



Neath Port Talbot Council **Corporate Plan** 2024/2027

“Working towards a more prosperous, fairer and greener NPT”



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

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Foreword

In March 2022, the council published a new corporate plan 'Recover, Reset, Renew'.

The Plan drew on extensive engagement with residents, businesses, our workforce and partners, as well as other insights and intelligence. It provided a clear framework for the council to recover from the disruption that had occurred during the pandemic period. It also acknowledged the ongoing work that the council was doing to support the wider recovery effort – for example, administering support to businesses and community organisations on behalf of the governments; whilst also continuing to support the NHS in delivering population-wide vaccine and other public health programmes.

A lot has changed in two years.

Soon after Recover, Reset, Renew was published we experienced the impacts of the severe, additional economic shocks that arose from the Russian Government's illegal war in Ukraine and the more recent conflict in the Middle East. These world events drove very high levels of inflation and energy prices and compounded the cost of living crisis that has pushed many more of our residents and businesses into financial hardship. We have also seen supply chain disruptions arising from BREXIT which have affected contract prices and delivery timescales; structural changes in the labour market making it more difficult to attract and retain a sufficient workforce; welcomed unprecedented levels of investor interest which has the potential to transform the local economy over the medium to long term; and we have also implemented a wide range of new policy initiatives introduced by the council elected in 2022 and the Welsh Government.

These changes have had, and continue to have, a profound impact on our organisation.

Foreword (continued)

At the time of writing this Plan, there are more people seeking help from social services; more people presenting as homeless; and more children needing extra help in school and in travelling to school. However, the funding made available by the UK and Welsh governments for these functions in the last two years has fallen significantly short of what we need to respond to our communities. Conversely, we have secured a large amount of investment funding under the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda to help regenerate our communities and we have dealt with major projects that have the potential to grow a large number of sustainable jobs into future years, including the Freeport status for the port of Port Talbot. The announcement by Tata Steel UK Ltd of a decarbonisation programme that will see the end of traditional steel making at Port Talbot, and a move to new technologies, adds a further strategic dimension to this landscape.

As we look forward to the remaining three years of this local government term, we have taken the opportunity to take stock and to reset the council's priorities in light of the new context we are working within. Whilst there is no doubt that there are many challenges in front of us, we remain optimistic and ambitious for our county borough. This refreshed Corporate Plan describes the next set of actions we believe we need to take to balance the needs of our communities in the present, with the opportunities we will need to grasp if we are to create a more prosperous, fairer and greener future for everyone over the long term.

**Cllr S K Hunt ,
Leader of Council**



**Mrs K Jones,
Chief Executive**



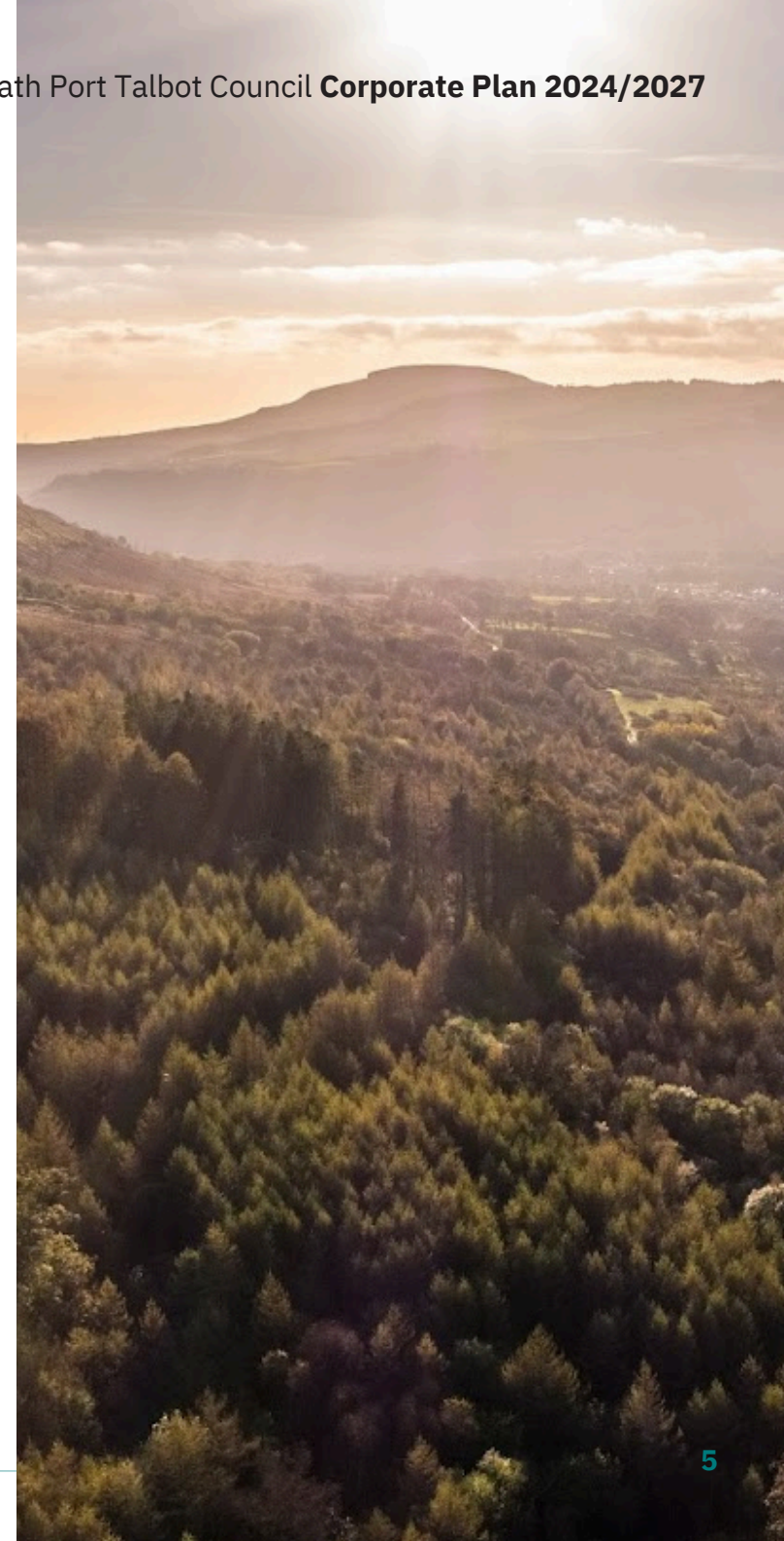
Our Current Situation

➤ Our Financial Resources

The public sector has faced a sustained period of real term reductions in funding levels for over ten years with Neath Port Talbot Council securing reductions in the revenue budget in excess of £100m in real terms since 2008. As well as finding genuine efficiencies and economies in the cost of services and functions (as has been the case in other councils) the scale of austerity measures imposed by the UK Government has also seen deep cuts in services and jobs, particularly in those services delivered under discretionary powers.

Over the last two financial years – 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 – we have faced additional costs of circa £70 million but have received just £26.9 million from the Welsh Government to meet these additional revenue budget pressures. To set a balanced budget, something we are legally obliged to do, we have delivered over £23 million of efficiency, income and other budget measures, with the balance of funding met through council tax. We have achieved this whilst protecting the services people rely upon and safeguarding jobs.

We do not have certainty of funding for future years and indications are that Welsh Government will be freezing or potentially reducing funding for local government in the financial year 2025/2026. At a time when there are more people needing help and support and the cost of goods and services is still increasing, this will impact jobs and services and the council will need to prioritise further. Early soundings from residents will be crucial to inform decisions in the next budget round.



Our Current Situation

➤ Our Financial Resources (continued)

In terms of investment, the council has secured additional, large sums of money through the Levelling Up programme and the Shared Prosperity Fund and will focus on delivering these programmes. A bid submitted to both the Welsh and UK governments for Freeport status (with partners from Associated British Ports, Port of Milford Haven and Pembrokeshire County Council) was successful and we are now working through the detailed business case stages to secure seed capital of £25 million for the Freeport area and an estimated £0.5 billion of retained business rates that can be used to improve infrastructure to facilitate and enable economic growth over the next 25 years.

The council has also led the development of a Local Economic Action Plan (LEAP) on behalf of the Tata Transition Board that will inform decisions as to how the £100 million available to the Board will be spent. The LEAP identifies a significant impact on the local and regional economy which will require concerted action on the part of government, the company and wider stakeholders over the next 10 or more years. In the short term there will need to be a significant effort to support people affected by job losses at the plant and in the wider supply chain.

The council will continue to seek out funding to improve local infrastructure, for example to extend the 21st Century Schools programme. However, at the time of writing funds are generally geared towards new facilities and there is a growing concern about the condition of legacy infrastructure including roads; other highways structures; and buildings, with inadequate funds available to maintain and repair infrastructure.

The overall financial context is set to be very challenging indeed. On the current trajectory the council will need to plan to be a smaller organisation, focused on fewer things and working in a very different way.

Our Current Situation

➤ Our People

In common with other parts of the UK, the pandemic period has disrupted the world of work across Neath Port Talbot and the council has experienced this too.

The labour market has become more competitive with employers needing to adopt increasingly creative approaches to recruitment and retention practices. An early action in our recovery plan was to create a Future of Work Strategy. A priority within that Strategy was to focus on our employment offer and the way in which we promote this offer to the labour market and our existing workforce. The Strategy has had a good measure of success although more remains to be done to recruit to some jobs in our organisation that remain hard to fill.

We are continuing to build on the work we have started, with the aim of becoming an employer of choice. We have a really good employment offer and are proud of the number of local people who choose to come and work with us. We are particularly proud to have been externally recognised by former equality body Chwarae Teg for the work we have done in advancing equality of opportunity; by Welsh Government for our social partnership arrangements with trade union partners; and by the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) for the way we are approaching our people and organisational development work.

Developing and supporting our people will continue to be a central part of the work we will be doing over the remainder of this local government term. We firmly believe that ultimately people make the difference. Our ability to achieve our purpose, vision and values rests on our ability to support people to achieve their potential.



Our Current Situation

➤ Basing actions on what matters to residents, businesses and wider stakeholders

We launched a public engagement exercise ‘Let’s Talk’ to inform our priorities as we emerged from the pandemic period.

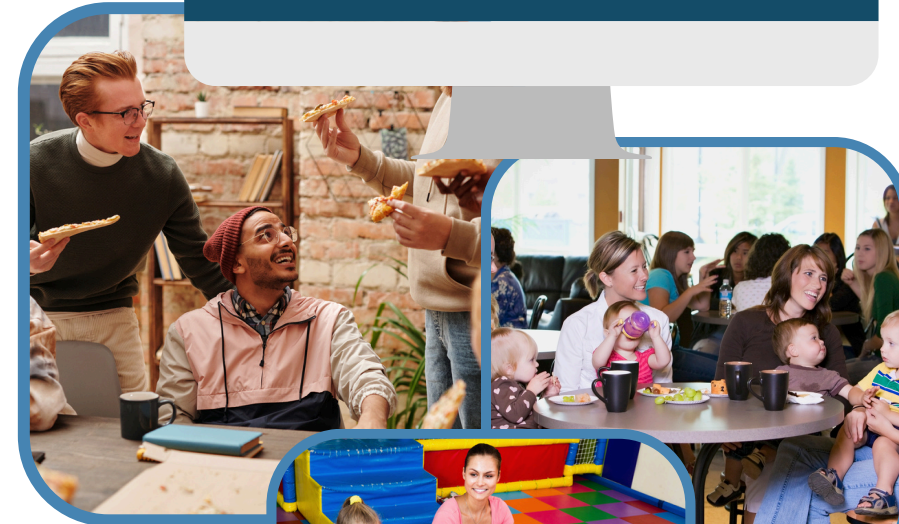
We heard from thousands of people as part of that work, including people from different parts of the county borough and people from all sorts of backgrounds.

