has been any corrupt or fraudulent act or omission by them which in any way induced the Council to enter into the Contract;
- (d) acknowledging that the Council is not bound to accept the lowest or any Tender, that the Procurement may be abandoned at any stage during and that they are liable for their own costs and expenses.

20.3 In respect of Procurements with an estimated value in excess **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods and Services including Special Regime Contracts and over **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works, the Service Area **must** consult the Corporate Procurement Manager for advice regarding the Procurement Documentation (ITT, Specification, evaluation criteria and weightings etc).

20.4 Prior disclosure of the award criteria and weightings is a fundamental requirement that **must** be complied with for all the Council's

Procurements. Any particular scoring or weighting attributable to any criteria or sub-criteria **must** be clearly stated.

21 Tender Evaluation

21.1 For each Procurement with an estimated value that meets or exceeds **£30,000** (inc VAT) in respect of Goods and or Services (including Special Regime Contracts) and that meets or exceeds **£75,000** (inc VAT) in respect of Works; the Senior Officer of the Service Area requiring the Procurement shall form an evaluation team (**'Evaluation Panel'**) with responsibility for evaluating Tenders.

Written records of the membership of the Evaluation Panel and evaluation undertaken **must** be kept.

21.2 The Evaluation Panel shall evaluate Tenders in accordance with the predetermined and published evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria shall be strictly observed at all times throughout the Contract award procedure.

21.3 As a general rule, no adjustment or qualification to any Tender(s) submitted is permitted. Errors found during the Tender evaluation shall be dealt with in one of the following ways:

(a) If the error is not arithmetical, the Supplier shall be given details of the error(s) and shall be given the opportunity of confirming without amendment or withdrawing the Tender; or

(b) If an arithmetical error is found, the Supplier shall be given details of the error(s) and shall be given the opportunity of confirming without amendment or withdrawing the Tender, and the responsible officer shall correct the error(s) provided that, apart from these genuine arithmetic error(s), no other adjustment, revision or qualification is permitted. An appropriate record **must** be kept.

22 Tender Clarification

22.1 Where a Procurement is conducted pursuant to Procurement Legislation, there are restrictions on the use of post-Tender clarifications and legal advice must be sought before determining whether any clarification would be appropriate.

22.2 The Senior Officer, following consultation with the Corporate Procurement Manager, may seek clarification from Suppliers in respect of their Tenders provided this does not involve discrimination. A record of all clarifications needs to be maintained including minutes of any clarification interviews.

22.3 All valid clarifications and questions from Suppliers **must** be resolved before submitting the Tenders, and appropriate timeframes applied. A valid clarification may be a question that was submitted by a Supplier in line with the Tender guidance and within the deadline given for any clarification requests.

23 Abnormally Low Tenders

23.1 Consideration **must** be given by the Senior Officer as to whether any Tender received by a Supplier is abnormally low. Abnormally low shall be taken to mean a Tender whose price is considered significantly lower than most of or the average of all Tenders in the same Procurement process.

Where the Officer considers a Tender has an abnormally low price it **must** notify the Supplier that it considers the price to be abnormally low and **must** give the Supplier reasonable opportunity to demonstrate that it will be able to perform the Contract for the price offered. Where it demonstrates to the Officer's satisfaction that it will be able to perform the Contract for the price offered, the Council may not disregard the Tender on the basis of abnormally low price.

If the Supplier does not satisfy the Council, their Tender may be disregarded. A Tender should only be disregarded on these grounds after consulting the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Records of all communications with Suppliers which are made prior to Contract Award and concern the Procurement or Contract **must** be retained.

Communications **must** be electronic.

24 Notification of Results, De-briefing and Standstill Period

24.1 Following a Procurement that meets or is over UK Threshold, the Contract cannot be entered into before the end of the mandatory standstill period (**8 working days** beginning on the day the [Contract Award Notice](#) is published) and cannot be entered into before the end of any standstill period longer than **8 working days**, where such longer period has been provided for in the [Contract Award Notice](#).

24.2 Where there is no legal requirement for a mandatory standstill period, a voluntary standstill may be provided for and must not be less than **8 working days** from the day the [Contract Details Notice](#) is published.

24.3 Following a Procurement that meets or is over UK Threshold, before publishing a [Contract Award Notice](#), an assessment summary **must** be

provided to each Supplier that submitted an assessed Tender, which includes information about the assessment of the Tender, and the identity of the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT).

- 24.4 Where there is no legal requirement for an assessment summary, it is advisable to provide supplier feedback prior to the [Contract Details Notice](#) being published.
- 24.5 If any additional information is to be disclosed to Suppliers, this **must** be agreed in advance with the Corporate Procurement Manager, taking into account the requirements of any legislation relating to the disclosure of information.

25 Awarding Contracts

- 25.1 The award criteria is the criteria that Tenders are evaluated against, for the purpose of identifying the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT).
- 25.2 In all circumstances a Contract **must** be awarded to the Supplier that submits the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT) however the Council reserves the right not to award any Tender.

Award criteria **must**:

- (a) relate to the subject matter of the Contract;
 - (b) be sufficiently clear;
 - (c) be measurable and specific;
 - (d) must not be discriminatory (in particular with respect to requirements regarding technical specifications); and
 - (e) be a proportionate means of assessing Tenders, having regard to the nature, complexity and cost of the Contract.
- 25.3 When setting award criteria, it **must** be specified how Tenders are to be assessed against them, and where there is more than **1 (one)** criterion their relative importance **must** be indicated.
- 25.4 Additional considerations apply to the setting of award criteria for Light-Touch Contracts and the guidance of the Corporate Procurement Manager should be followed for such Procurement processes.
- 25.5 For all Procurements valued at or exceeding **£30,000 (inc VAT) for Goods and Services** (including Special Regime Contracts) **or £75,000 (inc VAT) for Works**, the decision to award a Contract shall be made using the Council's [Contract Award Form / Report](#) submitted to the Corporate Procurement Team and a Cabinet Report when required set out in the table below.

- 25.6 For all utility Procurements Cabinet is the decision maker.
- 25.7 The Senior Officer must ensure, prior to seeking such a decision, that sufficient funds are in place to meet all Contract payments and if any funding is being obtained from third parties that any conditions attaching to such funding have been complied with.
- 25.8 Any Contract that is awarded using third party funding should include funding conditions so as to allow the Council to claw-back funding, where required and not cause the Council to be in breach of the conditions of the funding to the Council:

Contract type	Estimated Contract Value or Actual Contract Value	Decision Maker
Goods / Works / Services	£100k to £300k	Head of Service
Goods / Services	£300k up to £2m	Head of Service in consultation with Cabinet member
Goods / Services	£2m and above	Cabinet
Works / Concessions / Light Touch Contracts	£300k up to £5m	Head of Service in consultation with Cabinet member
Works / Concessions / Light Touch Contracts	£5m and above	Cabinet (Delegated authority may be granted, if so authorised by Cabinet to the Chief Executive, Director or Head of Service to make the final award if so determined by Cabinet)

26 Letters of Intent

- 26.1 A letter of intent is not an appropriate substitute for a formal Contract but in exceptional circumstances can be issued as an interim measure until a formal Contract has been executed. Letters of intent shall only be used with the prior agreement of, and in a form approved by, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 26.2 Save for exceptional circumstances, no successful Supplier should be asked to provide any Services, supply any Goods or carry out any Works (including preliminary Works) (including Special Regime Contracts) until

the Contract is concluded or the Services, Goods or Works (including those under Special Regime) concerned are covered by a letter of intent. Should the Senior Officer for the Service Area concerned make any decision to the contrary, such decision shall contain a full risk assessment as to the possible implications to the Council of the Supplier being allowed to start before the Contract Terms and Conditions have been finalised or a letter of intent issued.

- 26.3 For Contracts with a value that meets or exceeds **£30,000** (inc VAT) Goods and Services (including Special Regime) or **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works but is below **£120,000** (inc VAT), Service Areas may use an appropriate standard Form of Contract issued or approved for use by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 26.4 For Contracts with a value that meets or exceeds **£120,000** (inc VAT) **Goods, Services or Works** (including Special Regime), Service Areas **must** take the advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the Form of Contract to be used, though wherever appropriate, industry standard forms will be used.
- 26.5 It is essential that the Goods, Services or Works are procured on the Council's Standard Terms and Conditions and not those submitted by the Supplier unless authorised by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 26.6 Contract documents, along with all associated related documents, must be retained for a minimum of **6 (six)** years from the contract end date and, if the Contract is concluded under seal, for a period of **12 (twelve)** years from the Contract end date for the purpose of any audit requirements. Where the Contract was funded, or partly funded, through some form of external grant then further grant specific conditions, as regard to retention of documents may apply and must be adhered to.
- 26.7 As minimum contracts **must** set out;
- (a) the work, materials, services or supplies to be carried out or provided and standards required;
 - (b) the price to be paid (or, as appropriate, the sums to be received) with a statement of discounts, or other deductions, and where not known, the basis upon which the final Contract sum is to be calculated;
 - (c) the time or times within which the Contract is to be performed; and
 - (d) the commencement and termination dates of the Contract.

26.8 The following Contract terms are implied in every Contract for Goods, Services or Works that have a value of **£30,000** (inc VAT) **for Goods and Services** (including Light Touch) **and £75,000** (inc VAT) or more **for Works**:

26.8.1 Any sum due to be paid under the Contract by the Council must be paid before the end of the period of 30 calendar days beginning with;

(a) the day on which an invoice is received by the Council in respect of the sum, or

(b) if later, the day on which the sum first became due in accordance with the invoice.

26.8.2 The term in subsection 26.8.1 does not apply if the Council;

(a) considers the invoice invalid, or

(b) disputes the invoice.

26.8.3 On receiving an invoice from a payee, the Council must notify the payee without undue delay if;

(a) it considers the invoice invalid, or

(b) it disputes the invoice.

26.8.4 The Council may rely on a payment made by a third party to satisfy the term in Rule 26.8.1 only with the agreement of the payee.

26.8.5 For the purposes of the Rule 26.8.1 and 26.8.4, an invoice is valid if it sets out the minimum required information and meets any other requirement set out in the Contract.

26.8.6 The minimum required information is;

(a) the name of the invoicing party;

(b) a description of the Goods, Services or Works (including Light Touch) supplied;

(c) the sum requested, and

(d) a unique identification number.

26.8.7 No Contract term that seeks to restrict or override the terms implied by this Rule 26.8 will take effect.

27 Execution (Completion / Signing / Sealing) of Contracts

27.1 Any Contract with a value that meets or exceeds **£100,000** **must** be completed under seal. The Council's seal may only be affixed to a Contract in the presence of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or nominated officers.

28 Contract Management

28.1 Once the Contract has been awarded, the Senior Officer (of the Service Area concerned) **must** identify and nominate an individual (referred to as the Contract Manager), who will manage the day-to-day aspects of the Contract for its term.

28.2 The day-to-day management of the Contract shall be undertaken by the Contract Manager and shall include monitoring and in respect of:-

- (a) adherence to payment terms and conditions
- (b) key performance indicators (KPIs)
- (c) performance of services
- (d) compliance with specification and Contract terms;
- (e) cost;
- (f) any Value for Money/best value requirements;
- (g) user satisfaction;
- (h) risk management; and
- (i) delivery of agreed Community Benefits / Social Value.

28.3 For all Contracts, it is the responsibility of the Contract Manager to raise any incidents of poor performance immediately with the Supplier and seek rectification.

