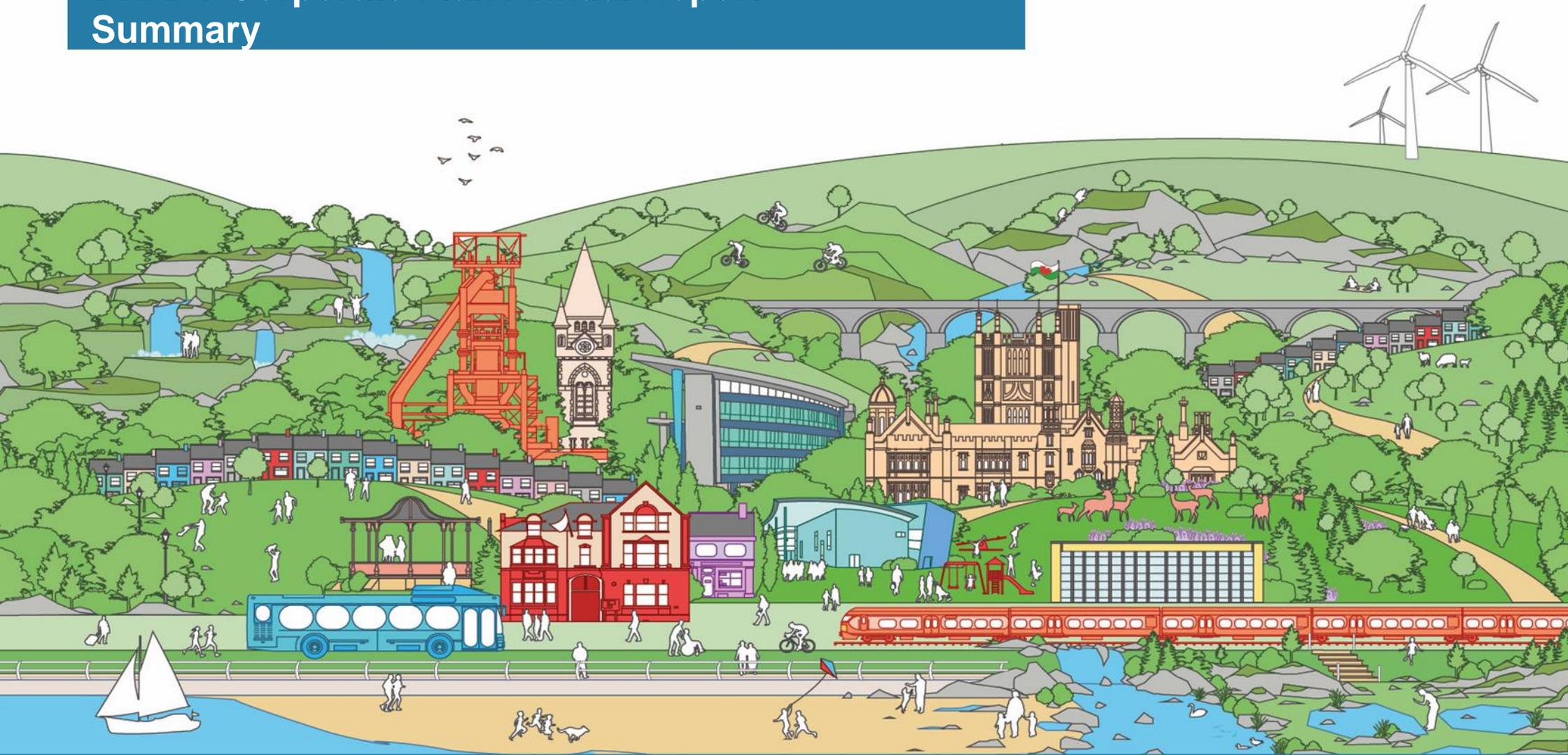


Appendix 2  
**DRAFT Corporate Plan Annual Report  
Summary**



Period: 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022



## **FOREWORD**

In the middle of March 2020, the Council mobilised an emergency response to the developing COVID-19 national emergency situation. There was an immense effort to ensure the Council responded in step with the policy decisions taken by the Welsh Government and the UK Government.

