

CORPORATE PLAN / STRATEGIC CHANGE PROGRAMME 2023-2024

Half year progress April 2023 to September 2023

Well-being Objective 4

Jobs & Skills

Objective
<i>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</i>

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
1. Worked through the Corporate Joint Committee to deliver the Regional Economic Development Strategy.	a. We will work collaboratively with the region to deliver the three 'ambitions' for the South West Wales economy: * Resilient & Sustainable * Enterprising & Ambitious * Balanced & Inclusive	We are currently working with regional partners across South West Wales to develop and deliver numerous Regeneration Programmes funded by the UK and Welsh Governments, in order to feed into the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) and deliver the Regional Economic Development Strategy. These include the Swansea Bay City Deal, Shared Prosperity Fund, Celtic Freeports and the Transforming Towns initiative. The inaugural CJC Economic and Well-being Sub-Committee was held as recently as the 9 th October, further updates will follow in the Quarter 3 Highlight Report.	
	b. Map the economic development opportunities associated with Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) and maximise those opportunities to local companies, in addition to ensuring that a skilled workforce is developed through our various academic partners.	<p>As part of the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Funding funded Business Anchor project, support is being provided to local companies to help upskill their workforce and maximise their opportunities for growth and diversification associated with Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW), e.g. the team are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering events in partnership with key developers to raise awareness of the opportunities available to local companies; • Engaging with FLOW system designers and developers to establish connections for local businesses and to provide insight of industry issues from both a business and developer perspective; • Setting up a forum of local companies to discuss key issues and encourage collaborative working; • Ensuring local companies are linked up to various supply chain portals and groups such as the Celtic Sea Cluster and those associated with offshore developers; • Meeting local colleges and universities to ensure they are aware of the work being undertaken and to ensure they add value to the process. • The Freeport Business Plan should be in place by December 2023 <p>In addition, the team have been engaging with projects such as FLOVENTIS Energy. As this project is separate to the Celtic Sea offshore wind license round, this is a great opportunity for local companies to get involved with a project that is pioneering new technologies to support the next generation of wind turbine technologies.</p> <p>This work will bring about the longer term impacts for the county borough and in turn will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise opportunities for local businesses from programmes such as FLOW, on-shore renewables; Freeports, etc. • Increase the ability of local companies to secure contracts and create highly skilled and well-paid employment. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnership working between businesses; academia and key developers. • Understand the gaps in skills and work plan in place. • Grow and diversify the local economy. • Encourage innovation and develop local supply chains. 															
	<p>c. Contribute to the development of the Regional Transport Plan ensuring the transport needs and priorities for Neath Port Talbot are fully addressed. This plan will form the basis of any future grant funded submissions to enable delivery.</p>	<p>The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for South West Wales has been mandated to produce a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) for the region by Welsh Government, in conformity with the Transport (Wales) Act (2006) and to complement Llwybr Newydd: Wales Transport Strategy (2022). The region was tasked with producing an Implementation Plan setting out how the Regional Transport Plan (RTP) will be developed and adopted.</p> <p>The guidance for the Corporate Joint Committee Regional Transport Plan (RTP) was issued on 13th July 2023. An implementation plan is to be submitted to Welsh Government for approval by 31st October 2023. A draft has been prepared and has been submitted to the CJC for approval prior to submitting to Welsh Government. Key dates for the development of the RTP are shown below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="937 898 2080 1482"> <tbody> <tr> <td>13th July 2023</td> <td>Guidance for developing the RTP issued to CJC's</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31st October 2023</td> <td>CJC to submit implementation plan to WG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29th February 2024</td> <td>CJC to submit RTP case for Change (including SMART objectives) to WG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29th May 2024</td> <td>CJC to submit initial draft of RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG (before public consultation)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31st October 2024</td> <td>CJC to submit final draft of RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29th March 2025</td> <td>CJC to submit final RTP, RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30th June 2025</td> <td>WG decision on approval of RTP.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The timeline for developing the RTP is very restricted, especially considering the number of studies that have to be completed to feed into the RTP, the amount of public consultation that has to be completed and the timeframes for political/CJC approval. At present Welsh Government have not provided any funding to complete the RTP. There are no dedicated staff to deliver the RTP, existing staff will be expected to deliver the RTP on top of their current workloads.</p> <p>Prior to submitting the Implementation Plan to Welsh Government, the Plan was considered and endorsed by the CJC Regional Transport Sub Committee at its meeting on the 9th October 2023. The overarching aims of the Regional Transport Sub Committee is to drive an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system across the region; and they have the function to make recommendations to the Corporate Joint Committee on the development and delivery of the Regional Transport Plan.</p> <p>This implementation plan was subsequently considered by the Corporate Joint Committee at its meeting held on 24th October and has now been submitted to Welsh Government by their deadline of the 31st October 2023.</p>	13th July 2023	Guidance for developing the RTP issued to CJC's	31st October 2023	CJC to submit implementation plan to WG	29th February 2024	CJC to submit RTP case for Change (including SMART objectives) to WG	29th May 2024	CJC to submit initial draft of RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG (before public consultation)	31st October 2024	CJC to submit final draft of RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG	29th March 2025	CJC to submit final RTP, RTP, Integrated Well-Being Assessment and Regional Transport Development Plan to WG	30th June 2025	WG decision on approval of RTP.	
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		<p>Whilst positive discussions have taken place with Welsh Government regarding the availability of funding to prepare the RTP, those discussions have not yet concluded nor has any funding been received.</p>	
<p>2. Delivered the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) programme in Neath Port Talbot.</p>	<p>a. The Strategic Funding Programmes Team will lead the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Neath Port Talbot ensuring the local allocation of funding is maximised to deliver priority projects addressing the challenges and opportunities of the county borough as described in the regional Investment Plan. 5 anchor projects have been approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Place * Valleys & Villages * Sustainable Communities * Enhanced Business support for Growth & Innovation * Employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the Valleys and Villages Prosperity Fund (VVPF) - The VVPF seeks to address the challenges in our valleys and villages, the shortage of quality housing, commercial properties and public facilities in those areas across Neath Port Talbot and the current gap in provision of grant funding for such projects. The VVPF will fund projects that create sustainable growth in our valleys and village communities and enhance them as places to visit, work and live. A Project Manager and Project Development Officer have been recruited and commenced work in June. VVPF documentation has been finalised and the Fund has opened to receive Expressions of Interest and various promotional activities have commenced. <p>The VVPF will fund projects that will both make positive impact to the sustainability of our rural communities in the short term, such as outdoor events and markets. It will also fund projects that will make a lasting and long term difference with projects such as active travel routes enabling travel to and from work and study, green spaces that make our valleys and villages better places to live, and new/improved recreational and community facilities addressing isolation, mental health and wellbeing and access to services for all residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Funding Programmes Office managed the open call for Skills, Multiply and Strategic Projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Skills projects were approved totalling £2.7m UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding • 7 Multiply Projects were approved totalling £2.9m UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding • 7 Strategic Projects were approved totalling £1.3m <p>Grant Agreements have been issued to all approved projects and inception meetings held. Progress meetings have been scheduled to ensure all projects meet financial and output targets. The 2nd round of Skills was launched and the assessment and moderation process is in progress. Multiply Round 2 was launched and is due to close on 14th October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply programme we aim to start delivering numeracy courses designed to support people into employment and to help those already in employment to upskill. These courses will start throughout Neath Port Talbot in October 2023. We are working in partnership with a variety of internal and external agencies and local businesses including Communities for work +, Skills and Training, Youth Service, Neath Port Talbot Social Services, Bespoke, Maximus, Community Lives Consortium, Schools in Neath Port Talbot, Workways+ and Swansea University to deliver specific numeracy interventions. We are creating ‘opportunity hubs’ in various venues throughout Neath and Port Talbot. We aim to reach the 21% of households who have no-one in employment in Neath Port Talbot and those that are the hardest to reach in the community (both geographically and those who are disengaged) . We will give them the confidence and skills to enter the workplace. <p>For those who are in employment, this is often low paid and unskilled, so we will address this by offering Functioning Skills Qualifications (FSQ) building up to GCSEs, leading to access of better paid employment which will also enhance businesses and support their growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through our Adult Community Learning Service we have delivered ‘Managing money’ and ‘cooking on a budget’ sessions. These sessions have been completed successfully in various community centres, supporting people to live and deal with money independently and to foster a positive ethos around healthy eating. <p>Number of sessions delivered between April and September 2023:</p> <p>5 Cooking on a Budget which also includes Money Management – 100% pass rate.</p> <p>2 Money Management (Budgeting) – 100% pass rate.</p>	