We repeated that exercise during the summer of 2023 to ensure we had a good understanding of what matters to people now and to have clear insight about what has changed in people’s lives since we did the original exercise back in 2021/2022.

During the initial Let’s Talk campaign it was clear that the main focus for our residents, community organisations and businesses was to keep friends, family and customers safe whilst continuing to ease restrictions and return to day to day living. Whilst these are still important to people, when asked ‘what matters to you for the future’ in the 2023 Let’s Keep Talking campaign the responses included protecting our local economy, our environment and health and well-being.

We have used the feedback we gathered through this new exercise in developing the priorities set out in this Corporate Plan.

The main themes are summarised across the following pages.



As part of the **Let's Keep Talking** campaign we asked:

The ten responses most frequently mentioned were as follows:

“ What matters to you now ”

1 “ Friends and family (including pets) ”

2 “ Leisure activities / recreational facilities ”

3 “ Education / Libraries / schools ”

4 “ Health & well-being ”

5 “ Keeping local area clean ”

6 “ Cost of living /inflation ”

7 “ Environmental issues ”

8 “ A good local economy / local area/town centre ”

9 “ Public Transport ”

10 “ Standard of living/quality of life ”

As part of the **Let's Keep Talking** campaign we asked:

The ten responses most frequently mentioned were as follows:

“What matters to you in future”

1 “Job / Job opportunities”

2 “Friends, family and pets”

3 “Education / libraries / schools”

4 “Leisure activities /recreational facilities”

7 “Environmental issues”

8 “Cost of living / inflation”

9 “A good local economy / local area / town centre”

5 “Standard of living / quality of life”

6 “Health & well-being”

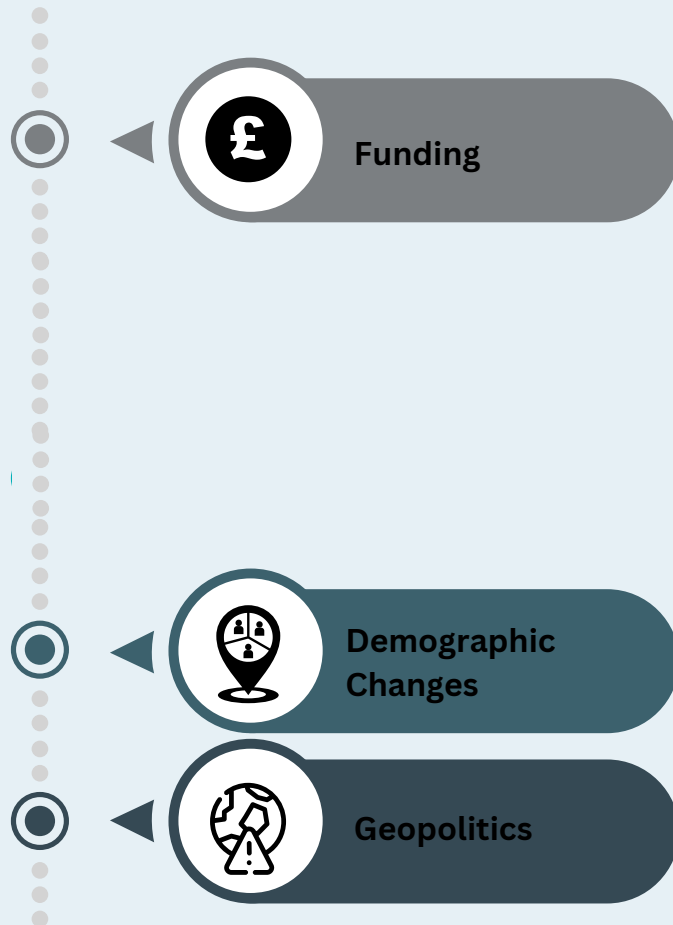
10 “Keeping local area clean / public transport”

A Changing World - Megatrends

Increasingly, world events are also shaping our priorities and responses. There are a number of other factors that we have taken into account in our forward planning. These include:



A Changing World - Megatrends

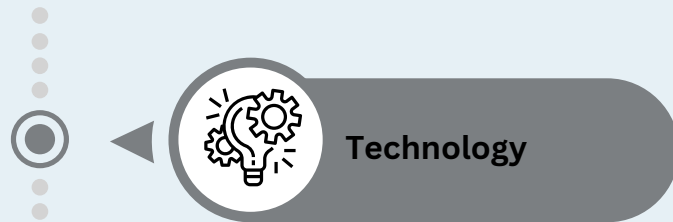


- The UK government has not made available sufficient additional funding to respond to the additional demand and cost pressures being experienced across all councils.
- In Wales, the government is prioritising investment in health and aspects of transport. Whilst providing some protection to front line services delivered by councils, settlements are significantly short of what is needed to ensure sustainability.
- There are increasing numbers of councils experiencing financial distress. Without additional government funding, we expect a deterioration in the financial resilience of all councils and an increase in the number of councils that are faced within unpalatable cuts to local services and higher council tax levels.
- In terms of investment, processes for accessing funding from the UK Government have been based on a principle of competition making it costly to draw down funding and the tight timescales for delivery are impacting on the wider investment programme priorities.
- It is unclear what the government plans to do to replace the EU structural funds. The initial programme – Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund have run over extremely short timescales with no certainty about longer term arrangements.

- The workforce is ageing and there are wider structural changes in the labour market affecting recruitment and retention.
- Our population is getting older and we see higher levels of sickness, disability and inequity in the post-pandemic period.
- Neath Port Talbot has a relatively older, disabled and deprived population and a high level of unpaid carers.

- Global conflicts are causing disruption to economies, supply chains and accelerating the movement of people across the world.
- Some of the impacts of this are being felt locally through higher prices; labour market shortages; whilst also testing community cohesion.

A Changing World - Megatrends



Technology

- Disruption through technological advances is accelerating.
- As well as increased cyber threat, artificial intelligence, disinformation and automation pose new challenges to organisational capability as well as presenting new opportunities to design different models of service to respond to community need.
- The accelerated move to on-line shopping is contributing to a decline in retail presence in town centres.
- There are still significant numbers of people who are not on-line which creates inequality of access to a wide range of services and information.



Climate and Nature Emergencies

- We need to take urgent action to respond to the climate and nature emergencies, underlined by increased incidences of flooding, extreme weather events, population movement, environmental activism and food scarcity – to name just a few very real impacts.
- As well as increasing the pace at which these critical issues are addressed, greater attention is needed to securing a just transition so that the burden of change does not fall disproportionately on those who already face the greatest disadvantage.
- More residents and businesses are engaged with their local environment, heritage and culture to understand the impact of climate change and nature emergencies..



Devolution

- There has been an increase in powers to the Welsh Government over time and clear divergence on a range of policy matters from other parts of the UK.
- This seems set to continue with the proposed increase in the number of Senedd Members and associated electoral reforms.
- The partnership landscape in Wales is increasingly complex with over-lapping regional, pan-regional local governance arrangements.

Our Performance - Feedback from Regulators

Service performance and our wider organisational arrangements have recovered well in the last two years. Our annual assurance from our external auditors – Audit Wales – and the two inspectorates Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales demonstrated that we have a good understanding of what is working well and where our improvement effort should be concentrated. A summary of our overall performance follows:

Wider Council

- The council has a clear corporate plan in place covering the period 2022/2027;
- The council has positively engaged with its communities through its Let's Talk and Let's Keep Talking initiatives;
- The council responds positively to external audit findings and recommendations and continues to review much of its corporate framework. A focus on asset management, performance management will feature in the next phase of the governance improvement work;
- The council has been financially stable to date and its leadership team is fully resourced. The 2024/2025 financial year has been challenging and this is set to continue. Demand pressures in social services, education and housing will present particular risks but this is a picture seen across Wales;
- The council has developed a Future of Work Strategy and put arrangements in place to implement it. Recruitment and retention of people will however continue to present issues;
- There are a large number of economic regeneration projects which are progressing as well as new strategies for culture, heritage and destination management;
- There is a clear and well-developed approach to digital, data and technology;
- Changes at Tata Steel UK Ltd will create new risks for the council
- There is a plan to increase the percentage of waste recycled and this will require ongoing monitoring;
- The return of indoor leisure services from Celtic Leisure is proving difficult in the current economic conditions.

Social Services

- The council has a good understanding and provides strong corporate support for social services and has a strong senior leadership team that provides confidence across both children's and adults' services;
- The level of demand will present ongoing budget challenges for the whole council;
- A strengths-based and outcome-focussed social work assessment model is embedded across Children's Social Services;
- The workforce is stable and experienced with good use of consultant social worker roles in both adult and children social services;
- Partnership relationships are effective and there are good examples of co-production, supported by a strong early help offer;
- There is investment in foster carers to increase the range of placement options available to support those young people who need them;
- Ensuring a focus on workforce continues is important, particularly given the increased demand and complexity being seen through our adult and children social services front door;
- Further work will be needed to develop a sufficient range of placements so that there is the right range of services for children and families who will need support;
- In adult social services there is good creative thinking around the way services are developed and resourced.
- The workforce involved in safeguarding has increased;
- There are positive relationships with health colleagues;
- There remain challenges in the provision of care for vulnerable adults in common with other parts of Wales and this needs to align with the wishes of those needing services.

Education

- There is a stable senior officer team and local authority officers know their schools well;
- Safeguarding work is strong;
- There are sound plans in place to deliver national priorities and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is driving improvement, including the opening of a new Welsh Medium school in the Neath area;
- Inspection outcomes are mainly positive, although one secondary school and three primary schools are receiving enhanced support and monitoring; and
- Attendance and exclusion rates in common with other parts of Wales are receiving attention – there is more to do in both of these areas.



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

World events since 2022 have caused inequalities to widen across Neath Port Talbot in common with a pattern seen in other parts of the United Kingdom. It is clear that those who faced the greatest disadvantage prior to the pandemic have been hardest hit. Equalities is at the heart of everything we do, this is demonstrated through all elements of the corporate plan and the supporting strategic equality plan to reduce inequality.

The council's Strategic Equality Plan 2024/2028, which includes how we will address our socio-economic duty, sets out more detail on the work we will do under each well-being objective.

Welsh Language

The Welsh language is a very important part of our work across Neath Port Talbot in supporting the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambition to achieve a million people able to use and enjoy speaking Welsh by 2050. Our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023/2028 takes account of, and builds on, the progress made, the commitments of Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/2032 (WESP) as well as the work of our partners in promoting the Welsh language locally.