As we moved into the second year (2021/2022) of the pandemic, our response was greatly assisted by the availability of the Covid-19 vaccines. We were pleased to be able to offer further support to our NHS, converting facilities at Margam Orangery for use as a mass vaccination centre and modifying a mobile library for use as a mobile vaccination centre. The mobile vaccination centre enabled the vaccine programme to be accessed by those hardest to reach. We also made facilities available for the rapid expansion of Covid-19 testing at various locations across the county borough.

We continued to administer government financial support programmes. This enabled financial support to be provided quickly to local businesses and also to individual residents – for example, residents required to self-isolate and those who had children eligible for free school meals.

Alongside our ongoing response to the pandemic, we continued to deliver on the priorities we had set in our Corporate Plan 2021/2023 and in this Annual Report Summary you will find more information on that work and the difference we made.

Going forward, the emphasis is on working together to help the county borough continue to recover and make Neath Port Talbot a place we are all proud of. There are a number of challenges facing us but we learned through the pandemic that when we come together we can achieve remarkable things.

**Cllr S Hunt, Leader of Council**

This Report is available [in Welsh](#) and on our website. More detailed progress is reported within our [2021/22 Annual Report](#).

## **Summary of Progress and Performance for 2021/22:**

**Well-being objectives – How did we do?** – Overall, we were on track in delivering all the three well-being objectives for 2021/22, which is the final year of these particular objectives.

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

In terms of the corporate plan ‘Steps’ to deliver the priorities, for 2021/22, 77% (72 of 93) were on track and 21 ‘just off track’. This is an improvement on 2020/21 whereby 65% (54 of 83) of steps were on track, 24 of the steps were ‘just off’ track and 5 were ‘off track’. For 2019/20 we reported 83% (68 of 83) of steps on track. Overall progress on these steps is showing that services are starting to recover and have improved on 2020/21, which was heavily impacted by the pandemic.

Summary progress of each well-being objective and our improvement priorities is detailed from page 5 below with more detail within our full 2021/22 Corporate Plan Annual Report [\(link\)](#).

## **Key Performance Indicators - How did we do?**

To assess our performance in meeting our well-being objectives, alongside progress on our ‘Steps’, for 2021/22 we used 58 performance indicators (Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators).

The summary below shows a higher proportion of corporate plan key performance indicators achieved targets in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 and 2019/20 and the percentage improving increased by 1% compared to 2020/21.

***\*Caution should be taken with the comparison as performance for some measures across both 2020/21 and 2021/22 were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.***

- **Comparing against Targets** - During 2021/22, of the performance indicators that had comparable targets, 70% (28 of 40) achieved target, 7.5% (3 of 40) were within 5% of target and 22.5% (9 of 40) were 5% or more below target. This compares favourably to 2020/21 where 61% (23 of 38) achieved target, 18% (7 of 38) were within 5% of target and 21% (8 of 38) were 5% or more below the target set. In 2019/20, 54% achieved target.
- **Comparing against previous year performance** - In 2021/22, 58% (28 of 48) improved or maintained performance, 17% (8 of 48) marginally declined but within 5% and 25% (12 of 48) declined by 5% or more. In 2020/21, 57% (24 of 42) improved or maintained performance, 24% (10 of 42) marginally declined and 19% (8 of 42) declined by 5% or more. In 2019/20, 63% (32 of 51) improved or maintained performance.