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	<p>b. Neath Port Talbot Employability will provide a holistic joined up provision within Neath Port Talbot through a wide range of interventions. We will have a single front door service that will ensure our residents in Neath Port Talbot have the help, support and advice to meet their needs, as well as linking in with local businesses and the business team to access the right jobs. Sustainable Communities Growth Fund will be developed with a Growth Funding Officer in place. Youth and Poverty activity will move forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Youth Service’s Shared Prosperity Funded Horizons Project has provided outreach enrichment activities for socially isolated young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and who do not leave their homes. This work includes supporting young people in their homes with the aim of helping develop the confidence and social skills to at some point leave the house and engage in activities to help them progress further. <p>The Horizons Project also supports young people who need additional help to sustain their engagement on a reduced Jobs Growth Wales Plus programme of learning.</p> <p>Horizons has supported 107 young people who are furthest away from engaging during the period April - September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neath Port Talbot Employability has established a single front door triage referral process which captures a wide range of interventions to help and support individuals from comprehensive school age through to retirement age with wellbeing, employment, training, work experience and paid work opportunities. Support is offered to those who are economically inactive and unemployed, with consideration given to those who have protected characteristics. We have developed, with the aid of our Digital Team a database (POD+) that ensures all data for employability is stored at one central point and run reports to provide clear data intelligence for future use. Shared Prosperity Funding Sustainable Communities Growth Funding Officer has been appointed and will work with the central team to ensure that communities are notified of this grant funding. We are anticipating that Expressions of Interest and full applications will be scored by panel during October. Documentation has been developed to send out to community groups and organisation. One application has been approved to date, the next Panel meeting will take place in November 2023. 	
<p>3. Worked with partners to take forward major development and investment opportunities and activities linked to the council’s Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy.</p>	<p>a. Work with key and major developments to maximise any potential supply chain opportunities, attracting inward investment and linked economic benefits, on activity such as Floating Offshore Wind, re-development of Associated British Ports (ABP) Port Talbot Docks, Global Rail Centre of Excellence, Wildfox and Freeport opportunity. These range from awareness raising events, supply chain linked events and activity, linking investment enquiries, scoping low carbon opportunities, linking skills activity to relevant organisations and contacts, working across these on a strategic and operational level</p>	<p>We have secured funding from the Microgeneration Certification Scheme to deliver a project ‘Integrating Skills and Competency in Green / Retrofit Through New Learning Pathways’. Planning meetings and confirming delivery with partners MOBIE/Supply Chain School</p> <p>As part of the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund funded Business Anchor, a Neath Port Talbot Manufacturing Group has been set up to discuss Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) supply chain opportunities and link these businesses with key developers and renewable energy operators. In addition, the group will also be undertaking further scoping work to feed onto developers in relation to the capabilities and capacity of the manufacturing sector to support FLOW and other industry issues and/or barriers.</p> <p>To date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 businesses have attended 4 meetings. 15 local and 2 regional manufacturing businesses have committed to attend the meetings. Meetings/discussions have taken place with 5 offshore wind developers, i.e. Marine Power Solutions, RWE, EQUINOR, LISARB and EDF. <p>Officers have supported Global Centre for Rail Excellence, EDF, RWE and the Wildfox project in delivering ‘Meet the Buyer’ events to raise awareness of the investment and supply chain development opportunities.</p> <p>The application to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to become a strategic partner with UKRI on Launchpad to ensure there is a focus on the net zero ambitions of the region has been successful. The Launchpad is designed to help accelerate innovation and growth of local businesses connected with industrial decarbonisation.</p> <p>Successful application to UKRI to establish a Place Based Innovation Accelerator Account (PBIAA) to focus on the journey to net zero</p> <p>The project aims to bring together the education providers across South West Wales with the relevant sector bodies and associations to ensure that the training and skills are reflective of the industry needs. This will include having the facilities, resources, trainer capacity,</p>	

