

Agenda



Newport City Council

Date: Tuesday, 28 April 2015
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Council Chambers - Civic Centre
To: **All Members of the City Council**

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If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Chief Democratic Services Officer.

Item	Wards Affected
1. <u>Preliminaries</u> i. To receive any apologies for absence. ii. To receive any declarations of interest iii. To receive any announcements by the Mayor.	All Wards
2. <u>Minutes</u> (Pages 5 - 20) To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2015	All Wards
3. <u>Appointments</u> To consider any proposed appointments.	All Wards
4. <u>Police Issues (30 minutes)</u> Questions to Superintendent Fernquest	All Wards

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Date of Issue: Monday, 20 April 2015

5. Welsh Government White Paper "Power to Local People" (Pages 21 - 54) All Wards
To agree a response to the White Paper "Power to Local People".

6. Improvement Plan (Pages 55 - 108) All Wards
To consider adoption of the Improvement Plan 2015/16 as recommended by the Cabinet

7. Member's Remuneration 2015 - 2016 (Pages 109 - 120) All Wards
To note and apply the main remuneration details for Member's for 2015-2016 and to make a decision on the remuneration of the City's Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2015-2016

8. Questions to the Chair of the Cabinet All Wards
To provide an opportunity for councillors to ask questions to the Chair of the Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Process: *No more than 30 minutes will be allocated at the Council meeting for oral questions to the Leader*

If members are unable to ask their question orally within the allocated time, remaining questions will be answered in writing. The question and response will be appended to the minutes.

The question must be addressed through the Mayor or the person presiding at the meeting and not directly to the person being questioned

9. Questions to Cabinet Members All Wards
To provide an opportunity to pose Questions to Cabinet Members in line with Standing Orders

Process: *No more than 10 minutes will be allocated at the Council meeting for questions to each Cabinet Member.*

Members will have needed to submit their proposed questions in writing in accordance with Standing Orders. If members are unable to ask their question orally within the allocated time, remaining questions will be answered in writing. The question and response will be appended to the minutes.

The question must be addressed through the Mayor or the person presiding at the meeting and not directly to the person being questioned.

Questions will be posed to cabinet members in the following order:

Deputy Leader
Cabinet Member for Education and Young People
Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Assets
Cabinet Member for Infrastructure
Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture
Cabinet Member for Licensing and Statutory Functions
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development
Cabinet Member for Skills and Work
Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing

For Information: A digest of recent decision schedules issued by Cabinet, Cabinet Members and Minutes of recent meetings of Committees has been circulated electronically to all Members of the Council.

10. Questions to Chairs of Committees All Wards

To pose questions to the Chairs of the Committees in the following order:

- I. Scrutiny Committees
 - Community Planning and Development
 - Learning, Caring and Leisure
 - Street Scene, Regeneration and Safety
- II. Planning Committee
- III. Licensing Committee
- IV. Democratic Services Committee

Process: No more than 10 minutes will be allocated at the Council meeting for questions to each Chair.

Members will have needed to submit their proposed questions in writing in accordance with Standing Orders. If members are unable to ask their question orally within the allocated time, remaining questions will be answered in writing. The question and response will be appended to the minutes.

The question must be addressed through the Mayor or the person presiding at the meeting and not directly to the person being questioned.

11. Standards Committee (Pages 121 - 124) All Wards

To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24 March 2015

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Minutes



Council

Date: 24 February 2105

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Evans (Chair), D Atwell, E Corten, C Jenkins, D Mayer, R Poole, D Wilcox, M Al-Nuiami, O Ali, R Bright, P Cockeram, M Cornelious, K Critchley, D Davies, V Delahaye, C Evans, C Ferris, D Fouweather, E Garland, G Giles, D Harvey, I Hayat, R Hutchings, R Jeavons, M Kellaway, M Linton, C Maxfield, S Mlewa, R Mogford, A Morris, J Mudd, M Rahman, J Richards, M Spencer, C Suller, T Suller, H Thomas, K Thomas, E Townsend, N Trigg, R Truman, T Watkins, R White and D Williams

Apologies: Councillors T Bond, J Guy, P Hannon, P Huntley, D Mayer, M Whitcutt and K Whitehead

1. Preliminaries

Mayor's Announcements

Armed Forces Support

The Mayor was pleased to announce that the Council had received an award recognising the commitment and support it has given to members of the armed forces. A ceremony was held in Cardiff City Stadium on 30th January to mark the launch of the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Awards in Wales.

The Council was nominated for the support it showed to education welfare officer Tony Hampson and fitness team leader Kris Dowding, who are members of the Army Reserve.

The Mayor passed the award to Councillor Mark spencer, the Council's Armed Forces and Veterans Champion and Mr Hampson. He passed on is congratulations and members applauded the receipt of the award

Holocaust Memorial Day

The Mayor referred to the Holocaust Memorial Day and the service held at the Cathedral on the day of the last Council meeting. The Mayor thanked thank all of those who helped organise the event and those who took part, including Mr Ron Jones, a remarkable man from Newport who survived incarceration at Auschwitz; was in the Auschwitz football team and took part in the 900 mile walk which became known as the "death march". The Mayor considered Mr Jones to be a true inspiration and once again passed on his thanks to everyone involved.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 were confirmed as a true record.

3. Appointments

The following appointments were agreed:

- Planning Committee: Councillor Omar Ali to replace Councillor Mark Spencer
- Audit Committee: Councillor Ali was to step down from the Committee
- Caldicot and Wentlooge Internal Drainage District Advisory Group: Cllr Trevor Watkins, Mr Rob Hepworth, Mrs Helen Truman and Mr William Langsford. Substitutes to these: Cllr Paul Huntley, Cllr Herbert Thomas, Mr Alan Speight and Cllr Christine Jenkins
- Newport NORSE Board: Cllr Miqdad Al-Nuaimi was appointed to replace Cllr Cliff Suller
- Newport BID : Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development

4. Police Issues

The Mayor welcomed Superintendent Fernquest to the meeting

Superintendent Fernquest updated members on activities in Newport and action taken by the police and partners in helping to alleviate criminal and antisocial behaviour in the City.

Councillor Al Nuaimi asked for improved enforcement of traffic management issues in the Stow Hill Ward, particularly in relation to the Emlyn Street area and the City Centre, since the rising bollards were not functioning. He referred also to residents parking. Superintendent Fernquest described actions taken on each issue and difficulties faced in enforcement since the bollards were not operational.

Superintendent Fernquest agreed with Councillor Morris that there was a link between many burglaries and drug addiction. He agreed that alternative activities for young people in the City would help.

Councillor Giles referred the Council's support for the White Ribbon initiative that aimed at eradication domestic abuse against women and girls Superintendent Fernquest stated that Gwent Police was playing its role and subscribed to "Claire's Law".

Superintendent Fernquest agreed with Councillor Wilcox that antisocial behaviour can go in cycles, and confirmed that that a multi- agency approach will continue to address ongoing problems.

Superintendent Fernquest updated Councillor Garland on action taken on specific issues in the St Julian's ward

Superintendent Fernquest would raise with local officers issues raised by Cllr Spencer about the need for increasing local patrols

Superintendent Fernquest agreed with Councillor Poole that the vision for Newport has to be a family friendly city centre and that partners need to work together to achieve that goal.

Superintendent Fernquest agreed with Councillor Tom Suller that the use of various and many communication channels was important for the police and partners.

Superintendent Fernquest agreed with Councillor Trigg that community facilities can help alleviate antisocial behaviour and confirmed that ideas can be presented to the Commissioner's Office.

Superintendent Fernquest would not comment on the Council's budget proposals but agreed with Cllr Townsend that if the bollards in the city centre are working it helps with issues such as enforcement of parking regulations.

5. **Budget 2015 - 2016 and Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Leader of the Council stated that the grant notification that came to the Council in December confirmed that the Revenue Support Grant would be reducing by nearly £5.7 million, a 2.6% reduction.

The Leader informed Members that the Welsh Government's revenue support grant makes up some 82% of the funding for the Council's net budget and therefore, the reduction next year, and in the future, mattered significantly. He confirmed that Council Tax cannot make up the difference.

He said that following last year's budget process, this Council had a balanced medium term financial plan and the changes announced last summer markedly changed this.

The Leader introduced a report to Council which brought together the relevant strands of the Council's financial management including the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, treasury management and the consequential Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Leader stated that the Capital Programme set out in the report showed the final 3 years of the Council's agreed medium term Capital Programme. He said that given the pressure on revenue funds, there were no significant resources or easy solutions to expand the Capital Programme, though demand for capital resources, as always, is high. In saying this, he confirmed the Council would be investing over the next 3 years in its schools, the city centre regeneration as well as the usual cyclical replacement of key IT and vehicle assets

The Leader said that the Cabinet had considered the budget at its February meeting and had listened very carefully to the outcome of what had been the most comprehensive consultation exercise this Council had undertaken. The consultation budget was announced in December and this included important investments on services: £655,000 for schools; £579,000 for out of area education and social care placements; £375,000 investment in recycling to ensure current progress is improved, as Welsh Government specific grant support reduces; and £100,000 to improve on grounds maintenance and weed spraying capacity

To balance the budget, the Cabinet had to propose significant savings and this included 72 new proposals with savings of over £6m and £4.7m of proposals agreed last February.

The Leader stated the proposed budget included a Council Tax increase of 5%. He said budget proposals widely circulated to the public, partners and across the Authority were based on this increase. He said that of all the comments received about the proposals, only one was received that specifically referred to the level of Council Tax and this was in the positive.

The Leader of the Council informed the Council that, in developing proposals, protecting services was uppermost in Cabinet's mind and the temptation to play with decimal points had been resisted.

He said that out of the 72 proposals, only 7 received negative public responses, where more people were against the proposals than were for them.

Of these three had been resolved through alternative proposals: There were alternative proposals for the central library and museum provision. This would provision in the current location and these were currently subject to consultation and there was an agreement with the Health Board which will keep social care teams in the Serennu centre.

Two proposals have been deleted, namely the charging for DIY waste and the loss of the children's psychology service; One proposal had been substantially changed by £56k, to retain the current level of H&S inspections of our playground facilities

One proposal will remain, being the Council Tax help for pensioners. Given that pensioners will still access the statutory benefit available here, this amounts to a maximum of £2 per week, and with a lot of pensioners not even getting that amount as their bills are already under £100, Cabinet felt that this proposal should remain.

The Leader stated the Cabinet said it would listen and it had done.

The Leader confirmed that Newport's Tax is already low and even with a 5% increase, will retain its position as the second lowest rate in Wales, and amongst the lowest across UK unitary councils. In cash terms, it amounts to £44.66 per year for an average Band D property; He said that a 1% reduction from a proposed 5% would only amount to £8.93 for an average band D property per annum but it has a negative £382,000 impact on the Council's finances – which is £382,000 more cuts to services and less service investments.

The Leader mentioned that the Council continues to spend considerably less than the Standard Spending Assessment – the amount Welsh Government deems is needed to fund a 'standard level of services', - by just under £7 million. Whilst this was historical, to make up the difference would require a further Council Tax increase of 13.4% (About £125.00 per Band D property) to make budget equal to SSA – over and above the 5% already proposed. A marginal reduction would have a further detrimental effect to the SSA.

The Leader mentioned that across Wales, 12 Councils are proposing increases of above 4.5%, a further 4 are above 4%. With an increase in 5% Newport was still low in cash terms compared with other areas.

He mentioned this had allowed the Council to invest in school's budgets again. Next year, schools face significant financial pressures of around £2million in relation to increasing pension costs, rising pupil numbers and a pay award to fund. Anything other than at least the full pledge would not be reasonable. He realised however that honouring this will need to be reviewed each year, as the pressure mounts, but for 2015/16, Cabinet recognised the pressure they are under.

The proposals allowed investment in the commitment to paying the 'Living Wage' and social justice; provided budget investments in areas which require it, ensured budgets were as robust as they can be and dealt with the more unpopular proposals according to our residents' views.

Given all this, and the fact that savings required amount to over £10m, the Leader considered the Council Tax increase strikes a reasonable balance. This would produce an average Band D Council Tax of £938.02, an increase of just £44.66 per year, or 86p per week. The Council's overall budget would be just over £261 million. The Leader mentioned that Cabinet continues in its ambition to modernise services and to seek social justice and that that he was confident this Administration is steering a path through these difficult times.

The Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment to the proposals. He stated that he considered the consultation process this year to be the best he had seen and that the Council had listened to some of the concerns. He accepted the task was difficult for the administration but he considered the proposed increase in Council Tax by 5% was too high. He stated that some of the adjustments would be supported as they were important to the public. He mentioned the amendment would allow the increase to be reduced to 4%. The formal proposal was as follows:

“To

- Maintain the Council's net budget down at current level recommended - at £261,370,983
- Reduce the Newport City Council's own 'Council Tax' increase to 4.0% (currently proposed 5.00%), which would result in a Newport City Council Band 'D' Tax of £929.09 (currently proposed £938.02)

He acknowledged that it is for the Council's Cabinet to decide on the detail of the budget. In coming to the above proposed amendment, he asked that the Cabinet consider the following changes:

- Stop Newport Matters- £44k
- Stop Trade Union facility time - £57k
- Stop GAVO core funding - £28k
- Stop SEWREC core funding - £49k
- Reduce Cabinet by 1 further post - £16k
- Reduce the increase in school's funding by £188k

These reduce Newport City Council's expenditure by £382k, being a reduction in Council tax funding of £496k, less consequential reduction in Council Tax Reduction benefit of £114k, which would enable its Council Tax increase to be reduced to 4.00%. “

In seconding the report, Councillor Williams mentioned the following matters in support

- The Council Tax proposal reduction remained high but was fair
- GAVO and SEWREC need share some the outcomes of the reduction in funding

Members of the administration spoke against that the amendment saying

- The budget proposals reflected the outcome of a wide consultation
- The budget had been proposed in a responsible manner

- The proposals in the amendment amounted to a saving of just over £8 per year but reduced spending by £380,000
- The proposed reduction in schools funding would increase the burden on schools that were already facing substantial pressures
- Newport needs a high skilled, high wage economy built on young people playing their part by improving life chances for students through education and where poverty places no cap on education
- “Newport Matters” was a well –received publication and played a significant role in the budget consultation exercise.
- The Opposition Members had opportunities to raise these proposals for consideration during the wide consultation process
- GAVO and SEWREC provided excellent services and one of the outcomes of the budget consultation was to work more closely with volunteers. Voluntary bodies provide a social return on investment for the most vulnerable in society
- Trade Union representatives play an important and valued role in the Council and provided a voice for the highly valued Council staff
- The proposals had been produced late in the process and had not gone through any Equalities Impact Assessments and Opposition Members had not participated in the consultation process
- The administration was proposing one reduction the Cabinet. A further reduction would save only £16,000 and Cabinet Members oversee the use of the budget and the senior management

Councillor Townsend would not support the amendment but remained unconvinced about the proposals by the Cabinet as he had not yet been persuaded by the arguments.