More detail performance comments relating to the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators is included within the 2021/22 Key Performance Indicators Report. [link](#)

**Well-being Objective 1:** To improve the well-being of children and young people: *“All of our children and young people have the best start in life, so they can be the best they can be”*



<b>Well-being Objective 1 - To improve the well-being of children and young people</b>	<b>GREEN</b> <b>'On Track'</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We set 30 steps to help us deliver the 7 improvement priorities under Well-being Objective 1 for 2021/22.</li> <li>• All 7 of the improvement priorities were on track for 2021/22. In 2020/21, 2 of 7 improvement priorities were on track with 5 'just off' track. Progress on these in 2020/21 was heavily impacted by the pandemic.</li> <li>• 93% (28 of 30) of steps were on track with 3 steps 'just off' track. This is a significant improvement on 2020/21 where 56% (15 of 27) steps were on track.</li> </ul>	
<b>Improvement Priority 1.1 - Children in their early years will benefit from integrated and effective pre-school programmes that maximise their well-being and their readiness for learning</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We received and processed 774 Childcare Offer applications during 2021/22 and 914 children receiving childcare through the Offer as at April 2022.</li> <li>• 184 childcare providers registered to provide the Childcare Offer to families within NPT and over £2 million was paid to childcare providers active in the offer in 2021/22. There were 2,339 full day childcare places being provided at the end of March 2022.</li> <li>• We delivered 72 forestry-school play sessions for 504 children and 18 Family Wellbeing Sessions to 132 families with children 0-4 years.</li> <li>• We supported 195 children and families' while they awaited paediatric assessment.</li> <li>• We supported 64 children with additional learning needs (ALN) across 10 settings.</li> <li>• 58 Bookstart sessions were delivered at all eight of our libraries to 990 children and their families.</li> <li>• 1,393 referrals to Families First and 70% of participants who engaged with the programme had improved positive outcomes.</li> <li>• Flying Start delivered part-time childcare to approximately 500 2-3 year olds, provided a health care visiting service for over 1,700 children under 4, 330 packages of parenting support and 93 speech, language and communication development support packages.</li> </ul>	

**Improvement Priority 1.2** - Children of school age will be safer, healthier and engaged with their learning**GREEN**

- £776,000 All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding was utilised to improve opportunities for children’s play.
- Our Strategic School Improvement Programme remains on track which includes a new £9m facility at Ystalyfera Campus of Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur, £1.14m Improvement scheme at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle’r Ynn and £640,000 renewal project at the Welsh-medium 3-11 primary school Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg (YGG) Cwmllynfell.
- Our new 10 year WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) was approved by Welsh Government on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and was adopted by Council on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- A range of Welsh language learning sessions delivered with partners.
- Percentage of year 11 pupils studying Welsh first language improved to 12.29% (11.33% the year before) and was above target of 11.7%.
- Sandfields West Children’s Community (SWCC) delivered 113 engagement sessions to 462 families.
- We worked alongside the Physical Activity and Sport Service (PASS) to deliver 4 basic motor skills sessions to 65 children at each session.
- All schools in NPT are following new ALN (Additional Learning Needs) processes and systems in line with new legislation.
- Attendance at both primary and secondary schools for the 2020/21 academic continued to be affected by the pandemic.
- We supported a number of Ethnic Minority groups and worked with community groups such as NPT Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Community Association and stakeholder groups such as the Gypsy Traveller Forum, supported LGBTQ+ groups in schools and worked closely with other partners to provide support for refugees and their families from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

**Improvement Priority 1.3** - Children and young people in need of protection, care and support will be protected and safeguarded and more of those children will be able to grow up in a stable family setting**GREEN**

- Adults and Children’s ‘Single Point of Contact’ (SPOC) provided information, advice and assistance to over 23,000 contacts.
- 99.15% of child assessments were completed on time.
- The ‘Working Together Service’ worked with in excess of 50 children and their families and has been key to preventing the need for any of these children who engaged with this service from entering the care system.
- Work continues to be undertaken regionally to develop emotional and well-being support services for children and young people.
- We continue to develop our in-house fostering service to ensure the sufficiency and stability of placements.