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		industry relevant experience, and equipment to transition to low carbon and renewable heat and energy technologies, bridging the gap between industry and competency expectations and the offer from local training providers.	
4. Delivered the Celtic Freeport across Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire.	a. Set up the Freeport company and Joint Investment Board and work in partnership with consortium members to develop the outline and full Business Cases required by the Treasury, to deliver the economic development aspirations associated with the Freeport.	<p>Economic Development continue to provide information for inclusion in the Freeports outline Business Plan. This work is ongoing with the Outline Business Plan (OBC) expected to be submitted in mid-November. It is estimated that 16,000 jobs will be delivered across Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire. The economic growth of net zero industries within underused industrial land in Neath Port Talbot will be stimulated and accelerated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a hub to encourage global trade and investment. • Attract new investment by focusing on innovation, research and development and the introduction of new technologies. • Support the creation and safeguarding of well-paid employment. <p>Promote regeneration and infrastructure improvements within the port area and outer boundaries to achieve economic growth and long-term sustainability.</p>	
5. Ensured partnership working is robust in order to develop more green opportunities.	a. Continue to work with regional and local partners to develop new green jobs and skills.	<p>The Universities, Neath Port Talbot College and Regional Skills and Learning Partnership (RSLP) have been invited to join the Manufacturing Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) Skills Group. This sharing of business intelligence should help partners identify skills gaps and develop relevant programmes of support to support new green jobs.</p> <p>Shared Prosperity Funding Skills Open Call Round 2 Webinar held on 14 July 23 for business, this was open invitation to businesses in Neath Port Talbot - Approximately 20 Neath Port Talbot businesses attended.</p> <p>Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) funding delivery is moving forward working internally (business and Education and the College). Schools have been contacted and a website has been developed for the project. The progress report has been completed and submitted to the funding body MCS.</p> <p>Understand the capabilities and capacity of the potential supply chain; the skills requirements of the workforce and industry issues and/or barriers needed to support the FLOW and on-shore renewables sectors. Greater awareness of renewables and competence through retrofit. MCS web address : https://business.nptcgroup.ac.uk/net-zero-academy/building_net_zero_in_the_region/</p>	
	b. Target businesses seeking to grow or expand within the decarbonisation and renewable energy sectors and encourage them to focus their growth plans within the county borough	<p>A Manufacturing Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) Skills Group has been set up with local companies with the aim of working collaboratively to understand the capabilities of local industry to support FLOW, identify skills gaps and what support is needed to ensure opportunities to diversify and grow within this sector is not missed. In particular, businesses have requested that the Group focuses on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the landscape in which the Renewable sector operates. • Supply chain and diversification opportunities. • UK Innovation funding and how best to access programmes. • Encouraging collaboration between businesses. • Providing opportunities for businesses to exchange ideas and link with trade/ professional bodies and industry related organisations. <p>Understanding the skills requirements needed to support the development of the Renewables sector.</p> <p>Understand the capabilities and capacity of the potential supply chain; the skills requirements of the workforce and industry issues and/or barriers needed to support the FLOW and on-shore renewables sectors.</p> <p>Improve the skills of people and businesses and supporting the net zero agenda.</p>	

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		The Skills Co-ordinator is now in post and is currently looking at the skills requirements for Neath Port Talbot working with partners to develop an enhanced undertaking of skills needs across Neath Port Talbot, both generic and with regards to renewables.	
6. Targeted programmes are developed to enable local people to benefit from the employment created through new business investment.	a. Take a collaborative approach to delivering the Supporting Business and Employability Shared Prosperity Fund projects to ensure that business and market intelligence is being used to develop employment and training programmes that meet the needs of local businesses.	<p>Working with Regional Skills and Learning Partnership (RSLP) to ensure that local businesses feed in the Annual/Quarterly Skills Report. In addition, a Skills Questionnaire is being developed to gather information from local businesses who are applying for grant funding via the Shared Prosperity Fund Business Anchor project. The aim will be to collate information on skills and training gaps, future employment trends and any recruitment issues. This intelligence will be used to inform the development of Economic Development and Skills related strategies and the delivery of employment, training and business support programmes to ensure local needs are met. This information will also be shared with the RSLP. An interim report has been completed.</p> <p>Skills plan will be available from RWE by end of '23. In addition, a joined up approach with Education to link businesses struggling to recruit with any displaced workers from other sectors is to be developed by the end of Quarter 3.</p> <p>“Draft Employability and Skills Strategy for Neath Port Talbot” collaboration with Neath Port Talbot and RLSP, should be completed end of Oct 23, this will be circulated to stakeholders, then to Corporate Directors Group and Cabinet. A collective workshop has taken place.</p> <p>A draft Outline Business Case to develop a Net Zeros Skills Centre of Excellence has been prepared and is progressing through the city deal governance structure before being submitted to both Governments for considerations. Understand the skills requirements of the workforce needed to support economic growth and the creation of well-paid employment opportunities. The Net Zero Skills Centre of Excellence will work in tandem with and enhance the opportunities provided by the Advanced Manufacturing Production Facility to deliver an industry led skills and training programme. The facility will complement rather than compete with existing academic organisations to deliver a pipeline of talented recruits to support the growing green economy.</p>	
7. Strengthen partnership arrangements at the local level to develop the economy ensuring business and communities have a strong voice in shaping future plans.	a. Support local businesses in their recovery, providing financial support when available and helping businesses to diversify so that they are more resilient to future economic shocks.	<p>Working with Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) business partners such as Business Wales, Development Bank for Wales, Communities for Work+, Workways, universities, etc., a collaborative approach has been developed to support the delivery of the SPF Programme across all communities and a strong working relationship has been established to gather and share intelligence to help shape future strategies and plans.</p> <p>As part of the delivery of the SPF Business Anchor project, throughout quarter 1 and 2 the team have been developing and testing a new Customer Management System to manage the delivery of the project, including the £2.8m grant fund. The fund is now open and the team are currently working their way through over 300 requests for financial support from local businesses. As part of the testing process, 19 grants (15 from existing businesses and 4 from new start-ups) have been processed totalling a value of £314,593.</p> <p>A full launch of the SPF Grant Fund is expected in Quarter 3.</p> <p>Develop a better coordinated gateway to business support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance to support new business start-ups. • Enable existing businesses to innovate, grow and develop and build long-term resilience within the local economy. • Develop and support a culture of innovation to maximise opportunities for diversification, growth, up-skilling and job creation. • Accelerate innovation and growth of local businesses connected with industrial decarbonisation. 	
8. Employability programmes are further strengthened ensuing that all those needing help to find work can access it,	a. Create a ‘single front door’ to our employability services so that those seeking training and/or work find it easy to access the help and support that they need.	The Youth Service Keeping in Touch Team (KIT) are tasked with locating and engaging with young people whose status is unknown and are in Tier 1 of the Careers Wales 5 Tier Model and move them into an appropriate tier. The KIT Team also provide lead worker support to targeted groups of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in the Careers Wales 5 Tier Model. During Quarter 1. Targeted groups included young people who are Electively Home Educated (EHE), young people from the traveller community and those young people who haven’t transitioned from Schools.	