The Leader of the Council stated that the proposed reduction of 1% in the increase would result in a reduction of just £8.93p. He mentioned that the proposals in the amendment would result in the loss of Newport Matters that had proved invaluable in the consultation process.

The proposals included the non-payment of facility time The Leader stated that the Trade Unions had been immensely helpful and without their constructive contribution, agreement on pay and grading and other matters would not have been achieved.

The proposed reduction of grant to GAVO was against the expressed wishes of the public during the consultation process and the work of SEWREC within Newport’s diverse population was respected.

The Leader of the Council also referred to the £ 2m pressure on School budgets. He said that the Council’s Tax bill would remain the second lowest in Wales and among the lowest in the UK.

In summing up the Leader of the Opposition stated his Group valued education and the proposal was not a suggested cut in Education funding but a reduction in the proposed increase for Education.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the view of the Fairness Commission was that services such as Education and Social Services could not expect to be protected as others suffer. He considered the 5% increase would lead to suffering by residents.

He considered that there were many other channels available for communication with the public without the expense of ‘Newport Matters’ to the extent that it is produced now

He considered the Unions are cash – rich and should pay the Council for facility time rather than the other way.

As to GAVO, it has an income of over £4m. SEWREC has an income of over £600,000 and have adequate funds to run their services.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the public view was that the Cabinet should be reduced.

The required number of elected members requested a recorded vote on the amendment proposals. The outcome of the vote was as follows:

In favour of the amendment: D Atwell; M Cornelious; M Evans; C Ferris; D Fouweather; M Kellaway; T Suller; R White; and D Williams. A total of 9 members

Against the amendment: O Ali; M Al Nuiami; T Bond; R Bright; P Cockeram; E Corten; K Critchley; D Davies; V Delahaye; C Evans; E Garland; G Giles; D Harvey ; I Hayat, R Hutchings; R Jeavons; C Jenkins; M Linton; C Maxfield; S Mlewa; A Morris; J Mudd; R Poole; M Rahman; J Richards; M Spencer; C Suller; H Thomas; K Thomas; E Townsend; N Trigg; R Truman; T Watkins; and D Wilcox . A total of 34 Members

The amendment was, therefore, **lost**

Members then commented on the substantive motion

The Leader of the Council referred to some typographical errors that had been explained to all Members by the Head of Finance.

Councillor Davies thanked the Leader for identifying funds for a two year scheme to be used to help address problems facing young people not in education, employment of training and help improve people's lives. As Cabinet Member for Skills and Work, Councillor Davies would monitor the use of funds and the outcomes of the project. She mentioned that Newport continues to have a high level of pupils who, at the need of year 11, do not go on employment, further education or training. One of the factors was that Newport is the fourth most deprived area in Wales but had not benefitted from ESF money. The Cabinet Member would meet all Secondary Heads to discuss the way forward and try to make a difference.

Members of the Opposition Group spoke against the motion saying:

- The situation relating to young people not in education, employment or training would get worse as transport grant had been cut for students aged over 16.
- The Opposition Group fully engaged in the scrutiny committees' consultation on the budget and had held local meetings and distributed the Questionnaire to local residents.
- Choices made in the budget could have been different by looking at further discretionary services as proposed in the amendment
- Residents should not pay for time off for trade union duties
- It is not the time to increase council tax and the proposed increase was too high as people are struggling and it would not protect the vulnerable
- This was about the cost to individual householders of modest means.

Members of the Administration supported the proposals saying:

- There had been difficult choices in developing the budget and everything had been seriously considered
- Cabinet Members played an important role in developing budgets on an annual basis
- The proposed amendment differed from the substantive proposal by one – seventh of one per cent of the total budget but resulted in some important further cuts.
- Post 16 students who qualify are eligible to receive a travel grant and post 16 students in Wales can still receive the Education Maintenance grant
- Newport City Council remains the second lowest Band D Council Tax rate in Wales.
- Central Government in Westminster had created the crisis.
- There had been no challenge to the proposals from the Opposition, other than make a saving of such a small amount

In summing up the Leader of the Council reiterated that the Council Tax in Newport would be the second lowest in Wales. He also mentioned that the regeneration of the city is all about regenerating the local economy with rising disposal income. This could only be done by preserving education services

He mentioned that 'Newport Matters' had proved to be a useful tool in communicating with residents and as part of the consultation process. There had been a very good response and the results were a 95% indicator of what people really thought. It said they wanted to support Education, Social Services and those doing voluntary work. The seven items that received negative comment had, in the main, been mitigated.

The Leader mentioned that the increase would lead to Council Tax being some 6% of income in Newport whereas in other areas, the increase would be at 10% of the local income. The consultation process was on the basis of a 5% increase. Anything under 5% would add to the burden of not meeting Standard Spending Assessment.

He said that education and social services to be protected as much as possible and honoured the pledge to pay the minimum wage. This was a well thought out budget that looked after the Council's expressed aspirations.

Resolved

Revenue budget and Council Tax 15/16 (paragraphs 4-30)

- To note that an extensive consultation exercise has been completed on the medium term change/efficiency programme, including the 2015/16 budget proposals and that Cabinet have taken these into account in recommending final details of the programme and the resulting 2015/16 overall revenue budget recommended to this Council.
- To note the Head of Finance's recommendations that minimum General Fund Balances be maintained at £5million
- To note that, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Head of Finance confirms the robustness of the estimates underlying the proposals and the adequacy of the General Reserves in the context of other earmarked reserves and a revenue budget contingency of c£1,500k

- To approve the final detail of Newport City Council's budget, shown in Appendix 1, noting that schools' funding is in line with the Welsh Government pledge
- To approve a Council Tax increase for Newport City Council of 5%, a band D tax of £938.02
- To approve the formal Council Tax resolution, included in Appendix 5 which incorporates Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent & Community Council precepts as follows:

RESOLUTION TO SET COUNCIL TAX LEVELS

1. That the revenue estimates for 2015/2016, as recommended by the Cabinet on 9th February 2015 be approved.
2. That it be noted that the Council at its meeting on 20th February 2007 delegated the setting of the tax base to the Head of Finance and that on 06 November 2014, the Head of Finance acting in accordance with that delegation calculated the following amounts for the year 2015/2016 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

(a) Council Tax Base

55,560.04 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its council tax base for the year;

(b) Council Tax base for parts of the Council's Area

Area	Tax base
Bishton	753
Coedkernew	978
Goldcliff	188
Graig	2,848
Langstone	1,832
Llanvaches	239
Llanwern	314
Marshfield	1,502
Michaelstone	166
Nash	138
Penhow	439
Redwick	111
Rogerstone	4,441
Wentlooge	345

3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015/2016 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) £390,974,695.96 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act (**Gross Expenditure**).
- (b) £129,364,568.00 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a) to (c) of the Act (**Gross Income**).
- (c) £261,610,127.96 being the amount by which the aggregate at (3) (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year (**Budget + Community Council precepts**).
- (d) £209,254,324 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its council fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant or additional grant (**RSG + NNDR**).
- (e) £942.33 being the amount at 3(c) above less the amount at 3(d) above, all divided by the amount at 2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (**Average Band 'D' Tax for NCC including Community Councils**).
- (f) £239,144.96 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act and detailed below (**Community Council precepts**).

Area	Special Item £
Bishton	7,454.70
Coedkernew	3,423.00
Goldcliff	2,820.00
Graig	51,121.60
Langstone	38,105.60
Llanvaches	5,975.00
Llanwern	7,498.32
Marshfield	22,530.00
Michaelstone	3,600.54
Nash	1,269.60
Penhow	8,586.84
Redwick	2,681.76
Rogerstone	79,938.00
Wentlooge	4,140.00
	239,144.96

- (g) £938.02 being the amount at 3(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(f) above by the amount at 2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (**NCC Band 'D' Council Tax**).

(h) Council Tax level for parts of the Council's Area

Area	Basic Council Tax £
Bishton	947.92
Coedkernew	941.52
Goldcliff	953.02
Graig	955.97
Langstone	958.82
Llanvaches	963.02
Llanwern	961.90
Marshfield	953.02
Michaelstone	959.71
Nash	947.22
Penhow	957.58
Redwick	962.18
Rogerstone	956.02
Wentlooge	950.02

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(g) above, the amounts of the special item or items in 3(f) divided by the amount at 2(b) for the specified area of the council. These amounts are calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(i)

NCC + Community Councils	Valuation Bands								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p
Bishton	631.95	737.27	842.60	947.92	1,158.57	1,369.22	1,579.87	1,895.84	2,211.81
Coedkernew	627.68	732.29	836.91	941.52	1,150.75	1,359.98	1,569.20	1,883.04	2,196.88
Goldcliff	635.35	741.24	847.13	953.02	1,164.80	1,376.59	1,588.37	1,906.04	2,223.71
Graig	637.32	743.53	849.76	955.97	1,168.41	1,380.85	1,593.29	1,911.94	2,230.59
Langstone	639.22	745.75	852.29	958.82	1,171.89	1,384.96	1,598.04	1,917.64	2,237.24
Llanvaches	642.02	749.01	856.02	963.02	1,177.03	1,391.03	1,605.04	1,926.04	2,247.04
Llanwern	641.27	748.14	855.03	961.90	1,175.66	1,389.41	1,603.17	1,923.80	2,244.43
Marshfield	635.35	741.24	847.13	953.02	1,164.80	1,376.59	1,588.37	1,906.04	2,223.71
Michaelstone	639.81	746.44	853.08	959.71	1,172.98	1,386.25	1,599.52	1,919.42	2,239.32
Nash	631.48	736.73	841.98	947.22	1,157.71	1,368.21	1,578.70	1,894.44	2,210.18
Penhow	638.39	744.78	851.19	957.58	1,170.38	1,383.17	1,595.97	1,915.16	2,234.35
Redwick	641.46	748.36	855.28	962.18	1,176.00	1,389.82	1,603.64	1,924.36	2,245.08
Rogerstone	637.35	743.57	849.80	956.02	1,168.47	1,380.92	1,593.37	1,912.04	2,230.71
Wentlooge	633.35	738.90	844.47	950.02	1,161.14	1,372.25	1,583.37	1,900.04	2,216.71
All Other Parts of the City	625.35	729.57	833.80	938.02	1,146.47	1,354.92	1,563.37	1,876.04	2,188.71

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) and 3(h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that

proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in the valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. That it be noted for the year 2015/2016, that the only major precepting authority has stated the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Gwent Police	Valuation Bands								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p
All Parts of the City	141.08	164.59	188.11	211.62	258.65	305.67	352.70	423.24	493.78

5. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(i) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2015/2016 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

Total Council Tax Demand	Valuation Bands								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p
Bishton	773.03	901.86	1,030.71	1,159.54	1,417.22	1,674.89	1,932.57	2,319.08	2,705.59
Coedkernew	768.76	896.88	1,025.02	1,153.14	1,409.40	1,665.65	1,921.90	2,306.28	2,690.66
Goldcliff	776.43	905.83	1,035.24	1,164.64	1,423.45	1,682.26	1,941.07	2,329.28	2,717.49
Graig	778.40	908.12	1,037.87	1,167.59	1,427.06	1,686.52	1,945.99	2,335.18	2,724.37
Langstone	780.30	910.34	1,040.40	1,170.44	1,430.54	1,690.63	1,950.74	2,340.88	2,731.02
Llanvaches	783.10	913.60	1,044.13	1,174.64	1,435.68	1,696.70	1,957.74	2,349.28	2,740.82
Llanwern	782.35	912.73	1,043.14	1,173.52	1,434.31	1,695.08	1,955.87	2,347.04	2,738.21
Marshfield	776.43	905.83	1,035.24	1,164.64	1,423.45	1,682.26	1,941.07	2,329.28	2,717.49
Michaelstone	780.89	911.03	1,041.19	1,171.33	1,431.63	1,691.92	1,952.22	2,342.66	2,733.10
Nash	772.56	901.32	1,030.09	1,158.84	1,416.36	1,673.88	1,931.40	2,317.68	2,703.96
Penhow	779.47	909.37	1,039.30	1,169.20	1,429.03	1,688.84	1,948.67	2,338.40	2,728.13
Redwick	782.54	912.95	1,043.39	1,173.80	1,434.65	1,695.49	1,956.34	2,347.60	2,738.86
Rogerstone	778.43	908.16	1,037.91	1,167.64	1,427.12	1,686.59	1,946.07	2,335.28	2,724.49
Wentlooge	774.43	903.49	1,032.58	1,161.64	1,419.79	1,677.92	1,936.07	2,323.28	2,710.49
All Other Parts of the City	766.43	894.16	1,021.91	1,149.64	1,405.12	1,660.59	1,916.07	2,299.28	2,682.49

Capital Programme and 2015/16 budget (paragraphs 31–45)

- To approve the 2015/16 capital budget, in line with the detail contained in Appendix 6

Treasury Management and Investment strategies, Minimum Revenue Provision Policies & Prudential Indicators (paragraphs 46-66)

- To approve Treasury Management Policies in line with the detail contained in Appendix 7
- To approve the Annual Investment Strategy in line with the detail contained in Appendix 7

- To approve the Council's Counterparty list (external bodies for Council investments) in line with the detail contained in Appendix 7
- To approve the Prudential Indicators in line with the detail contained in Appendix 7
- To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision policy in line with the detail contained in Appendix 7

Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital programme (paragraphs 67 – 73 and 31 - 45)

- To note Cabinets approval of the implementation of the full 4 year change and efficiency programme, including all budget investments and saving options (Appendices 2 - 3), as summarised within the Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix 8) and the final 3 years of the capital programme (Appendix 6). Noting they are subject to on-going review and updating.