In instances of particularly poor performance, or persistent poor performance, the Contract Manager should consider the appropriate course of action to take under the Contract, taking advice as appropriate from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

28.4 The setting and measuring of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be considered for all Contracts to monitor Supplier performance. The inclusion of KPIs will depend on the subject matter, complexity and value of the Contract.

KPIs should be designed around the most important deliverables under the Contract.

They must clearly link to the wider objectives under the Contract and should also include minimum satisfactory standards and performance escalation protocols, should these not be met.

- 28.5 The inclusion of at least three KPIs is required for all Contracts valued over **£5,000,000** (inc VAT).

Once set, details of the KPIs shall be included in the [Contract Details Notice](#).

- 28.6 Performance against the KPIs in such contracts **must** be assessed against a standardised rating system as per Regulation 39(5) of the Procurement Regulations 2024 and information about the Supplier's performance against them **must** be published via a [Contract Performance Notice](#) on at least an annual basis for the life of the Contract.

29 Contract Modifications

- 29.1 Depending upon the nature of the modification proposed, the terms of the Contract concerned, and scope of the original Procurement undertaken, Contract modification have the potential to amount to a new Contract, and so can constitute a single Tender award without advertisement.

- 29.2 In all cases of Contract modification, careful consideration **must** be made of the impact of any increase to the value of the Contract in relation to the current UK Threshold level.

- 29.3 The advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager and Head of Legal and Democratic Services should be obtained, if there is any uncertainty as to whether a modification is permissible.

- 29.4 Contract and Framework Agreements under UK Threshold may be varied without a new Procurement Process where either:

- (a) the modifications have been provided for in the initial procurement documents in clear, precise and unequivocal terms (i.e. the Contract conditions provide for; extension of the Contract term, price variation, fluctuation clauses or options, additional works, goods and services) and these do not alter the overall nature of the Contract or the Contract cannot be performed to the satisfaction of the Council and the modification goes not further than to remedy that fact;
- (b) the circumstances causing the need for modification were unforeseen, the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract and provided that any increase in the price does not exceed

10% of the value of the original contract value for Goods or Services (including services concession contracts) or 15% for Works (advice of the Corporate Procurement Manager must be sought before placing reliance on this rule);

- (c) there is a change in Supplier that was provided for in the Contract, or as a result of a merger, acquisition, insolvency or similar of the original Supplier, which the new Supplier fulfils the original criteria for qualitative selection, provided this does not lead to other substantial variations or is aimed at circumventing the Regulations;
- (d) they do not materially change the scope of the Contract;
- (e) the modification is necessary for extreme urgency or protection of life; or
- (f) they do not materially change the economic balance of the Contract in favour of the Supplier;
- (g) the Contract is a Light Touch Contract.

29.5 Contracts meeting and over UK Threshold may only be modified in accordance with Procurement Legislation.

Advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services should be sought before determining this and the Corporate Procurement Manager shall co-ordinate any notices required to be published.

29.6 A decision to extend the Contract period (term) may only be made before the original expiry date, where it is in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the original Contract and contemplated by the original Procurement.

30 Contract Modification Authorisation

30.1 The decision to vary a Contract should be on the basis of prior advice sought from the Head of Legal Services and / or the Corporate Procurement Manager.

The authorisation for a proposed Contract modification shall be made, as appropriate, by Cabinet or the Officers listed below.

Decisions to authorise modifications shall be recorded in writing and actioned by the following:

Head of Service	Modification (or aggregate value of all variations modification made to the Contract) of up to £30,000 or 10% of the Contract price (whichever is deemed lower)
Director	Modification (or aggregate value of all variations modification made to the Contract) up to £250,000
Director (with consent of relevant Cabinet Member)	Modification (or aggregate value of all variations modification made to the Contract) up to £1,000,000
Cabinet	Modification (or aggregate value of all variations modification made to the Contract) over £1,000,000

30.2 As soon as it becomes known or apparent (whichever is the earlier) that the total cost of a Contract, including modifications, will or is likely to exceed the Contract sum by more than 5%, the Director of Finance **must** be informed for financial monitoring purposes. In such circumstances, a report must be prepared, which must address the reasons for increased cost, an analysis of options considered to reduce cost to budget and the funding options considered to meet any budget shortfall, together with an indication of how any additional costs will be paid for.

30.3 Any modification to the original Contract **must** be in the best interests of the Council and for continued delivery of services.

31 Assignments and Novation

31.1 Any proposals by a Senior Officer to agree to assign or novate their own or any Supplier's obligations under a Contract **must** be referred to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services at the earliest possible instance for advice.

32 Early Termination of Contract

- 32.1 For any Contract that meets or exceeds **£30,000 for Goods and Services (including Special Regime) or £75,000 for Works** (inc VAT), early termination shall be approved by the appropriate decision maker, provided always that the advice of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is first sought. Contracts of a lesser value may be terminated early (prior to the expiry date) by agreement with the Supplier or in accordance with the termination provisions set out in the Contract.
- 32.2 Advice should be sought from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on termination provisions if so required.
- 32.3 For any Contract exceeding **£5,000,000** (inc VAT) early termination shall be approved by Cabinet unless the matter relates to full Council, in which case matters shall be reported accordingly.

33 Contract End

- 33.1 Where a Contract has a duration of more than **12 (twelve)** months, then at an appropriate point but generally at least **6 (six)** months prior to the end of the Contract term, the Contract Manager should review the Supplier's performance and consider what, if any, replacement arrangements are required and should consult the Corporate Procurement Manager in adequate time.
- 33.2 Some Contracts may require active steps to be taken to end the Contract (e.g. serving of notices no later than a certain number of months prior to the end of the Contract) and/ or steps to be taken to decommission the Contract arrangements. The Senior Officer of the Service Area and/or Contract Manager concerned is responsible for ensuring that appropriate steps are taken to bring Contracts to an end and sufficient time allowed to put in place any replacement arrangements that may be required including any proposed Procurement process.

34 Advance Payments and Contract Payments

34.1 Advance Payments

Advance payments should only be made in appropriate circumstances. The Contract Manager **must** keep detailed records of any such payment, which shall be open to inspection by the Director of Finance.

34.2 Contract Payments

The Senior Officer and/or Contract Manager of the relevant Service Area shall make arrangements to retain adequate details relating to all contract payments made to allow for a proper audit of all such payments.

- 34.3 All payments made **must** comply with the process as set out in Financial Procedure Rules and Accounting Instructions shall be paid within **30 (thirty)** calendar days of an undisputed invoice.

35 Bonds, Securities, Liquidated and other damages

- 35.1 The Senior Officer and/or Contract Manager of the Service Area requiring the Procurement is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is undertaken, to determine if a performance bond or performance guarantee is required. The advice of the Council's Director of Finance should be sought.

- 35.2 Consideration should also be given to the appropriateness of including in the Contract a provision for liquidated damages to be paid by the Supplier in case the terms of the Contract are not duly performed.

36 Parent Company Guarantee or Financial Guarantee

- 36.1 The Senior Officer of the Service Area and/or Contract Manager requiring the Procurement is responsible for seeking a Parent Company or Financial Guarantee;

- (a) where a Supplier is a subsidiary of a parent company and the award is based on evaluation of the parent company;
- (b) the financial status of the Supplier (having regard to the proposed Contract) warrants the same; and/or
- (c) the Director of Finance recommends.

37 Records

- 37.1 For all Procurement activity Service areas **must** keep appropriate records. As a minimum the records kept **must** detail:

- (a) which parties were selected to Tender;
- (b) to whom the Contract was awarded and the reasons for so doing (lowest price or offer which represents best value to the Council) so that best value and the integrity of the process can be demonstrated;
- (c) the value of the Contract;
- (d) the start and expiry date of the Contract; Contract duration and any

extension period;

- (e) details of whether the Contract is a one-off (spot) or expected to be renewed (term) Contract.
- (f) Any further details as required in order to upload relevant data to the Council's Corporate Contracts Register as per Rule 38 below and /or any Regulatory notices.

38 Corporate Contracts Register

38.1 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services shall maintain a Corporate Contracts Register, which will record details of all Contracts awarded by the Council that meet or exceed **£30,000** (inc VAT) for Goods and Services (including Special Regime Contracts), and **£75,000** (inc VAT) for Works.

Senior Officers **must** ensure that Officers within their Service Area complete the Corporate Contracts Register for any new Contracts awarded as soon as possible and no later than **10 (ten)** calendar days following the award of a Contract and **must** ensure that Officers maintain and update the record during the lifetime of the Contract.

Appendix 1: Definitions

Term	Definition
Community Benefits / Social Value	<p>The delivery of social, economic and environmental benefit through effective application of Community Benefits clauses in public contracts.</p> <p>Mandatory on all contracts with a value greater than £1m and optional, but encouraged, on contracts below £1m</p>
Concession Contract	<p>A Contract between the Council and Supplier, where the consideration in the Contract consists of the Supplier's right to exploit the work or services, that are the subject of the contract, or that right to exploit together with a payment</p>
Conflict of Interest	<p>A personal, professional or financial interest of an Officer or elected member or a Supplier which may be direct or indirect</p>
Conflicts of Interest Declaration	<p>A declaration completed by Officers specific to a Procurement in a form approved by the Corporate Procurement Manager</p>
Contract	<p>Any form of agreement (including, without limitation); Framework Agreements; purchase orders produced for the supply of Goods, provision of Services (including Special Regime) or carrying out of Works and or concession and utility contracts.</p>
Contract Manager	<p>Officer with conduct of the Contract for the Procurement</p>
Contract Award Form	<p>The document which is used to confirm the award of Contract and the governance arrangements associated with the same as copy of which will be available on the Council's intranet</p>

Contract Procedure Rules/ Rules	These contract standing orders and Procurement rules as may be amended from time to time
Corporate Contracts Register	The register maintained (in such form as determine from time to time) by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, which lists all Contracts (except arrangements in respect of land) concluded by the Council with a value of £30,000 (inc VAT) or greater
Corporate Procurement Manager	The officer delegated as the Council's Corporate Procurement Manager or any officers under their supervision or management to whom they delegate authority to carry out any of the obligations, duties or activities required to be performed by them under these Rules or to act in their absence
Council	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Council Constitution	The Constitution of the Council
Council Policies	Policies of the Council which may be adopted and updated from time to time
Data Protection Legislation	<p>(a) the UK GDPR;</p> <p>(b) the Data Protection Act 2018 (and regulations made thereunder) to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy;</p> <p>(c) all applicable law about the processing of personal data and privacy; and</p> <p>(d) (to the extent that it applies) Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation) as it has effect in EU law.</p>

Debarment List	A list published by UK or Welsh Government of excluded (where a mandatory exclusion ground applies) or excludable (where a discretionary exclusion ground applies) Suppliers
Director of Finance	The officer delegated under the Constitution as being the Director of Finance or any officers under their supervision or management to whom they delegate authority to carry out any of the obligations, duties or activities required to be performed by him/her under these Rules or to act in their absence
Dynamic Market	Arrangements for the purpose of the Council awarding Contracts by reference to Suppliers' participation in the arrangements
Electronic Procurement	The Procurement of all Goods, Services (including Special Regime) and Works conducted using the Council's approved eTendering system
Employee Code of Conduct	The Council's Employee Code of Conduct available on the Council's Intranet
Excludable Supplier	Where a discretionary exclusion ground applies to the Supplier or an associated or connected person, and the circumstances giving rise to the application of the exclusion ground are continuing or likely to occur again, or the Supplier or an associated person is on the Debarment List by virtue of a discretionary exclusion ground
Excluded Supplier	Where a mandatory exclusion ground applies to the Supplier or an associated or connected person, and the circumstances giving rise to the application of the exclusion ground are continuing or likely to occur again, or the Supplier or an associated person is on the Debarment List by virtue of a mandatory exclusion ground