Our approach is to reflect the strategic themes outlined in the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy. These themes reflect our own belief in how the Welsh language can be promoted/facilitated locally and we will work toward realising the themes of:

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

A number of actions contained within the WESP have already been delivered or are currently being developed to promote and facilitate the language locally.

The Socio-Economic Duty

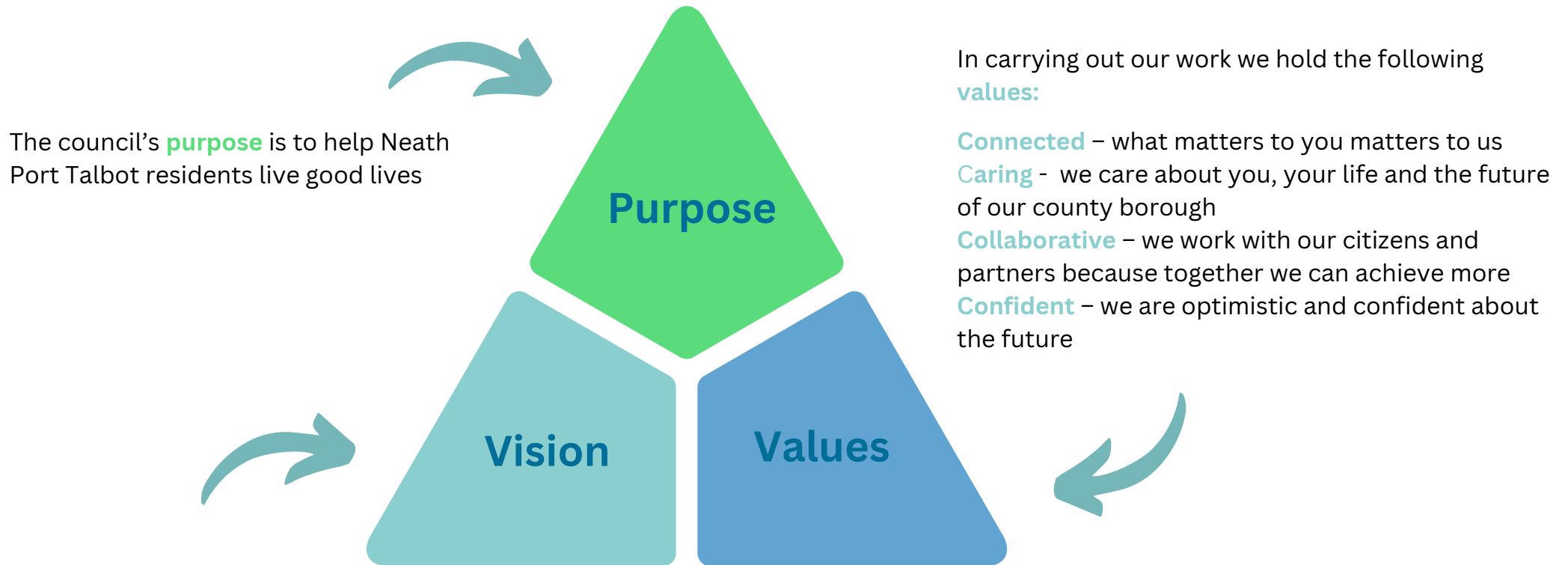
(Equality Act 2010) which came into force on 31 March 2021 requires councils, when taking strategic decisions such as setting priorities, to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.

Evidence demonstrates that the poorest areas have experienced the greatest impact both in terms of health and financial impacts. Those who faced the greatest disadvantage prior to the pandemic have been hardest hit and, as a consequence, inequalities across Neath Port Talbot have widened.

Addressing these inequalities is a cross-cutting theme across all the priorities in the short, medium and longer term.

Purpose, Vision and Values

We have tested our existing purpose, vision and values as part of our review process and have concluded that they remain relevant.



Our **vision** is to give every child the best start in life; that every community is thriving and sustainable; that our environment, heritage and culture can be enjoyed by future generations; and that local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy.

Our Well-being Objectives and Associated Priorities

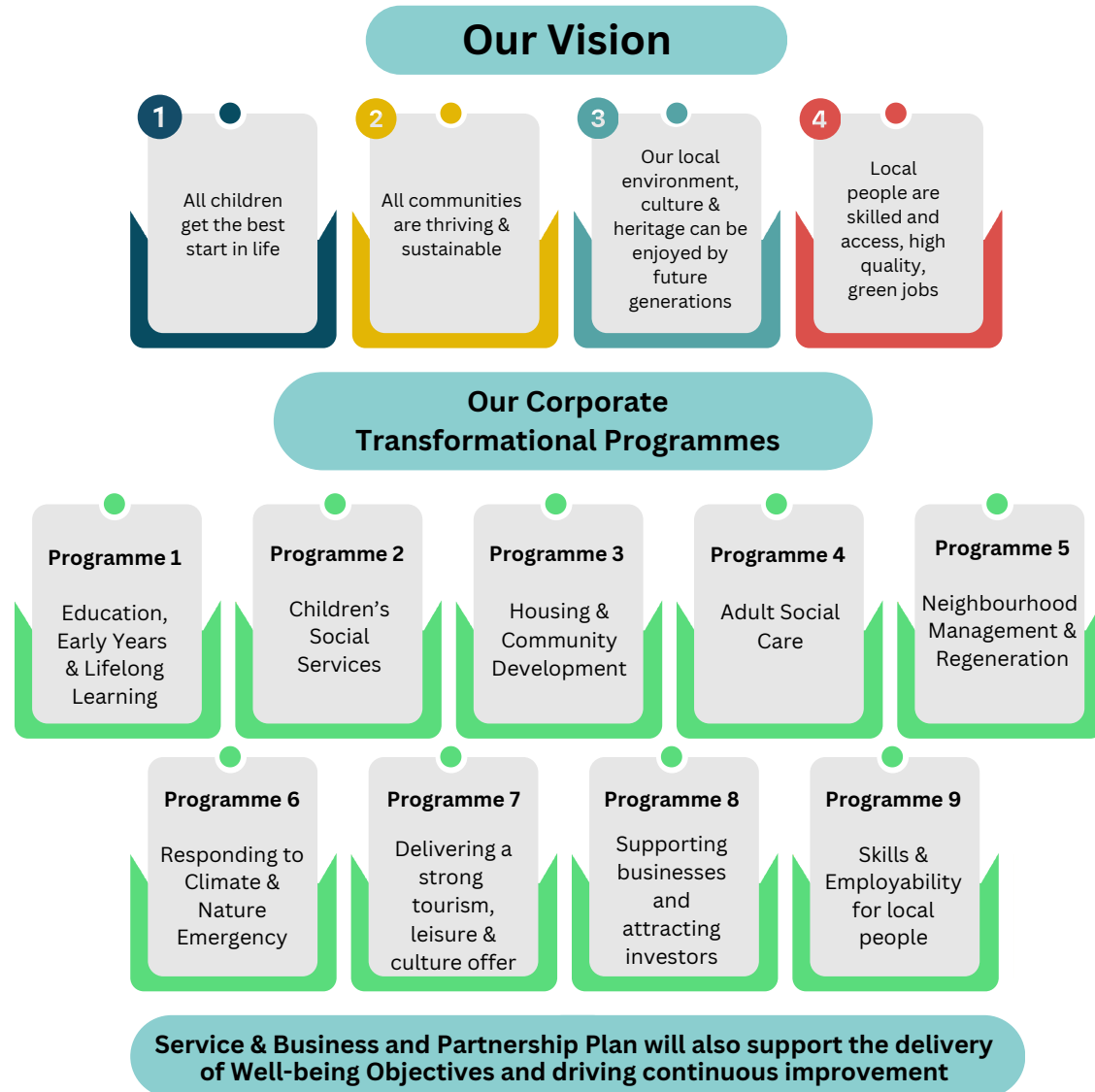
The four well-being objectives set in 2022 are drawn directly from our vision and remain our focus for 2024/2027.

For each well-being objective we have set out long term (20 year) outcomes that we want to achieve. Over the last two years we have made a good start in working towards those outcomes.

The detail of progress we have made to date can be accessed in our annual reports. We have also taken the opportunity, as part of this review, to identify a small number of strategic priorities that we will concentrate upon over the next three year period. These strategic priorities form our corporate transformation programme.

The corporate transformation programme represents the next major steps towards our long term vision, whilst also making a significant contribution to improving outcomes for citizens and wider stakeholders against a backdrop of a challenging financial context in the medium term (three years). It is key to note that future budget settlements, and grant funding, will play a significant part in how these transformation programmes progress over the medium term.

In addition to the corporate transformation programmes which are summarised in this Plan, all services and functions will contribute to the four well-being objectives through strengthened business planning and performance management arrangements at operational level.



Medium Term Financial Plan, Asset Plans, Strategic Equalities Plan

1

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 1
Best start in life

*All children get
the best start in life*



In 20 years' time...

- All children and young people will be:
 - ambitious, capable learners;
 - enterprising, creative contributors;
 - ethical, informed citizens; and
 - healthy, confident individuals.
- There will be a shared culture across the county borough that supports aspiration and ambition for all children and young people;
- Inequalities in health, education and economic outcomes will have reduced;
- Children, young people and families will have access to high quality early help and support services at the right time, this will ensure children and young people are engaged in their learning and families are being helped to move out of poverty;
- We will have completed a programme of school reorganisation and have the right schools in the right place and all children and young people are accessing the schools that are right for them, first time, every time;
- The council will be systematically removing the barriers to learning and aspiration by convening and working in partnership with other services and agencies that touch the lives of children and young people;
- We will have created an environment that secures access to learning and opportunities for all children, young people and adults in order that they reach their potential and their ambition;
- We will be championing the needs of all learners, particularly our vulnerable and disadvantaged, and building strong relationships with families, schools and communities;
- We will have created environments where learning is a safe, nurturing and fulfilling experience in all settings, where there is respect and due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion; and
- We will be working in partnership to ensure that schools and other providers meet the learning needs of all their pupils and students, building professional capital and collective responsibility throughout the system and ensuring that literacy and numeracy are at the heart of learners' development.



Our work over the next three years to deliver our Well-being Objectives has been set out within this Corporate Plan, through our transformational programmes, and will be supported by delivery plans and also through plans which have been produced in collaboration with our partners.

In the next 3 years we aim to....

- Work with our partners to ensure our youngest children are better prepared for the transition into education.
- Progress our strategic schools improvement programme to develop our learning and teaching environments.
- Continue roll out of educational reform to support all pupils, including Additional Learning Needs legislation and the Curriculum for Wales to raise standards across our schools for all learners.
- Provide opportunities for all to benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh.
- Provide high quality support for teaching that supports the evolution of pedagogy and how to plan for progression in the Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide high quality responsive support for leadership at all levels including induction, support staff, leadership training etc.
- Support schools to secure an improvement in pupil attendance rates across all NPT schools.
- Support schools to reduce the number of pupils subject to an exclusion (both fixed-term and permanent).
- Ensure that there is a culture of safeguarding within Neath Port Talbot Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning and our schools.
- Work with Sports Wales to ensure a smooth transition for the Physical Activity Sport Service (PASS) to the regional partnership model
- Enable our young people to develop independent, safe travel skills.
- Expand the foster care provision, supporting children with the most complex needs.
- Support young carers, those leaving care and minority groups to access opportunities.
- Enhanced facilities, improved play and leisure services for children and young people.
- Develop a co-ordinated approach to meet the well-being needs of our children and young people and ensure there are strong safeguarding and support procedures in place.