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including those who are hardest to reach.		<p>During Qtr 1 the KIT Team managed to locate 38 out of 47 young people and move them into a more appropriate Tier. At the end of Qtr2 the KIT Team managed to locate 74 out of 100 young people and move them into a more appropriate Tier.</p> <p>During Qtr1 the KIT team had supported 32 young people aged 16-18. At the end of Qtr2 the KIT team had supported 34 young people aged 16-18.</p> <p>The Youth Services Legacy Youth Workers provide support to young people identified as being at risk of becoming NEET to make a successful transition from school to a post 16 destination.</p> <p>During Qtr 1 the Legacy Team supported 143 young people (Year 11 leaver project). At the end of Qtr 2 the Legacy Team supported 231 young people (Year 11 leaver project). This work will continue over the summer holidays and youth workers will maintain supporting these young people until the 31st October.</p> <p>Continuing to work with stakeholders, organisations and agencies we have updated our one system triage process to incorporate a holistic provision within Neath Port Talbot ensuring that customers are receiving the appropriate support for their need. This has recently gone out to a wider partnership stakeholders 4th October. We are incorporating a Training framework as part of Neath Port Talbot Employability to cover a wide range of training opportunities especially those focusing on emerging new green skills.</p> <p>Neath Port Talbot Employability is linking with the Shared Prosperity Fund Anchor projects and the Homes as Power Stations [HAPS] project to identify areas of growth within the emerging green economy. These links will identify areas of training required. A Training Framework is being developed, which will include invitations to apply for the identified training – Renewable Energy Solutions / Retrofit / Energy / Electrical and Construction (to include Traditional and Heritage Building). There has been an increase in individuals prepared and contributing to the emerging green economy.</p> <p>Employer Liaison Officers and the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator, working with local businesses will support employers to identify areas of transferable skills. The newly appointed Skills Co-ordinator is carrying out an analysis of the current training provision to identify gaps.</p> <p>Hub has been opened in the centre of Port Talbot offering a “single front door approach” to employment support, the Hub is open daily (Monday-Friday with partner agencies utilising the venue for appointments. This Hub ensures that people looking for employment support can walk in and be supported immediately and in addition can be referred to the correct provision for support. The Hub is averaging 50 drop-ins each month for people looking for employment support.</p> <p>Referrals received requesting support total 1296 between April and September.</p>	Green
9. Established 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 and attracting new investment to the area.	a. Strengthen engagement with local businesses.	<p>As part of the delivery for the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Business Anchor project, a series of community events have been delivered across valley and town centre locations to promote business support services and provide hands-on advice to new and existing businesses across Neath Port Talbot. To date, 5 events aimed at providing advice and guidance to new business start-ups and, 6 Let’s Talk Business’ events for new and existing businesses have been held.</p> <p>The SPF Business Anchor project is delivering a programme of support to key employers within the manufacturing, engineering, med-tech, Information Computer Technology (ICT) and renewables sectors and new and existing businesses within the Foundational Economy, delivering a £2.8m grant pot and specialist support via diagnostic reviews.</p> <p>Meet the Buyer events have also been delivered with key developers such as Associated British Ports (ABP); RWE; Wildfox; Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) to encourage local sourcing, supply chain development and employment and training opportunities.</p>	Green
	b. Work with the Economic Forum to review the Local Economic Recovery Plan and develop a joint flexible	As the focus has shifted to the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Anchor projects, and other strategic projects such as Freeports, Celtic Sea, etc., the Local Economic Development Recovery Plan needs to be reviewed to incorporate these new areas of work.	Green