Exclusion Grounds	Those set out in the Procurement Act 2023 and include mandatory grounds (serious, high-risk scenarios and include specific offences, misconduct and infringement) and discretionary grounds (situations that may pose unacceptable risks such as insolvency, professional misconduct, misconduct in relation to labour and the environment, breach of contract and poor performance) occurring within specified time periods
Framework Agreement	A framework agreement for one or more Suppliers and an open framework with the minimum of two Suppliers
Goods	All products, goods, supplies, substances and materials that the Council purchases, hires or otherwise obtains
Government Guidance	Applicable Welsh Government and Cabinet Office guidance, which shall include WPPNs and PPNs
Grant	A sum of money paid or to be paid by the Council to a third party, and in respect of which the Council does not require the recipient to provide the Council with any Services, or Goods or carry out any Works for the Council's direct benefit. The Grant(s) may be conditional (e.g. obligation to spend the Grant(s) in a particular manner, to account for that spend and repay the Grant(s) if the Grant(s) conditions are breached)
Head of Legal and Democratic Services	The officer delegated under the Constitution as being the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or any officers under their supervision or management to whom they delegate authority to carry out any of the obligations, duties or activities required to be performed by him/her under these Rules or to act in their absence
ITT	Invitation to Tender

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Contractual targets against which a Supplier's contract delivery can be objectively measured
Light Touch	Services as defined in Schedule 1 of the Procurement Regulations 2024 and include health, social and related services, administrative social, educational, healthcare and cultural services and compulsory social security services
Most Advantageous Tender (MAT)	The Tender that both satisfies the Council's requirements and is the winning Tender when assessed against the award criteria and the assessment methodology
Officer or Officers	Means an employee of the Council
Procurement	The process by which the Council manages the acquisition of all its Goods, Services (including Special Regime) and Works, in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the Council, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. It includes the identification of need, options appraisal, consideration of options, the actual quotation or tender process. Supplier selection, award and the subsequent contract management and review of the contracts through to the end of a contract or the end of the useful life of the asset, or disposal of the asset
Procurement Act 2023	The Procurement Act 2023 as may be amended from time to time
Procurement Forward Workplan	The Council's forward work programme in respect of its Procurements
Procurement Guidance	The guidance issued by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or Corporate Procurement Manager or such other person authorised by them

Procurement Legislation	All relevant UK Government and Welsh Government legislation applicable to the Council's Procurements including the Procurement Act 2023 and the regulations made thereunder (including but not limited to the Procurement Regulations 2024 and the Procurement (Wales) Regulations 2024), and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 and the regulations made thereunder
Procurement Pipeline	The collection of individual Procurements of an estimated value of more than £30,000 (inc VAT) for Goods and Services (including Special Regime) or £75,000 (inc VAT) for Works that make up the Council's procurement pipeline over the next 18 months commencing on the first day of the financial year, the first being the 1st April 2025
Procurement Regulations 2024	The companion legislation and schedules that add further detail to the Procurement Act 2023 as may be amended from time to time
Procurement Strategy	The Council's Procurement Strategy approved on the 11th September 2024
Procurement Strategy Document	The document setting out the strategy of the procurement process and confirmation of the appropriate authority being in place
Purchase Order	An electronic order raised and authorised via the P2P, or such other electronic system in force for the time being
Purchase to Pay / P2P	The Council's electronic system of processing payments
Quotation	a potential Supplier's informal quotation in response to the Council's requirements for Goods, Services or Works

Reserved Procurement Arrangement	A Procurement under a UK central government arrangement, for example the Crown Commercial Services
Rules	Means these Contract Procedure Rules
Senior Officer	The Chief Executive, Directors or Heads of Services or any officers under their supervision or management to whom he/she delegates authority to carry out any of the obligations, duties or activities required to be performed by him/her under these Rules or to act in their absence
Service Area	The respective service area of the Council
Services	Includes all services, which the Council purchases or otherwise obtains including advice, specialist consultancy work, agency staff and all those activities constituting Services in the Procurement Legislation
Small and medium enterprise / SME	Suppliers that have fewer than 250 staff, and have a turnover of an amount less than or equal to £44 million, or a balance sheet total of an amount less than or equal to £38 million
Socially Responsible Procurement Duties	The duties as set out in the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023
Special Regime Contracts	A Concession Contract, a Light Touch Contract, a utilities Contract, or defence and security Contract
Supplier	Means any supplier, contractor or provider with whom the Council enters into a Contract for the carrying out of Works, provision of Services or the supply of Goods (including those under Special Regime)
Tender	A potential Supplier's formal tender documentation and submission in response to the Council's requirements for Goods, Services or Works
Tender	A Suppliers submission for a Contract including all documentation required by any ITT

Tender Record Form	A template that will be issued to Service Areas by the Corporate Procurement Manager
Terms and Conditions	Terms and conditions issued or approved by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. The Procurement Act 2023 will imply certain terms into most Contracts and the Socially Responsible Procurement Duties prescribe certain model clauses
Threshold(s)	The thresholds prescribed in the Procurement Act 2023 for Goods, Services, Works and Special Regime Contracts as may be amended from time to time (see Appendix 2)
Transitional Arrangements	The Procurement Act 2023 comes into effect on 24th February 2025 . Procurements commenced prior to this date and existing Contracts will continue to be subject to the requirements of the previous regime i.e. the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 as relevant. Certain existing Council arrangements will have to finish by February 2029
Treaty State Suppliers	A Supplier from a country that has an international agreement with the UK that covers the contracting authority carrying out the Procurement, the Goods, Services or Works being procured and the provisions of Procurement Legislation are within scope of that agreement
Value for Money	The optimum combination of whole-of-life costs in terms of not only generating efficiency savings and good quality outcomes for the organisation, but also benefit to society, the economy, and the environment, both now and in the future
Variation(s)	Any alteration to a Contract including, additions, omissions, substitutions, alterations or changes of any other nature

VAT	Value Added Tax
VCSE/s	Organisations with a social or environmental purpose, including, voluntary organisations, charities, public service mutual, social enterprises, and other non-profits
Wales Procurement Policy Statement (WPPS)	The Wales Procurement Policy Statement as issued by the Welsh Ministers from time to time
Works	Includes all works of new construction and repairs in respect of physical assets (buildings, roads, etc.) including all those activities constituting works for the purposes of the Procurement Legislation

Appendix 2: Threshold Table

The thresholds currently prescribed in the Procurement Act 2023 for Goods, Services, Works, Special Regime Contracts

	Type of contract	Threshold amount
1	Defence and security contract that is a works contract	£5,336,937
2	Defence and security contract that is a concession contract	£5,336,937
3	Defence and security contract not within row 1, 2 or 8	£426,955
4	Utilities contract that is a works contract	£5,336,937
5	Utilities contract that is a light touch contract	£884,720
6	Utilities contract not within row 3, 4 or 5	£426,955
7	Light touch contract that is a concession contract	£5,336,937
8	Light touch contract not within row 5 or 7	£663,540
9	Concession contract not within row 2, 6 or 7	£5,336,937
10	Works contract not within row 1, 4 or 9	£5,336,937
11	Contract for the supply of goods, services or works authority not within any other row	£213,477

Appendix 3: Notices

To be included once made available from UK Government and Welsh Government

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Updating of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs)
Service Area: Legal and Democratic Services
Directorate: Strategy and Corporate Services

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				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.

Disability		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Gender Reassignment		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement

						Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Race		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Religion/Belief		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules

						will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Sex		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.
Sexual orientation		X				As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy There will be no effect on this protected characteristic.

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?
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People's opportunities to use the Welsh language			x			The updated Contract Procedure Rules incorporate the requirements of the relevant Welsh Language Standards and the statutory obligations contained therein. See report for further details.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English			x			The updated Contract Procedure Rules incorporate the requirements of the relevant Welsh Language Standards and the statutory obligations contained therein. See report for further details

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			As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy. Couple with the Procurement Strategy, the proposed Contract Procedure Rules will that officers must consider the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity in all tender processes in procurement activity.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,			x			As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to our Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure

such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.						Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy. Couple with the Procurement Strategy, the proposed Contract Procedure Rules will that officers must consider the promotion and resilience of ecosystems in procurement activity.
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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		The 5 ways of working are reflected in the proposed Contract Procedure Rules, particularly the consideration of the 5 ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations Act at the procurement planning stage (as set out in the tender strategy document) and the consideration of community and wider environmental/sustainability benefits is emphasised within the proposed Contract Procedure Rules.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		The updated CPRs assist in implementing the Council's well-being objective, in particular consideration of reserved contracts and sustainability at the procurement planning stage (set out in the tender strategy document), emphasis on pre-engagement with local suppliers under the market testing provisions of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules so as to make local suppliers aware of upcoming opportunities, and the ability to divide contracts up into smaller lots when tendering is highlighted in the preliminary steps provisions of the proposed Contract Procedure Rules so as to encourage the involvement of smaller and local suppliers .
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	X		The proposed Contract Procedure Rules are internally focused and have been agreed between officers of the Council to ensure the legal, financial and operational requirements of the Council have been considered and developed. The 5 ways of working have been embedded within the

			procurement procedures, for example there is a requirement for consideration of the 5 ways of working at the procurement planning stage.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	X		The proposed Contract Procedure Rules are internally focused and have been agreed between officers of the Council to ensure the legal, financial and operational requirements of the Council have been considered and developed. The 5 ways of working have been embedded within the procurement procedures, for example there is a requirement for consideration of the 5 ways of working at the procurement planning stage.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	X		The 5 ways of working have been embedded within the procurement procedures set out in the proposed Contract Procedure Rules, for example there is a requirement for consideration of the 5 ways of working at the procurement planning stage.

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

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	X
Reasons for this conclusion	
There are no impacts requiring a full Integrated Impact Assessment to be completed. As a result of legislative changes to procurement rules and new policy directives from the Welsh Government, an update to these Contract Procure Rules is now necessary. It should be noted that the Council is already in compliance with these legislative requirements, but the Contract Procedure Rules required updating to ensure that such processes are documented accordingly. The proposed Contract Procedure Rules will also aim to address strategic decisions taken by this Council such as the implementation of the Procurement Strategy.	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Approved by	Craig Griffiths	Head of Legal and Democratic Services	C Griffiths	4 th December 2024

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

19th February 2025

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Mr Craig Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All wards

Mayoral Arrangements

Purpose of the Report:

To nominate a Mayor elect and Deputy Mayor elect for the civic year 2025/2026.

Background:

The Council elects a mayor and deputy mayor to preside over Council proceedings and discharge the duties of the First Citizen each year.

At its annual meeting in May 2025, formal appointment will take place pursuant to the Council's Constitution.

However, to assist in preparation and following discussions between political group leaders, Full Council are asked to approve that Cllr Wayne Carpenter be nominated as Mayor and that Cllr Alan Lockyer be nominated as Deputy Mayor for the 2025/2026 civic year.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts associated with this report

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment as this is a report in respect of governance arrangements only

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are no valley community impacts

Workforce Impacts:

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report

Legal Impacts:

The report discharges duties placed on the Council pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972

Risk Management Impacts:

Failure to ensure that the appropriate appointments are made could render the Council in breach of its statutory duties.