Why is this important?

- The impact from Covid-19 and the subsequent loss of education that happened within schools is still having a significant, adverse impact on children and young people, with the disruption they had to their learning at crucial points (e.g. transition from Primary to Secondary) and consequences for their social development and physical and mental well-being.
- From the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, 14 of Neath Port Talbot's (NPT) 91 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (15.4%) are in the most deprived 10% in Wales. Three (3.3%) are in the least deprived 10%. NPT has the ninth highest number of children in Wales receiving care and support from the local authority according to the Children Receiving Care and Support Census, 2022.
- 27% of pupils of statutory school age are entitled to free school meals (Pupil Level Annual School Census 2024 (PLASC));
- In 2023/24, 2156 children received support from Flying Start funded services. This figure continues to increase as result of Flying Start Expansion. The programme now reaches around 35% of the local authority, with its targeted outreach programme accessible on a needs basis to the whole of the local authority.
- A significant percentage of pupils finish statutory education without the expected levels in language, mathematics and science, especially those who are eligible for free school meals.
- Too many children and young people are still being excluded from schools on a fixed term and permanent basis;
- At PLASC 2023, 15.7% of Neath Port Talbot's school population had special educational needs/additional learning needs compared with 13.4% nationally. There continues to be a rise in complexity of need.
- In NPT, 16.9% (3,536) of pupils received their education in Welsh medium schools at PLASC 2023, the highest percentage in Neath Port Talbot based on figures going back to 2007. This consisted of 17.4% (2,130) of primary school age and 16.0% (1,406) of secondary school age pupils with percentages in both sectors increasing annually.
- To maintain our place as the top performing physical activity service in Wales with 46% of pupils undertaking activity three or more times a week.

Key Strategies, Plans & Partnerships

The following partnerships, strategies and plans will support us in the delivery of Well-being Objective 1

Strategies & Plans	Key Partnerships
Children & Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy	NPT Public Services Board
Children & Young People’s Plan 2024/2029	Children and Young People’s Leadership Group
Children & Young People’s Social Care Strategic Plan 2023/2026	Western Bay Regional Partnership
Community Safety Strategic Intent Document for 2024/2027	NPT District Sports Council
Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy – 2023/2026	NPT Local Economic Partnership
Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023/2028	Western Bay Safeguarding Board
Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/2032	



2

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

People live healthy, long and good lives in thriving and sustainable communities where people get along together and support one another



In 20 years' time...

- Every community is thriving;
- We have sustainable communities where residents have the ability to live, work, shop and enjoy their leisure time in their communities;
- Inequalities in health, economic and social outcomes have reduced;
- People are involved in decisions that affect them, more people are involved in community life;
- People are welcoming of newcomers and treat each other with respect; every individual is included and has an equal voice;
- People can access good quality, affordable, low carbon housing in their community;
- People are connected within their community; communities are connected to each other and the wider world through good quality digital services and public transport networks;
- People are resilient; they respect and take care of their environment and they can come together and act at times of crisis;
- Communities are inclusive and accessible to all;
- Communities are pleasant, clean, safe and green;
- Vulnerable people are supported in their community through a range of informal and formal care and support networks;
- Communities can access a range of quality services necessary for daily living; and
- Communities benefit from a high quality of design that reflects the unique heritage and characteristics of each place.



Our work over the next three years to deliver our Well-being Objectives has been set out within this Corporate Plan, through our transformational programmes, and will be supported by delivery plans and also through plans which have been produced in collaboration with our partners.

In the next 3 years we aim to....

- Work to ensure residents have access to high quality sustainable housing and prevent homelessness;
- Support our communities who are at risk, or living in poverty;
- Improve the range and quality of informal and formal support for elderly and vulnerable residents, including unpaid carers
- Ensure there is a wide range of community services for residents with disabilities and complex needs;
- Ensure that we support our communities to develop and give residents a voice to be involved in community life and decision making;
- Further develop our valleys, villages and towns and progress our regeneration vision linked to funding and investment opportunities;
- Support the development of community groups, community hubs and access to volunteering opportunities;
- Secure funding to further develop our access to walking and cycling routes as part of our active travel network;
- Reduce carbon outputs and meet statutory recycling and waste targets.
- Effectively manage drainage networks, surface water and ordinary watercourses. Protect property from flooding by constructing new defences and maintaining existing defences. Promote wider catchment approaches to managing flood risk, including cross border and multi-agency working.

Why is this important?

- Covid-19 has had an adverse impact on many people with more people becoming lonely and isolated. There has been a disproportionate impact on young people, women and people from BME backgrounds;
- There were 144,000 people living in Neath Port Talbot in 2021. This is expected to grow to 147,000 by the mid-2030s;
- The population is ageing – the number of people retired is growing but the number of young people is declining;
- People are living for longer and living healthier lives but life expectancy and health life expectancy is below the rest of Wales and the gap between those who are best and worst off is significant;
- GVA* (Gross Value Added) is lower than the Welsh average;
- 27% of children are eligible for free school meals; There are estimated to be over 20,000 unpaid carers in the county borough;
- There is a need for more affordable housing of a good quality; and we expect to see a 35% increase in those aged 65+ who will be living alone by 2035.



* Gross Value Added (GVA) is an economic productivity metric that measures the contribution of a corporate subsidiary, company, or municipality to an economy, producer, sector, or region.

Key Strategies, Plans & Partnerships

The following partnerships, strategies and plans will support us in the delivery of Well-being Objective 2

Strategies & Plans	Key Partnerships
Adult Social Care Strategy 2023/2026	NPT Public Services Board
Adult Social Isolation and Loneliness Strategy	NPT Local Economic Partnership
Housing & Homelessness Strategic Plan 2024/2027	NPT Adult Learning Network
Regional Carers Strategy	NPT Strategic Housing Forum
Public Participation Strategy	South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023/2028	Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum
Community Safety Strategic Intent Document for 2024/2027	Community Safety Partnership
Local Development Plan	Area Planning Board
West Glamorgan Regional Partnership - Emotion and Mental Wellbeing Strategy	

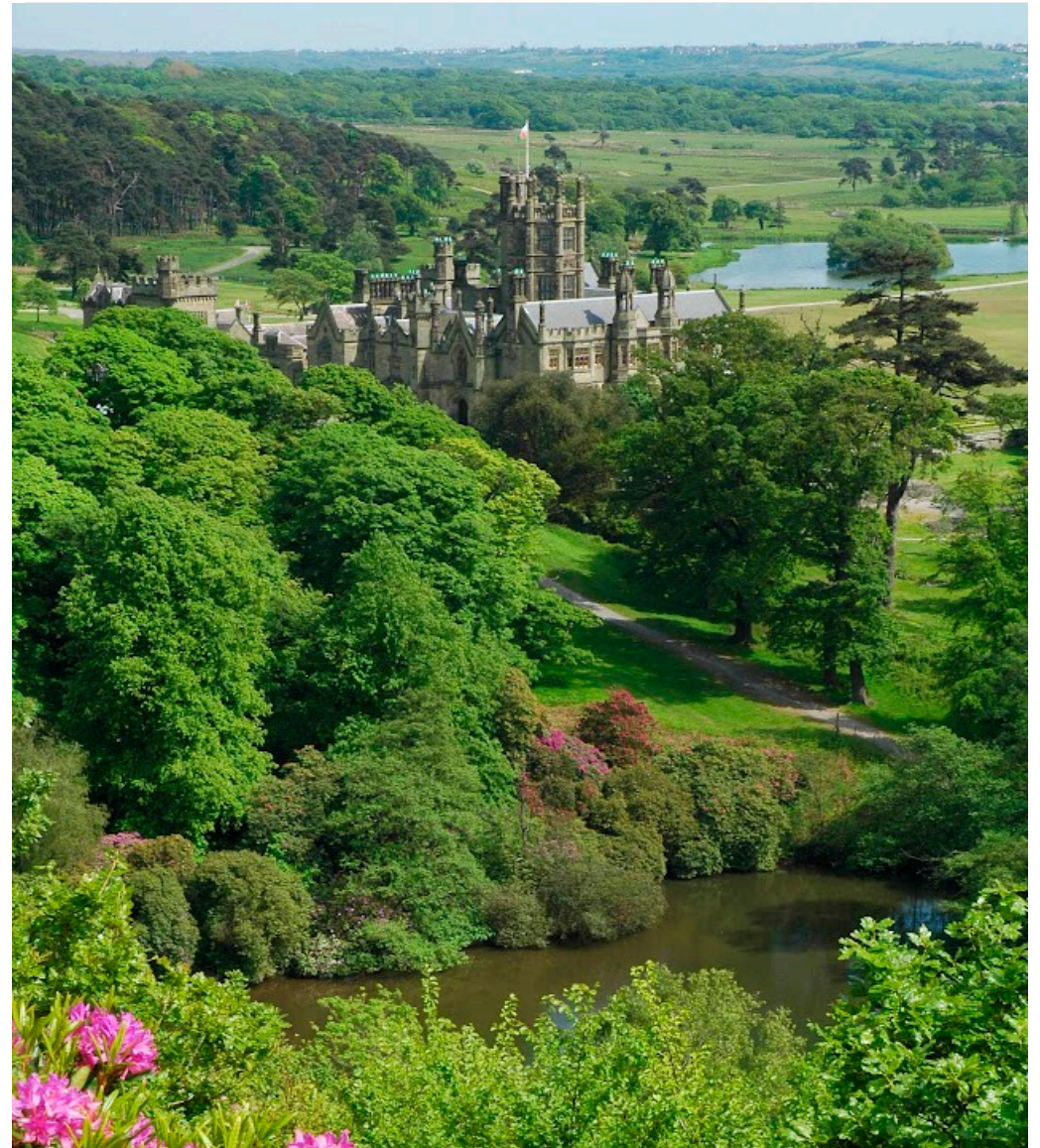


3

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Natural processes are restored and they mitigate and develop greater resilience to climate change. People actively conserve, improve and enjoy our stunning natural environment, treasure the Welsh language and are actively engaged with the rich sporting, cultural and industrial heritage of the area



In 20 years' time...

- More people speak the Welsh language and Welsh is an integral part of everyday life;
- People will value and cherish our local natural environment and have reversed the decline in our wildlife; our most precious sites will be in improved condition and connected via a network of green corridors; People will have restored natural processes to mitigate and develop greater resilience to the effects of climate change;
- Our urban areas will embrace and include space for nature that can be enjoyed and provide opportunities for all;
- Residents of all ages across Neath Port Talbot will talk about the local environment, culture, sports and heritage with pride and confidence and more people will be actively involved in the conservation of our environment, culture and heritage;
- Local culture and heritage will be visible, brought to life through high quality, sustainable design that celebrates the past and connects it to the county borough's ambitions for the future;
- The area will be a destination of choice for people to live, work and spend their leisure time. The area will have built a reputation for excellence in the way it promotes a strong sense of belonging through heritage, the arts, sport and culture and supports everyone to connect to the natural environment and to enjoy a high quality of well-being; and
- We will increase the appeal of our area as a visitor destination by building upon our sense of place, having an inclusive approach and encouraging sustainable development. Visitors will be encouraged to act responsibly for the benefit of our communities and local environment.