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	framework for delivering and monitoring actions' going forward.	Governance structures are currently being worked up. In addition, working in collaboration with Education, to develop a new Economic Development and Skills Strategy to shape the delivery of future services. The Economic Strategy and associated delivery plan will enable a coordinated development of our existing and emerging business community and will enable the council and partners to access additional sources of funding	
10. Invested and attracted investment into our principal towns, district centres and wider communities; respond to the demand for more flexible work spaces; produced a holistic Regeneration Strategy for the borough.	a. Work with the Urbanists will continue. In addition to Town Centres, remit extended to include secondary and tertiary centres e.g. Ystalyfera, Gwaun- Cae-Gurwen, Taibach. A submission has been made for Shared Prosperity Fund to develop and expand the work which has recently been funded by the Welsh Government via its 'Transforming Towns' initiative.	Consultants, The Urbanists, are nearing completion over their commission for Place Plans for the three main towns (which consists of documents identifying issues to be addressed and/or opportunities to be explored) and the next steps are to go out to Member and wider consultation to help shape the proposals later in 2023. Work is continuing on the secondary and tertiary centres, which will follow the suit of that of the three main towns. We will dovetail together the Place Plans and capture them under one overarching Regeneration Strategy. This will then allow us to have numerous Regeneration projects identified, and will provide a pipeline of future Regeneration programmes, as and when appropriate funding becomes available from both the Welsh and UK Governments. This preparedness will enable us to respond far more quickly and flexibly to funding opportunities, and allow us a greater amount of time in which to deliver the projects.	
	b. This work will then form an important part of the forthcoming wider Regeneration Strategy, with emphasis on the Valleys.	Our aim is to dove-tail together the place plans and capture them under one overarching Regeneration Strategy. This will then allow us to have a pipeline of Regeneration projects identified and will provide the basis of future Regeneration programmes which we can draw down, as and when appropriate funding becomes available from both the Welsh and UK Governments. Welsh Government funding in particular has recently been focused on the main 3 town centres. With the Place Plans completed, we will have the opportunity to be more inclusive of valleys areas, and this will be further supported by the UK Governments Shared Prosperity Fund. This preparedness will enable us to respond far more quickly and flexibly to funding opportunities and allow us a greater amount of time in which to deliver the projects across the wider borough.	
11. Increased capacity within the Regeneration & Economic Development team to better position the council to develop and bid for funding to support the development of the local economy.	a. Strengthen the council's business support team to help local businesses recruit skilled people and to help local learning providers to adapt learning provision to keep pace with the changing needs of employers.	Recruitment has been completed for 7 new posts and the enhancement of 4 existing posts to take on additional responsibilities. Funded via the Shared Prosperity Fund Programme (SPF), the posts are involved in managing the delivery of the project including the overall grant process; monitoring and reporting; submitting claims; ensuring activities meet programme eligibility, procurement, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other regulatory issues as well as developing and delivering social value, community benefits and circular economy concepts and initiatives and providing advice and guidance to new and existing businesses operating within the Foundational Economy. In addition, the posts will also be involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning of a feasibility study to provide a strategic position in terms of leveraging future funding and developing local supply chains to support new investment, technologies, markets, etc. • Working in collaboration with universities and local colleges to deliver specialist business support packages to key employers and spin outs to maximise opportunities from new developments/technologies (Floating Of-Shore Wind (FLOW); low carbon; net zero, hydrogen production), Government initiatives (Freeports), regeneration (re-development of Port Talbot Docks and new investments (Global Centre of Rail Excellence). • Delivering communications, marketing and promotional activity relating to for the SPF Business Anchor Project. 	

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	<p>b. Recruit additional staff to the Regeneration team, to enable the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund programme.</p>	<p>2 members of staff have been recruited to administer the Valleys and Villages anchor project and 2 members of staff have been recruited to administer the Heritage, Culture and Tourism anchor Project. Applications are already in the process of Scrutiny and approval and will shortly be issued to successful parties.</p>	
	<p>c. Establish the mechanisms to implement the actions set out in the Local Economic Development Plan and use market intelligence gained from the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund programme to strengthen future funding bids</p>	<p>The Shared Prosperity Fund Business Anchor project will support the delivery of the key priorities of the Economic Development Plan when it is fully launched in October 2023. A new Content Management System (CMS) has been procured to ensure business intelligence is captured in a format that can be used to support the development of future bids.</p> <p>Additional funding is being secured to expand the regeneration team and enable an enhanced response to the economic challenges currently experienced within the Neath Port Talbot area and to enable the delivery of strategic regeneration projects within the council area.</p> <p>Improved partnership working with major developers/investors will deliver a positive and sustainable growth of our local economy, and in turn an increase in well paid jobs and reduction in poverty levels.</p>	
<p>12. Improved access to sites and premises – especially in valley areas.</p>	<p>a. Via the Shared Prosperity Fund programme, we will deliver 14 new business units in the Amman, Afan and Dulais Valleys. We will also continue to explore opportunities to utilise surplus buildings.</p>	<p>Preliminary site investigative work is underway along with initial layout designs. Survey work is being undertaken with a view to submitting Planning Applications for the 3 sites at Glyncorwg, Cwmgors and Nant y Cafn in February or March 2024. The Council has been approached by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust who propose to develop out the remaining 4 acres at Nant y Cafn site with a further 60,000 sq.ft. of business space over two phases. Whilst this proposal cannot take advantage of this round of Shared Prosperity Fund, the Regeneration team are in dialogue with the Coalfield Regeneration Trust with a view to establishing a future relationship which will allow further development to take place over the next few years. We will provide new, quality business space to our Valleys communities, creating job opportunities and potential growth for indigenous businesses, as well as encouraging inward investment and new start-ups.</p>	
<p>13. Assessed the impact of the changes made to the council's operating model and bring forward proposals to repurpose assets that are surplus to requirements; this could include shared workspace hubs, hybrid office and research and development workspaces, starter units etc.</p>	<p>a. Work in areas within Neath Port Talbot where there is the greatest economic inactivity to target business support.</p>	<p>As part of the delivery for the Shared Prosperity Fund Business Anchor project, a series of community events have been delivered across valley and town centre locations to promote business support services and provide hands-on advice to new and existing businesses across Neath Port Talbot. Branded "Let's Talk Business" two events have been held at Croeserw Enterprise Centre and Crynant Business Centre during the first quarter. Further events; workshops and drop in sessions are planned to increase the level of support available to local businesses.</p> <p>Fit for purpose business floor space is available to accommodate new and expanding businesses.</p>	
	<p>b. Develop an investment programme to enable the expansion of sites and premises across the county borough that can support the development and growth of local businesses.</p>	<p>The Regeneration and Estates team are already considering options around several buildings that have been declared surplus, with a view to making available, high quality business and activity space, as has been previously demonstrated with such projects as the former Plaza Cinema, 8 Wind Street, the Crown building, and the former Port Talbot Magistrates Court.</p> <p>The teams are considering an alternative potential use for the Wern School in Ystayfera and have submitted an application for funding to the Welsh Government to refurbish, reconfigure and extend the former Youth Offending Team building in Port Talbot, to provide quality office space to complement the adjacent Harbourside Court. We are also working with consultants with a view to convert the former Neath library into an Arts/Creative hub.</p> <p>As the Council's forthcoming Accommodation Strategy is delivered, then potential further surplus accommodation can also be considered with a view to bringing additional quality business space to the market.</p>	