**Improvement Priority 1.4** - Young people leaving full- time education will have the opportunity to enter employment, training or further/higher education

**GREEN**

- We supported 78 apprenticeships and 32 Kickstart placements, with 5 gaining further employment within NPT Council.
- The Legacy Youth Workers Service supported 253 year 11 school leavers who were identified as being most at risk of becoming NEET.
- 2.4% (39 of 1,618) of year 11 leavers were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)), better than our target of 3%.
- 210 young people received support from The Youth Service Keeping in touch (KIT) Team with 144 achieving a successful outcome. Examples of positive outcomes include achieving recognised qualifications, entering work based learning, work placement or work experience, securing a job interview, engaging with a specialist service following referral and entering paid employment.
- 30% of young people were in contact with the Youth Service, which is an improvement but still lower than pre-pandemic levels.
- We continued with our work as Corporate Parents to ensure young people have suitable accommodation and support when they leave the care of the Council.

**Improvement Priority 1.5** - All children and young people will be helped to have a say in matters that affect them

**GREEN**

- The first part of the Children’s Rights’ Charter Action Plan was completed. It is anticipated the Charter will be finalised October 2022 with the launch on International Children’s Day.
- We continued to obtain views from service users to help drive improvements to service delivery.
- Our Children and Young People Service partnered with Social Care Wales to produce a document that explains our Strengths Based Model of Practice which is an outcome focused model that we have been applying since 2017. Social Care Wales intend promoting the framework and handbook to all Welsh Authorities.
- Face to face engagements were carried out with 37 children between the ages of 3 – 12 at 6 summer programme events, as part of our ‘Let’s Talk’ initiative.
- Our 16-17 year olds electoral voter registration rate increased by 12.8% to 58.5%

**Improvement Priority 1.6 - Children and young people are safe and feel safe**

**GREEN**

- Age appropriate healthy relationship lessons and a workshop on Cyber Crime was delivered virtually to approximately 1,800 pupils.
- Healthy relationship lessons delivered in schools to 1,408 secondary school pupils.
- All schools are engaged with 360 degree Safe Cymru Self-Evaluation tool to help keep learners safe online.
- We continue to review and develop our response to safeguarding practice across Children's Services and a Joint Inspection into Child Protection arrangements across NPT was broadly positive. However further work is required across the partnership in response to Criminal Exploitation, which is now the most prevalent risk factor outside of the family home.
- Approximately 1,600 council employees completed mandatory safeguarding awareness e-learning training.
- Road Safety programmes were delivered to over 13,000 pupils.

**Improvement Priority 1.7 - Children of all ages will benefit from participation in activities in the natural environment, providing benefits for well-being and a greater appreciation for the role the natural environment plays in their lives**

**GREEN**

- £776,000 All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding delivered outdoor play and sport activities, including play in parks and Forest School.
- Improvements were made to local parks and playgrounds to improve quality of access to outdoor play.
- 72 forestry-school play sessions delivered for 504 children.
- Projects at Craig Gwladus have also supported local schools to use the Park for outdoor learning.
- The Lost Peatlands project has been running outdoor learning sessions enabling local children to learn about and experience their local environment, learn about peatlands and the important wildlife in the area.



**Well-being Objective 2:** To improve the well-being of all adults who live in the county borough: *“Everyone participates fully in community life – socially and economically”*

<b>Well-being Objective 2 - To improve the well-being of all adults who live in the county borough</b>	<b>GREEN</b> ‘On Track’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We set out 31 steps to help us deliver the 8 improvement priorities for Well-being Objective 2 for 2021/22.</li> <li>• 6 of the 8 improvement priorities were on track and 2 ‘just off track’ for 2021/22. In 2020/21, 4 of 6 improvement priorities were on track with 2 ‘just off’ track.</li> <li>• For 2021/22, 65% (20 of 31) of steps were on track with 11 steps ‘just off’ track. In 2020/21, 65% (20 of 31) were on track, 10 ‘just off’ track and one step off track.</li> </ul>	
<b>Improvement Priority 2.1 - Local people can access sustainable, local, quality employment</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We responded to 700 business requests for advice, information or financial support; Processed 300 emergency grant payments to small businesses and provided assistance to 244 new business start-ups.</li> <li>• 112 people were helped to progress back to work, training or volunteering via the Workways+ programme.</li> <li>• 134 people aged 16-24 and 50 people aged 25+ were helped to gain training, volunteering, work experience, full time education or sustainable employment through the Communities for Work Programme and 525 people through the Communities for Work plus programme.</li> <li>• Through the Kickstart Programme, 108 people were placed with local businesses and we supported 32 people, of which 5 people gained employment with us.</li> <li>• We facilitated 2,844 training weeks from apprenticeship, traineeships and work experience opportunities.</li> </ul>	