Consultation:

There will be no requirement for any consultation.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

(a) Councillor Wayne Carpenter be nominated Mayor for the civic year 2025/26 pursuant to Section 23(1) of the Local Government Act 1972

(b) Councillor Alan Lockyer be nominated Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2025/26 pursuant to Section 23(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To identify and agree the mayoral and deputy mayoral appointments for the civic year 2025/26.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation immediately

Appendices:

None

List of Background Papers:

Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Officer Contact:

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**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL**

19TH FEBRUARY 2025

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

Matter for decision

Wards affected: all wards

Pay Policy Statement 2025 / 2026

Purpose of the Report:

To approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2025 / 2026 for publication on the Council's website. The Statement is attached as Appendix 1.

Executive Summary:

It is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 that the Council produces a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year, setting out specific information in relation to the pay of the Council's workforce. The Statement that has been prepared for 2025 / 2026, and attached at Appendix 1, has been developed in line with guidance produced by the Welsh Government "Pay Accountability within Local Government" published in November 2021 and to reflect national and local developments in pay.

Background:

The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year articulating its policy towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly in relation to senior staff and the lowest paid within the workforce. This is with the aim of increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of local pay.

The statement must be prepared annually, considered and approved by full Council and published on the Council's website.

An initial Pay Policy statement was developed and approved by this Council in March 2012. As required by legislation, the Pay Policy Statement must be reviewed at least annually, and then approved and published by 31st March each subsequent year.

The Pay Policy Statement for 2025 / 2026 is attached at Appendix 1. The format of the document has been developed with reference to the guidance produced by the Welsh Government “Pay Accountability within Local Government” published in November 2021 and the content has been updated to take account of national and local pay related developments, outlined in this report.

Pay related developments

It is the Council’s policy that any nationally agreed pay awards, negotiated at a national level by the local government employers in conjunction with the recognised Trade Unions will be applied, unless full Council determines otherwise.

The attached statement reflects pay awards agreed for Chief Executive, Chief Officers, and Local Government Services applying from 1st April 2024, Youth & Community Workers applying from 1st September 2024, and Soulbury Officers applying from 1st September 2023.

Pay Multiples

Whilst the Localism Act excludes schools from the scope of local authority Pay Policy Statements, the Pay Policy Statement for this Council sets out details of pay multiples both including and excluding employees who are appointed and managed by schools:

Basis	Pay Multiple
Lowest paid employee earnings: Chief Executive’s earnings	1 : 6.14
Median employee FTE* earnings: Chief Executive	1 : 4.84
Lowest paid employee earnings: average Chief Officer earnings	1 : 4.26
Median employee FTE* earnings: average Chief Officer earnings	1 : 3.35

* FTE= Full Time Equivalent

Financial impacts:

The Council spends 49% of gross expenditure on its workforce (NB this figure will fluctuate throughout the year).

Integrated impact assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage assessment, attached at appendix 1 has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:

“A full impact is not required as there is no impact on any protected group as a result of this report – the Pay Policy Statement reflects pay decision already taken, and is simply a statement summarising those decisions. It also has no negative impact on bio-diversity or the Welsh Language. However, it should be noted that, in determining pay and remuneration, the Council complies with relevant employment legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, the Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002, Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. The Council has sought to ensure that there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that pay differentials can be objectively justified primarily through the use of an equality proofed job evaluation mechanism which directly relates basic pay to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of each job role”.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce impacts:

The Pay Policy Statement sets out the impact of the Council’s pay strategy on pay relativities within the workforce, and particularly the relationship between the highest and the lowest paid within the organisation.

Legal impacts:

It is a requirement under the Localism Act 2011 that the Council produces a Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2025 / 2026 and that it is considered and approved by full Council, and subsequently published on the Council's website.

Risk Management Impacts:

Failure to consider and approve a Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2025 / 2026 will place the Council in breach of the Localism Act 2011.

Consultation:

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

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Members consider and approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2025 / 2026 for publication on the Council's website.

FOR DECISION**Reason for proposed decision:**

To ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Pay Policy Statement 2025 / 2026

List of Background Papers:

Localism Act 2011

Officer contact:

Sheenagh Rees, Head of People and Organisational Development, email: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Pay Policy Statement

2025 / 2026

Version	Date	Action
Version 1	March 2011	Approved by Council
Version 13	March 2024	Approved by Council
Version 14	February 2025	Approved by Council
Version 15	March 2026	For approval by Council

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This Council is committed to being open and transparent and as Leader I want to ensure that the Council tax payers of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council have access to information about how we pay people.

Council services are delivered by people, and most of the people we employ live and work in this County Borough. I want to ensure that Council services are the best they can be, so our pay policy seeks to ensure we can attract, retain and motivate the best employees with the right skills to deliver our services.

This, of course, has to be balanced against the need to ensure value for money for the local Council taxpayer.

The Council is one of the main employers in this area and it is important that the Council can offer good quality employment on reasonable terms and conditions and fair rates of pay. This will have a beneficial impact on the quality of life within the community as well as on the local economy.

Cllr S Hunt
Leader of Council

Introduction

This is Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's (NPT) thirteenth annual Pay Policy Statement. This Statement covers the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

This Pay Policy Statement provides the framework for decision making on pay and in particular decision making on senior pay. Preparing and publishing this statement is a requirement under the Localism Act 2011. The provisions in the Act do not apply to the staff of local authority schools and therefore teaching staff are not included in the scope of this document.

This Pay Policy Statement has been approved by council on 19th February 2025.

Legislative Framework

The council has the power to appoint staff under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 and complies with all relevant employment legislation in determining the pay and remuneration of its staff.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

The council employs approximately 6,500 employees. The posts they are employed within are covered by a range of terms and conditions drawn from either:

- National Joint Council for Local Government Services
- Joint National Council for Chief Executives
- Joint National Council for Chief Officers
- Soulbury Committee
- The Joint National Council for Youth and Community Workers
- Teachers (not within the scope of this statement)

The following pay scales are provided as Appendices to this policy:

- **Appendix A** Local Government Services Employee
- **Appendix B** JNC Chief Executive and Chief Officers
- **Appendix C** Soulbury Officers
- **Appendix D** JNC Youth & Community Workers

We publish a breakdown of staff numbers by pay band and gender in the **Annual Equalities in Employment Report**, published separately. Linked to this is the **Gender Pay Gap Report**.

National Pay Awards

For all employee groups, any nationally agreed pay awards, negotiated at a national level by the local government employers in conjunction with the recognised Trade Unions will be applied. The council will pay these nationally agreed pay awards as and when determined unless full council decides otherwise.

Job Evaluation

In 2008 the council completed a Job Evaluation exercise in relation to jobs which are governed by the NJC for LGS' terms and conditions of employment. A new pay and grading structure, based on the outcome of the Job Evaluation exercise, was developed in partnership with, and agreed with, our trade unions via a Collective Agreement and introduced in 2008. The pay and grading structure is based on the NJC for LGS' nationally negotiated pay spine as the basis for its pay and grading structure. In order to implement the new LGS pay spine to apply from 1st April 2019, revisions to the pay and grading structure were again agreed via Collective Agreement reached with our trade unions in January 2019 to both implement the new pay spine, and at the same time ensure that arrangements remain equality proofed. These arrangements applied with effect from 1st April 2019.

The council seeks to maintain the equality proofed pay and grading structure by subjecting any newly established job or jobs which have significantly changed to a job evaluation assessment. A Joint Job Evaluation Panel, comprising of trained management and trade union representatives continues to meet on a regular basis to consider and determine Grading Appeals.

Starting salaries

It is the council's policy that all appointments to jobs with the council are made at the minimum of the relevant pay grade, although this can be varied where necessary, e.g. to secure the services of the best available candidate/s.

Heads of Service can authorise a variation of starting salary for all jobs below Head of Service level. The Special Appointments Committee, a committee with delegated authority from Personnel Committee, will determine the starting salary of Heads of Service.

The Welsh Government recommends that in addition to agreeing the parameters for setting the pay of chief officers, full council should be offered the opportunity to vote on large salary packages which are to be offered in respect

of new appointments in accordance with their agreed pay policy statements. The Welsh Ministers consider £100,000 is the right level for that threshold.

For this purpose, salary packages should be consistent with the categories defined for remuneration in the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014. This will include salary, bonuses, fees, allowances routinely payable, any expenses allowance chargeable to UK income tax, the relevant authorities' contribution to the officer's pension and any other benefits in kind to which the officer is entitled as a result of their employment.

In accordance with this:

- Full Council will approve the commencement of the appointment process for all Chief Officer posts which exceed this threshold.
- Council will confirm the maximum salary that would be offered and delegate responsibility for the final determination to the Special Appointments Committee.
- The process then continues with the Special Appointments Committee for all Chief Officer posts above the Strategic Manager pay grade (with the exception of Directors and Chief Executive which remain with Full Council).

Other pay-related allowances

All other pay-related allowances, e.g. overtime payments, are the subject of national and/or locally negotiated arrangements and subject to Member approval at personnel committee or full council, as appropriate (refer to Decision Making for more information).

The terms and conditions of employment relating to annual leave, hours of work, overtime payment, weekend working arrangements and sick pay for all employee groups (with the exception of teaching staff) are set out in **Appendix E**.

Travel and Subsistence Payments

The Council's Travel and Subsistence Payment Scheme requires employees to use the most cost effective method of transport for all journeys at all times. To ensure that all business journeys are absolutely necessary, whether inside or outside the County Borough area and that the most cost effective method of travel is used by all employees, the scheme provides a checklist to be completed by employees before the line manager authorises the use of

the employees own vehicle. Rates payable are in line with HMRC mileage allowances. The Scheme is available online or on request from the HR Team.

Acting Up and Honoraria Payments

There may be occasions when an employee is asked to carry out duties which are additional to those of their substantive post, for a period of time, or to 'act up' into a more senior job within the council, covering the full range of duties of the higher job. In such circumstances an additional payment may be made in line with the council's policy on payment of acting up or honoraria. The schemes, which apply to LGS employees only, have been reviewed, and revised versions approved by Personnel Committee in December 2023. The Schemes are available online or on request from the HR Team.

Personnel committee must approve any acting up or honoraria payments proposed for officers who are not within the scope of the scheme. Where the acting up or honoraria payment would result in the total pay package exceeding £100,000 approval must be sought from full council.

Market Pay Scheme

Job evaluation has enabled the council to set appropriate pay levels based on internal job size relativities within the council. However, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with the necessary specific knowledge, skills and experience.

The council has a Market Pay Scheme to ensure that the requirement for any market pay supplements is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources. The Scheme is available online or on request from the HR Team. It is the council's policy that any such additional payments are kept to a minimum and reviewed on a regular basis so that they can be withdrawn where no longer considered necessary.

The principles underpinning the Market Pay Scheme are applied to all employee groups within the council. Heads of Service can authorise market pay supplements following a recommendation from the Head of People and Organisational Development. Where it is proposed to apply a market supplement to a Chief Officer post within the council, approval is sought from the council's personnel committee. Should the market supplement result in the total pay package exceeding £100,000 approval must be sought from full council.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

To help people save more for their retirement, the government now requires employers to automatically enrol their workers into a workplace pension scheme. Neath Port Talbot Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme. If an employee has a contract of employment for at least 3 months (and is under 75 years of age), they will be automatically enrolled into the LGPS, from the date employment commenced. Opt out provisions apply.