6. **Pay and Reward Policy**

All Chief Officers attending the meeting withdrew from the Chamber during discussion of this item

The Leader of the Council presented a report which included a recommendation from the Cabinet and which informed the Council that the Localism Act 2011 required English and Welsh local authorities to produce a "pay policy statement", initially for the financial year 2012-13, and then on an annual basis. The legislation outlined a number of statutory requirements which must be included in any pay policy statement.

In March 2012, Council approved a Pay and Reward Policy which, as well as meeting the statutory requirements, widened the scope of the policy beyond that required by the Localism Act 2011 to cover the pay arrangements of all Council employees, including those in schools.

The annual review of the Council's Pay and Reward Policy has now taken place, and the policy updated where appropriate to take account of changes which have taken place during the last 12 months. Details of the review and the proposed changes were set out in full in the report.

Decision

To approve Pay and Reward Policy 2015 and acknowledge a further report will be required as a result of the Total Reward implementation.

7. **Questions to the Chair of the Cabinet**

There were no questions submitted to the Chair of the Cabinet on this occasion

8. **Questions to Cabinet Members**

There were no questions submitted to Cabinet Members on this occasion

9. **Scrutiny Committees**

There were no questions submitted to the Chairs of Committees on this occasion

10. **Planning Committee**

There were no questions submitted to the Chairs of Committees on this occasion

11. **Licensing Committee**

There were no questions submitted to the Chairs of Committees on this occasion

12. **Standards Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2015 were received

13. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

To exclude the press and the public during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure

14. **Collective Agreement**

The Council was asked to consider a draft Collective Agreement as recommended by the Cabinet. The Draft Agreement, following a comprehensive pay and grading review, sets out the proposed pay and grading arrangements for Newport City council Local Government Services employees.

Members were informed that negotiations with the relative recognised trade unions (Unison, GMB and UNITE) had taken place over a number of months. During December 2014, both management and trade union representatives reached a position where both sides were satisfied to escalate the draft agreement to the next level of governance. Consequently, papers have been forwarded to the Trade Unions at a national level via the regional representatives for consideration.

The Leader of the Council mentioned the Council's appreciation of the work of the Trade Unions on this issue and the constructive manner in which they had approached the matter. .

If, following this final process, the trade unions, Council and governing bodies are able to approve the draft Collective Agreement there is likely to be a subsequent ballot of Newport employees to determine their view of the proposals.

In coming to a final position, it should also be noted that as consultation and negotiation remains ongoing it is likely that there will be some minor changes to the draft documentation as presented. In this regard delegated responsibility is sought for finalising the collective agreement and associated documents.

The one off implementation costs and ongoing funding of this project have been built into the council's medium term financial plan. Within the plan there is a commitment that the ongoing costs will be met. The plan assumes that schools will not have to bear the cost of adopting the councils pay and grading structure.

A review of Chief Officers pay is planned to commence following the implementation of the new arrangement for Local Government Service Workers.

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Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28th April 2015

Item No: 5

Subject Welsh Government White Paper “Power to Local People”

Purpose: To agree a response to the White Paper “Power to Local People”.

Author Will Godfrey, Chief Executive

Ward All

Summary Welsh Government published the “Power to Local People” White Paper on 3rd February with a closing date for responses of April 28th. The White Paper sets out Welsh Government’s vision for the future of local government in Wales based on a wide ranging programme of reform and increasing participative democracy. It represents a watershed moment for local government in terms of future organisational and governance arrangements. It is also a clear challenge from Welsh Government to review current practices and taking account of the on-going financial challenges, look at how local government needs to change to meet the increasing demands of our communities.

The White Paper covers a wide range of governance and democratic proposals. This report sets out a suggested response to these proposals and endorsement of WLGA’s report on the same. The White Paper covers a number of themes which are at the heart of the future for local government.

The Cabinet considered the report at its meeting on 13 April 2015. The Chair of the Cabinet had agreed this would be a matter for the full Council as it affects all members.

The Cabinet broadly supported the concept of reform of local government but matters of detail needed to be carefully considered. Cabinet Members considered the WLGA response as outlined in the report was broadly consistent with the view of Newport City Council.

There were some concerns about the online questionnaire and the need for a sophisticated analysis of responses. It was agreed that the Cabinet would ask who designed the questionnaire and the academic validity of the response. Cabinet Members considered the questionnaire did not give residents the opportunity to provide a view on how current arrangements work. There is a lack of free text space in the questionnaire.

Detailed responses to the specific points were set out in the report identifying which proposals were supported and which were not. This response was generally supported by the Cabinet and recommended for consideration by the Council.

Proposal To endorse the proposed consultation response as set out in the report

Action by Chief Executive

Timetable: Council approval by the Welsh Government deadline for responses on 28 April 2015. Please note that the deadline is at 23:59 on 28 April, the same day as Council.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet
- Chief Executive
- Strategic Directors (People and Place)
- Head of People and Business Change
- Head of Law and Regulation
- Head of Finance
- All Heads of Service
- Chief Democratic Services Officer
- Business Improvement Manager
- Audit Committee
- Political parties have considered their own responses

Background

On 3rd February 2015 the Welsh Government published the Power to Local People White Paper for consultation with a closing date of April 28th.

The White Paper sets out the Welsh Government's vision for the future of local government in Wales, with an underlying principle of giving 'power to local people' through policies of participative democracy whereby communities can better engage and participate in decision making, service development and delivery.

The proposals are focused on the following themes:

- Activist councils, engaged in delivering modern, accessible, high quality public services with their local communities
- A smaller more focussed number of national priorities for local government with councils and their partners setting local priorities based on need and engagement
- More diversity amongst elected members and cabinets
- Reducing the cost of politics and management for local government across Wales, this ties in with the reorganisation and mergers of local authorities
- A stronger place shaping role for local authorities based on building community capacity and resilience
- A greater emphasis on developing new delivery models including transferring assets to communities, cooperative and mutual approaches to running services
- Empowering local people to become more engaged in the delivery of services and the democratic process

The White Paper and accompanying documents can be found at the following link:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?status=open&lang=en>

The Cabinet considered the report at its meeting on 13 April 2015. The Chair of the Cabinet had agreed this would be a matter for the full Council as it affects all members.

The Cabinet broadly supported the concept of reform of local government but matters of detail needed to be carefully considered. Cabinet Members considered the WLGA response as outlined in the report was broadly consistent with the view of Newport City Council.

There were some concerns about the online questionnaire and the need for a sophisticated analysis of responses. It was agreed that the Cabinet would ask who designed the questionnaire and the academic validity of the response. Cabinet Members considered the questionnaire did not give residents the opportunity to provide a view on how current arrangements work. There is a lack of free text space in the questionnaire.

Detailed responses to the specific points were set out in the report identifying which proposals were supported and which were not. This response was generally supported by the Cabinet and recommended for consideration by the Council.

Response from Newport City Council Audit Committee

The White Paper consultation was considered by Audit Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 26 March. This date was after the report deadline for April Cabinet and so the comments received could not be included in the following cabinet report. Audit Committee Member's comments were as follows:

- The role of Audit Committee should be “to ensure” the Chief Executive discharged his statutory improvement functions and not “to assist”.
- The Remuneration Panel should look at pay for all senior officers in addition to Elected Members.
- If Elected Members failed to do their job properly ie read reports and prepare for meetings then more independent members would be preferable. The Chair needed to be competent and it made no difference if he/she was an independent or not.
- It would be useful to have at least one independent member with experience to improve quality across the board and help raise standards generally. The skills that Elected Members brought should be recognised. Members who frequently failed to attend meetings should be replaced.
- Generally politics were “left at the door” but if this was an issue, more independent members could reduce that risk.

Financial Summary

	Year 1 (Current) £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £	Ongoing £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs					There are no immediate financial consequences in responding to the White Paper
(Income)					
Net Costs (Savings) Net Impact on Budget					

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Not properly preparing for the implications of the local government reform programme	Medium	Low	Cabinet and Council will receive update reports as the programme progresses and will respond to consultation accordingly	Chief Executive

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

There are no direct links to specific Council policies and priorities. Rather this report is about the potential future arrangements and workings of local government in the future, If the proposals are taken forward through the legislative process there will be further rounds of consultation as the implications become clearer.

Options Available

1. To endorse the proposed response as set out in the attached report to Cabinet (Appendix 1)
2. To submit an alternative response, however this will need to take consideration of the deadline for consultation responses being the same day as council (before midnight).

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1. - This response seeks to balance a position of broad support for the reform of local government whilst highlighting areas of specific concern. It is also noted that the White Paper proposals are at varying degrees of development and more detailed consideration will need to be given to the draft legislation which will take this programme forward.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no immediate financial consequences to this Council in responding to the White Paper though there will clearly be very significant financial issues when any changes to Local Government takes place and these will only become clearer as any process takes place and further details are known.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report at this stage as the Council is simply responding to the consultation on the White Paper. Some of the specific questions set out in the consultation document do raise a number of legal and operational issues relating to the process of implementing local government reorganisation and, where appropriate, comments have been included.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are a number of proposals on the White Paper which directly relate to the people impact associated with ant future reorganisation of local government and my comments on the relevant proposals are given in the body of this report. As these proposals are taken forward through the legislative programme any impact on staff will be subject to the usual consultation mechanisms and we would look to mitigate its effect.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The proposals are at the discussion/consultation stage and the detail available is not yet sufficient to carry out an equalities impact assessment of specific policy and impact on protected groups.

Consultation

As requested by Welsh Government the City Council has encouraged employees, partner organisations and members of the public to respond to the White Paper consultation. Such responses are however a matter for the individuals and organisations concerned and will be submitted directly to Welsh Government.

Dated: 28th April 2015

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 13th April 2015

Item No: Insert item number here

Subject Welsh Government White Paper “Power to Local People”

Purpose To agree an outline response to the White Paper “Power to Local People”.

Author Will Godfrey, Chief Executive

Ward All

Summary Welsh Government published the “Power to Local People” White Paper on 3rd February with a closing date for responses of April 28th. The White Paper sets out Welsh Government’s vision for the future of local government in Wales based on a wide ranging programme of reform and increasing participative democracy. It represents a watershed moment for local government in terms of future organisational and governance arrangements. It is also a clear challenge from Welsh Government to review current practices and taking account of the on-going financial challenges, look at how local government needs to change to meet the increasing demands of our communities.

The White Paper covers a wide range of governance and democratic proposals. This report sets out a suggested response to these proposals and endorsement of WLGA’s report on the same.

The White Paper covers a number of themes which are at the heart of the future for local government. It is therefore important that the final response to Welsh Government, due to be submitted by April 28th, is also considered by Council.

Proposal To endorse the WLGA report (dated 27th February) on the “Power to Local People” White Paper and to submit the proposed response set out in the following report subject to Council approval.

Action by Chief Executive

Timetable Council approval by the Welsh Government deadline for responses on 28 April 2015. Please note that the deadline is at 23:59 on 28 April which is the same day as Council.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Executive
- Strategic Directors (People and Place)
- Head of People and Business Change
- Head of Law and Regulation

- Head of Finance
- All Heads of Service
- Chief Democratic Services Officer
- Business Improvement Manager
- Audit Committee

Signed

Background

On 3rd February 2015 the Welsh Government published the Power to Local People White Paper for consultation with a closing date of April 28th.

The White Paper sets out the Welsh Government's vision for the future of local government in Wales, with an underlying principle of giving 'power to local people' through policies of participative democracy whereby communities can better engage and participate in decision making, service development and delivery.

The proposals are focused on the following themes:

- Activist councils, engaged in delivering modern, accessible, high quality public services with their local communities
- A smaller more focussed number of national priorities for local government with councils and their partners setting local priorities based on need and engagement
- More diversity amongst elected members and cabinets
- Reducing the cost of politics and management for local government across Wales, this ties in with the reorganisation and mergers of local authorities
- A stronger place shaping role for local authorities based on building community capacity and resilience
- A greater emphasis on developing new delivery models including transferring assets to communities, cooperative and mutual approaches to running services
- Empowering local people to become more engaged in the delivery of services and the democratic process

The White Paper and accompanying documents can be found at the following link:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?status=open&lang=en>

The White Paper includes a wide ranging set of proposals which include some firm policy recommendations and less developed points for consideration which may or may not be taken forward in Welsh Government's future programme of reform.

It is noted that a lack of detail on some proposals makes it difficult to give informed comments at this stage, for instance consideration of whether the future authorities should be called 'counties', or reducing the number of councillors, ahead of Welsh Government publishing a boundaries map.

A large number of the proposals relate to corporate governance arrangements and internal process e.g. performance and improvement, audit and regulation. Welsh Government's intention appears to be to drive greater consistency and standardise what is considered to be best practice across Wales. Whilst it is difficult to argue against the principles of many of the proposals for improving governance, it is questionable whether removing local flexibility and the ability to decide on the best arrangements for individual council's will improve standards across the board.