**Improvement Priority 2.2 - Local people can access quality affordable housing****AMBER**

- No affordable homes were provided through the planning system (via section 106 agreements) during 2021/22. The rate of affordable housing delivery has been influenced by the low levels of market housing delivered in recent years and due to issues with viability. These issues will be addressed through the LDP (Local Development Plan) review which has commenced.
- 66 new gas central heating systems were installed into homes across the county borough through the Warm Homes Fund Scheme.
- 61% of households were successfully prevented from becoming homeless, just above our 60% target.
- Housing Support Grant was utilised to provide targeted support from external organisations/charities, such as support for ex-offenders, substance misuse and domestic abuse victims.
- Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants continues to be disrupted by the effects of the Covid pandemic. Average days to complete a disabled facilities grant reduced to 339 days however is still higher than target of 270 days.
- A Housing Support Programme Strategy was developed during 2021/22 , consulted on in early 2022/23 and will be considered by Cabinet in October 2022. The strategy will outline the strategic direction of the local authority for housing support services and approach to homelessness prevention and housing support services.

**Improvement Priority 2.3 - People are safe and feel safe****AMBER**

- 34.7% of incidents of domestic abuse were repeat victims which has reduced over the last two years, however high risk referrals have increased by 19%.
- Upon lifting of Covid 19 restrictions we saw an increase in anti-social behaviour (ASB) related incidents, particularly in our town centre areas. Specific sub groups have been setup to deal with particular issues of ASB, including Neath Town Centre, Port Talbot Town Centre and Briton Ferry.
- More planned work to investigate the key causes and consequences of drug use and drug deaths for individuals and their families.
- Since 2015 there has been a steady decline in accidents, there were 216 recorded accidents in 2015 and 94 in 2021. Unfortunately we did have 4 road traffic accident fatalities during the calendar year 2021.
- 100% of building control 'full plan' applications checked within 15 days and 99.2% of 'full plan' applications were approved first time.

- Vulnerable adults with complex needs were prioritised as part of the response to the pandemic.
- 96.6% of food businesses achieved a Food Hygiene Rating of either 3, 4, or 5 (out of 5).

**Improvement Priority 2.4** - People unable to work can maximise their income

**GREEN**

- We processed Winter Fuel payments of £100 each to over 10,000 residents.
- £750 Social Care Bonus Scheme and self-isolation payments of either £500 or £750 made to over 5,000 residents.
- The Welfare Rights Unit has supported more than 2,000 people raising on average £2,500 in extra income for each client.
- Provided c£19m in council tax support to c17, 000 households and took a decision to freeze the Council element of the Council Tax bill.
- Exceeded our collection rate target for Council Tax (98.01% collected).
- Put plans in place to deliver the Welsh Government Cost of Living Support Scheme payments to c55,000 households.
- Set aside £2m into a Hardship Relief Reserve and developed a scheme to assist those affected most from the cost of living crisis.
- We processed Housing Benefit claims in 2.73 days (average) and the accuracy rate of processing benefits was 99.98%.
- We have signed up to Chwarae Teg's Fair Play Employer Scheme for a third year to assist us with strategies to reduce our gender pay gap.