The employee contribution rates, which are defined by statute, currently range between 5.5 per cent and 12.5 per cent of pensionable pay depending on full time equivalent salary levels. The Employer contribution rate is set by Actuaries advising the City and County of Swansea LGPS Pension fund and reviewed on a triennial basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded.

The employer contribution rate effective from 1st April 2024 was 22.4% following the latest triennial valuation.

Other employee benefits

The council believes that it has a responsibility to help support the health, wellbeing and welfare of its employees in order to ensure that they are able to perform at their best. As part of this approach and in common with other large employers the council provides a small number of non-pay benefits such as eye test vouchers for users of display screen equipment at work, childcare vouchers via a salary sacrifice scheme (following the Government's closure of such schemes, this benefit is now only available for those who joined the scheme prior to October 2018) and participation in the Cycle to Work and Car Benefit Schemes. We provide an Employee Assistance Programme and Salary Finance Platform to support the mental health, well-being and financial well-being of our employees. We subscribe to Employers for Carers (EFC) and all employees have access to the EFC Carers digital platform, which is packed full of information and guidance and can help having the caring conversation at home or in the workplace.

Employees who are members of the LGPS (see above) have the opportunity to join the Salary Sacrifice Shared Costs Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) Scheme, assisting employees who wish to increase pension benefits at retirement by paying additional voluntary contributions into the Local Government AVC Scheme.

Decision making

In accordance with the constitution of the council, the council's personnel committee has delegated authority for decision-making in relation to staff pensions, staff terms and conditions, i.e. related matters such as job evaluation strategies, national / local pay negotiations, operational conditions of service policies e.g. sickness, Directorate structural / staffing changes, including early retirement / redundancy policies, and industrial disputes.

Under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 any decision to determine or vary the remuneration of chief officers, or those to be appointed as chief officers, must be made by full council (please see page 6 [Starting Salaries](#)).

Collective bargaining arrangements with trade unions

The council recognises the following trade unions:

NJC for Local Government Services

UNISON

GMB

UNITE

JNC for Chief Officers

UNISON

GMB

Soulbury Committee

AEP

PROSPECT

JNC for Youth & Community Workers

UNISON

GMB

Teachers

NAHT

NASUWT

NEU

UCAC

ASCL

Recognition is for the purposes of consultation and negotiation on a collective basis in relation to relevant matters, which are not determined by National Negotiating bodies, which both parties agree are appropriate / beneficial to be determined by agreement. Negotiations are conducted with the aim of reaching agreement and avoiding disputes. Recognition also relates to representation on an individual trade union member basis.

Senior Pay

The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is the senior officer who leads and takes responsibility of the council. The Chief Executive is the statutory appointed Chief Executive Officer pursuant to S56 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Council is a large and complex organisation with a multi-million pound budget. It has a very wide range of functions and has responsibility for the provision of a wide range of essential services, employing some 6,400 staff.

The role of Chief Executive is a full time and permanent position. The post holder is selected on merit, against objective criteria, following public advertisement. The Chief Executive is appointed by full council.

The Chief Executive works closely with Elected Members to deliver the strategic aims of the council, including the 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 can access high quality, green jobs

The Chief Executive routinely works in the evenings and on weekends as well as the standard Monday to Friday business week. The Chief Executive also heads the 'on call' arrangements particularly to cover emergency planning arrangements.

The current Chief Executive, Ms Frances O'Brien, has been in post since November 2024. Ms. O'Brien has 20 years' experience within local government; prior to her appointment Ms O'Brien was Chief Officer, Communities and Place, at Monmouthshire County Council..

With effect from 1st April 2023, the Chief Executive's salary falls within the pay band £145,356 to £159,687 per annum (please see **Appendix B** for more details).

The council has a statutory duty to appoint a Returning Officer for specified Elections and Referenda and has appointed the Council's Chief Executive to this role. The Returning Officer is personally responsible for a wide range of functions in relation to the conduct of Elections and Referenda and is paid for discharging these functions in accordance with prescribed fees.

Details of the Chief Executive's pay, including any additional payments are published in the Statement of Accounts. This document is published separately.

Expenses such as for train, car mileage, overnight accommodation and parking are claimed back in accordance with the council's **Travel and Subsistence Payments Policy**.

The Chief Executive is currently a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The notice period for the role is 6 months.

Senior Staff

The current definition for senior posts is classed as:

Statutory Chief Officers:

- The Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning
- The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing
- The Director of Finance who undertakes the role of Section 151 Officer
- The Head of Legal and Democratic Services who undertakes the role of Monitoring Officer
- The Democratic Services Manager* who undertakes the role of Head of Democratic Services

** NB: whilst this post has the status in law as a statutory Chief Officer, pay and conditions are in line with the NJC for Local Government Services pay and conditions of employment.*

Non-statutory Chief Officers - non-statutory posts that report directly to the Chief Executive Officer:

- The Director of Environment and Regeneration
- The Director of Strategy and Corporate Services

Deputy Chief Officers - officers that report directly to statutory or non-statutory Chief Officers:

- The Chief Digital Officer
- The Head of Adult Services
- The Head of Children and Young People Services
- The Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships
- The Head of Education Development
- The Head of Engineering and Transport
- The Head of Housing and Communities
- The Head of Leisure, Tourism, Heritage and Culture
- The Head of People and Organisational Development
- The Head of Planning and Public Protection
- The Head of Property and Regeneration
- The Head of Streetcare
- The Head of South Wales Trunk Road Agency
- The Head of Support Services and Transformation

Pay

From 1st April 2024, Corporate Director posts attract a salary within the pay band £120,313 to £129,585 per annum (please see **Appendix B** for more details).

From 1st April 2023, the Director of Finance post attracts a salary within the pay band of £97,999 to £107,843 per annum (please see **Appendix B** for more details).

From 1st April 2023, Heads of Service posts attract a salary within the pay band of £84,015 to £92,207 per annum (please see **Appendix B** for more details).

Details of senior staff pay are published in the Statement of Accounts.

Number of senior posts remunerated over £100,000

Six posts attract a remuneration package over £100,000. Remuneration in relation to chief officers for the purposes of pay policy statements (as defined in section 43(3) of the Act) includes:

- salary (for chief officers who are employees) or payment under a contract for services (for chief officers who are self-employed)
- bonuses
- charges, fees and allowances
- benefits in kind
- any increase or enhancement of the chief officer's pension entitlement where that increase is a result of a resolution of the authority
- any amounts payable on the chief officer ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority (future severance payments)

In line with the Welsh Government guidance, the council is required to set out this information in bands of £5,000, as follows (effective from 1st April 2025):

£100,000 - £105,000 – N/A

£105,000 - £110,000 – one post

£110,000 - £115,000 – N/A

£115,000 - £120,000 – N/A

£120,000 - £125,000 – one post

£125,000 - £130,000 – three posts

£135,000 - £140,000 – N/A

£140,000 - £145,000 – N/A

£145,000 - £150,000 – one post

£150,000 - £155,000 – N/A

£155,000 - £160,000 – N/A

Recruitment of Senior Officers

The council's Policy and Procedures with regard to the recruitment of Chief Officers is contained within the Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out in the council's constitution available online.

The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant Council policies in place at the time of recruitment. Any salary package in relation to a Chief Officer that exceeds the threshold of £100,000 must be approved beforehand by full council.

Additions to Chief Officers' Pay

The council pays a standard mileage rate of 45 pence per mile to Chief Officers (and all other employees) where the Chief Officer uses his or her private vehicle on Council business. The council also reimburses any other reasonable expenses, incurred by the Chief Officer on behalf of the council whilst on council business, on production of receipts and in accordance with JNC conditions and other local conditions.

The cost of membership by the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors of one professional body is met by the council.

Independent Remuneration Panel

Section 143A of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 refers to the Independent Remuneration Panel in Wales ("the IRP") and sets out their

functions in relation to salaries of heads of paid service. The IRP may make recommendations about any policy in this Pay Policy Statement which relates to the salary of the council's Chief Executive and any proposed change to the salary of the council's Chief Executive. The council, will, as required, consult the IRP in relation to any change to the salary of the Chief Executive which is not commensurate with a change of the salaries of the council's other staff, and will have regard to any recommendation received from the IRP when deciding whether or not to proceed with making the change.

The council is required to identify in this pay policy statement whether any such referral has been made to the IRP, and if so, the nature of the referral, the IRP's decision and the council's response.

An authority which chooses not to follow the advice of the Panel may become subject to a Ministerial direction to reconsider their position. The Act also provides that authorities will be able to reduce (but not increase) the salary payable to their Chief Executive in advance of a recommendation from the IRP, so long as the contract under which the salary is payable does not prevent the authority from changing the salary after receiving a recommendation.

The council has not made a referral to the IRP relating to the salary payable to the Chief Executive.

Talent management

The council's key tool for talent management and succession planning is through the Succession Planning Toolkit which requires each management team to set out their planned arrangements to develop the workforce of the future. The Performance Appraisal process, as well as placing an emphasis on performance, seeks to put in place individual learning plans, developing the skills necessary not only for current roles, but with a future focus to support career development and succession planning.

The Learning, Training and Development team provide a very wide range of in-house and externally provided training and development options, to support the development of employees at every level in the organisation. The NPT Leadership and Development Pathway outlines opportunities for development from the point of induction. The comprehensive programme draws on ILM qualifications considered the de facto standard in terms of leadership and management qualification, designed in line with National Occupational Standards. In completing any of the qualifications listed from Levels 2 to 5, participants will also achieve a NVQ qualification at the same level. Our programmes include a Level 2 Diploma in Team Leading, aimed at first time supervisors / managers, and limited to those who have been in post for less

than 6 months, Level 3, Level 4, Level 5 Diplomas in Leadership and Management, aimed at first time, more experience first tier, Middle and Senior Managers, and then finally a Level 7 Diploma aimed at those with strategic responsibility.

A newly established Mission I'm Possible Programme launches in March 2025 aimed at aspiring first time managers.

The People and Organisational Development Service established the HR Talent Management Team in 2024, with a focus on the following priorities:

1. **Attracting the best candidates**- we are not sitting back and waiting for talent to come to us, we are taking the lead, maximising our reach on all our social media platforms, linking with schools, colleges, universities, and DWP, and diving into external employability projects to attract the skilled individuals we need.
2. **Developing career pathways** –working with managers to craft clear career pathways with targeted training initiatives, providing a roadmap to success for applicants in business critical roles to reach their full potential.
3. **Building a multi-generational workforce** – developing career pathways for young people, initiatives encouraging people to return to work, and encouraging older applicants to jobs within the Council.
4. **Enhance retention**– finding out why people stay working for the Council is important to us to enhance our employment offer, together with reviewing our exit questionnaire/interview arrangements as we need to understand why people leave so we can develop initiatives to make them want to stay.
5. **Internal career progression** – helping all of our employees reach their full potential, promote our culture of continuous professional development and cultivate the skills and knowledge of our existing employees

Performance related pay

The council expects high levels of performance from all employees and has implemented a Performance Appraisal Scheme to monitor, evaluate and manage employee performance on an ongoing basis.

No bonus or performance-related pay mechanism applies, although the maximum incremental pay point of the pay grades for the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors are only payable if there is a satisfactory outcome to their respective annual performance appraisal.