WLGA's response to the White Paper

The Welsh Local Government Association are currently working on a response to the consultation to be agreed at their Coordinating Committee on 27th March. From their initial discussions with Leaders they have published a report setting out their overall reaction to the key themes and ambitions set out in the White Paper (Appendix 1). WLGA are broadly supportive of the White Paper's vision for councils leading communities through a 'place shaping' approach, greater diversity in political representation, stronger arrangements for self-improvement and a peer-support framework and a joined up, proportionate approach to regulation. However despite supporting the principles and ambitions set out in the White Paper, WLGA highlight a number of highly controversial points about political representation raised by Welsh Government. Most notably these include:

- A reduction in full-time Cabinet roles and the introduction of part-time deputy Cabinet Member roles
- A reduction in the number of Councillors in Wales in line with the rest of the UK
- Term limits for Leaders (2 terms), Cabinet Members (2 terms) and Councillors (5 terms)
- Five year fixed elections cycles and consideration of elections phased in thirds
- A review to reduce the level of remuneration for Leaders, Councillors and Cabinet Members
- Consideration of a power of recall for Councillors in line with proposals for MPs
- Similar term limits and salary control proposals are raised for Chief Executives and senior officers

Views on these proposals will be set out by the political parties in their own responses to the White Paper.

Proposed response of Newport City Council

The WLGA response as outlined above (appendix 1) is broadly consistent with the view of Newport City Council. The vision and ambitions set out in the White Paper can be supported in principle, however there is a need to highlight concerns regarding specific proposals, as set out in this report. Furthermore as the White Paper proposals are still at a consultative stage it will be essential for Cabinet to receive further updates as the legislative programme of reform progresses and detailed policy recommendations emerge.

There are a number of concerns arising from the proposals, for instance, the notion of consistency across the devolved public sector and the concept of "One Welsh Public Service" as was raised by the Williams Commission. For example, the introduction of term limits and other proposals relating to the election/appointment of councillors and senior officers will not apply to other Welsh services and institutions, not least the Welsh Government. Remuneration for Leaders and Cabinet Members should reflect the level of responsibility, accountability and time commitments associated with these roles. The assumption that such roles could be undertaken on a part-time basis is rejected given the increasing demands and expectations on senior elected members. It is hard to see how the responsibility for portfolios would decrease should 'part time' roles and reduced allowances be implemented. The implication is that this would result in politicians being expected to do the same work for less money. Furthermore a reduction in salary would widen the gap in status between 'full-time' Assembly Members and 'part time' local government Cabinet Members whilst the White Paper emphasises the importance of strong leadership in reshaping public services and localities.

With regards to term limits for Councillors (including Leaders and Cabinet Members) there are concerns that such restrictions are un-democratic and would effectively remove choice from electors and within administrations when choosing a leader. There is a further concern that such a policy could be considered ageist or ironically have the effect of restricting long-serving, younger councillors who were

elected at a young age e.g. in their twenties and are then required to step-down in their forties. Term limits are thought to be a blunt tool which are unlikely to change the demographic profile of councils but will limit voter choice and could have unintended consequences. It should remain the responsibility of political parties to choose who they select to stand for election and the electorate to ultimately decide on their representatives.

The following White Paper proposals are supported:

- Reviewing the body of local government legislation with a view to longer term consolidation and simplification is strongly supported.
- Audit Committee Chairs – It is agreed that the Chair of a local authority Audit Committee should be an independent appointment.
- Greater use of digital channels and social media – the current Measure provisions are sufficient. Changing the 1972 Act provisions relating to hard copies of agendas would assist. But otherwise, councils should be free to determine their own procedures. The Council broadcasts full Council meetings, Planning and Licensing Committee meetings. Extending this to other committees would be achievable but the grant funding will cease in 2 years' time and continuation of broadcasting will be a budget pressure.
- Audit Committee consideration of complaints reports – this is primarily a performance issue for the executive, but subject to scrutiny by audit.
- It is thought that the Head of Democratic Services should be a chief officer role, and the restriction preventing the Monitoring Officer from being Head of Democratic Services should be removed.
- Regional scrutiny arrangements - Local Scrutiny members are concerned that they are able to scrutinise local outcomes of regional services as well as joint scrutiny of services as a whole
- Scrutiny arrangements - the points describing 'good scrutiny' are agreed. This Council took part in the WAO Peer review and set up a Scrutiny Improvement Group of members as an outcome of that review. Work programming led by members is essential. The ability to scrutinise other providers of services to the residents would be welcomed
- Complaints procedures – within Newport City Council a report is being taken to Cabinet in March that seeks to align our policy and procedures with those promoted by WG and the Public Services Ombudsman – The fact that the White Paper recognises the need to address vexatious complaints is welcomed and as part of the report a new policy is proposed to do this.
- Corporate Governance and Improvement - the proposals for self-assessment, peer reviews and corporate plans are supported
- The promotion/facilitation of shared services models whilst recognising the need for local flexibility, is welcomed.
- The establishment of a Staff Commission is supported provided its primary aim is to assist/support public sector reorganisation and all of the staffing complexities that will undoubtedly arise. It will be important that the right people are appointed to the Commission and they bring expert knowledge of the profession/sector. The future priorities of the Commission should be agreed with 'partners' so that the right blend of strategic focus is achieved.

- Public Services Academi should have greater involvement in the establishment of leadership models and development tools. These need to be flexible so to take account of the differences represented by different aspects of public services.
- The considerations around consistency of performance reporting is supported and will further support accurate benchmarking of service delivery and outcomes.
- Reducing the number of Elected Members in Wales – whilst a reduction was supported this would need to be done through consideration of the needs of individual wards rather than a rigid formula based on a ratio of members to constituents
- Financial planning and management are crucial for Local Authorities to meet the ambitious agenda set out in the White Paper with this in mind the 2 phased approach is supported.
- Local taxation – The paper's response to re-balancing the balance of funding is supported. On average – about 80% of Council's net costs are funded through the revenue support grant and this is very much higher than English Authorities. The current reduction in this funding and the proposed review on its distribution brings the issues these bring into very sharp focus given how high it is and therefore important to the funding of local government in Wales.

The following proposals are not supported:

- Roles of Leaders/Elected Mayors defined in legislation - The statutory basis of the Leader's role is enshrined in the Local Government Act 2000. It does not require further legislation but it should be left to individual councils to establish individual job descriptions based on their own internal processes and constitution e.g. any specific executive functions for which they should have personal responsibility. However the roles and responsibilities identified in the White Paper provide a useful guide when writing job descriptions and a constitution.
- Leader's Manifestos and annual reports - The appointment of the Leader of the Council is, of course, a decision made by the Council. The proposal fails to recognise that the Leader of the Council will inevitably be the person elected as the Leader of the majority Group. This seems to suggest the presentation of goals etc for 'interview' at Council. Perhaps a solution would be an annual report presented by the Cabinet to Council in the same way as annual reports are received from Scrutiny and Democratic Services and Standards Committee. This could set out performance against previous year's objectives and then objectives for the coming year.
- Roles of Cabinet Members defined in legislation –there is no need to legislate on Cabinet Member roles and this is a matter for individual authorities to decide.
- Number of Cabinet Posts – the proposals on reducing the maximum number of Cabinet Members are not supported and it is believed that the current maximum is sufficient. It should then be left to individual councils to determine the optimum level of membership to suit their constitutional requirements and scheme of delegation. In Newport individual cabinet members have individual decision making powers. This improves transparency and accountability The decision has been taken that we need 9 members of the Cabinet to make our governance arrangements work efficiently and effectively.

- The introduction of 'Junior' Cabinet posts is not supported. Questions arise as to how this will affect the number of Special Responsibility Allowances?
- Roles of Elected Members defined in legislation –this is not supported as these matters are best decided by individual authorities, perhaps making reference to best practice guidelines.
- Effectiveness of Members - The effectiveness, or otherwise, of Councillors is a matter for the electorate. Standards committees should not judge the performance of Councillors only regulate behaviour and propriety
- Recall of Elected Members –there could be clearer rules on disqualification due to failure to discharge duties, but public recall would be unworkable.
- Diversity of Cabinets and the introduction of co-opted members - Whilst it is accepted that Cabinets should demonstrate diversity the co-opting of members onto Cabinets would not work in terms of accountability and responsibility. The Democratic Services Committee takes the view that a more diverse mix of Councillors relies heavily on the selection of candidates by parties.
- Roles of Chief Executives defined in legislation – the responsibilities are already set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder.
- Terms limits/review mechanisms for Chief Executives – this was not supported on the basis that the current procedures are sufficient to ensure transparency and prevent decisions being taken for “political” reasons. Further restrictions on periods of office could undermine the role of Head of Paid Service.
- Senior Manager Salaries – it was agreed that there should be greater consistency across Wales in the salaries of senior officer posts and that this could be achieved through a National Framework. However this framework should not be so prescriptive as to prevent the payment of market supplements where the nature of the role and recruitment issues require this.
- Senior management appointments - the proposals on setting up a Public Sector Appointments Commission to was not thought necessary, as the current appointment regulations are thought sufficient, provided the process is open and transparent councils should have the discretion to make their own chief officer appointments.
- Should a system of “key decisions” be put in place in Wales - Subject to the legislative requirements, councils should be allowed to set their own procedures for scrutiny of decisions. In Newport the “call-in” process only applies where decisions are made unlawfully or unconstitutionally. There is no right of challenge on the merits, even for “key” executive decisions because all members are consulted prior to decisions being made.
- There is still confusion over the definition of Chief Officers and this can include relatively junior officers who are not considered to be Senior Managers. Therefore the extension of the role of the Independent Remuneration Panel to include all Chief Officer posts is not supported. The extended involvement of the IRP will make day to day managing of recruitment, restructures and other operational decisions unworkable.
- Senior Manager Salaries – it is agreed that there should be greater consistency across Wales in the salaries of senior officer posts and that this could be achieved through a National Framework. However this framework should not be so prescriptive as to prevent the payment of market supplements where the nature of the role and recruitment issues requires this.

- Senior management appointments - the proposals on setting up a Public Sector Appointments Commission is not necessary or appropriate. Council's should have discretion to make their own appointments, whilst making reference to a Common Assessment Framework for senior appointments and leadership roles.
- Should a system of "key decisions" be put in place in Wales - Subject to the legislative requirements, councils should be allowed to set their own procedures for scrutiny of decisions. In Newport the "call-in" process only applies where decisions are made unlawfully or unconstitutionally. There is no right of challenge on the merits, even for "key" executive decisions because all members are consulted prior to decisions being made.
- The role of the Workforce Partnership Council is recognised, however this is not wholly representative in terms of size/representation of Local Government. The legitimacy of sector established collective bargaining arrangements such as the Joint Council for Wales will be an essential feature for managing change with our social partners.
- Specific grants - There is inherent tension between the importance given to local priorities and accountability and the need to deliver on WG national strategies, supported through funding via specific grants. Whilst the paper mentions the large number of specific grants and the administrative burden they create, there is little detail or perceived ambition to reduce these and subsume into the revenue grant settlement. Newport currently receives nearly £50m of specific grants. A key issue in creating a new funding framework for Local Authorities has to include a sensible review of the use of specific grants and allowing more freedom to Councils to use funding as local priorities requires but manage national agenda's and priorities in a different way. As funds continue to diminish, allowing greater flexibility to use funds is a key way to manage the problem and the paper recognises that, but from a general taxation viewpoint and not the increased burden of specific grants and the 'core services' they often fund. It needs a more fundamental review and ambition to change than the paper currently indicates

Financial Summary

	Year 1 (Current) £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £	Ongoing £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs					There are no immediate financial consequences in responding to the White Paper
(Income)					
Net Costs (Savings) Net Impact on Budget					

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Not properly preparing for the implications of the local government reform programme	Medium	Low	Cabinet and Council will receive update reports as the programme progresses and will respond to consultation accordingly	Chief Executive

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

There are no direct links to specific Council policies and priorities. Rather this report is about the potential future arrangements and workings of local government in the future, If the proposals are taken forward through the legislative process there will be further rounds of consultation as the implications become clearer.

Options Available

3. To endorse the WLGA report (dated 27th February) on the “Power to Local People” White Paper and to submit the proposed response set out in this report subject to Council approval.
4. To submit an alternative response

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1. - This response seeks to balance a position of broad support for the reform of local government whilst highlighting areas of specific concern. It is also noted that the White Paper proposals are at varying degrees of development and more detailed consideration will need to be given to the draft legislation which will take this programme forward.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no immediate financial consequences in responding to the White Paper and my comments with regards to specific White Paper proposals on local government finance are given within the body of the report.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report at this stage as the Council is simply responding to the consultation on the White Paper. Some of the specific questions set out in the consultation document do raise a number of legal and operational issues relating to the process of implementing local government reorganisation and, where appropriate, comments have been included.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are a number of proposals on the White Paper which directly relate to the people impact associated with any future reorganisation of local government and my comments on the relevant proposals are given in the body of this report. As these proposals are taken forward through the legislative programme any impact on staff will be subject to the usual consultation mechanisms and we would look to mitigate its effect.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The proposals are at the discussion/consultation stage and the detail available is not yet sufficient to carry out an equalities impact assessment of specific policy and impact on protected groups.

Consultation

As requested by Welsh Government the City Council has encouraged employees, partner organisations and members of the public to respond to the White Paper consultation. Such responses are however a matter for the individuals and organisations concerned and will be submitted directly to Welsh Government.