**Improvement Priority 2.5** - People who need care and support will be helped to develop their resilience, accessing support from within their community. If their needs can only be met by social services they will receive services which are personalised

**GREEN**

- Adults and Children's Single Point of Contact' (SPOC) provided information, advice and assistance to over 23,000 contacts
- A volunteer's register of people was established in order to support care providers with acute staff shortages arising from Covid-19 and a regional Infection, Protection and Control (IP&C) nurse was employed to support care homes.
- Hospital to Home has been implemented and rebranded as Home First and 568 over 65's were supported home from hospital.
- An 11% uplift to the fees paid for residential and nursing care home placements was implemented from October 2021. This uplift supported care homes to pay staff the Real Living Wage and improve other workforce terms and conditions in order to help improve the recruitment and retention of staff.
- We continued to review the services we provide for people with the most complex needs to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.
- We continued to develop our progression-based model of care for people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and physical disabilities

<b>Improvement Priority 2.6</b> - People will be able to have their say in matters that affect them and where people need help to voice their opinions, advocacy support will be available	<b>GREEN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We continued with our work to implement the Regional Joint Carers’ Strategy with our partners.</li> <li>• Support was provided for carers such as respite opportunities and short breaks.</li> <li>• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was provided to unpaid carers via the Carers Service.</li> <li>• We continue to embed a rights-based approach to ensure that people have access to advocacy support where that is required.</li> </ul>	
<b>Improvement Priority 2.7</b> - Develop a range of strategies to improve health and well-being of older people across the county borough	<b>GREEN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local Market Stability Report (MSR) has been developed which will inform the Regional Market Stability Report and will help Local Authorities and Health Boards to be better placed to plan and commission social care services for their local and regional populations and the report provides useful information for providers of social care, people who use the service and unpaid carers. The Market Stability Report will be used to develop local and regional Market Position Statements that set out what types of services are required to meet population need now and in the future and will then be used to inform the creation of local and regional commissioning strategies.</li> <li>• A programme of commissioning work has been developed to take forward necessary work as identified through the above market stability report.</li> </ul>	
<b>Improvement Priority 2.8</b> - People will benefit from participation in activities in the natural environment, providing benefits for well-being and a greater appreciation for the role the natural environment plays in their lives	<b>GREEN</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2021 our upgraded Active Travel route opened in Neath.</li> <li>• A number of projects have secured funding to support community engagement and volunteering in the natural environment including Lost Peatlands of South Wales Project, Connecting Green Infrastructure Project and Craig Gwladus projects. All of these projects provide health and wellbeing focused outdoor activities as well as a range of events, educational training and schools activities.</li> </ul>	



**Well-being Objective 3:** To develop the local economy and environment so that the well-being of people can be improved: *“The whole of Neath Port Talbot county borough will be a vibrant, healthy and safe place to live, work and enjoy recreational time”*

**Well-being Objective 3- To develop the local economy and environment so that the well-being of people can be improved**

**GREEN**  
**‘On Track’**

- We set out 32 steps to help us deliver the 9 improvement priorities for Well-being Objective 3 for 2021/22.
- 7 of the 9 improvement priorities were on track and 2 ‘just off track’ for 2021/22. In 2020/21, 6 of 8 improvement priorities were on track with 2 ‘just off’ track.
- For 2021/22, 75% (24 of 32) of steps were on track with 8 steps ‘just off’ track. In 2020/21, 76% (19 of 25) of steps were on track, 5 ‘just off’ track and one step off track.

**Improvement Priority 3.1 - We will provide an environment where new businesses can establish themselves and existing businesses can grow**

**GREEN**

- Regeneration work continued, including the new leisure and retail development in Neath and the Plaza Cinema in Port Talbot. We have completed the refurbishment of offices at the former Crown site in Neath which is now occupied by three local companies. Work is ongoing in the remediation of Harbourside. The new Technology Centre on Baglan Energy Park was completed in early 2022 and we assisted with delivery of the Coastal development at the rear of Boots in Neath as well as the ongoing refurbishment of the former Liberal Club on Orchard Street.
- The Swansea Bay City Deal programmes/projects progressed. We led regional projects for Homes as Power Stations (HAPS) and Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth (SILCG). Both projects have been approved by Welsh and UK Governments in 2021.
- 410 jobs were created or safeguarded as a result of financial support we provided.
- We supported 36 growth projects from existing local manufacturing companies which created/safeguarded over 200 jobs with the potential to create/safeguard up to 500 jobs.