The Performance Management Policy and Procedure is available online or on request from the HR Team.

Support for lower paid staff

The council has committed to continuing discussions with Trade Unions with the objective of introducing the Living Wage on an affordable and sustainable basis when circumstances allow. The lowest spinal column point on the LGS pay spine, SCP 2, currently equates to £12.26 per hour which is just below the Real Living Wage Foundation's national living wage rate of £12.60 per hour.

In 2019 the council committed to working with Chwarae Teg as part of the Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme. Chwarae Teg initially supported the Council by carrying out a Gender Equality Audit of the council's policy and practices, and this has been used to inform the development of a Gender Equality Action Plan. Whilst Chwarae Teg have now sadly closed due to lack of funding, the council continues to deliver the Action Plan which includes specific actions to reduce the Council's Gender Pay Gap as well as actions to support low paid women. This is particularly important, as whilst the Council's overall gender profile is 71% female, 97% of those employed in the Council's lowest pay band, Grade 1, are female. In 2020 / 21 through the Fair Play Employer Scheme we were able to provide career development sessions for low paid employees, to gain skills and confidence, and in 2021 / 2022 we ran reward and recognition workshops for managers to help them engage and motivate employees.

In 2023 / 24 we worked with Chwarae Teg to launch a mentoring scheme, 'NPT Ment2Be' aimed at supporting low paid women in the workplace and the programme is going from strength to strength. The aim of this programme is to offer opportunities to staff who are interested in career progression in areas of the Council that they are not necessarily currently working in – and want to know more, or areas that they are working within, but they are unsure

where to go next in their careers. Whilst the scheme aims to support low paid women, access to the scheme will not be limited to low paid women, and will be an inclusive opportunity available to all employees to access. The Council was delighted to be the recipient of the Women Inspire Fair Play Employer Award for this work in the final ever Chwarae Teg Awards in October 2023.

The Council's Learning Training & Development Team provide confidential support to employees who want to improve their '**Essential Skills**', and can design a bespoke programme for employees which can include 'Calculating with Confidence', Literacy, 'Improve your Spelling', Report Writing, Form Filling, 'Develop your IT Skills', 'Internet and Email' and Communication Skills. Whilst not exclusively aimed at lower paid employees, this support is aimed at supporting employees to gain new confidence in their skills and abilities and in order to help them progress in their careers.

In a similar vein, the internal network of **Digital Partners (DPs)** aims to help employees gain digital confidence and overcome any barriers to getting digitally active in both the workplace and their personal lives. DPs complete the following training package:

- 'Digital Champions Essentials',
- 'Helping your colleagues with digital skills',
- 'Using your role to help customers get online',
- 'Working with people with learning difficulties and / or disabilities'
- 'Visual impairment and technology'
- 'Working with learners who are deaf or hard of hearing'
- 'Working with people with memory loss'
- 'Using the internet to help people live later life'

Exit Policy

Early Retirement, Voluntary Redundancy and Compulsory Redundancy

The council's Exit Policy for employees prior to reaching normal retirement age, is set out within its Early Retirement, Voluntary Redundancy and Compulsory Redundancy (ER / VR / CR) Scheme, in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006. Please refer to **Appendix F**.

Please note that a separate scheme operates for those employed on Teacher terms and conditions of employment.

Under the ER / VR / CR Scheme, all Early Retirement and Voluntary Redundancy expressions of interest are subject to a robust business case,

seeking to limit discretionary compensation to an affordable limit, as well as considering the costs of any consequential organisational / pay grade changes.

When calculating the value of a severance package, the following payments should be included:

- salary paid in lieu of notice
- lump sum redundancy / severance payment
- cost to the council of the strain on the pension fund arising from providing early access to an unreduced pension.

Any severance package in respect of early termination of employment that exceeds a threshold of £100,000 must be approved beforehand by full council.

The council has operated a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme during the financial year 2023 / 2024 and details of all employees who exited the council's employment under this Scheme can be found in the annual Statement of Accounts.

Re-employment

Employees who leave the council's employment on the grounds of early retirement (ER) or voluntary redundancy (VR) who are employed on LGS Grades 11, 12 and 13 or equivalent, will not normally be permitted to return to any paid temporary or permanent NPT council employment (which includes schools) or be re-engaged as an agency worker or on a consultancy basis. However, in exceptional circumstances, re-employment may be permitted if the "employing" Head of Service is able to provide a robust business case for doing so which is acceptable to the Director of Finance and Head of People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the relevant trade union/s.

All other employees who leave the council's employment on the grounds of early retirement (ER) or voluntary redundancy (VR) will not be permitted to return to employment with the council for a period of 12 months following their leaving date. However, again, and in exceptional circumstances, earlier re-employment may be permitted if the "employing" Head of Service is able to provide a robust business case for doing so which is acceptable to the Director of Finance and Head of People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the relevant trade union/s.

Flexible retirement

Employees are permitted to take flexible retirement in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme and the council's Flexible Retirement Scheme.

Off Payroll arrangements

Where the council is unable to recruit to a job under a contract of service, or where there is a need for specialist support for a specific project, the council will, where necessary, consider engaging individuals under a contract for service. These will be sourced through the relevant procurement process under the council's Contract Procedure Rules, ensuring the council is able to demonstrate value for money from competition in securing the relevant service.

Where the contract for service is to provide cover for a vacant post, in addition to ensuring adherence to Contract Procedure Rules, decision making in relation to the appointment will be in line with the council's rules in relation to appointments i.e. council will determine appointments at Director level, Special Appointments Committee will determine appointments at Head of Service level, and Heads of Service or those acting under their authority will determine appointments at Strategic Manager level and below.

With effect from April 2017, the UK Government introduced "Intermediaries Legislation", known as IR35, reforming tax rules for off-payroll working in the public sector and the council has implemented the new rules in line with the legislation.

Pay relativities in the council

The lowest paid employee is on £23,656 per annum, in accordance with the minimum spinal column point (SCP 2) of the NJC pay spine for Local Government Services employees. This excludes apprentices who are engaged on different arrangements with training being the main feature of the arrangement and it also excludes agency staff.

The highest paid employee is the Chief Executive and the pay band minimum is £145,356 rising to the pay band maximum of £159,687. The current post holder earns £145,356.

The median salary in the council is £30,060.

The pay multiple between the lowest paid (full time equivalent) employee and the Chief Executive is a ratio of 1:6.14 and the pay multiple between the lowest paid employee and average Chief Officer is a ratio of 1:4.26.

The pay multiple between the median full time equivalent earnings and the council's Chief Executive is a ratio of 1:4.84 where all council employees are taken into account and the same where employees appointed and managed by head teachers/Governing Bodies are excluded from the calculation, as required by the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

The multiple between the median full time equivalent earnings and the average council Chief Officer is 1:3.35 where all council employees are taken into account and the same where employees appointed and managed by head teachers/Governing Bodies are excluded from the calculation, as required by the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

APPENDIX A

Local Government Services Employees Salary Scale w.e.f. 1st April 2024

<u>GRADE 1</u>	<u>1</u>	-	<u>GRADE 8</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>36,124</u>
	<u>2</u>	<u>23,656</u>		<u>27</u>	<u>37,035</u>
<u>GRADE 2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>23,656</u>		<u>28</u>	<u>37,938</u>
	<u>3</u>	<u>24,027</u>		<u>29</u>	<u>38,626</u>
<u>GRADE 3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>24,027</u>		<u>30</u>	<u>39,513</u>
	<u>4</u>	<u>24,404</u>		<u>GRADE 9</u>	<u>30</u>
	<u>5</u>	<u>24,790</u>		<u>31</u>	<u>40,476</u>
	<u>6</u>	<u>25,183</u>		<u>32</u>	<u>41,511</u>
<u>GRADE 4</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>25,584</u>		<u>33</u>	<u>42,708</u>
	<u>8</u>	<u>25,992</u>		<u>34</u>	<u>43,693</u>
	<u>9</u>	<u>26,409</u>	<u>GRADE 10</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>43,693</u>
	<u>10</u>	<u>26,835</u>		<u>35</u>	<u>44,711</u>
<u>GRADE 5</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>27,269</u>		<u>36</u>	<u>45,718</u>
	<u>12</u>	<u>27,711</u>		<u>37</u>	<u>46,731</u>
	<u>14</u>	<u>28,624</u>	<u>GRADE 11</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>47,754</u>
	<u>15</u>	<u>29,093</u>		<u>39</u>	<u>48,710</u>
	<u>17</u>	<u>30,060</u>		<u>40</u>	<u>49,764</u>
	<u>17</u>	<u>30,060</u>		<u>41</u>	<u>50,788</u>
<u>GRADE 6</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>30,559</u>	<u>GRADE 12</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>50,788</u>
	<u>19</u>	<u>31,067</u>		<u>42</u>	<u>51,802</u>
	<u>20</u>	<u>31,586</u>		<u>43</u>	<u>52,805</u>
	<u>21</u>	<u>32,115</u>		<u>GRADE 13</u>	<u>44</u>
	<u>22</u>	<u>32,654</u>		<u>45</u>	<u>55,109</u>
	<u>22</u>	<u>32,654</u>		<u>46</u>	<u>56,305</u>
<u>GRADE 7</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>33,366</u>			
	<u>24</u>	<u>34,314</u>	<u>Sleeping-in</u>	<u>£41.78</u>	
	<u>25</u>	<u>35,235</u>			
	<u>26</u>	<u>36,124</u>			

JNC Chief Executive and Chief Officers Pay GradesEffective 1st April 2024

CHIEF EXECUTIVE				
Point 1	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5*
£145,356	£148,939	£152,522	£156,104	£159,687

* subject to performance

CORPORATE DIRECTOR				
Point 1	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5*
£120,313	£120,891	£123,787	£126,686	£129,585

* subject to performance

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE				
Point 1	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5
£97,999	£100,461	£102,922	£105,390	£107,843

HEAD OF SERVICE				
Point 1	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5
£84,015	£86,063	£88,108	£90,159	£92,207

STRATEGIC MANAGER				
Point 1	Point 2	Point 3	Point 4	Point 5
£62,349	£63,908	£65,468	£67,025	£68,585

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**NATIONAL PAY GRADES – SOULBURY****EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS - SCALE A**

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1.	42,422
2.	44,474
3.	46,525
4.	48,575
5.	50,627
6.	52,678
7.	54,609
8.	56,540
9.	58,348
10.	60,160
11.	61,848
12.	62,540*
13.	63,836*
14.	65,120*

Notes:

1. Pay scales to consist of 6 consecutive points, based on the duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit, retain and motivate staff.
2. *Extension to scale to accommodate structured professional assessment points.

SENIOR & PRINCIPAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS – SCALE B

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1.	52,678
2.	54,609
3.	56,540
4.	58,348
5.	60,160

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
6.	61,848*
7.	62,540
8.	63,836
9.	65,120
10.	66,425
11.	67,706
12.	69,010
13.	70,337
14.	71,621
15.	72,966
16.	74,297
17.	75,637**
18.	76,976**
19.	80,055**
20.	83,257**
21.	86,587**

Notes:

Salary scales to consist of not more than four consecutive points based on the duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit retain and motivate staff.

*Normal minimum point for the principal educational psychologist undertaking the full range of duties at this level.