Dated: 13th April 2015

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

- a. Voluntary Mergers Bill**
- b. White Paper "Power to local people"**

Purpose

1. This report updates members on a range of significant developments in the Welsh Government's Reforming Local Government programme since the last WLGA Council meeting, including the voluntary mergers, the publication of the Local Government (Wales) Bill and the publication of the 'Power to Local People' White Paper.
2. It also seeks at this preliminary stage to gauge members' views on key elements of the White Paper "Power to Local People" and allows sufficient opportunity to debate the construction of a full response before the deadline of 28th April 2015.

Voluntary Mergers and the Local Government (Wales) Bill

3. Local government has engaged constructively in the debate around structural reform through the Williams Commission, in dialogue with Ministers and in its response to the Reforming Local Government White Paper in the summer of 2014. The WLGA has put forward discussion documents outlining a vision for local democracy and local government and alternative options for delivering services differently.
4. There has been broad support, in principle, with a majority of councils confirming that they were prepared to consider merger through the process of the Second Bill and a further six councils constructing Expressions of Interest for a voluntary merger as part of the First Bill process. Other authorities took a democratic view to not engage in merger discussions.
5. Three formal voluntary merger expressions of interest, from Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan, and Conwy and Denbighshire were submitted to the Minister for consideration by the 30th November 2014 deadline. The deadline for the Welsh Government to process these bids was shifted from 5th January 2015 until a formal announcement that included the publication of the Voluntary Mergers Bill on 26th January 2015. The following day however saw the formal expressions of interest were rejected by the Minister for Public Services on 27th January 2015 in a statement was *"not persuaded that any one of these Expressions of Interest sufficiently meets the criteria for moving ahead to prepare a full Voluntary Merger Proposal"*. The rejection of the bids has

been greeted with considerable disappointment by the authorities involved some of whom have disputed the outcome of this process.

6. It remains the case that Welsh Government continues to encourage a programme of voluntary mergers and intends to produce a further local government map by the June 2015 and has published the Local Government (Wales) Bill [the Bill] which sets out arrangements and powers to introduce voluntary mergers. In addition the First Minister has publically stated that *“Williams is still the preferred map, but not the definitive map. I will be asking the party leaders, over the course of the next few weeks”, to meet with me in order that I can have a better assessment of what they think the map should look like,* (Record of Proceedings 27/01/15). In a subsequent interview on the “Wales Report” on 11/02/15 when asked about possible numbers of councils the Minister for Public Services highlighted his agreement that *“I think there is certainly a case for coming down to single figures”* and committed to the production of a map before the summer recess”.
7. The Bill sets out powers for Ministers to issue guidance around voluntary mergers (i.e. the Prospectus), gives powers to authorities to submit voluntary merger proposals and gives Ministers subsequent powers to make regulations introducing such new proposed authorities, as well as powers to direct the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission and Independent Remuneration Panel to undertake necessary preparatory work. The Bill also sets out arrangements in terms of establishment of transition committees and shadow authorities.
8. In the absence of an agreed map, it has led to some questions in the Assembly about the relevance of the Bill and the achievability of voluntary mergers. The Minister for Public Services recognised these concerns in evidence to the Committee on the 5th February:

“I think if I were in local government—I’ll be blunt—I would not want to bring forward at this moment a voluntary merger proposal without seeing the overall map. What I’m hoping is that we will get some agreement on an overall map during the course of the early summer, and, if local authorities then, feeling they had confidence in the way the map might roll out, as it were, wanted to bring forward voluntary mergers, well, the Bill would provide them with that opportunity.”
9. It should be noted that the Bill’s proposals for establishing the preparatory governance arrangements are also applicable for the anticipated wider merger or reorganisation programme.
10. Of particular significance is the Bill’s implications on merger timescales. The Bill includes a 30th November 2015 deadline for submissions of proposals for voluntary mergers, which would present a challenging timescale for interested authorities of around 5 months from the anticipated publication of a new map possibly in June.
11. The Bill also permits the Minister to direct the Local Government and Boundary Commission to undertake initial electoral reviews of proposed new authorities effectively from the commencement of the Bill (anticipated in November). The Minister could direct initial reviews of any voluntary merger proposals that may

be presented or, if minded, any or all of the proposed new authorities as outlined in the map expected in the summer. The Minister could also issue such directions following any map or proposals published in a second Local Government (Wales) Bill which is anticipated after the Assembly elections.

12. The WLGA is giving evidence on the Bill to the Assembly's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on 26th February. The WLGA was invited to give initial written submission early in the Committee's Inquiry (included in **Annex 1**), the Inquiry however closes on 13th March so any further WLGA views and local authority comments can be provided until that date. An oral update will be provided to WLGA Council on WLGA discussions with the Committee.

White Paper: Power to Local People

13. The Welsh Government published the Power to Local People White Paper [the White Paper] on 3rd February 2015.
14. The White Paper seeks to set out the Welsh government's vision for local government in Wales and, crucially, giving 'power to local people'. It describes ambitions for:
 - Activist councils, engaged in delivering modern, accessible, high quality public services with their local communities.
 - A more limited set of national priorities set for local government with councils setting the bulk of local priorities with local people.
 - More diverse membership of local authorities and cabinets.
 - Reducing the cost of politics and management in local government.
 - Councils committed to looking outwards at their place-shaping role, building community capacity and resilience.
 - Councils open to new ways of delivering services based on Wales's traditions of cooperative and mutual services.
 - Empowering local people to more closely involved in decision-taking.
15. The White Paper is a mix of a traditional White Paper with firm policy recommendations but also a Green Paper, seeking views on a range of possible options, which may or not be formally proposed, and which has been published to stimulate debate. The themes and issues in the White Paper will be open for engagement for longer than normal as the Welsh Government intends to translate the policy proposals into a Draft Bill to be published in the autumn. This Draft Bill in turn will be subject to consultation, and will remain draft until (and whether) the Welsh Government introduces it formally as a Bill in the new Assembly following the May 2016 elections.
16. The White Paper consultation closes on 28th April 2015 and is being underpinned by a programme of public engagement including radio adverts, bus advertising, roadshows and online surveys

17. The White Paper is a wide-ranging document and the consultation form itself runs to thirty pages. A summary of the key proposals is included in **Annex 2**.
18. From discussions with a range of leaders thus far the WLGA would agree to key underpinning themes and ambitions in the White Paper. These include specific proposals such as the introduction of a power of general competence, councils leading their communities, engagement with communities and promoting much greater diversity in terms of representation, strengthening of the self-improvement and peer support framework and a proportionate joined up philosophy of external audit and inspection.
19. The White Paper sets out a vision for an 'activist council', and sets out challenges for councils to be better connected with communities. It further develops and promotes the concept of participative democracy, where communities and community groups can better engage and participate in local democracy, service design, commissioning and delivery. The Minister for Public Services has also recently written to Leaders (17th February) outlining a review he has commissioned which will 'explore the scope for the mutualisation of public services' (**Annex 3**).
20. A number of specific proposals are however very controversial and have inevitably dominated initial debate and media coverage to the exclusion of other elements of the White Paper. These include
 - Roles and responsibilities of leaders and cabinet member set out in legislation.
 - A reduction in full-time Cabinet roles and introduction of (part-time) Deputy or 'Junior' Cabinet Members.
 - Reduction in number of councillors in line with UK average. Councils will be elected on a fixed five year election cycle in line with Parliament and the Assembly.
 - Views are sought on whether Council elections should be phased in thirds.
 - Term limits of 5 terms for councillors and 2 terms for leaders and cabinet members.
 - A possible recall mechanism for councillors in line with proposals for MPs.
 - A review to reduce the level of remuneration of councillors, Leaders and Cabinet members.
 - Legislation to ensure that councils establish "Area Boards which reflect modern inclusive, participatory principles with a guaranteed role for community bodies, the third sector, community councils and other public services" (These will be in addition to the Public Services Boards proposed under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.)

21. There are also a range of recommendations around the role of Chief Executive and senior managers not least considering the establishment of a Public Sector Appointments Commission.
22. All the factors above form part of a wider debate about a proper vision for local government. They concentrate around the future of local democracy, the model of central local relations in Wales, the role and recognition of councillors as dedicated public servants and structural configuration of councils in the future. Indeed in a number of instance it is very difficult to answer consultation questions on the number of elected members until we know the number of authorities.
23. Many of the proposals and wider media narrative to support them has therefore been greeted with disappointment and concern by many elected members given the significant contribution and commitment of hard-working councillors. There is also anxiety that the proposals for local democracy may be subject to the law of unintended consequences and actually see the departure of younger councillors in their forties who may have met the "5 term ceiling".
24. Concern has also been expressed about the consistency of the Welsh Government's proposals in the context of the Williams Report and the exhortation for "One Welsh Public Service". Many of the proposals around the appointment/election, role, terms and remuneration of councillors and senior council officers are not consistent with and do not apply to other Welsh public services or the Welsh Government.
25. When it comes to management costs the Welsh Government has recently issued a corrective note to the figures on Page 40 on the size of senior management teams. In other areas some recommendations do not compare "like with like" for example that "Councillors remuneration should be more in line with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland". In England there is not a national system of allowance setting, in Scotland the basic allowance is £3,260 higher than the £13,300 in Wales and in Northern Ireland the comparisons is with councils that resemble "districts" in terms of functions. WLGA will seek to fully debate the evidence in its response to the White paper.
26. The above factors led Cllr Bob Wellington, WLGA Leader in responding to the White Paper's publication to stress that:

"The Williams Commission and the Welsh Government's initial response promised a reform of public services as a whole and a move to one Welsh Public Service; it is imperative that any debate on remuneration, term limits for councillors and senior officers, and recall for democratic representatives extends well beyond local government to all tiers of government and public service in Wales. We need consistency across public services in Wales and equal treatment within the democratic sphere. The WLGA wants to see the difficult role of councillors properly valued."

27. The White Paper will be debated extensively throughout councils in the coming period and the WLGA would welcome a wide-ranging debate amongst its membership and with the Welsh Government on to how we move forward on the proposals.

28. It is intended that the WLGA's draft White Paper response will be considered by WLGA Coordinating Committee on 27th March.

Recommendations

29. Members are asked to:

29.1 Note the report and oral update on voluntary mergers and the WLGA evidence session on the Local Government (Wales) Bill;

29.2 Comment on the implications of the Local Government (Wales) Bill and encourage authorities to submit evidence to the Assembly's Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee by 13th March 2015;

29.3 Provide initial views on the White Paper and encourage all authorities to respond formally to the consultation and contribute to the WLGA's draft consultation response by WLGA Coordinating Committee on 27th March.

Report cleared by: Cllr Bob Wellington
WLGA Leader

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WLGA and SOLACE Evidence

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Local Government (Wales) Bill

February 2015

Introduction

1. The WLGA and SOLACE welcomes the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee's inquiry into the general principles of the Local Government (Wales) Bill [the Bill].
2. Local government engaged constructively with the Williams Commission and has since sought to work with the Welsh Government in determining a collective response to the Williams proposals. Whilst the Williams Report covered all public services and made many broad recommendations, much of the debate has since focused on structural reform of local government. From the outset, local government through the WLGA recognised the need for some structural reform noting in its submission to the Williams Commission that:

“We fully accept that the current structure of twenty two councils is essentially contested but any proposals for structural change must clearly demonstrate a compelling case for change supported by hard evidence.”

3. The Reforming Local Government White Paper in July 2014 set out the Welsh Government's current preferred map of 12 local authorities and confirmed its intention to encourage and incentivise early voluntary mergers. In its response to the White Paper the WLGA stated:

“There is consensus across Welsh local government and the Welsh Government about the need for public service reform. The size of the financial and demographic challenges facing councils is such that their sustainability into the future is an issue. There are however honestly held and passionate views across local government regarding the nature, scale, timing and timescale of such reform and whether proposed structural changes provide the answer.

Local government has responded constructively and proactively to the debate, putting forward discussion documents outlining a vision for local democracy and local government and alternative options for delivering services differently. A number of authorities have also indicated that they are prepared to further explore options for early voluntary mergers.”

4. The Welsh Government published its Prospectus for Voluntary Mergers on 18th September 2014. On 26th September, the WLGA Council unanimously passed the following resolution:

“The WLGA considers that whilst some authorities do not favour mergers, there are a number of authorities that are prepared in principle to consider voluntary mergers. However, all authorities need considerably more information on the support, including financial support that would be available in order to be in a position to develop a sound business case.”

5. There was overwhelming support, at least in principle, within local government to explore opportunities for voluntary mergers. Three formal expressions of interest, from

six authorities, were submitted to the Minister for consideration by the 30th November 2014 deadline. In addition, a further eight authorities confirmed that they were prepared to consider mergers, but either did not have willing merger partners or were constrained from proposing alternative options which required boundary changes. Two authorities were determined as 'stand alone' authorities in the map of twelve.

6. Although the formal expressions of interest were rejected on 27th January 2015, the Welsh Government continues to encourage voluntary mergers and intends to produce a further local government map by the Summer 2015.