**Improvement Priority 3.2 - We will work with communities to increase reuse, recycling and composting**

**AMBER**

- We experienced a slight drop in 'recycling' performance in 2021/22, along with 12 other Councils. However at 66%, we still exceeded the current statutory target of 64%. The next review of our Waste Strategy is due to take place in the autumn of 2022 to put in place any required actions needed to deliver the 70% target by 2024/25.
- We saw a reduction in the amount of waste generated per person from 209.7 tonnes in 2020/21 to 204.37 tonnes in 2021/22 and a slight improvement in cleanliness of our streets from 90.98% in 2020/21 to 92.85% in 2021/22.
- The average days to clear fly tipping increased from 2.84 in 2020/21 to 4.52 days in 2021/22.

**Improvement Priority 3.3 - Local people and visitors can access good quality leisure and community facilities, country parks and countryside**

**AMBER**

- Overall there has been a reduction in tourism sector businesses seeking assistance due to impacts of the pandemic.
- 10 existing tourism providers and 2 new and 5 proposed tourism providers were supported during 2021/22.
- A new Splash Pad in Aberavon has replaced the old paddling pool and there are new water fountains, jets and waterfalls, spread over a central play area. In addition, the Tourism Team secured £120,000 funding through Visit Wales' Brilliant Basics Scheme to create a fully accessible changing place at the Aberavon Seafront Aquasplash, refurbish the existing public toilet provision and improve access pathways.
- Plaza cinema has been redeveloped and renovation works to the Turbine House in Margam Park has been completed.
- We secured £250,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help protect and sustain our built and natural heritage.
- Cabinet Members agreed to bring leisure services back under the council's management (in-house). Following the Cabinet decision, council officers will now work with Celtic Leisure to facilitate an in-house leisure service and undertake the necessary consultation work.
- Visits to Margam Park have increased despite impacts of the pandemic and improvements have been made to the Orangery, Charlottes Pantry and the children's play facility.
- The number of visits to libraries, theatres and leisure centres continued to be impacted by the pandemic.

<b>Improvement Priority 3.4</b> - To identify and develop opportunities for sustainable economic growth in our valley communities across the county borough improving the health and well-being of our communities	<b>GREEN</b>
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- We continued to work with developers and partners to deliver key strategic development sites along the coastal corridor including Coed Darcy, Baglan Bay including Port Talbot Harbourside and Baglan Energy Park.
- 87% of all planning applications were determined within time, target for the year was 95%.
- £150 million Global Centre for Rail Excellence (GCRE) project at the top of the Dulais Valley and in South Powys received outline planning permission on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021.
- Outline planning application for the Wildfox Resort in the Afan Valley was granted in January 2022, subject to a Section 106 legal agreement.
- During 2021/22 we supported 50 valley businesses.
- Our Economic Recovery Plan has been adopted, which will provide focus on our valleys’ communities.
- Working with Swansea Council we have jointly appointed consultants to undertake a Housing and Economic Growth Assessment to inform the emerging Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).
- We are developing a Levelling Up Fund bid for the Neath Valley centred around culture, heritage and tourism attractions.
- We continue to access Welsh Government funding to deliver regeneration projects in our Valleys’ communities.

<b>Improvement Priority 3.5</b> - To protect, conserve and enhance our natural environment (including green and blue infrastructure, important landscapes and countryside, habitats and species and wider ecosystem resilience) increasing awareness of its value and encouraging wider participation	<b>GREEN</b>
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- The Biodiversity Duty Plan (BDP) was reviewed, updated and approved in November 2021.
- 51 biodiversity rich areas are protected and/or enhanced and a new ‘bee friendly’ approach to managing our verges and grasslands was adopted.
- We began a pioneering air quality monitoring project aimed at providing accurate “real time” measurement of pollution so solutions for greener, healthier communities can be found. This project is the first of its kind in Wales.
- Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) breaches in the Port Talbot/Taibach area for 2021/22 was 27, within the target of 35.
- 48 environmental volunteers from our communities are working with a number of grant funded local environment projects.