**Extension to range to accommodate discretionary scale points and structured professional assessments

TRAINEE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1	
2	29,872
3	31,770
4	33,673
5	35,572
6	37,473

ASSISTANT EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1	
2	35,228
3	36,531
4	37,828
	39,341

YOUNG PEOPLE’S / COMMUNITY SERVICE MANAGERS

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1	41,972
2	43,281
3	44,587
4	45,922*
5	47,278
6	48,601
7	49,953**
8	51,490
9	52,338
10	53,648
11	54,950
12	56,255
13	57,550
14	58,858
15	60,167
16	61,481
17	62,800
18	64,113
19	65,417
20	66,749***
21	68,106***

22	69,496***
23	70,912***
24	72,358***

Notes:

The minimum Youth and Community Service Officers' scale is 4 points. Other salary scales to consist of not more than four consecutive points based on duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit retain and motivate staff.

* normal minimum point for senior youth and community officers undertaking the full range of duties at this level

** normal minimum point for principal youth and community service officer undertaking the full range of duties at this level

*** extension to range to accommodate discretionary scale points and structured professional assessments.

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROFESSIONALS (EIPs)

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
1	40,540
2	41,920
3	43,224
4	44,545
5	45,857
6	47,170
7	48,550
8	49,878*
9	51,425
10	52,805
11	54,166
12	55,484
13	56,976**
14	58,308
15	59,777
16	61,106
17	62,440

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
18	63,748
19	65,097
20	65,794***
21	67,133
22	68,301
23	69,586
24	70,739
25	71,971
26	73,173
27	74,403
28	75,650
29	76,899
30	78,146
31	79,382
32	80,637
33	81,894
34	83,180
35	84,465
36	85,784
37	87,083
38	88,396
39	89,691
40	90,985
41	92,285
42	93,585
43	94,883
44	96,189
45	97,490
46	98,794
47	100,102

SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.23
48	101,399
49	102,700
50	104,004
51	108,164****
52	112,491****

Notes: Salary scales to consist of not more than four consecutive points, based on the duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit and motivate staff.

- * normal minimum point for EIP undertaking the full range of duties at this level
- ** normal minimum point for senior EIP undertaking the full range of duties at this level
- *** normal minimum point for leading EIP undertaking the full range of duties at this level
- **** extension to range to accommodate structured professional assessments.

NATIONAL PAY GRADES – JNC YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORKERS

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKER RANGE	
SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.24
5	£24,786
6	£25,115
7	£25,411
8	£26,089
9	£26,954
10	£27,631
11	£28,724
12	£29,791
13	£30,896
14	£32,040
15	£32,818
16	£33,631
17	£34,431

PROFESSIONAL RANGE	
SPINE POINT	Pay – with effect from 01.09.24
13	£30,896
14	£32,040
15	£32,818
16	£33,631
17	£34,431
18	£35,236
19	£36,035
20	£36,837
21	£37,737
22	£38,757
23	£39,751
24	£40,749
25	£41,755
26	£42,760
27	£43,765
28	£44,783
29	£45,792
30	£46,803
31	£47,485
32	£48,606

All Employee Groups - Main Conditions of Service

ANNUAL LEAVE (pro rata for part time employees)	
❖ Chief Executive ❖ Chief Officers	34 days pa (includes one day allocated at Christmas)
❖ Local Government Services	33 days after 5 years service; 26 days pa initially (includes one day allocated at Christmas)
❖ Soulbury	32 days after 5 years service; 25 days pa initially (includes one day allocated at Christmas)
❖ Youth & Community Workers	35 days after 5 years service; 30 days pa initially (includes one day allocated at Christmas)
HOURS OF WORK	
❖ Chief Executive ❖ Chief Officers	Minimum of 37 hours per week, together with additional evening, weekend and bank holiday working as required
❖ Local Government Services ❖ Soulbury ❖ Youth & Community Workers	Standard working week is 37 hours
OVERTIME PAYMENTS	
❖ Chief Executive	

❖ Chief Officers	None payable
❖ Soulbury	
❖ Local Government Services	Time plus 30% for weekdays and weekends; double time on Bank Holidays, except Christmas Day which is triple time
❖ Youth and Community Workers	Time plus 30% for weekdays and weekends; double time on Bank Holidays
WEEKEND WORKING PAYMENTS	
❖ Chief Executive	
❖ Chief Officers	
❖ Soulbury	None payable
❖ Youth & Community Workers	
❖ Local Government Services	Time plus 30%
SICK PAY SCHEME	
❖ Chief Executive	
❖ Chief Officers	
❖ Local Government Services	
❖ Soulbury	
❖ Youth & Community Workers	1 month's full pay at commencement of employment, increasing year on year, after 5 years service, to up to 6 months at full pay, followed by up to 6 months at half pay

ER/VR/CR Scheme



Human Resources

APPROVED BY

Personnel
Committee

DATE

15/10/2018

EDITION/VERSION

3

REVIEW DATE

31/03/2025

Contents

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1. SCOPE

This Scheme is applicable to all NPT Council employees, excluding Teachers.

2. VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY (VR)

The Council may, from time to time, in accordance with the needs of the service and within a specified period, invite expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy (VR) as part of its Workforce Strategy to reduce employee costs. It is unlikely that all volunteers will be allowed to leave the Council's employment under this Scheme as the Council will have an ongoing need to retain employees with the necessary skills and competencies to both deliver and transform a range of services.

The Council will consider "bumped" redundancies, where appropriate. In these circumstances, employees may apply for voluntary redundancy, thereby making available their post for employees with transferable skills whose job has or will become redundant and who do not wish to leave the employment of the Council. Such "bumping" of a redundancy will be considered across service areas, with appropriate funding arrangements being agreed by the Heads of Service or Head teachers involved.

All VR expressions of interest will be considered at management's sole discretion, based on a robust business case (including the cost of any consequential organisational/pay grade changes). All VR expressions of interest will need to be authorised by the relevant Head of Service and Directorate Management Team.

The Council's grievance procedure will not apply in the case of VR, but the Head of People and Organisational Development has an advisory and monitoring role in this respect.

3. EARLY RETIREMENT (ER)

Applications for Early Retirement (ER), where a job loss does not take place, will be granted in exceptional circumstances only, and on the basis of "in the interests of efficiency of the service" (due to the range of alternative, and usually more cost-effective, measures available to manage capability issues). All such ER decisions will be subject to a robust business case (including the cost of any consequential organisational/pay grade changes) being approved by the relevant Head of Service and Directorate Management Team, or Head teacher and School Governing Body, as appropriate.

The Council's grievance procedure will not apply in the case of ER, but the Head of People and Organisational Development has an advisory and monitoring role in this respect.

4. FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

The Council's Flexible Retirement Policy will remain available to eligible employees alongside this ER/VR/CR Scheme.

5. COMPULSORY REDUNDANCY (CR)

It is the Council's policy to prevent compulsory redundancies from arising to the greatest extent possible. However, where unavoidable, selection for compulsory redundancy (CR) will take place in accordance with relevant management of change and associated employment policies.

6. SCHEME PAYMENTS, COSTS AND FUNDING (ER/VR/CR)

VR and CR Payments

Subject to **the total cost to the Council of early release of pension and/or severance payment being limited to the equivalent of 52 weeks' pay** for the employee concerned (see Note 1), the following provisions will apply in cases of Voluntary Redundancy (VR) and Compulsory Redundancy (CR):

early release of pension for "qualifying" employees (see Note 2);

lump sum **statutory redundancy payment** (see Note 3), using the 30 week Statutory Redundancy table (Appendix A);

Lump sum **discretionary compensation payment**, using the Council's 45 week table (Appendix B), (reduced by the statutory redundancy payment referred to above).

Where the total cost of early access to pension and the cost of statutory redundancy payments equates to more than 52 weeks' pay, the payback period may be extended "up to 104 weeks", **but subject to only early access to pension plus statutory redundancy pay being applicable (i.e. no discretionary severance payment)**

ER Payments

Subject to **the total cost to the Council of early release of pension being limited to the equivalent of 52 weeks' pay** (see Note 1), the following will apply in cases of Early Retirement (ER): Early release of pension for "qualifying" employees (see Note 2).

ER, VR and CR Funding

Early retirement, statutory redundancy and discretionary compensation payment costs will all be met by the employing Directorate, with the exception of school Governing Bodies where the costs will be met from a separately identified element of schools' delegated budgets.

Any severance package in respect of early termination of employment that exceeds a threshold of £100,000 must be approved beforehand by Full Council.

7. POST EMPLOYMENT NOTICE PAY (PENP)

With effect from 6th April 2018, the HMRC has changed the way employers must deal with termination payments.

The changes introduce the concept of post-employment notice pay (PENP), which represents the amount of basic pay the employee will not receive because their employment was terminated without full notice being given. PENP is calculated by applying a formula for the total amount of the payment, or benefits paid in connection with the termination of employment. This element of the payment will be subject to tax and National Insurance Contributions (NICs). Any remaining balance of the termination payment, which is not a PENP may be included within the overall £30,000 exemption for tax purposes and is free from NICs.

What this means for employees considering taking VR is if the contractual notice is worked, then no tax and national insurance would be deducted from the VR payment. However, if the contractual notice period is not worked then tax and national insurance would be deducted from the VR payment, at an amount depending on the termination date and the date the VR acceptance is signed.

This change applies to payments, or benefits received on, or after, 6 April 2018 in circumstances where the employment also ended on, or after, 6 April 2018.

Further guidance is available by visiting:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-rules-for-taxation-of-termination-payments>

7. OTHER ER/VR/CR PROVISIONS

In cases of **compulsory redundancy (CR)**, there will be a presumption that employees will continue to be employed during the statutory notice period, particularly as this will maximise the prospects of potential redeployment. Employees in this situation must arrange to take any outstanding annual leave during the notice period but, if not practicable and certified accordingly by the relevant Head of Service, an employee will be paid for any untaken annual leave which remains outstanding on expiry of the notice period. Any annual leave entitlement exceeded will be recovered from pay. Exceptionally, pay in lieu of notice, which is subject to tax and National Insurance, may be granted.

Employees leaving the Council's employment on the grounds of **ER or VR** will do so on the basis of a **mutually agreed termination date, with no notice period being applicable on either side** and with **no extra payment being made** for any outstanding holidays, time off in lieu or flexi leave.

Employees who leave the Council's employment on the grounds of early retirement (ER) or voluntary redundancy (VR) who are employed on LGS Grades 11, 12 and 13 or equivalent, will not normally not be permitted to return to any paid temporary or permanent NPT Council employment (which includes schools) or be re-engaged as an agency worker or on a consultancy basis. However, in exceptional circumstances, re-employment may be permitted if the "employing" Head of Service is able to provide a robust business case for doing so which is acceptable to the Chief Finance Officer and Head of People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the relevant trade union/s.

All other employees who leave the Council's employment on the grounds of early retirement (ER) or voluntary redundancy (VR) will not be permitted to return to employment with the Council for a period of 12 months following their leaving date. However, in exceptional circumstances, earlier re-employment may be permitted if the "employing" Head of Service is able to provide a robust business case for doing so which is acceptable to the Chief Finance Officer and Head of People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the relevant trade union/s.

8. NOTES

Note 1: All employees who are made redundant are entitled to a statutory redundancy payment (see Note 3 below).