Comments in response to the Committee's Terms of Reference:

1. the general principles of the Local Government (Wales) Bill and the need for legislation to:

- **enable preparations to be made for a programme of local government mergers and reform;**
 - **allow Principal Local Authorities to merge voluntarily by April 2018;**
7. The Bill (Section 11 onwards) sets in place appropriate and non-contentious arrangements to enable the preparation for voluntary mergers and subsequent 'enacted' mergers of local authorities. The Bill features mechanisms and governance arrangements, such as transition committees and shadow authorities, which are common to previous legislation which initiated the reform of principal authority structures.
 8. There are two sections however which may require further clarification and/or consideration at Stage 2 scrutiny:
 - a. Section 29(1) states that a merging authority cannot undertake certain transactions without providing the detail specified in S29(3) to the transition committee and considering its opinion. However S29(3) does not specify what detail is to be provided.
 - b. Section 31(1) is intended to control land transactions. It governs any transaction where the 'consideration for the acquisition or disposal exceeds £150,000'. The legislation therefore would not stop a disposal at an undervalue (or for free); for clarity this section could refer to 'land value' rather than the more technical legal term of 'consideration'.
 9. Sections 3-10 set out arrangements relating to the Voluntary Mergers of local authorities. The most significant challenge to this part of the Bill is provision of early clarity and the manageability of timescales (the risks of the electoral review process is explored further below). The Bill allows Ministers to make a range of regulations relating to the governance arrangements of voluntary merging authorities, such as the establishment of transition committees and shadow authorities. The dates for the establishment of these are therefore not on the face of the Bill and are not considered in detail in the Explanatory Memorandum. The WLGA however raised a number of points during consultation on the Reforming Local Government White Paper in September notably that for voluntary mergers there was only a proposed 6 months shadow authority period compared to 12 months for later mergers. 6 months is a very short period of time for transition and set up given need for senior officer recruitment, business and financial planning and continuity, establishment of governance arrangements and hand-over.
 10. Sections 3-10 relating to the Voluntary Mergers of local authorities appears unusual if not unique in Assembly legislation, as noted in the Explanatory Memorandum, as the Bill seeks to retrospectively give powers to Welsh Ministers (to issue guidance which has

already been published i.e. the Prospectus) and to authorities (to make applications for voluntary mergers) before the Bill has been enacted.

11. It is well documented that whilst the Welsh Government's current preferred map is the Williams Map of 12 authorities and Welsh Ministers now intend to produce a new map by the Summer 2015. Until a new map is produced, it is unlikely that any further expressions of interest or formal proposals for merger will be submitted, as was recognised by the Minister for Local Government in his evidence to Committee on 5th February 2015.
12. The absence of a final agreed map therefore means that it is difficult to assess the practicability and costs of the Bill in entirety. In particular, the timescales between the anticipated Summer publication of a map and the 30th November 2015 deadline (*or such later date as per (S3(1))*) does impact significantly on the practicability of voluntary mergers – this would allow only around five months to develop a fully costed, consulted upon voluntary merger proposal, compared to the original Prospectus timetable of ten months (from publication of the Prospectus to deadline of 30th June 2015).
- **amend provision in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 relating to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and the survey of councillors and unsuccessful candidates for election as councillors;**
13. The WLGA supports the provisions in the Bill (Sections 25-27) relating to amending the powers of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales with regards undertaking preparatory reviews of remuneration for future Shadow Authorities and/or new Principal Authorities.
14. The WLGA has been in correspondence with the Welsh Government with regards the implications of the definition of Chief Officers (S35(2) (for the purposes of the extension of the Panel's remit) as defined in the Localism Act 2011. The WLGA has queried this on the basis that the Localism Act's definition of Chief Officer was based on that of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which was introduced for the purposes of political restriction rather than determination of salary levels. The statutory Chief Officer definition therefore also includes 'Deputy Chief Officers' who are described as an officer who '...report directly or is directly accountable...chief officers'. This means that the Panel's workload could be unintentionally but significantly affected by having responsibility for managing pay policy and salary determinations for numerous comparatively junior local government employees.
15. There are also wider potential implications of the Panel making recommendations as to the level of pay for Chief Officers (from the date of commencement until 2020) which would need to be further considered and covered in Guidance. The Panel's remit would appear to apply to any Chief Officer vacancy that might arise during that period. Notwithstanding the above difference in interpretations around the definition of Chief Officers, the provision will prove challenging in practice if it is applied to individual Chief Officer vacancies in an authority with a number of incumbent Chief Officers. For example, a Chief Officer vacancy arises in an authority with a Senior Management Team of 5 Chief Officers; the Panel recommends a lower salary for the new post than the other current Chief Officers. The authority will then have to consider either the contractual implications of reducing the salaries of the 4 other Chief Officer posts in line with the Panel's recommendation or discriminate against the one Chief Officer post. Furthermore, there would be equal pay implications if the authority applied the Panel's determination only to the vacant post, where the incumbent Chief Officers were men and the authority decided to appoint a woman to the vacant lower paid Chief Officer role.

16. The WLGA supports S36 which increases the Panel's membership from five to six, which is appropriate given anticipated workload in advance of any mergers, notably around members' remuneration and senior officer salaries.
17. The WLGA welcomes the amendments to the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 regarding the survey of candidates and councillors, these amendments have been shaped by feedback from authorities' experiences of the first statutory survey in 2012. The survey could be further improved with the inclusion of additional qualitative questions, however, this is a matter for regulations.

- **amend provision in the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 relating to electoral reviews.**

18. The provisions relating to electoral reviews (Sections 16-24 and 38) are deemed necessary to provide the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission [the Commission] to undertake any preparatory or electoral review work as early in the merger process as possible. A significant responsibility is placed on the Commission as the electoral review process presents a potential risk to the effectiveness and timeliness of the local government reform programme.
19. Preparatory work and an early Ministerial direction to conduct an initial electoral review are critical given the potential time and capacity constraints of a local government reform programme. An early direction, for example, in the second anticipated Local Government (Wales) Bill 2016, in advance of enactment however does present (albeit a small) potential risk that early electoral review work could be made redundant should a 'proposed principal area' as set out in a Bill alter as a result of any amendments to the map during the passage of that Bill.
20. Section 23 appears to introduce a significant 'back-stop' power for Welsh Ministers to make 'electoral regulations if no recommendations [are] made' by the Commission by the date set out in any direction. Whilst a back-stop power may be necessary, this is a significant Ministerial power particularly as the Explanatory Memorandum notes that there is 'No Assembly procedure' for this subordinate legislation. The WLGA and SOLACE believe that whilst a reserve back-stop power may be necessary, the Bill should be amended at Stage 2 to ensure that there adequate consultative safeguards are put in place. S23 currently outlines that should a Minister need to make such regulations, any evidence gathered through the Commission's investigation and consultation should be passed to Welsh Ministers to inform their decision which the WLGA and SOLACE would support, however, it appears Welsh Ministers can then make regulations on electoral arrangements for a proposed principal area without any consultation on the final proposals. The Bill should therefore be amended to ensure that Welsh Ministers also have to follow the Commission's consultative procedures (as set out in Section 20(3) and (4) and produce a final report with publication and local (and mandatory) consultation for between 6 and 12 weeks.

2. any potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and whether the Bill takes account of them,

21. The most significant potential barrier to the implementation of the Bill's provisions is whether any authorities decide to make an application for voluntary merger following the publication of a revised map in the Summer. Similarly, successful implementation is dependent on whether any application fulfils the criteria set out in the enacted Bill and any accompanying guidance and whether the appropriate preparatory electoral review work can be completed expeditiously.

22. The resourcing of any voluntary mergers (or enacted mergers) is still an issue of some debate (as was reflected in the Committee's discussions on 5th February); the totality of predicted costs is contested and it remains unclear how (and by whom) any mergers will be funded.

23. Although perhaps unlikely, it also appears a possibility that a voluntary merger process started before the end of this Assembly term could be 'revoked' before completion by a new Welsh Minister in the fifth Assembly term, if for example, an alternative map was introduced by a new administration through a new Bill.

3. whether there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill,

24. The WLGA is not aware of any unintended consequences arising from the Bill, other than any outlined above.

4. the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum),

21. The financial implications of the Bill appear to be appropriate as far as they go in terms of assessing the costs of known factors, such as the potential cost implications on the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission, the Independent Remuneration Panel and the establishment of Transition Committees and Shadow Authorities.

22. As noted above however, the regulatory impact assessment can only be completed and any financial implications considered when an agreed map is produced and the costs and benefits of (voluntary or enacted) mergers of authorities have been fully and robustly assessed.

5. the appropriateness of the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Explanatory Memorandum).

23. The powers for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation appear appropriate and proportionate (noting the reference to powers under Section 23 above).

WLGA Briefing

Welsh Government White Paper Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People

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Background

The Welsh Government has published 3 versions (titles are clickable links):

- [Full version](#)
- [Everyday \(summary\) version](#)
- [Young people version](#)

The consultation closes at 23.59 on 28th April.

The White Paper seeks to set out the Welsh government's vision for local government in Wales and, crucially, giving 'power to local people'. It describes ambitions for:

- Activist councils, engaged in delivering modern, accessible, high quality public services with their local communities
- A more limited set of national priorities set for local government with councils setting the bulk of local priorities with local people
- More diverse membership of local authorities and cabinets
- Reducing the cost of politics and management in local government
- Councils committed to looking outwards at their place-shaping role, building community capacity and resilience
- Councils open to new ways of delivering services based on Wales's traditions of cooperative and mutual services
- Empowering local people to more closely involved in decision-taking

Summary

The White Paper is extensive and includes a number of clear policy proposals, a reiteration of previous policy commitments (such as mergers, links to Future Generations Bill etc.) but also includes a number of open ended questions seeking views on policy options.

Some of the proposals and policy options are complex but the White Paper offers limited detail around how proposals would be implemented.

The following list summarises a number of the main proposals and/or policy options outlined. The summary does not provide a critique of any of the proposals, which will be

subject to fuller consultation and debate in councils and through the WLGA Council and Coordinating Committee ahead of the consultation deadline of 28th April.

For a full-list of proposals/options see the Welsh Government's 30 page consultation form <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/consultation/150203-power-to-local-people-response-en.docx>:

Balancing the Responsibilities of National and Local Government

1. Recasting the Partnership Council and Partnership Scheme – Partnership Council would assess performance, progress and collaboration against a limited set of national priority outcomes (these would be underpinned by more detail local priorities).
2. The provision of a general power of competence to Local Authorities and eligible Community Councils.
3. All authorities to be called 'Counties' i.e. dropping the term County Borough

Renewing Democracy

4. Roles and responsibilities of leaders and cabinet member set out in legislation.
5. Leaders should produce a manifesto and produce Annual Reports for Council. Leaders should also publically set and performance manage objectives for Cabinet Members and Chief Executives.
6. Council Leaders to have explicit duties in respect of diversity and standards of behaviour, including bullying and harassment of councillors and staff
7. A reduction in full-time Cabinet roles and introduction of (part-time) Deputy or 'Junior' Cabinet Members.
8. Reduction in number of councillors in line with UK average.
9. Mandatory training introduced for councillors and all councillors have to produce annual reports detailing activities, attendance, training etc.
10. Councils will be elected on a fixed five year election cycle in line with Parliament and the Assembly.
11. Views are sought on whether Council elections should be phased in thirds.
12. Term limits of 5 terms for councillors and 2 terms for leaders and cabinet members.
13. Enhanced powers for Standards Committees
14. A possible recall mechanism for councillors in line with proposals for MPs. No detail is included on how this might work.
15. A review to reduce the level of remuneration of councillors, Leaders and Cabinet members.
16. Lift the restrictions on council staff (other than politically-restricted posts) from standing for election to their own authority (although they would have to resign if they were elected).
17. Staff of devolved bodies who are councillors to be given more time off to attend council business.
18. Views sought on whether people should be prevented from holding posts as a Councillor and Assembly Member at the same time, or Community Councillor and County Councillor.
19. Statutory duties around promoting democratic engagement and having Youth Councils.
20. Role and responsibilities of the Chief Executive in Local Authorities defined in legislation, including duties around improvement, corporate planning and promoting democratic engagement.

21. Proposed term limits on chief executive appointments.
22. Chief Executives to be recruited through a national recruitment process via a Public Sector Appointments Commission.
23. Tight and more consistent, nationally set standards and controls on the remuneration of chief executives and other chief officers

Connecting with Communities

24. Councils to establish Local Area Boards, led by elected members, including third sector and community group representatives and Community Councillors. Local responsibilities and/or budgets could be delegated to such Boards. All members of board to have voting rights.
25. Responsibility for the consistency of Community Council structures to lie with Principal Councils and councils should complete, by 2022, a review of the Community Councils in their area.
26. Minimum standards to be met by Community Councils who wish to be considered 'competent' and able to utilise the general power of competence or the community rights.

Power to Local Communities

27. Activist councils should lead in the development of new forms of community control of services, including mutual and cooperatives, establishing new 'community rights';
 - to be involved in the improvement of services
 - to initiate the transfer of land and other assets from local government to community groups
 - a first refusal to buy assets of community value
28. Governance tests will apply to organisations delivering services or assets.
29. Welsh Government will support local authorities in the development of new skills to create this cultural change.

Corporate Governance and Improvement

30. Repealing Part 1 of the LG (Wales) Measure 2009, removing the requirement upon Local Authorities to produce annual Improvement Plans.
31. Councils required to undertake an annual self-assessment process.
32. Councils will be subject to rolling programme of biennial peer reviews and joint inspections from WAO, Estyn and CSSIW. The latter will produce an joint assessment of local authority performance in Wales.
33. A strengthened role for audit committees, with an independent chair, and a requirement to consider the Local Authority's self-assessment, peer review and 'whole system' assessment reports.
34. Clarification of powers for Welsh Ministers to intervene in the event of corporate or service failure (following repeal of current powers outlined in 2009 Measure) and revision of joint protocol on support and intervention.

Performance in Local Government

35. Local Authorities will be required to prepare a corporate plan (in place of the improvement plan and linking to the wellbeing plan).

36. Local Authorities will be required to publish comparative service performance real-time data, which should be consistent and include contextual information.
37. Views are sought on the establishment of minimum setting of minimum performance outcomes or standards and whether there should be financial penalties.
38. Local Authorities must embrace digital technology to improve services to local communities
39. Local Authorities will be required to establish an online complaints process.
40. Strengthens provisions with regards to broadcasting of proceedings (including the webcasting of all full Council and Executive meetings) and rights of the public to engage in proceedings via social media.