- Wildlife towers constructed at the Gnoll Country Park and at Bryn Tip Local Nature Reserve, with owl and bat use already evident.
- The Lost Peatlands of South Wales Partnership Project was awarded £1.56 million by National Lottery Heritage Fund and works have started to restore peatlands and other upland habitats in the upper Afan Valley and into Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- A number of public rights of way footpaths have been improved.

**Improvement Priority 3.6** - To deliver a positive contribution to the regional planning agenda

**GREEN**

- We continued to work with neighbouring authorities to scope and deliver a Strategic Development Plan and we have commissioned a number of studies with our neighbouring authorities.
- The Public Services Board (PSB) has completed its second local assessment of well-being. The next step will be to agree well-objectives and develop the detail of the well-being plan which is due to be published May 2023.

**Improvement Priority 3.7** - To promote and deliver sustainable accessibility and improve connectivity and communication links

**GREEN**

- We were awarded £721,000 core funding in addition to £195,000 for active travel design work, minor improvement works, land negotiations and promotion of schemes.
- A number of improvements to active travel routes were made including improving 11 active travel junctions, removing or replacing 16 barriers and 8 seats and storage for 20 bikes were installed.
- Work is still ongoing with Welsh Government (WG) and Transport for Wales (TfW) on the strategic bus network review.
- We further improved the condition of A roads, B roads and C roads and achieved targets for all three road categories.

**Improvement Priority 3.8** - We will work with partners to improve connectivity and infrastructure across the county borough

**GREEN**

- We worked to support the Swansea Bay City Region on the wider digital connectivity issues and opportunities to benefit the area and bring forward further connectivity.
- We continued to work with partners to improve digital infrastructure and connectivity.

- We secured funding from Welsh Government for the development of fibre infrastructure for Mardon Park on Baglan Energy Park.
- With our help, 253 local businesses received support via Welsh Government’s Superfast Broadband Cymru Programme and a successful Community Renewal Fund (CRF) bid during 2021/22 means continued support for businesses.
- We continued to support the third sector to enable more people to access on-line services.
- Public Services Board partners have made a formal commitment to working towards the digital inclusion charter principles so that the need to cater for digitally excluded people is reflected in agency digital strategies and agency equality plans. The next phase of work will look at infrastructure and the availability and affordability of high speed broadband.

**Improvement Priority 3.9** - We will introduce a series of interventions and improvement measures across the county borough to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits and opportunities provided by the decarbonisation agenda

**GREEN**

- Some improvement progress during 2021/22 include low energy street light lamp replacements, electric vehicle charging points and solar panels at the Quays in Baglan and a first of its kind in Wales air quality monitoring project.
- We secured funding from the Community Renewal Fund in February 2022 to deliver an eight month pilot project to support innovative local businesses and will provide a platform for businesses to discuss future challenges, opportunities and shared examples of good practice in relation to the decarbonisation agenda. Two events were held in March 2022 and 25 businesses attended.
- Work to restore peatlands has started within the Upper Afan and Rhondda Valleys, the project area will store around 350,000 tonnes of Carbon which is equivalent of 5,291,268 trees being planted and grown for 10 years.
- We will continue to work to address any barriers to the development of renewable energy across the county borough and promote the sustainable and appropriate use of renewable resources and build on progress already made.

## Have your say on what matters to you

We welcome feedback on the information contained within this report via:

Email: [policy@npt.gov.uk](mailto:policy@npt.gov.uk) or post: Chief Executive, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ

The Citizens Panel enables residents to take part in research relating to the council. This means you will be able to tell us what you think about council policies, priorities and/or services. The feedback helps us to understand the residents' perspective and is used to help make decisions. You do not need any knowledge of council services to become a member of the panel. We are looking for a variety of views from a range of different people. Panel members may be asked to take part in online questionnaires, informal discussions, workshops, telephone interviews and other forms of consultation. If you would like to join up, please complete the recruitment questionnaire which can be found [here](#).

We also have a number of consultation/engagement events about various services which we promote in the press and on the website which you can access via the following link: <https://www.npt.gov.uk/haveyoursay?lang=en-gb>



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

Visit the Council's website: [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)



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