Our work over the next three years to deliver our Well-being Objectives has been set out within this Corporate Plan, through our transformational programmes, and will be supported by delivery plans and also through plans which have been produced in collaboration with our partners.

In the next 3 years we aim to....

- Implement our culture, leisure and heritage strategies alongside our destination management plan and raise the profile of NPT as a visitor destination;
- Have a strong approach to high quality leisure and recreation activities;
- Work with communities and partners to engender a greater sense of stewardship, encouraging them to take a more active role in the ongoing management and improvement of their local environment;
- Embed the history of the local environment, heritage and nature into the curriculum and ensure all schools have access to environmental and outdoor learning opportunities;
- Strengthen our approach to decarbonisation of fleet and assets, alongside a robust policy and supporting strategies to respond to climate change and nature emergency, highlighting where we have a part to play;
- Secure funding to further develop and promote our active travel network and improved public rights of way to encourage more people to walk and cycle;
- Work to help nature recover and to improve the quality of and access to our natural environment.
- Encourage people to speak, and enjoy the Welsh language.

Why is this important?

Heritage is integral to our culture, people's sense of identity and sense of belonging which in turn impacts on people's health, well-being and social inclusion. Heritage and culture also contributes to the economy, supporting paid employment, helping to attract inward investment and generating value through voluntary action – part of our wider place shaping agenda.

The Welsh language is a very important part of our heritage and culture. We support the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambition to achieve a million people able to enjoy speaking Welsh by 2050.

The importance of protecting our natural environment has, of course, never been so prominent. The Welsh Government officially declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and a Nature Emergency in 2021, recognising the significance of these two interrelated challenges and the urgency in tackling them. The natural environment is vital to our communities and provides us with all our basic needs. It gives us all a better quality of life and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and Wales' natural beauty and heritage, giving people the choice to become more physically active. People come from far and wide to experience our environment and it is intrinsically linked with Welsh culture and language.

While the area has many strengths, it also experiences relatively high levels of poverty, deprivation, ill-health and disability. There is a strong focus on encouraging people of all ages and from all backgrounds to adopt active lifestyles to improve physical and emotional well-being. There is also a need to grow more quality jobs in the local leisure and tourism industry and to continue the long tradition of fostering local talent to achieve success as elite athletes and to perform on the world stage.

Key Strategies, Plans & Partnerships

The following partnerships, strategies and plans will support us in the delivery of Well-being Objective 3

Strategies & Plans	Key Partnerships
Destination Management Plan 2023/2028	Afan Forest Partnership Group
Culture Strategy 2023	NPT Destination Management Plan Leadership Group
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023/2028	NPT Nature Partnership
Public Participation Strategy	NPT Public Services Board (PSB)
Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023/2028	Aberavon Seafront Management Group
Biodiversity Duty Plan 2023/2026	NPT Children and Young Peoples Partnership
Heritage Strategy 2024/2039	NPT Heritage Forum
Local Development Plan	NPT PSB - Climate and Nature Partnership
	Lost Peatlands Steering Group
	Neath Port Talbot Council / Swansea University Memorandum of Understanding



4

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4

Jobs and Skills

Working with our partners we create the conditions for more secure, well paid and green work in the area and support local people into those jobs



In 20 years' time...

- There is a strong and diverse SME base in the county borough which benefits from well coordinated support, premises and finance;
- Transformation of major sites at Port Talbot, Baglan Energy Park, the Global Centre for Rail Excellence will be complete;
- Significant, new economic benefits have been delivered through the decarbonisation of industry, housing and transport; the area is an exemplar for renewable, clean energy;
- Town centres and communities are thriving;
- We have made the most of our natural environment, heritage and cultural assets and have a significant, sustainable visitor economy;
- There is much improved connectivity to work, learning and services;
- There is a skilled and resilient local workforce with rates of workless households or economically inactive people at or below the Welsh average; and
- There is a strong partnership between the council, the business community, local people and wider stakeholders.

Our work over the next three years to deliver our Well-being Objectives has been set out within this Corporate Plan, through our transformational programmes, and will be supported by delivery plans and also through plans which have been produced in collaboration with our partners.

In the next 3 years we aim to....

- Establish the Celtic Freeport across Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire, attracting investment and creating sustainable jobs across the green economy.
- Complete the significant programme of work via the UK Government's Levelling Up and Shared Prosperity Funds, benefiting locals and visitors alike.
- Support those impacted by the decarbonisation of Tata Steel UK.
- Take forward major development and investment opportunities and activities linked to the council's Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy with a range of partners, and developed more green opportunities.
- Work to maximise Social Value Developed transport plans in partnership with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to support access to work, reduce emissions and serve the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Secure funding to establish a strong gateway to business support to help diversify the local economy and increase its resilience to future economic shocks by helping existing businesses to grow, establishing new enterprises, attracting new investment and delivering targeted programmes that enable local people to benefit from the employment created through new investment.
- Maximise Social Value and Community Benefits opportunities across the council's procurement activities and with key private sector partners/investors to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits for local residents, businesses and communities.
- Maintain a strong employability focus to support those needing help to find work, including those who are hardest to reach, this support will be accessible for all.
- Continue to strengthen partnership working to upskill those already in work or who wish to return to work; more local people will hold qualifications.

Why is this important?

- The world of work is changing rapidly, disrupted by the explosion in digital technology advances and now by the response to the climate emergency;
- Covid-19 which caused an economic shock across the economy affected businesses in very different ways;
- NPT has a strong, distinctive manufacturing base which includes a wide range of SME's where employment needs to be protected;
- Our industrial heritage includes the UK's largest steel producer who's plans to decarbonise and transition to net zero will have a significant impact on local people, businesses and communities.
- NPT has a number of strategic employment sites and that presents many opportunities to achieve economic growth including new green jobs as industry and society decarbonises and new industries such as Floating Offshore Wind, Hydrogen production and other renewable energy projects emerge.
- The area is well served by rail, road and the deep water harbour is a strategic asset in the delivery of key investments such as the Celtic Sea Project.
- The local economy is reliant to a large proportion on micro and SME's - 88% of local businesses employ less than ten employees;
- Start-up rates and business survival rates are on a par with the Welsh average;
- There are significant numbers of people commuting into the county borough – for the higher salary jobs; and a large number of people commuting out of the area for work.



“ The availability of interventions across all business sectors that help create a strong and resilient economy and promote inclusive growth. ”

“ Business funding to support innovation, growth, the safeguarding of existing jobs and the creation of new employment opportunities. ”

“ **What matters to local businesses** ”

“ Coordinated and easy to access business support services that are able to respond to the needs and opportunities of local companies. ”

“ Targeted interventions to help businesses overcome the specific challenges such as the recovery from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and the impact of the Tata Steel Transition plans. ”



“ Interventions that attract and support investment from both the UK and overseas to increase economic prosperity across NPT. ”

“ Support mechanisms that enable local companies to upskill and take advantage of the new business opportunities linked to Renewable Energy Technologies and emerging sectors such as Floating Offshore Wind; Hydrogen Production, Carbon Capture, etc. ”

“ Funding to support property build and refurbishment to create an environment that supports economic growth, job creation and a “levelling up” approach across all our communities. ”



“ The council to take an innovative approach to using Social Value policies and local procurement models to support business growth, the creation and safeguarding of employment and the delivery of training and supply chain programmes. ”

“ A joined up approach to developing an entrepreneurial culture to deliver support to new businesses start-ups. ”



Key Strategies, Plans & Partnerships

The following partnerships, strategies and plans will support us in the delivery of Well-being Objective 4

Strategies & Plans	Key Partnerships
Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023/2028	Port Talbot Waterfront – Enterprise Zone
Local Area Energy Plan 2024/2028	South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
Corporate Joint Committee Corporate Plan 2023/2028	NPT Adult Learning Network
Local Economic Recovery Plan	NPT Public Services Board
Tata Transition Board - Local Economic Action Plan	Swansea University Partnership
Employability & Skills Strategy	NPT Local Economic Partnership
Local Development Plan	Swansea Bay City Deal – Joint Committee
South West Wales Regional Economic Development Plan	Celtic Sea Cluster
Key Partnerships	Swansea Bay City Deal - Digital Infrastructure Programme
Swansea Bay City Deal - Supporting Innovation & Low Carbon Growth Programme Board	Celtic Freeport
Swansea Bay City Deal - Homes as Power Stations Programme Board	Western Gateway Partnership Board
Tata Transition Board	South West Wales Regional Skills & Learning Partnership
	NPT UK Shared Prosperity Programme Board





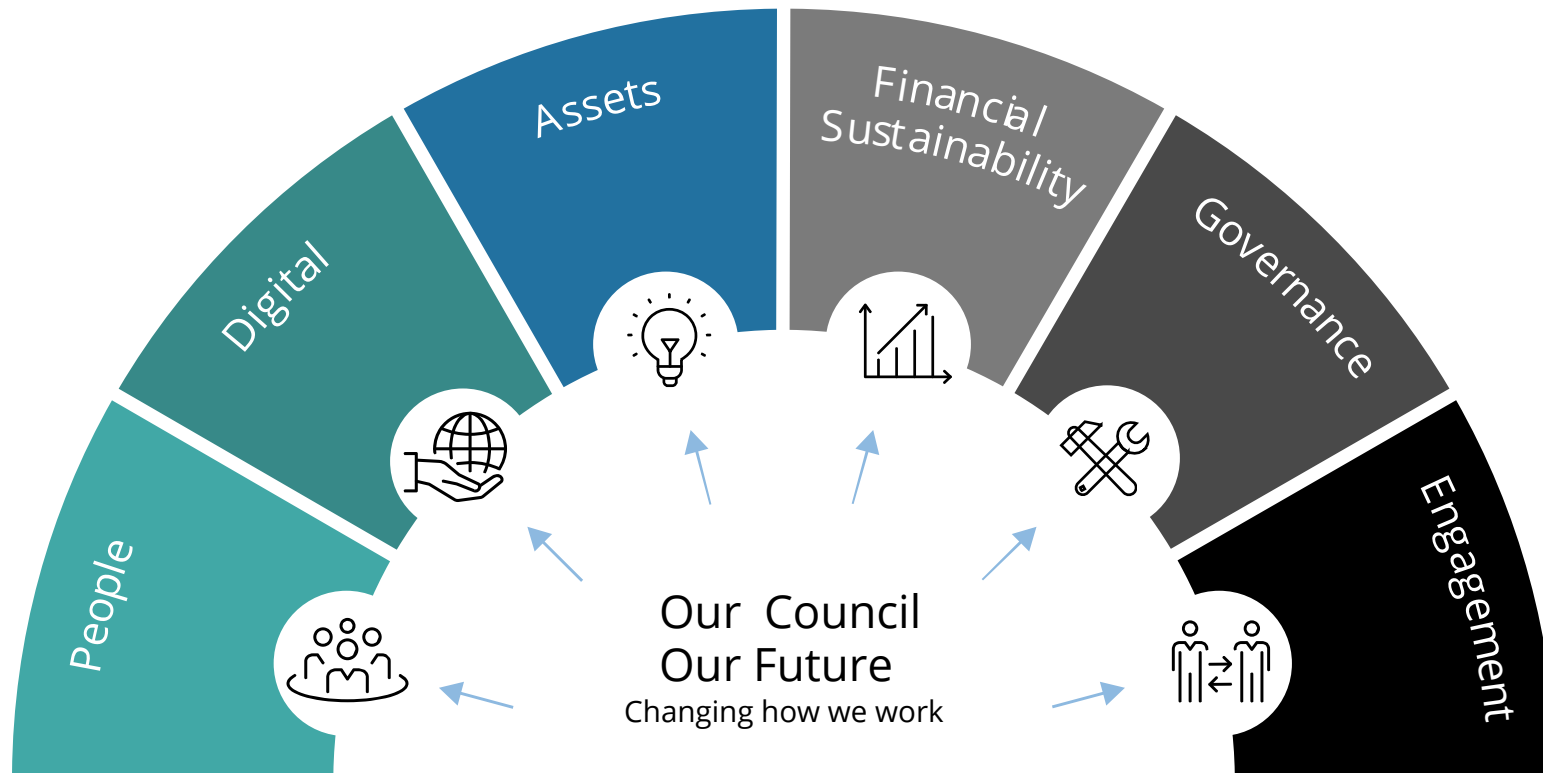
Enabling Programme

Our enabling capabilities allows the council to adapt and transform to meet the changing needs and expectations of our communities



Enabling Programme - Developing our Organisation

Our work through our 'Enabling Programme' ensures we have the capabilities to support the council to adapt and transform to meet the changing needs and expectations of our communities.