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
		We will continue to adapt and refurbish surplus properties, so that local businesses have a choice of high quality accommodation to choose from. The availability of this new space will encourage indigenous businesses to remain and grow within the local economic area, and also encourage inward investment and new business start-ups.	
14. Maximised Social Value and Community Benefits opportunities across the council's procurement activities to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits for local residents, businesses and communities.	a. Further develop council procurement arrangements to ensure that the money spent by the council supports the employment of local people and the development of local businesses to the maximum extent possible.	<p>Economic Development and Procurement working together to review processes and understand the barriers faced by local businesses when tendering/quoting for work with the Council.</p> <p>Economic Development and Passenger Transport working together to hold a How to Tender workshop for local taxi drivers with the aim of giving them greater access to winning schools contracts.</p> <p>Economic Development and Workways working together to develop their Training Framework with the aim of ensuring local training providers.</p> <p>Cwmpas report was completed on 7th September 23 – next steps discussions are already taking place.</p> <p>Meetings have taken place with Business Wales and a Face to Face joint event will take place early January 24.</p> <p>Reached the stage of meeting local businesses Face to Face to discuss their views and possible barriers to tendering.</p> <p>A questionnaire is being developed to gather intelligence from local businesses with the aim of developing and supporting the local supply chain to be awarded contracts with the Council.</p> <p>Report complete: options appraisal of procurement approaches to increasing the local economic and social benefit of council's spend; and the development of a local procurement and supply chain strategy informed by the options appraisal.</p>	
	b. Development of a procurement and social value policy in line with the Social Partnerships and Public Procurement Bill (once legislation approved by Welsh Government).	The Shared Prosperity Fund Business Support Anchor project includes provision to take forward this work. Plans to liaise with Procurement and Legal departments. Policy will be developed from these internal discussions. By working together to develop a Social Value policy and by sharing resources Procurement and Economic Development aim to maximise spend within the local supply chain, create a reduction in our environmental impact, increase staff awareness of what social value means and how it can support the local economy.	
	c. Work with Cwmpas (Wales Co-op) and CLES (Centre for Local Economic Strategies, developers of the 'Preston Model') to review procurement supply chain strategy. Maximise the local social and economic benefits of council spend, prioritise goals and objectives for social value and community wealth building in Neath Port Talbot.	<p>Procurement commissioned consultants to prepare a report to highlight ways in which the Council can enhance and develop local spend, while considering different procurement approaches such as the "Preston Model", Circular & Foundational Economy concepts to develop a tailored Neath Port Talbot Procurement Strategy. Final report issued week commencing 4th September and to be reviewed with Procurement. Information on the Shared Prosperity Fund Business Anchor project and its activities to support local procurement, supply chain development and use of Social Value policies have been provided for consideration.</p> <p>Mirroring the 'Let's Talk Business' events it has been decided to start similar style events on October 19th which will take place in the community, offering advice and support to local businesses.</p> <p>Directly help local people and businesses to start, grow and innovate and create opportunities for the local supply chain to be awarded contracts within the organisation and externally through providing access to training and upskilling.</p>	

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
<p>15. Developed the Transport Hub at Neath Railway Station</p>	<p>a. Continue to develop plans to provide an Integrated Transport Hub at Neath Railway Station linking local bus services to the main railway station, reducing overall journey times, and improving connections between the places where people live and the places where people work, learn and enjoy their leisure time.</p>	<p>Welsh Government funding to continue the design in 2023/24 has been awarded. Design on the Transport Hub went to Scrutiny Committee on 14th July 2023, there were delays to the design programme while the scheme went through the scrutiny process. Funding has been secured to progress to detailed design stage and to commence land assembly. A communication strategy is being developed to ensure that businesses affected by the development are briefed and involved in the development of the scheme. Delays to the programme. Potential for amendments to the design. Public transport and active travel routes will be improved to ensure that they support the vitality and viability of the town centre, in addition to reducing the reliance upon private vehicles.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>16. Developed transport plans in partnership with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to support access to work, reduce emissions and serve the needs of Neath Port Talbot residents.</p>	<p>a. Contribute to the development of the Regional Transport Plan ensuring that the needs and priorities of Neath Port Talbot are addressed.</p>	<p>The Regional Transport Plan (RTP) Guidance issued by Welsh Government set out the key requirements in order to develop the South West Wales RTP, these are listed below. Each requirement has a number of actions and work packages that need to be undertaken, as part of the detailed Implementation Plan. Key features are outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the RTP Implementation Plan • Development of the Case for Change • Development of the Initial Draft of the Regional Transport Plan, Integrated Well-Being Assessment (IWBA) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) Development of the Final Draft of the Regional Transport Plan, Integrated Well-Being Assessment (IWBA) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) • Development of the Final Regional Transport Plan, Integrated Well-Being Assessment (IWBA) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) • Public and Stakeholder Consultation Monitoring and Evaluation Plan • Equalities Impact Assessment • Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment. <p>As set out in the table at section 1c above, the next piece of work to be undertaken is the RTP Case for Change; with the current deadline for submission to Welsh Government set for 29th February 2024.</p> <p>The Corporate Joint committee are currently awaiting Welsh Government feedback on the submitted implementation plan which on their approval a grant of £125K will be awarded to take the programme forward to the next stage of the process.</p> <p>Whilst positive discussions have taken place with Welsh Government regarding the availability of funding to prepare the RTP, those discussions have not yet concluded nor has any funding been received.</p>	<p>Green</p>