Strengthening the Role of Review

41. Heads of Democratic Services should be Chief Officers and restriction on Monitoring Officer being an HDS removed.
42. A strengthened relationship between internal scrutiny and external Audit, Inspection and Regulation.
43. Scrutiny to be able to call-in only specified 'Key Decisions' as in England.
44. Co-opted members of scrutiny given power to vote.
45. Further extension of Scrutiny Committees duty to provide the public and community based bodies with opportunities to engage with scrutiny.
46. Proposal to consider the establishment of Local Public Accounts Committees to scrutinise all public service expenditure in Wales (in line with pilots being explored with England).

Reforming Local Government Finance

47. A review of the mechanisms for funding Local Authorities (longer term).
48. Implementation of the necessary changes to the framework of financial governance required to enable and support the above reforms.

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

To: All Local Authority Leaders

17 February 2015

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to draw to your attention to some work which I have jointly commissioned with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport to explore the scope for the mutualisation of public services.

The work builds on the themes I set out in the *Reforming Local Government: Power to local People* White Paper and will start to map out how the opportunities identified in the report of the *Co-operatives and Mutual Commission* chaired by Professor Andrew Davies can be realised. The Minister for the Economy, Science and Transport has recently asked the Commission to reconvene and review progress on its recommendations and to report back to her.

The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport and I have commissioned the Wales Co-operative Centre to lead the work which will focus on establishing the views of key stakeholders, determining the potential scope for mutualisation of services and identifying any specific ideas for taking this forward locally. The findings will be presented in a report to Welsh Government. The work will be carried out by Keith Edwards, former director of the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru and the Tenant Participation Advisory Service and he will be contacting your office shortly to arrange an interview in your role as leader of the Council.

I hope that you will be able to share your experience and insight to ensure this work is grounded in a thorough understanding of service delivery realities. If you have any queries or require any further information at this stage please contact Claire Bennett 029 20826734 or Tracey Burke 0300 061 5855 (Welsh Government) or Keith directly on 07949 443 039 or at keith.edwardscihcm@gmail.com

Best wishes,
Leighton Andrews

Leighton Andrews AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28th April 2015

Item No: 6

Subject Improvement Plan 2015/16

Purpose: To present Council with the Improvement Plan 2015/16 and to seek endorsement and approval as required by the Local Government Measure 2009.

Author Chief Executive

Ward All

Summary The purpose of the Improvement Plan is to enable the authority to evidence that it has discharged its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement (Local Government Measure 2009).

In order to fulfil this duty, the Improvement Plan 2015/16 identifies eight Improvement Objectives in which the council will seek to demonstrate measurable improvement. The plan is produced annually, as soon as is reasonably practicable at the beginning of the financial year.

The Improvement Plan builds upon the Council's Corporate Plan and the Local Service Board's Single Integrated Plan, and is informed by stakeholder consultation and engagement, Member involvement and feedback from regulators.

At its meeting held on 13 April 2015, the Cabinet endorsed the Plan and recommended its adoption by Council.

Proposal To adopt the Improvement Plan 15/16

Action by Strategic Directors and Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Scrutiny Committees
- Chief Executive
- Strategic Directors
- Heads of Service
- Performance Board
- Cabinet

Background

The purpose of the Improvement Plan is to enable the authority to evidence that it has discharged its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement (Local Government Measure 2009). In order to clearly demonstrate that the Council is fulfilling this duty, eight discrete priority areas have been identified in which measurable improvement should be demonstrated during 2015/16.

The eight Improvement Objectives (which relate to the priorities of the Corporate Plan) were selected by Cabinet in January 2015 after consideration of consultation responses.

Scrutiny meetings were held in February to enable Members' to input into the Improvement Plan 15/16. Feedback from Scrutiny is provided below.

The eight Improvement Objectives 2015/16 are linked according to theme below:

A Caring City

1. Supporting older people leaving hospital

We want to ensure that people who require social care support do not stay in hospital beds any longer than necessary. When we are responsible for organising to discharge someone from hospital and we are unable to do so within reasonable time, they will be recorded as delayed for social care reasons.

2. Improving care and support services for adults

It is part of adult services statutory duty to review packages of care and support for individual service users. Achieving this objective will improve our planning with individuals proactively, ensuring a planned and efficient approach to our reviewing framework.

We are also required to develop an integrated assessment process for older people. By developing more integrated approaches to the management of care and support packages, we aim for more multi-professional involvement in reviewing care plans. This should also contribute to improving care plan reviewing.

A Learning & Working City

3. Developing and regenerating the City

The objective is to make Newport an attractive place for:

- The creation of opportunities for businesses to set up in Newport
- Businesses to continue to deliver their services and develop their business
- The city is seen as a destination for tourism, culture, sport and retail
- Where the residents of the city benefit through increased employment and community benefits

We will provide support to local businesses in order to promote economic growth and will enhance the city's skill base, generating additional employment for Newport residents through a variety of physical and social regeneration projects.

4. Supporting young people into education, employment or training

Engagement in learning and training are critical if young people are to make successes of their lives and meet their own needs and the needs of the city of Newport as an economic community. The council and its partners have an important role to play in helping young people to make the most of opportunities for training and employment. The Improvement Objective measures the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training at key stages of their lives.

5. Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children

To ensure all our pupils are effectively engaged in education so that they can attain the best possible educational outcomes. This includes vulnerable learners that may be at risk of not reaching their expected level of attainment.

A Greener and Healthier City

6. Helping children have a flying start in life

"Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the lives of children in the most disadvantaged communities". The Flying Start programme offers eligible parents free quality childcare for 2-3 year olds, parenting support, an enhanced health visitor service and support for early language development.

7. Increasing recycling

To ensure Newport delivers the Welsh Government objectives for the increasing of recycling and the European targets for diversion of waste from landfill, every recycling and diversion opportunity available to the city must be explored and where applicable, implemented.

The diversion of residual municipal waste from landfill will largely be covered by the operation of Prosiect Gwyrdd and Cwm-y-Fory. Therefore, this objective will largely focus on encouraging businesses and residents within the city to recycle more which will maximise the potential currently being classified and treated as residual waste.

A Safer City

8. Improving outcomes for youth justice

The principle aim of the youth justice system, established by section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is to prevent offending by children and young people. This relates to prevention of anti-social behaviour and offending; appropriate use of Out of Court Disposals to divert young people from the criminal justice system; reducing the rate of proven re-offending and reducing the proportion of young people sentenced to custody. In line with Welsh Government and Youth Justice Board policy, we believe that prevention is better than cure and that children are young people first and offenders second.

Feedback from Scrutiny

Street Scene, Regeneration and Safety Scrutiny Committee 12/02/15

The Improvement Priorities for this Committee relate to:

- Increasing recycling
- Developing and regenerating the City
- Improving outcomes for youth justice

Comments made included:-

- Acknowledgement of the action of the Youth Justice Board to address improvements to the Youth Justice Service in the light of the findings of the Inspection report following a full joint Inspection undertaken by colleagues from Criminal Justice, Social care, health and learning and skills inspectorates in 2014. The service was now in a better position to drive forward the objectives in the Improvement Plan. Acknowledgement was also made of the support provided by Regulators in areas needing improvement.
- Concern regarding proposals by Gwent Police from April 1 2015 to reduce by 50%, current staffing levels dedicated to Youth Justice that would affect a model being considered for the East and West of Newport respectively to tackle youth offending. This would be detrimental to the operation of the Youth Offending Service and adversely affect improvements to the service.
- Representations had been made regarding this matter and it was intended to raise the issue with the Management Board in March.
- The effect residents not recycling waste could have on the Council achieving its targets. Failure could result in financial penalties being imposed by Welsh Government.
- Different methods of undertaking collection of recycled waste, including kerbside ready separated or combined collections, that were then separated at a dedicated recycling centre. The implications of each were mentioned, especially the possible financial disadvantages that could be incurred should the quality of recyclables be impaired through contamination before resale.
- The improvements made to the process for consultation on the draft proposals for the Improvement Plan, over those implemented last year.

- The desirability of being involved earlier in the process for consultation on next year's draft proposals for the Improvement Plan.
- The possibility of implementing a workshop approach to consultation on the Improvement Plan proposals for the following year.

Resolutions and Actions

1. To endorse the processes undertaken in selecting its improvement objectives and the improvements made over those undertaken in the previous year.
2. To forward comments made to the Cabinet, to take into account before a final Draft Plan is recommended for approval to Council in April 2015.

Community Planning and Development Scrutiny 18/02/15

The Improvement Priorities for this Committee relate to:

- Supporting older people leaving hospital;
- Improving care and support services for adults

Comments made included:

- Clarification was provided that Review Team provides the annually required review while any other issues should be addressed through the Assessment Team.
- It was explained that a collective integrated approach was to be utilised by Health and Social Services for integrated assessments.
- It was questioned whether IT data was up to date? – In the past some IT tools wouldn't have been used, but there had been less discipline in entering information. Concern was expressed about money being spent on systems that are not fully utilised.
- It was further clarified that scoping assessments and tools had been looked at and the need to streamline processes for adults.
- A Member stated it was the routine of doing things rather than using the tools available and that professional practice requires cultural shift.
- There was a request for a service area structure reflecting the different parts of the service to be circulated to Members of the Committee for information.
- With regard to the process, a Member expressed one negative and lots of positives - Page 42, the Table doesn't reflect the positive consideration of draft priorities in the Workshop and disaggregation. There has been improvement in consultation and the range of stakeholders involved in this consultation, improvements in the Risk Register on Audit Committee, asking the Fairness Commission to comment. The volume has increased so to present it numerically isn't great.
- A Member added that the Citizen's Panel isn't referenced in the table distinctly.
- It was clarified that much is delivered via partnership working e.g. Hospital Occupational Therapy Team, links to GP networks, Partnership working across Providers, Carers Support function with Carers Forum, Residential and Nursing Providers jointly with Torfaen.
- A Member asked whether on Page 41 – supporting people leaving hospital, those discharged without a package are guaranteed an assessment within 24 hours. – It was explained that this hasn't commenced, but examining using some resources to have an assessment in the community.
- A Member asked how long it would take from assessment to putting in place? – It was explained that there has to be assurance that there is capacity in the Frailty Service to react before this can be done.

Resolutions and Actions

To endorse the processes undertaken in the selection of the Authority's Improvement Objectives and the detailed proposals that relate to the portfolio of this Committee and forward Members' comments to Cabinet before a final plan is recommended to Council for approval in April 2015.

Learning, Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee 25/02/15

The Improvement Priorities for this Committee relate to:

- Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children
- Supporting young people into education, employment or training
- Helping children have a flying start in life

Comments made related to:-

- The options and approaches available for catering for pupils with additional or alternative educational needs, including those excluded from mainstream schooling.
- The level of days lost by pupils as a result of being excluded.
- The role of the schools in engaging with parents which varies depending on individual circumstances.
- The process by which alternative education provision was quality assured.
- Whether targets were sufficiently aspirational. The Chief Education Officer reported that these were appropriately aspirational given the circumstances that existed. Improvement in all cases was realistically incremental.
- How Newport compared nationally regarding improvement achieved against targets.
- The Chief Education Officer would provide recent performance data for South East Wales and other Councils for information.
- The relative importance of the availability of vocational pathways for pupils as an alternative to the academic route.
- The potential adverse effect curtailing post 16 education would have on rurally based pupils.
- The number of entrants into work based learning academy places. This was set up via the Communities first initiative and was not undertaken through schools. The scheme represented a pathway to training, education or employment for young people.
- Disappointment at the absence of current and comparative performance data and targets for 2015/16 within the Helping Children to have the best start in life priority narrative. It was however clarified that the document was in draft and would be completed as soon as was possible. Comments made would be conveyed to the Cabinet.

Resolutions and Actions

1. To endorse the processes undertaken in selecting its improvement objectives and the improvements made over those undertaken in the previous year.
2. To forward comments made to the Cabinet, to take into account before a final Draft Plan is recommended for approval to Council in April 2015.

Performance Board Improvement Plan Work Programme

The following work programme is proposed to monitor the Improvement Plan throughout 2015/16. Cabinet will receive quarterly updates on the plan in its entirety and it is proposed that Performance Board look in detail at each of the eight objectives in turn at the following meetings:

Meeting	Improvement Objectives considered in detail
June 2015	Helping Children have a flying start in life Increasing Recycling
September 2015	Supporting Older People leaving hospital Improving care and support services for adults
December 2015	Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children Supporting young people into education, employment or training
March 2016	Improving Outcomes for Youth Justice Developing and Regenerating the City

Monitoring Framework

Each of the eight Improvement Objectives is included in the relevant Service Plan; therefore Service Plan monitoring will also cover the monitoring of the Improvement Objectives.

The progress of the Improvement Plan will be monitored in the following ways:

Meeting	Report Received
Cabinet	Quarterly monitoring reports
Performance Board	In depth monitoring of Improvement Objectives in accordance with the work programme.
Scrutiny	Mid-year and year end monitoring of Service Improvement Plan progress Mid-year progress update report
Strategic Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team	Monthly performance monitoring reports

Financial Summary

As started by the Chief Financial Officer there are no direct financial implications stemming from this report as actions under the Improvement Plan are included in the Service Plans.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the council's plans and projects do not have the desired impact on the city	H	M	The council will assess the impact of its actions on an ongoing basis and enable adjustments to actions and policies to be brought forward as the need arises	Heads of Service
That major impacts are not properly monitored due to faulty assessment of risk and/or impact	H	L	Quarterly reporting to cabinet, together with opportunity for scrutiny reviews will enable adjustments to monitoring regime to be implemented as the need arises	Head of Service
That on-going monitoring impedes progress on project delivery	H	L	The assessment criteria for monitoring progress are designed to ensure monitoring is proportionate to impact and purpose. This will be reassessed as part of the on-going reporting process	Chief Executive / Strategic Directors

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Improvement Plan directly contributes towards the Corporate Plan.