"Qualifying" employees are also entitled to early release of pension if their employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy (or in the interest of efficiency of the service). Statutory redundancy payments may be enhanced through the payment of discretionary compensation payments and will be calculated having regard to the total cost of:

- (a) early release of pension,
- (b) statutory redundancy payments and
- (c) discretionary compensation payments not exceeding - in total – the equivalent of 52 weeks' pay for the employee concerned.

For example, where an employee's entitlement under the 45 week table takes the total cost above the value of his/her annual pay, the number of weeks of redundancy and/or discretionary compensation payments and/or the weekly pay calculator rate will be adjusted downwards as necessary.

The definition of a "week's pay" will be in accordance with statutory provisions for redundancy pay calculation purposes.

In summary, this will be the gross amount payable for a week's work in accordance with the employee's contract of employment as applicable on the "calculation date", which will be the pay period immediately preceding the first day of his/her notice period. If an employee's remuneration is variable, a 12 weekly average will be calculated. Sections 220 to 229 and Section 234 of ERA 1996 further define the calculation of a "week's pay".

Note 2: "Qualifying" generally means aged 55 years, or over, with 3 months' membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The definition of "qualifying" is covered by LGPS Regulations and may change as a result of future legislative changes.

Note 3: To use the statutory redundancy table in Appendix A, firstly look up the employee's age and number of years' continuous service with the Council (& its predecessor authorities). Where the two intersect on the table, this is the number of weeks' pay which becomes payable. The "week's pay" to be used to calculate the lump sum statutory redundancy payment will be in accordance with statutory provisions (maximum of £508 per week with effect from 6th April 2018).

STATUTORY REDUNDANCY TABLE

Age	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	1	1½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	1	1½	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	1	1½	2	2½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	1	1½	2	2½	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	2	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	2	3	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	2	3	4	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	2	3	4	5	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	2	3	4	5	6	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	-	-	-	-	-	-
30	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	-	-	-	-	-
31	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	-	-	-	-
32	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	-	-	-
33	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	-	-
34	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	-
35	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17
37	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½
38	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16½	17	17½	18
39	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17½	18	18½
40	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18½	19
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	19½
42	2½	3½	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½
43	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
44	3	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½
45	3	4½	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
46	3	4½	6	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½
47	3	4½	6	7½	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
48	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½
49	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
50	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½
51	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
52	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½
53	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
54	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½
55	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
56	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	27½
57	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25	26	27	28
58	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	26½	27½	28½
59	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28	29
60	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	29½
61+	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	30

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills URN 09/1371

45 WEEK DISCRETIONARY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS TABLE

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	1.50																		
18	1.50	2.25																	
19	1.50	2.25	3.00																
20	1.50	2.25	3.00	3.75															
21	1.50	2.25	3.00	3.75	4.50														
22	1.50	2.25	3.00	3.75	4.50	5.25													
23	2.25	3.00	3.75	4.50	5.25	6.00	6.75												
24	3.00	3.75	4.50	5.25	6.00	6.75	7.50	8.25											
25	3.00	4.50	5.25	6.00	6.75	7.50	8.25	9.00	9.75										
26	3.00	4.50	6.00	6.75	7.50	8.25	9.00	9.75	10.50	11.25									
27	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	8.25	9.00	9.75	10.50	11.25	12.00	12.75								
28	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	9.75	10.50	11.25	12.00	12.75	13.50	14.25							
29	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	11.25	12.00	12.75	13.50	14.25	15.00	15.75						
30	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	12.75	13.50	14.25	15.00	15.75	16.50	17.25					
31	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	14.25	15.00	15.75	16.50	17.25	18.00	18.75				
32	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	15.75	16.50	17.25	18.00	18.75	19.50	20.25			
33	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	17.25	18.00	18.75	19.50	20.25	21.00	21.75		
34	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	18.75	19.50	20.25	21.00	21.75	22.50	23.25	
35	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	20.25	21.00	21.75	22.50	23.25	24.00	24.75
36	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	21.75	22.50	23.25	24.00	24.75	25.50
37	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	23.25	24.00	24.75	25.50	26.25
38	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	24.75	25.50	26.25	27.00
39	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	26.25	27.00	27.75
40	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	27.75	28.50
41	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	29.25
42	3.75	5.25	6.75	8.25	9.75	11.25	12.75	14.25	15.75	17.25	18.75	20.25	21.75	23.25	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75
43	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50
44	4.50	6.75	8.25	9.75	11.25	12.75	14.25	15.75	17.25	18.75	20.25	21.75	23.25	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75	32.25
45	4.50	6.75	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00
46	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	12.75	14.25	15.75	17.25	18.75	20.25	21.75	23.25	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75	32.25	33.75
47	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00	34.50
48	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	17.25	18.75	20.25	21.75	23.25	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75	32.25	33.75	35.25
49	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	19.50	21.00	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00	34.50	36.00
50	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	21.75	23.25	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75	32.25	33.75	35.25	36.75
51	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.00	25.50	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00	34.50	36.00	37.50
52	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	26.25	27.75	29.25	30.75	32.25	33.75	35.25	36.75	38.25
53	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	28.50	30.00	31.50	33.00	34.50	36.00	37.50	39.00
54	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	30.75	32.25	33.75	35.25	36.75	38.25	39.75
55	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.00	34.50	36.00	37.50	39.00	40.50
56	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	35.25	36.75	38.25	39.75	41.25
57	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	37.50	39.00	40.50	42.00
58	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	39.75	41.25	42.75
59	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.00	43.50
60	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.75	44.25
61	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.75	45.00
62	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.75	45.00
63	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.75	45.00
64	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.75	27.00	29.25	31.50	33.75	36.00	38.25	40.50	42.75	45.00

Business Case – Voluntary Redundancy

Human Resources



APPENDIX C

TO BE COMPLETED BY MANAGEMENT

BUSINESS CASE – VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY	
Part A – Introduction	
<p>1. All decisions concerning voluntary redundancy are subject to a business case being approved by the “employing” Head of Service. The Head of People and Organisational Development has an advisory and monitoring role.</p> <p>2. Once Parts B-E have been completed, this form should be forwarded to your designated HR Officer.</p> <p>3. All requests for Pensions estimates must be sent to the City & County of Swansea Pension Section by HR/Payroll, not by the individual or his/her line manager</p>	
Part B – Employee Details	
Full Name	
Job Title and Workplace	
Directorate	
National Insurance Number	
Post Reference Number	
Payroll Number	
Date of Birth	
Proposed Leaving Date	
Part C – Further Required Information	
<p>Please explain how it is proposed that the service area concerned will operate in future if this employee (and any other(s)) leaves the Council’s employment in accordance with this Scheme. Full supporting details to be attached.</p>	

If this business case is supported, will the person qualify for the early payment of their pension benefits? (see Note 2 of Transitional VR Scheme)	Yes		No	
Leaving Reason Please tick the relevant box below to confirm which Leaving Reason this employee's employment will be terminated on:-				
VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY	Yes		No	
VR – WITH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT	Yes		No	
VR – BUMPED REDUNDANCY (Please state which post/grade on structure is being deleted):	Yes		No	
VR – BUMPED REDUNDANCY WITH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (Please state which post/grade on structure is being deleted)	Yes		No	
Part D - Declaration				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have not made, and will not make, an agreement with this employee concerning re-employment by the Council in any paid capacity. 2. My support for this application is not as a result of any capability or disciplinary issues or concerns in relation to this employee 3. There are no outstanding concerns or formal processes regarding this employee's ability to attend work on a regular basis; 4. The savings which will accrue from implementation of this business case cannot be achieved in a different way through the non-filling of vacancies, or known leavers, and no suitable alternative employment is available within the Council for this employee; 5. This business case is supported by the relevant Directorate Management Team, as appropriate, and has been recorded accordingly. 				
Signed Head of Service		Date		
If you cannot give this declaration, please state the reason below:				

Part E – Fixed Term or Temporary Employees			
Is the employee engaged on a temporary or fixed term contract?	Yes		No
If yes, please give start and end dates and state whether grant-funded.	Start Date:		End Date:
Part F - Value of 52 weeks' pay – HR to complete from database			
Value of 52 weeks' pay is	£		
Part G – Costs for Voluntary Redundancy – HR to complete from database			
Cost Centre Code			
Cost of Early Release of Pension	£		
Statutory Redundancy Payment	£		
Discretionary Compensation payment (reduced by (2) above)	£		
Total Cost	£		
<p>The total cost under (G) must not exceed the cost under (F).</p> <p>If (G) exceeds (F) the Discretionary Compensation payment must be reduced.</p>			
<p>****where the total cost of early access to pension and the cost of statutory redundancy payments equates to more than 52 weeks' pay, the payback period may be extended "up to 104 weeks", but subject to only early access to pension plus statutory redundancy pay being applicable (i.e. no discretionary severance payment) If the lump sum Discretionary Compensation payment becomes zero, and (G) is still larger than (F), the weekly rate will be reduced until (G) = (F) subject to the £508 per week provision not being contravened.</p> <p>If this condition still cannot be met, the application for voluntary redundancy will be refused.</p>			
Part I – Business Case Approval			
Head of Service (or Director, where a Head of Service is the subject of this approval)			
Approved			Not Approved
Signed		Date	

ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKLIST FOR HR	
Employee expresses an interest in voluntary redundancy	
Head of Service has agreed that the post can be “lost”	
HR Officer updates VR database and sends request to Payroll	
Payroll Officer emails request/s for estimates of benefits to Pension Section (if over 55)	
Estimate of Benefits received from Pension Section	
Copy of Estimate given to employee (and Line Manager if necessary). Retain one copy on file.	
Outcome discussed with employee and he/she confirms they wish to leave on grounds of VR	
Business Case to be completed by HR and Head of Service, for signature	
Head of Service returns Business Case signed and HR Officer issues letter offering VR	
HR Officer to remind Line Manager to make suitable arrangements about the employee’s leaving date, outstanding annual leave etc.	
HR Officer to “terminate” employee on Vision	
HR Officer to send memo to Pensions and Payroll regarding termination. Include a copy of the offer letter. Pensions to process termination.	
Copy of all documents retained on iDocs	
HR Officer to complete Post Details Form with Post Reference, Number of Hours and JEID and discuss with Workforce Information Team to ensure correct post is being disestablished/bumped redundancy/restructure	

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Approval of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2025 / 2026
Service Area: All Council Employees.
Directorate: All

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				The approval of the Statement does not have an impact on protected characteristics, as it simply reflects pay decisions already made, and which will have been subject to a full impact assessment. The Statement for 2025 / 2026 does not introduce any changes to pay or conditions of service.
Disability		X				
Gender Reassignment		X				
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				
Race		X				
Religion/Belief		X				
Sex		X				
Sexual orientation		X				

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		X				
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		X				The Statement, once approved by Members, will be translated into Welsh and made publicly available in Welsh.

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				
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		X				

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			N/A
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives			N/A
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative			N/A
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions			N/A
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse			N/A

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

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	X
Reasons for this conclusion	
<p>A full impact is not required as there is no impact on any protected group as a result of this report – the Pay Policy Statement reflects pay decision already taken, and is simply a statement summarising those decisions. It also has no negative impact on bio-diversity or the Welsh Language. However, it should be noted that, in determining pay and remuneration, the Council complies with relevant employment legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, the Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002, Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. The Council has sought to ensure that there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that pay differentials can be objectively justified primarily through the use of an equality proofed job evaluation mechanism which directly relates basic pay to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of each job role.</p>	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

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	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by				
Signed off by	Sheenagh Rees	Head of People & OD		31 st January 2025

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