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
	<p>b. The Welsh Government have announced £1.3m funding to support Community Transport car schemes to expand electric vehicle (EV) community cars in the Region. Neath Port Talbot schemes have been successful in securing some of this funding and will be looking at introducing EV cars in the Afan, Neath, Dulais and Amman Valleys.</p>	<p>Electric vehicles have been introduced and in service. Charging points installed in Afan, Neath, Dulais and Amman Valleys.</p> <p>The number of people transported in the two electric Multi-Purpose Vehicles in order to access opportunities, activities and facilitate medical appointments: 216 passengers(Health 138, Education 39, Shopping 16, Work 12, Social 11)</p> <p>The number of self-drive and volunteer driven journeys: 180 volunteer Driven</p> <p>The number of people transported in the two electric fully accessible minibuses: 2576 Passengers (Health 82, Education 373, Shopping 773, Social 1316, Work 32)</p>	
	<p>c. Publish the regional Low Emission Vehicle Strategy to support the transition of vehicles to electric power.</p>	<p>Taking the Neath Port Talbot Council Zero Emission Vehicle and Infrastructure Strategy (ZEVIS) for Board approval in November 2023. We are currently engaging with regional stakeholders across South West Wales Region moving towards formulating a synchronised Regional Strategy and Improvement Programme. The local strategy will inform the development of the regional strategy to coordinate activities across the region.</p>	
	<p>d. In partnership with Transport for Wales develop a proposed bus network and explore the feasibility of introducing a pilot Flecsi bus service to complement the proposed network. This initiative will be subject to funding becoming available</p>	<p>The Local Authority has worked with Transport for Wales (TfW) and the bus operators to introduce an affordable Network within Bus Transition funding budget. There will be service reduction despite lobbying from officers and politicians.</p>	
	<p>e. In partnership with Transport for Wales and Welsh Government secure funding for procurement of Hydrogen fuelled vehicles and identify land for hydrogen storage and refuelling infrastructure, vehicle parking and maintenance</p>	<p>Project team have met twice. Tender documentation and vehicle specification discussed. Awaiting confirmation of funding.</p> <p>Transport for Wales (TfW) identifying land options.</p> <p>The project positively aligns with the overarching policy framework including the goals of the Paris Agreement as it supports the decarbonisation of the transport sector, delivers on the commitment for public service buses to be net zero by 2035; supports aspirations for Wales to be a leading country in hydrogen mobility deployment across Europe and for the hydrogen sector to be developed across the UK as a whole; advocates for improving public transport and also to support the development of a fully integrated bus network that encourages people away from their cars.</p>	

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
<p>17. Jobs Growth Wales Plus and apprenticeship programmes expanded across the county borough; with the council offering a larger number of quality placement opportunities</p>	<p>a. Develop clear pathways for local people interested in working in the council and further develop the council's employment and training offer to attract, retain and develop a high performing public service that is rooted in its communities.</p>	<p>Discussions still ongoing within our Corporate Training and Learning Team, Human Resources and Employability. We are continuing to update and modify processes. Working with Human Resources to get people into work for Neath Port Talbot and looking to update portal for Neath Port Talbot Website, work is still on going.</p> <p>Systems are continuing at a steady pace but still needs some work to develop</p>	
	<p>b. Review our Human Resources recruitment and apprenticeship support, as well as our employability offer, so that those seeking training and/or work find it easy to access the help and support that they need.</p>	<p>Shared Prosperity Fund Apprenticeship Bid - Met as Panel 4th October, imminent with decision, as part of the People and Skills to enhance our Business Critical posts and react to our internal aging workforce. Work on going.</p> <p>Skills and Training are targeting Teaching Assistants as a sector where it is hard to recruit. We have piloted this short sharp intervention which commenced in September 23, and will review its impact.</p> <p>3 Jobs Plus Wales learners went into Primary Schools in September, we are reacting to Teaching Assistant vacancies in our schools. Trialling this method at this moment, if the learners are suitable they will progress onto an Apprentice pathway as a Teaching Assistant. The work is aimed at resolving the issue of hiring / training teaching assistants within our primary schools.</p>	
<p>18. More young people have access to opportunities to achieve a recognised qualification following completion of their statutory education</p>	<p>a. Deliver Jobs Growth Wales Plus to young people in Neath Port Talbot working with colleges to obtain Level 1 and 2</p>	<p>Skills and Training awarded Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+) contract working with Pembrokeshire College, this replaced the old Traineeship contract from Welsh Government. We are already seeing high numbers of referrals from Careers Wales and Self Referrals into JGW+. During April to September 91 referrals Jobs Growth Wales+ and 29 Referrals for Apprenticeships were received.</p>	
	<p>b. We will work to ensure Apprenticeship pathways are robust via partnership working and therefore give young people more opportunities.</p>	<p>Skills and Training currently work with Skills Academy Wales to deliver an Apprenticeship programme but pathway is limited to Hairdressing and Barbering and Childcare. It is our intention to develop new and innovative pathways expanding our offer for apprenticeships within Neath Port Talbot.</p> <p>An Apprenticeship Co-ordinator has been appointed and Apprenticeship Pathway document has been completed, this gives an in-depth version of what apprenticeship pathways we have in Neath Port Talbot. A greater understanding of the pathway for apprenticeships to be developed.</p> <p>A summer engagement programme with Skills & Training had over 100 young people engaged over the period.</p>	
	<p>c. Work with young people to help them gain vocational qualifications, for example Duke of Edinburgh, Construction Skills Certificate Scheme , First Aid Level 2</p>	<p>Skills and Training continue to provide an Alternative provision in Hairdressing and Barbering. In addition we provided Construction Skills Certificate Scheme Training and Groundwork to some of our schools within Neath Port Talbot. The service is looking to develop as part of Shared Prosperity Fund People and Skills an expanded offer for our young people to react to the priority sector working with the RLSP and the emerging need within Neath Port Talbot. This will be promoted to all secondary schools within Neath Port Talbot through Neath and Afan Secondary Heads.</p>	