Enabling Programme - Developing our Organisation

➤ People

As part of our Future of Work programme, we are transforming our people and organisational development capability so that we can excel at getting the best from our workforce. Through our Strategic Workforce Plan:

- We will demonstrate that people make the difference and invest in programmes that will enable us to recruit, retain and develop a workforce that will enable us to sustain a high performing, sustainable and trusted organisation.
- We will ensure that people are well led, supported, trusted and recognised for the contribution they make.
- We will ensure people are treated fairly and with respect and also encouraged to bring forward ideas about how we can improve what we do.
- We will develop a workforce that is representative of our communities and people will have equal opportunities to progress in our organisation.
- We will develop a culture where people are accountable for and recognised for what they do and how they do it; and
- We will continue to support fair work practices within our own employment arrangements but also use our procurement and community leadership arrangements to encourage others to adopt fair work practices.

➤ Digital

We will adopt digital, data and technology to transform the services we deliver to residents, businesses, elected members, staff and visitors. Through our Digital, Data and Technology Strategy we will:

- Embrace new approaches and emerging technologies to provide our users with the best value, user centred products and services.
- Design and develop digital services based on need and ensure that the technology we use is robust, scalable, secure and efficient.
- Modernise how we manage and share our data, embedding research and data analysis into our decision-making processes, while creating the right capability, infrastructure, resilience, and collaborations.
- Ensure we have the right people with the right skills, driving a cultural shift around digital, data and technology across the whole organisation.

➤ Governance

We will adjust our risk appetite to encourage responsible innovation, and invest in building a strong corporate culture where people are responsible and accountable for what they do; where people challenge behaviours that are unacceptable and where people continuously learn and improve. We will systematically replace unnecessary red tape with more modern approaches. We will continue to foster a culture of mutual trust and respect between councillors and officers with each clear about their respective roles and responsibilities. We will provide more opportunities for citizens to take part in our democratic processes

➤ **Delivering value for money and ensuring financial sustainability**

There is no doubt that public services across the UK are under immense pressure and we see this also at NPT. In the short to medium term, we will build ownership across the whole of the council, with our community and wider partners of the challenges in front of us and seek new solutions to the financial challenges in front of us. Understanding ‘what matters’ to citizens and businesses will be a central focus as we rigorously and systematically test all areas of activity to ensure we are optimising income generation, investment and resource allocation activities. We will take a whole system view and continuously remove failure demand, reduce duplication and improve efficiency and effectiveness of service operations. We will prioritise economic growth and services that protect children and vulnerable people. We will continue to support an ‘invest to save’ culture to facilitate and incentivise innovation and service change. We will also further integrate our revenue and capital planning arrangements.

➤ **Engagement and community relations**

We have given greater priority to the way we engage and communicate with residents and other stakeholders over recent years. We aim to further develop our approaches over the next three years. Our focus will be to get greater insight and feedback on what matters to the people we serve, the organisations we work with and most crucially our employees and recognised trade unions. We will also provide clear information on how we are delivering against the priorities we have set so people can hold us to account. We will also enable more people to participate in formal decision making processes.

➤ **Assets**

The council has extensive assets that enable us to deliver our purpose. As part of our wider corporate governance arrangements, all assets are assessed as to their suitability and condition. These assessments guide our investment decisions and inform our risk management arrangements. We have a good track record of drawing down capital grants to sustain assets that support improvement in a range of service areas, however, there is insufficient funding available to maintain and repair legacy structure (most funding supports new or replacement assets) and this represents a growing organisational risk. More detail can be found in asset management plans that are in place for the major categories of assets, including buildings; highways; fleet and coal tips.

Key Partnerships, Strategies & Plans

The following partnerships and strategies plans will support us in the delivery of our Well-being

Strategies & Plans	Key Partnerships
Strategic Workforce Plan 2022/2027	NPT Public Services Board
<u>Digital Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy</u>	Town & Community Council Liaison Forum
Procurement Strategy 2024/2028	Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum
Corporate Asset Management Plan	South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee
Annual Governance Statement	Various other professional networks
Annual Report / Self-Assessment	
Strategic Equalities Plan 2024/2028	
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023/2028	
Medium Term Financial Plan	
Internal Audit Annual Plan	
Capital Programme	

Our Design Principles

Our Council

The whole council will focus on doing 'what matters' for our residents, local businesses and investors so we can achieve our purpose and vision.

Accountability

We will make it easier for people to access information and the meetings of the council. We will explain whether we have done what we said we would do.

Sustainable

We will play our part in responding to the climate and nature emergencies. We will increase the amount of council expenditure spent in the local and regional economy and encourage local people to buy local. We will balance the actions we take in the short term with the long term impact those actions may have on future generations.

Leadership and Teamwork

Our leaders and managers have a tremendous impact on the council's culture and through our leaders we want to provide a sense of vision, purpose and inspiration to our employees.

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

Agile and Innovative

We will take a user centred approach to the way we design policies, services and places. We will encourage new ideas and creative thinking to challenge the status quo and improve what we do and how we do it. We will anticipate challenges before they arise and take proactive measures to face them, quickly reacting to new challenges and circumstances.

Trust and Empowerment

We trust and believe in our colleagues. We will make sure they are trained, supported and authorised to do the things that matter so we impact positively upon people's lives.

Fairness and Equality

We will recruit and develop a workforce that is representative of our communities. We will treat Welsh and English on an equal basis and we will work to reduce poverty. We will celebrate diversity, ensure our services and places are accessible to everyone and root out discrimination in all its forms.

Value for Money

We will use public money wisely and work hard to secure new sources of income and influence the investment decisions of our partners with the aim of achieving our purpose and vision.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 & Well-being Statement

Our purpose, vision and values show how the council contributes to the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Neath Port Talbot and to the seven national well-being goals contained in the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We are able to clearly demonstrate through the key areas of work set out in this Corporate Plan that we are able to contribute to the well-being goals at a national level.



Neath Port Talbot Council's Well-being Objectives / 2024-2027

WBO 1 - Best start in life

WBO 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

WBO 3 - Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

WBO 4 - Jobs and skills

7 National Well-being Goals	WBO 1	WBO 2	WBO 3	WBO 4
A Prosperous Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Resilient Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A more equal Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A healthier Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of cohesive communities	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language	✓	✓	✓	✓
A globally responsible Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 & Well-being Statement

The priorities for the next three years are clearly set out under each well-being objective and detail how we will focus our efforts in the short, medium and longer term.

The four well-being objectives were developed following extensive community and stakeholder engagement which drew out clear themes of what mattered to people now and in the longer term. The outcome of engagement exercises was triangulated with other key data sets, including performance data, long term trend data and the budget, policy context and megatrends. They are to be viewed as inter-connected and not seen as separate programmes of work. Given the financial outlook, we will need to keep delivery timescales under review, less funding will likely impact timescales.

The contribution to the seven well-being goals is made through the way in which we work, in accordance with the sustainable development principle contained within the Act, by considering the following 5 things that show we have applied the sustainable development principle:



Looking ahead to the medium and longer term – the Corporate Plan sets out the focus of key work we will undertake over the next three years (medium term) and our ambition for twenty years time (longer term). We have taken into account the factors of an continually shifting landscape, from a local to global perspective, and how this could potentially impact the well-being of individuals and the well-being of Wales. When we set the 20 year ambition we challenged ourselves to think about what life would look like in generation’s time – not just for those not yet born, but for all of those currently living who would be entering different phases of their lives



Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse. Maintaining people’s well-being and preventing that from deteriorating is embedded across the Plan. However, the reducing level of resources available to local government in Wales will test our ability to maintain investment in essential prevention and early intervention services. We aim to protect this to the maximum extent possible.



Ensuring our well-being objectives interact with each other - so it is important to consider them as a whole. Services integrate their work across the council where this enables us to maximise the impact we have on the well-being objectives, as well as integrating and collaborating with other partners where this makes sense.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 & Well-being Statement (continued)



Working in partnership with others – the Plan envisages a ‘one council’ approach to the delivery of our purpose, vision and four well-being objectives. Collaboration is also identified as a core value of the organisation. The Public Services Board adopted the well-being objectives to ensure a ‘one place’ approach for NPT and we are already seeing the benefit of aligning across the two key plans. There is tangible progress being made through the core resources of participating organisations towards the well-being objectives. This corporate plan identifies other key partnerships which support our purpose, vision and well-being objectives.



Involving local people – there has been significant emphasis on engagement as we have recovered from the pandemic and we are developing our practice in co-production, and participation, across a growing number of services and functions. This extends to our employment arrangements where we are developing a broader range of employee voice mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on inclusion, diversity and equality.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 & Well-being Statement

The **Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (Wales) 2023** came into force on 1st April 2024.

The duty under the Act requires us to reach consensus or compromise with recognised trade unions when setting and delivering on our well-being objectives.

Social partnership is an approach that we have embedded into our organisation since the council's inception. We already have a practice of consulting and involving our recognised trade unions in our corporate planning arrangements and will now adjust those arrangements to ensure they fully respond to the new legal duties.

We will also see procurement processes being reformed in parallel with the Act with a focus on socially responsible public procurement.

As a local authority we will have a duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way. This duty will be developed through the new procurement strategy and the setting of socially responsible procurement objectives.

The **Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021** is a substantial piece of legislation covering electoral reform, public participation, governance, performance and collaborative working.

The council has completed two self-assessments in accordance with the Act. The self-assessment is a reporting framework to measure the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements (exercising our functions effectively; using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and our governance arrangements are effective) in order to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our communities. The self-assessment has informed the priorities set out within this Plan and working in partnership with other Welsh councils we will be externally benchmarking our progress. Our progress will also be measured when we undertake our panel performance assessment, an additional requirement set out in the Act.