2027 Outcome	Key Priorities for 2023/2024	Progress Comment	RAG Status
19. The council's learning and development offer is strengthened ensuring that all employees are supported to access lifelong learning opportunities and confidence to advance their careers within the council.	a. Maximise opportunities for partnership working both internally and externally, to access additional funding. Consider Shared Prosperity Fund funding for additional resource.	Shared Prosperity Fund bid – 'Developing People for the Future' has been submitted. This is a partnership application between Corporate Training & Development and The Employability Team. We plan to recruit 10 apprentices and 2 degree apprenticeships in departments where evidence gathered identifies skill shortages and business critical posts as part of our succession planning process. We will also recruit a Business Support Officer to assist in the administration and support of the project. This post holder will also work in partnership with the Apprenticeship Coordinator, within Skills & Training. Successful funding will allow us to deliver People and Skills interventions for people seeking employment and training through an apprenticeship pathway within Neath Port Talbot Council.	
20. Ensure we have a stronger workforce with sufficient apprenticeship opportunities for our young people and adults.	a. Work with local employers to increase the number of quality apprenticeship opportunities and ensure these opportunities are seen as attractive to those seeking work.	We appointed an Apprenticeship Coordinator, during August 23, as part of Shared Prosperity Funding. His role will be to map out existing pathway opportunities for business to access apprenticeships for their employees and routes in which they can expand their current workforce. A greater understanding of apprenticeship framework to be developed. An increased number of successful apprenticeships delivered to enable improved access to long term well paid and high skilled jobs in the local economy.	
	b. Initiate a local skills audit to identify the future work requirement of local employers and any shortfalls in the local learning provision.	Work has already been undertaken to initiate a skills audit/mapping exercise as part of the Shared Prosperity Funding People and Skills to enhance understanding of skills needs in Neath Port Talbot. We have also secured funding to appoint a Skills Coordinator for Neath Port Talbot, this in turn will drive the skills agenda for Neath Port Talbot. Skills co-ordinator will start in October 2023.	
21. Partnership working is strengthened to upskill those already in work or who wish to return to work will improve; more local people will hold qualifications at Level 4+ and are supported into local quality jobs.	a. Neath Port Talbot Employability in work support will develop initiatives through partnership working to encourage those who want to upskill or those wishing to gain qualifications at a higher level.	The current offer of Neath Port Talbot Employability does not support those individuals who are in work wishing to upskill or retrain to gain better employment, whether it be for additional hours or an increase of salary. The team have submitted a Shared Prosperity Fund Expression of Interest to the Sustainable Communities Growth Fund to include this as part of the holistic provision of Neath Port Talbot Employability. The Sustainable Communities Growth Fund panel is due to meet in early October 2023. If the bid is successful the project will enhance the employability programmes to offer in work support or to upskill those already in employment.	

Performance Measures 2023-2024		Baseline April 2022	Actual 2022-2023	Accumulative Total – April to September 2023	Outlook for 2023 - 2024 (increase, decrease or maintain)
1.	Number of 16-24 year olds being supported into education, employment, training and volunteering by Neath Port Talbot Employability.	155	108	162	Increase
2.	Number of internal Apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes.	78	110	Qtr 1 – 130 Qtr 2 - 155	Increase
3.	Number of completed training weeks for internal apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience (Community Benefits)	2844	1867	Reported annually	Increase
4.	Number of people assisted by Neath Port Talbot Employability achieving level 2 or higher qualification.	New performance Measure	New performance Measure	Qtr 1 – 17 Qtr 2 - 20	n/a – New Measure
5.	Number of people who are economically inactive supported into employment.	New performance Measure	New performance Measure	Qtr 1&2 -16	Increase
6.	Number of individuals from jobless households supported back into work with support from Neath Port Talbot Employability	New performance Measure	New performance Measure	Q1 &2 -42 was achieved Work Found – 27 Volunteering – 2 Qualifications/Work related Certificates - 13	n/a – New Measure
7.	Number of business enquires assisted resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies through Business Services.	711	515	For Qtr. 1 & 2 2023/24 – 481 For Qtr. 1 & 2 2022/23 - 294	Increase
8.	Business grants given as % of available funding.	New performance Measure	New performance Measure	Qtr 1 & 2 - Not issued any grants as yet. We have made conditional offers to companies but not paid out any because we have only had the grant offer letter and grant agreement approved by Legal week commencing 23.10.23. We should be in a position to start issuing letters week commencing 30.10.23, some companies will then be ready to draw down their funding. We will not see any activity on this PI until the end of quarter 3 and then it should increase substantially in quarter 4.	n/a – New Measure
9.	% of reduction in floor area of occupied council buildings.	22,010m2	New performance Measure	5.9% Decrease	Decrease

Performance Measures 2023-2024		Baseline April 2022	Actual 2022-2023	Accumulative Total – April to September 2023	Outlook for 2023 - 2024 (increase, decrease or maintain)
10.	High quality business space made available/or under development.	New performance Measure	Total of 16,055 sq. ft. of letting space of which 4,254 sq. ft. is occupied. = 26.5%.	Reported Annually	Increase
11.	Number of commercial premises assisted with renovations or improvement.	New performance Measure	196	Q1&2- 112 (This figure includes both general advice and grants)	n/a – New Measure