We are evolving our corporate planning and performance management arrangements to both fully recover from the pandemic period and also to respond to new duties under this legislation.



Neath Port Talbot Council 2024-2027
Corporate Transformation Programme
*“Working towards a more
prosperous, fairer and greener NPT”*



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

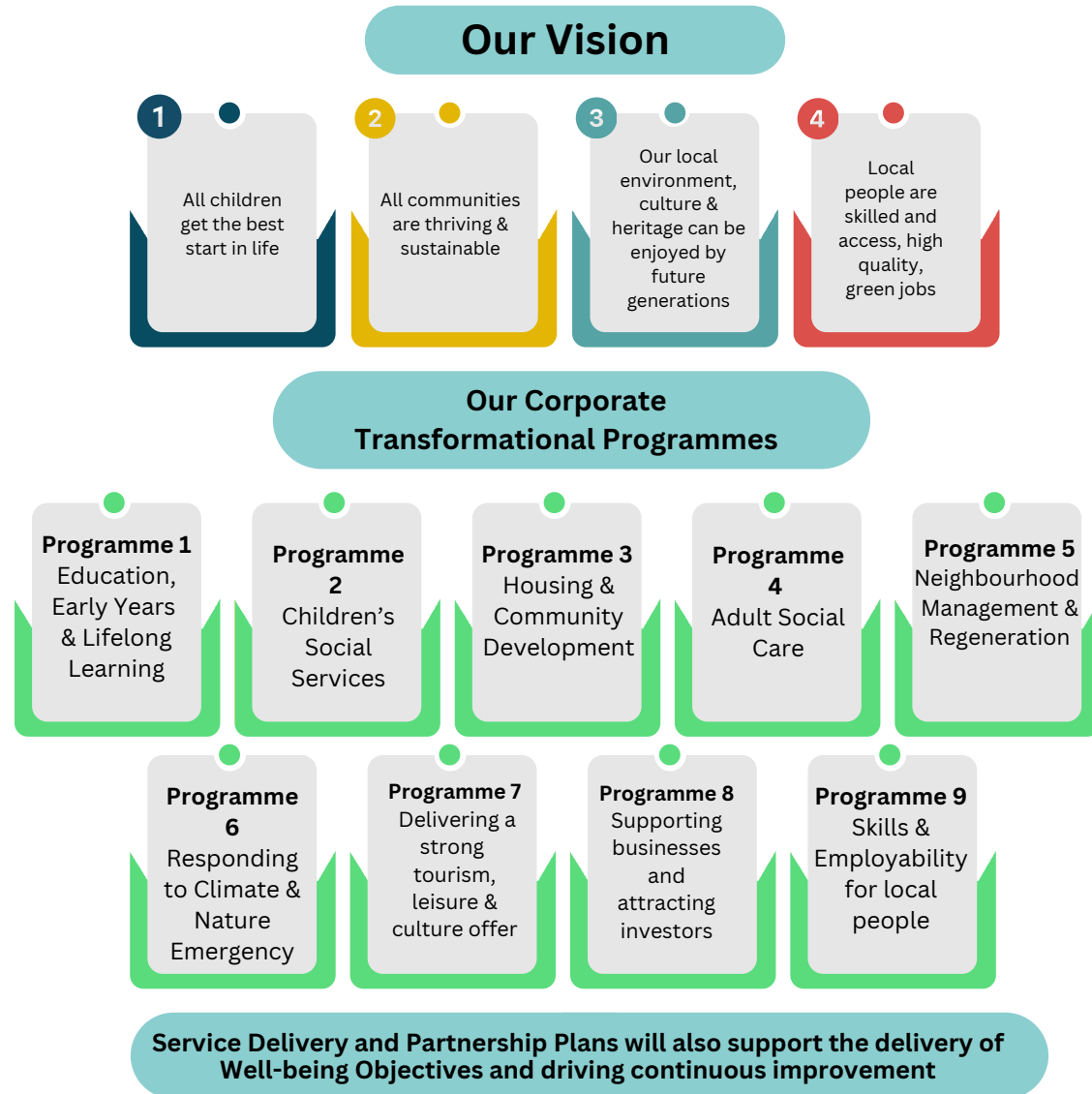
Corporate Transformational Programmes

This section of the Corporate Plan sets out the areas where we will be expecting to make a step change in our approach over the remainder of this political term, taking us up to 2027.

Many of the actions are essential to service and financial sustainability, whilst in a number of areas we will also be focusing on themes that have been derived from the extensive engagement undertaken over the last three years.

The wider continuous improvement effort will be managed through evolving business planning and performance management arrangements.

The diagram (opposite) depicts out how the transformational programmes will support the delivery of the four well-being objectives, along with our cross-cutting plans, service delivery and partnership plans.



Medium Term Financial Plan, Asset Plans, Strategic Equalities Plan

What we will do to provide children with the Best Start in Life

Programme 1 - Education, early years and lifelong learning

Political Lead:	Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years
Professional Lead:	Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning
Strategic Priorities	
More children are better prepared for school;	
We will have increased the number of 21st Century learning and teaching environments;	
Education reforms related to the curriculum and support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs are embedded and these changes will raise standards across our education system;	
Attendance across all school settings will have improved;	
The number of children and young people excluded from school will have reduced;	
More pupils are educated in Welsh medium schools and more learners, families and carers are able to engage and benefit from the medium of Welsh;	
Home to school transport is remodelled with an emphasis on helping young people to develop independent, safe travel skills; and	
All young people will progress to work, further education or training at the end of their statutory education.	

Programme 1 - Education, early years and lifelong learning

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Early Years & Education

Professional Lead: Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Performance Measures

£350k savings on home to school transport in 2024-25 and 2025-26 (£750k in total);

Deliver a new school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan by end 2026. We will also deliver the actions set out in our WESP;

Progress proposals to build additional capacity to support young people with complex needs; develop a skills based vocational skills provision; further progress the proposal to build a new English medium primary school in the Swansea Valley; progress a replacement facility for Llangatwg Comprehensive School; progress a replacement for Tywyn Primary School, incorporating a 48 place facility for young people with severe learning difficulties; further develop proposals for a new Welsh medium primary school in the east of the county borough; progress proposals to develop a St Joseph's 7-18 Middle School;

Increase attendance level over the next 3 years;

Reduce exclusions levels;

Education Support Officers will monitor schools through regular evaluation processes and support visits, these visits are logged and reviewed; and

% year 11 leavers who are NEET.

Programme 1 - Education, early years and lifelong learning



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 2 - Thriving & Sustainable Communities

Schools will be seen as important community hubs, enhancing the public realm and enabling the well-being of people within each community through improved community facilities and services. Access to good education ensures young people grow up to become responsible citizens, able to contribute positively to community life.

Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage & culture can be enjoyed by future generations

Improvements to the school estate will be designed to bring out the distinct characteristics of the culture and heritage of each place and will be built to environmentally sound standards. Curriculum reform will help children, young people and the wider community to develop a deeper sense of their local heritage and culture, including the Welsh language and culture.

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

All construction projects involve young people and other building users in the design and construction phases. The projects require community benefits to be achieved which include offering work experience and apprenticeship opportunities to local people. Local and regional companies are encouraged to bid for work so more of our public money is spent in our economy. Links between education and the economy will be strengthened with new and enhanced pathways available for young people to transition to employment at the point they exit their formal education





Programme 2 - Children's Social Services

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services

Professional Lead: Director of Social Services, Health & Housing

Strategic Priorities

All young people leaving care will have access to sustainable and appropriate accommodation;

There will be a wider range of foster carer 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 to transition into Adult Services appropriately; and

All children and young people will be safeguarded effectively.

Performance Measures

Percentage of care leavers provided with appropriate accommodation;

Percentage of young adults who have transitioned appropriately;

Number of children in residential care;

Number of children who are in the care of Neath Port Talbot Council;

Number of children stepped down to professional foster carers from residential care;

Number of professional foster carers recruited;

Number of mainstream foster carers recruited;

Programme 2 - Children's Social Services

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services

Professional Lead: Director of Social Services, Health & Housing

Performance Measures

Number of children with a disability who have received residential respite;

Number of children deregistered from the Child Protection register; and

Number of children re-registered within 1 year.



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 2 - Thriving & Sustainable Communities

Housing developments and a wider range of care placements will enable more, care-experienced, young people to be integrated into their community enabling them to enjoy the same opportunities as other children and young people

Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage & culture can be enjoyed by future generations

Care plans are developed with recognition of the culture and heritage of the young people we support.

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

The development of services will encourage employment of local people and the procurement of goods and services within our local and regional economy to contribute to economic growth

What we will do to ensure our communities are thriving and sustainable

Programme 3 - Housing and Community Development

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety

Professional Lead: Director for Social Services, Health & Housing

Strategic Priorities

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; and

Empty properties have been brought back into use through the Empty Property Grant, helping to address the demand for housing.

Performance Measures

Number of new affordable housing properties funded in the year;

40% of people owed a statutory homelessness duty who are prevented from becoming homeless;

Number of people living in temporary accommodation;

Length of time people are staying in temporary accommodation;

Decrease in the number of families staying in Bed & Breakfasts;

Decrease in the number of people staying in Bed & Breakfasts; and

Percentage of empty properties brought back into use via Empty Property Grant.

Programme 3 - Housing and Community Development

Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

By developing more and appropriate accommodation for young people who have care and support needs, we will be able to better support those young people to live in our communities, enabling them to enjoy and contribute to community life whilst maximising their independence


Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage & culture can be enjoyed by future generations

Housing developments will be undertaken with the ambition of decarbonising our housing stock and will be sympathetic to local culture and heritage. Carried out in the right way, housing developments will also help to alleviate fuel poverty.

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

This programme will create a number of new jobs in the council's directly employed workforce. Goods and service procured to support this objective will also be undertaken in a manner which contributes to local and regional economic growth.





Programme 4 - Adult Social Care

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Service & Health

Professional Lead: Director for Social Services, Health & Housing

Strategic Priorities

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 adults of working age with accommodation, care and support needs are being met in more appropriate ways through a wider range of housing and housing support services.

More people feel that they are involved in decision making and are empowered to develop local solutions that address issues that affect them locally;

Partnership relationships between the council and the third sector are benefitting from a refreshed partnership agreement.

Performance Measures

Number of adults aged 65+ per 10,000 population supported in the community (plus separate figure for care homes);

% of people with reduced / no care package following reablement;

Number of working age adults with accommodation, care and support needs moved back into county;

Number of working age adults with accommodation, care and support needs living in their own homes with their own tenancies.

Number of unpaid carers assessments undertaken;

Number of people accessing respite and average days per year;

Number of volunteers and hours provided;

Programme 4 - Adult Social Care

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Service & Health

Professional Lead: Director for Social Services, Health & Housing

Performance Measures

Number of people supported by Prevention and Early Intervention services;

Number of people who are digitally enabled to remain independent at home - (Digital Enablement);

Number of people supported to remain at home following a non- critical emergency (Mobile Response Service);

Number of new housing units developed to meet the needs of people with accommodation, care and support needs; and

Completed and signed off our review of our partnership agreement with the third sector.



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

More people who need care and support when they reach adulthood will be able to access housing and support in the community which meets their unique needs

Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage & culture can be enjoyed by future generations

By enabling more people to be involved in decision making, local culture and heritage can be conserved, promoted and sustained. Carried out in the right way, housing developments will also help to alleviate fuel poverty.

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

This programme will create a number of new jobs in the council's directly employed workforce. Goods and services procured to support this objective will also be undertaken in a manner which contributes to local and regional economic growth.

Programme 5 - Neighbourhood Management and Regeneration

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Streetscene / Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Economic Growth / Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Connectivity / Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Social Justice

Professional Lead: Director for Environment & Regeneration

Strategic Priorities

Our public realm will be cleaner and better cared for through improvements delivered through our Clean Up and Green Up programme;

A growing number of places will be seeing regeneration that has been developed with local people and stakeholders;

The regeneration ambitions for the county borough as a whole will be set out with supporting visions of how towns, valleys and villages will be regenerated. This will be clearly linked to funding and investment opportunities;

The county borough will be benefiting from better digital connectivity and fewer people will be digitally excluded; and

Additional funding will be secured to further develop, improve and maintain the active travel and rights of way network to create high quality, sustainable infrastructure which will be promoted to encourage people to walk and cycle regularly.

Performance Measures

Place Plans approved, adopted and in delivery as part of the Regeneration Programme;

Regeneration Strategy to be published by end 2024/25, with priorities reflected in 2025-2026 & 2025-2026 Corporate Plan;

Funding secured to further develop the Active Travel network;

Deliver £750,000 investment per year for Catch up, Clean up for the neighbourhood management budget;

Programme 5 - Neighbourhood Management and Regeneration

Political Lead:

Cabinet Member for Streetscene / Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Economic Growth / Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Connectivity / Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Social Justice

Professional Lead:

Director for Environment & Regeneration

Performance Measures

% of people satisfied with the local area as a place to live.

Regeneration Strategy to be published by end 2024/25, with priorities reflected in 2025-2026 & 2025-2026 Corporate Plan;

Increase the number of premises across Neath Port Talbot that are able to obtain high-speed fibre broadband



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

Creating the conditions where people have better access to their local community will support more young people into activities that will benefit their physical and emotional well-being

Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage & culture can be enjoyed by future generations

An improved physical environment will contribute to developing a stronger sense of civic pride which will help to sustain strong and cohesive communities

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

Volunteering makes a significant contribution to community life but also to the economy and the well-being of those who volunteer. The skills learned through volunteering also helps enhance the overall skills base of the area, helping to make the area attractive to investors and visitors.

What we will do to ensure our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Programme 6 - Responding to the Climate and Nature Emergency

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economic Growth / Cabinet Member for Streetcare

Professional Lead: Director for Environment & Regeneration

Strategic Priorities

The council will have reduced its carbon footprint through the decarbonisation of its vehicle fleet, property assets and through behaviour change;

We will have published a strengthened policy and supporting strategies to respond to climate change;

We will have extended our work to help nature recover and the quality of and access to the natural environment will have improved, guided by our biodiversity action plan;

More people in our community and wider partners have developed a greater sense of stewardship, actively working to manage and improve their local environment; and

Greater numbers of households and businesses will be participating in our recycling and reuse programmes.

Performance Measures

New Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy (DARE) strategy published end 2024/2025;

Establish a Decarbonisation team within Neath Port Talbot Council by December 2024;

Establish our carbon baseline and set net zero 2030 implementation plan by March 2025;

Programme 6 - Responding to the Climate and Nature Emergency

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economic Growth / Cabinet Member for Streetcare

Professional Lead: Director for Environment & Regeneration

Performance Measures

Make progress towards the actions set out within the Biodiversity Duty Plan; and

% of waste reused, recycled or composted.



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

Children and young people will grow up with a strong appreciation of their local environment and have the knowledge and skills to contribute to the climate and nature emergency response

Well-being Objective 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

The greater sense of stewardship will be a key feature that brings people together and helps sustain communities

Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy

Through community action, people will learn the importance of the climate and nature emergency response and develop the skills that will be sought after in the local economy



Programme 7- Delivering a strong tourism, leisure and culture offer

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Nature, Tourism & Well-being

Professional Lead: Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Strategic Priorities

The Dramatic Heart of Wales campaign will have raised the profile of Neath Port Talbot as a destination for visitors and more people will be staying overnight to enjoy what our area has to offer;

We will have reset our strategic approach to leisure and recreation ensuring high quality leisure and recreational activities for our residents;

Our heritage, sport and culture offer will be making an increased contribution to economic growth and well-being across the county borough;

We will have formed a new strategic partnership involving community and wider stakeholders to deliver our culture and heritage objectives and this partnership will be securing additional investment to extend our work to conserve and promote the county borough's heritage and culture;

We will have established new visitor masterplans for Aberavon Seafront and the Afan Valley and will be working with partners to deliver those plans;

Pontardawe Arts Centre will be home to a new cinema complex and this will have strengthened the role of the Centre as an important community hub;

We will have developed a heritage corridor through the Vale of Neath and refurbished the Princess Royal Theatre and surrounding public realm in Port Talbot – these developments are being enjoyed by local people but also helping to grow our local economy, particularly the visitor economy; and

We will complete and publish a feasibility study to replace Pontardawe Swimming Pool.

 **Programme 7- Delivering a strong tourism, leisure and culture offer**

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism & Culture

Professional Lead: Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Performance Measures

- Delivery of 70% of the culture strategy action plan targets;
- Number of overnight stays in Neath Port Talbot;
- Investment delivered in visitor infrastructure and product development;
- Indoor leisure business plan published by March 2025;
- New partnership compact to be developed by end 2024-2025;
- External grant funding attracted across the whole area (not just NPT council);
- Margam Castle NLHF bid successful;
- Aberavon Seafront masterplan to be adopted by end of 2024;
- Pontardawe Cinema to be open by April 2025;
- Budget targets met for Pontardawe Arts Centre;
- NPT Museum Feasibility complete by Dec 2024;

Programme 7- Delivering a strong tourism, leisure and culture offer

Political Lead:	Cabinet Member for Nature, Tourism & Well-being
Professional Lead:	Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Performance Measures
Achieve museum accreditation by 2027;
Library strategy adopted by March 2025;
Events strategy adopted by March 2025; and
Pontardawe Swimming Pool feasibility study complete.



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life	Well-being Objective 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable	Well-being Objective 4 - Local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy
Participation in sport and recreation will increase in all groups contributing to improved physical and mental well-being. The delivery of curriculum reform will enable all children and young people with a strong sense of belonging and civic pride for their local area.	The enhanced approach to leisure and recreation will enable more people across our communities to be active, contributing to the development of strong and cohesive communities.	Our culture, leisure and heritage strategies will attract greater investment which will benefit the local economy. By embedding our culture and heritage across our functions, the things that make Neath Port Talbot unique will be celebrated more widely and contribute to the growth of the local economy.

How we will work with our partners we create the conditions for more secure, well paid and green work in the area and support local people into those jobs

Programme 8 - Supporting business and attracting investors

Political Lead:	Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Economic Growth
Professional Lead:	Director for Environment & Regeneration

Strategic Priorities

Working with our partners we will have fully established the Celtic Freeport, and continued the delivery of Swansea Bay City Deal projects, attracting new investment to the area, including the creation of sustainable jobs in floating off-shore wind, biofuels, high value manufacturing and the wider green economy;

Where funding from Welsh Government allows we will have delivered a range of transport schemes that enable better integration across different modes of transport and we will have ensured that the transport needs of the county borough are fully reflected in the regional transport plan prepared by the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales;

We will have delivered a range of positive outcomes across the county borough from the Shared Prosperity Programme, contributing to economic growth, the improvement of the public realm and the reduction of inequalities;

We will have helped to mitigate the impact of decarbonisation at Tata Steel UK Ltd through action to help people into alternative employment and to help local businesses to diversify. We will have secured governmental support to create replacement jobs in the local economy;

We will be in the final phases of delivering our City Deal programmes and these will have created new jobs and infrastructure that are enabling the further green and sustainable growth of our local economy;

We will have further strengthened our links with academia and the wider innovation sector. We are seeking more investment in research and development flowing from these activities and this in turn is creating more investor interest;



Programme 8 - Supporting business and attracting investors

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Economic Growth

Professional Lead: Director for Environment & Regeneration

Strategic Priorities

Town centres are demonstrating resilience and a new town centre offer is emerging which is distinctive to each place;

We have secured funding to strengthen the delivery of activities that support businesses operating within the foundational economy and, in particular those within our valley communities including the embedding of circular economy principles; and

We will have started to adopt the replacement Local Development Plan and will move forward on the implementation of the Plan.

Performance Measures

Progress towards delivering the outputs and outcomes agreed in the Celtic Freeport Full Business Case;

Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 - Vale of Neath Heritage Corridor Visitor Attractor project (Gnoll Estate Country Park Visitor Infrastructure and Waterfall Country Pontneddfechan Visitor Infrastructure) to be delivered by March 2026;

Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 3 Port Talbot Regeneration project (Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Square and Riverside Walk) to be delivered by March 2026;

To deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan in Neath Port Talbot by March 2025.



Programme 8 - Supporting business and attracting investors

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Economic Growth

Professional Lead: Director for Environment & Regeneration

Performance Measures

We will have helped to deliver a range of interventions that mitigate the impact of change on local people and businesses as a result of Tata transition:

- Number of businesses supported to diversify operations;
- Number of businesses supported to achieve growth;
- Number of businesses supported to deliver redundancy measures; restructuring or closure of operations;
- Number of individuals supported to find alternative employment;
- Number of apprentices supported to find new placements; and
- Number of people reskilled.



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

Improved vocational pathways are creating wider choice for children and young people and this is enabling more young people to access well paid, sustainable work in Neath Port Talbot.

Well-being Objective 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

Local businesses are thriving and more businesses are being created in the county borough, benefiting from the new economic activity that is taking place. Local people have a wider choice of better paid, secure employment and this is starting to reflect in improved services and infrastructure

Well-being Objective 3 - Our environment, heritage and culture can be enjoyed by future generations

More industries are helped to decarbonise and there is a growth in new green industries which are having positive impacts on the local environment and nature. More young people are choosing to bring their own families up within the county borough and are helping to conserve our environment, heritage and culture. There is a strong sense of civic pride in what the county borough is achieving.



 **Programme 9 - Skills and Employability for local people**

Political Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Climate Change

Professional Lead: Director for Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning

Strategic Priorities

We will have published a skills and employability strategy that is fully aligned with our economic and regeneration aspirations and be working with schools and wider partners to develop a wider range of pathways into work for all residents;

More people and more employers are participating in apprenticeship programmes; and

The qualification and skill levels achieved by NPT residents are improved and better aligned with economic growth in the local area.

Performance Measures

Progress towards meeting year 1 and 2 actions with the approved Employability and Skills Strategy published in 2024/2025;

Number of people on various apprenticeship programmes;

Promote the full range of pathways available for skills and employment progression; and

Improvement in the qualification levels of the resident population.

Programme 9 - Skills and Employability for local people



Contribution to additional Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective 1 - All children and young people have the best start in life

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LET'S KEEP TALKING

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