Options Available

1. To endorse the plan
2. Not to endorse the plan

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1) is preferred in that it takes account of our current position and provides a plan for continued improvement within the framework of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications stemming from this report. The financial implication of individual projects are reported as part of the on-going medium term financial planning and budget monitoring processes and in that respect, having clear responsibility and accountability for delivering the projects and managing resources is key.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The details set out in this report reflect the requirements of the Local Government Measure. The approach for monitoring progress against corporate priorities and strategies is consistent with the Council's performance management framework and risk management principles.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no direct staffing implications as a result of this report. The Improvement Plan 2015/16, gives clarity of vision which should help employees, managers and stakeholders understand our corporate priorities, how they are being assessed and what this means for the people of Newport.

Comments of Cabinet Member

Report author to confirm that the Cabinet Member has approved the report for consideration by cabinet.

Scrutiny Committees

See above

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

See Improvement Plan

Consultation

See Improvement Plan

Background Papers

Cabinet Report: Improvement Plan Priorities 15/16 (12/01/15)

Street Scene, Regeneration and Safety Scrutiny Committee, Draft Improvement Plan 15/16 (12/02/15)

Community Planning and Development Scrutiny, Draft Improvement Plan 15/16 (18/02/15)

Learning, Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee, Draft Improvement Plan 15/16 (25/02/15)

Performance Board: Improvement Plan 2015/16 (23/03/2015)

Cabinet Report: Improvement Plan 2015/16 (13/04/15)

Dated: 13 April 2015

Newport City Council Improvement Plan 15/16

Newport City Council

Newport City Council is a unitary authority responsible for the administration of all areas of local government within a single tier for a given area. The Council was formed as a county borough in 1996 and obtained city status in 2002. It is the 8th largest in Wales, providing all major services such as education, leisure, housing, social services, planning and highways.

There are 50 Councillors and following the May 2012 election we have a Labour administration with 37 Labour, 10 Conservative, 2 Independent and 1 Liberal Democrat Members elected. The Council employs approximately 6,000 people and has a budget of £264m

As stated in the Council's Corporate Plan 2012-2017, there are currently unprecedented levels of cuts to public sector funding. The Council will be focusing primarily on how best to deploy its efforts to make sure that the city thrives and prospers – with projects underpinned with our determination to improve the well-being of all Newport's citizens.

The purpose of the Improvement Plan is to evidence that the Council is delivering on its duty under the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 to secure continuous improvement. The Improvement Plan focuses on eight Improvement Objectives – areas of work where we aim to make a significant difference to services and outcomes and to 'improve people's lives'.

The Improvement Plan builds on the Council's Corporate Plan and the Local Service Board's Single Integrated Plan (the overall plan for Newport). The Improvement Plan is not designed to describe all of the Council's day to day work; for more information on those details, refer to the Service Improvement Plans 2015-2016.

Corporate Plan 2012-2017

The Corporate Plan 'Standing Up for Newport' was approved by full Council in September 2012 and provides the framework to ensure that the Council is best placed to weather these changing times.

The themes and outcomes of the Corporate Plan are below:

A Caring City

People live in sustainable communities
People lead independent lives and are supported when appropriate

A Fairer City

Decisions are tested and monitored for fairness
The Council makes the most of its resources

A Learning & Working City

The life chances of children and young people are improved
Adults in Newport are successful and realise their potential
The local economy is strong and confident

A Greener & Healthier City

The attractiveness of the city is improved
Environmental sustainability is promoted
People lead healthier lives

A Safer City

People in Newport live in a safe and inclusive community
Newport is a vibrant, welcoming place to visit and enjoy
[Newport City Council Corporate Plan 2012-2017](#)

Improvement Plan Priorities

Choosing the Priorities for Consultation

In order to inform the consultation a 'long list' of potential priorities has been identified from the following sources:

- lowest performing measures in Wales based on 13/14 performance
- Risk Register
- Measures where performance can be improved
- Priorities in the 14/15 plan that are falling behind (based on Q1 and Q2 performance)
- Links to Single Integrated Plan and Outcome Agreements
- Priorities from the council's change programme and Medium Term Financial Plan

Consultation was then undertaken on the 'long list' of priorities with Elected Members, Fairness Commission, staff and the public. The Corporate Plan theme that these priorities contribute to is indicated in brackets below.

- Developing and regenerating the city (Learning and Working City)
- Supporting young people into education, work or training (Learning and Working City)
- Helping children have a flying start in life (Green and Healthy City)
- Supporting older people leaving hospital (Caring City)
- Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children (Learning and Working City)
- Increasing recycling (Green and Healthy City)
- Making the city centre safer (Safer City)
- Preventing offending and reoffending of young people (Safer City)
- Improving care and support services for adults (Caring City)
- Improving outcomes for looked after children (Fairer City)
- Ensuring people have access to suitable accommodation (Fairer City)
- Providing homes and business with faster broadband (Learning and Working City)

In total there are 2 priorities for Caring, 2 for Green and Healthy, 4 for Learning and Working, 2 for Fairer and 2 for Safer, representing a spread across the five themes of the Corporate Plan.

Consultation Methods

Our Improvement Plan 2015/16 consultation commenced on the 17th November, in a slight change to the approach taken last year; this year we asked participants to indicate their top three priorities from a list of twelve. It was launched with a citizens' panel survey which was sent electronically to panel members. A web-based survey for members of the public was also hosted on the www.newport.gov.uk webpages.

During December face-to-face public consultation was undertaken at Newport Centre, Newport International Sports Village and the Riverfront Theatre.

On 2 December members of the Performance Team attended a meeting of Fairness Commission to discuss the Improvement Plan and ask for their views.

Scrutiny Committees were also presented with the proposed themes; members participated in a debate about the priorities and Directors and Heads of Service/senior officers were in attendance to address questions on points of detail. Scrutiny members were then asked to indicate their top three priorities. All Elected Members who were not present at the scrutiny meeting were issued with a paper questionnaire.

Throughout November and December, the Performance Team conducted some face-to-face 'dot' voting with staff at the Civic Centre and Information Station. Staff 'paper' surveys have also been received since the consultation opened.

Consultation Results

The results of the Elected Member, staff and public consultations are shown in the table below, each participant had three votes. There were over 500 participants in this consultation, an increase on the 400 responses from this exercise last year. It should be noted that this consultation can be considered to be statistically significant of the population of Newport (95% confident that the maximum error rate is 5%). These consultation results include a much high proportion of responses from members of the public, 72% this year compared with 29% last year.

The Fairness Commission have provided a written response. It is not the role of the Fairness Commission to recommend or endorse specific policy direction. The Council wish to thank the Fairness Commission for their participation in this consultation.

Each participant in the consultation was offered three 'votes':

Priority	Responses
Developing and regenerating the city	231
Supporting young people into education, work or training	187
Helping children have a flying start in life	172
Supporting older people leaving hospital	151
Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children	136
Increasing recycling	134
Making the city centre safer	127
Improving outcomes for youth justice	120
Improving care and support services for adults	110
Improving outcomes for looked after children	79
Ensuring people have access to suitable accommodation	63
Providing homes and business with faster broadband	20

Response from the Fairness Commission

On 2nd December 2014 the Fairness Commission were consulted on the potential priorities for inclusion in the Improvement Plan 15/16. The response from the Commission can be found on the link below:

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/minutes/cont734598.pdf>

Improvement Priorities Selected

At the Cabinet meeting on 12th January 2014, members were offered a set of options in order to select Improvement Priorities for 15/16. Cabinet selected option 2, resulting in the following eight priorities being included in the Improvement Plan for 15/16

A Caring City	A Fairer City	A Learning and Working City	A Green and Healthy City	A Safer City
Supporting older people leaving hospital		Developing and regenerating the city	Helping children have a flying start in life	Improving outcomes for youth justice
Improving care and support services for adults		Supporting young people into education, employment or training	Increasing recycling	
		Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children		

Links with Outcome Agreements

Outcome Agreements are a set of measures and targets agreed with the Welsh Government that contribute towards their Programme for Government and that also align with the One Newport Single Integrated Plan. The five Outcome Agreements selected for the council to run between 13/14 and 15/16 are:

- Education
- Supporting young people into education, employment or training
- Improving outcomes for youth justice
- Ensuring people have access to suitable accommodation
- Providing homes and businesses with faster broadband

All of these priorities were part of the original consultation. The first three in the list above are also included in the Improvement Plan, and the final two outcome agreements will be included in Service Plans for 15/16.

Scrutiny Arrangements

During February 2015 drafts of the eight improvement objectives included in the 15/16 Improvement Plan were considered by the appropriate scrutiny committee. Each Scrutiny Committee was asked to review the content of the Improvement Plan sections relevant to their portfolio and input into the Improvement Planning process. The following lists show which Improvement Priorities were considered by each Scrutiny Committee.

Learning, Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee

- Helping children have a flying start in life
- Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children (also an Outcome Agreement)
- Supporting young people into education, employment or training (also an Outcome Agreement)

Street Scene, Regeneration and Safety Scrutiny Committee

- Increasing recycling
- Improving outcomes for youth justice (also an Outcome Agreement)
- Developing and regenerating the city

Community Planning and Development Scrutiny Committee

- Supporting older people leaving hospital
- Improving care and support services for adults

Summary Improvement Plan Objectives

The eight 2015/16 Improvement Objectives for Newport

The eight Improvement Objectives selected for 15/16 are grouped under the Corporate Plan's themes:

A Caring City

1. Supporting Older People leaving hospital

We want to ensure that people who require social care support do not stay in hospital beds any longer than necessary. When we are responsible for organising to discharge someone from hospital and we are unable to do so within reasonable time, they will be recorded as delayed for social care reasons.

2. Improving care and support services for adults

It is part of adult services statutory duty to review packages of care and support for individual service users. Achieving this objective will improve our planning with individuals proactively, ensuring a planned and efficient approach to our reviewing framework.

We are also required to develop an integrated assessment process for older people. By developing more integrated approaches to the management of care and support packages, we aim for more multi-professional involvement in reviewing care plans. This should also contribute to improving care plan reviewing.

A Learning & Working City

3. Developing and Regenerating the City

The objective is to make Newport an attractive place for:

- The creation of opportunities for businesses to set up in Newport
- Businesses to continue to deliver their services and develop their business
- The city is seen as a destination for tourism, culture, sport and retail
- Where the residents of the city benefit through increased employment and community benefits

We will provide support to local businesses in order to promote economic growth and will enhance the city's skill base, generating additional employment for Newport residents through a variety of physical and social regeneration projects.

4. Supporting young people into education, employment or training

Engagement in learning and training are critical if young people are to make successes of their lives and meet their own needs and the needs of the city of Newport as an economic community. The Council and its partners have an important role to play in helping young people to make the most of opportunities for training and employment. The Improvement Objective measures the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training at key stages of their lives.

5. Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children

To ensure all our pupils are effectively engaged in education so that they can attain the best possible educational outcomes. This includes vulnerable learners that may be at risk of not reaching their expected level of attainment.

A Greener and Healthier City

6. Helping Children have a flying start in life

"Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the lives of children in the most disadvantaged communities". The Flying Start programme offers eligible parents free quality childcare for 2-3 year olds, parenting support, an enhanced health visitor service and support for early language development.

7. Increasing recycling

To ensure Newport delivers the Welsh Government objectives for the increasing of recycling and the European targets for diversion of waste from landfill, every recycling and diversion opportunity available to the city must be explored and where applicable, implemented.

The diversion of residual municipal waste from landfill will largely be covered by the operation of Prosiect Gwyrdd and Cwm-y-Fory. Therefore, this objective will largely focus on encouraging businesses and residents within the city to recycle more which will maximise the potential currently being classified and treated as residual waste.

A Safer City

8. Improving outcomes for youth justice

The principle aim of the youth justice system, established by section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is to prevent offending by children and young people. This relates to prevention

of anti-social behaviour and offending; appropriate use of Out of Court Disposals to divert young people from the criminal justice system; reducing the rate of proven re-offending and reducing the proportion of young people sentenced to custody. In line with Welsh Government and Youth Justice Board policy, we believe that prevention is better than cure and that children are young people first and offenders second.

Links with Newport's Single Integrated Plan

Newport's Single Integrated Plan (SIP) is the work of the One Newport Local Service Board (LSB) where the leaders of local public, private and third sector organisations work together to ensure that services are effective, focused on local people and improve the quality of life for people in Newport.

The Single Integrated Plan is a strategic three year plan to help joint working across Newport. It was approved by the Local Service Board (LSB) in January 2013 and by full Council in February 2013. The Plan contains six priority themes.

Link to Newport's Single Integrated Plan

<http://onewportlsb.newport.gov.uk/oneNewport/index.cfm/content/communityStrategy>

Delivery, Monitoring and Scrutiny of the Improvement Objectives

The Improvement Objectives are delivered alongside all other Council work included in the Service Plans for 15/16. These plans are developed for a one year period at the beginning of each financial year and run concurrently with the Council's Improvement Plan. They are subject to the usual governance arrangements, consideration by Scrutiny and approved by Cabinet Member.

The progress of the Improvement Plan will be monitored in the following ways: quarterly reports to Cabinet, in depth monitoring for each improvement objective to Performance Board, mid-year and year end monitoring of Service Improvement Plans to Scrutiny, mid-year update report on the Improvement Plan to Scrutiny and monthly performance monitoring reports to the Corporate Management Team.

Link to Council Service Plans

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/en/Council-Democracy/About-the-council/Service-plans.aspx>

Equalities and the Welsh Language 2015/16

Strategic Equalities Plan

The Improvement Plan is designed to ensure that legislative duties under themes such as human rights, equalities and the Welsh language are embedded as a part of the duty to secure continuous improvement; and ensuring that the Council is undertaking its responsibilities under the Strategic Equalities Plan and the Welsh Language Scheme is everyone's responsibility. To make sure that Council services are delivered fairly and equally a Strategic Equalities Plan (SEP) and Welsh Language Scheme are in place.

The Strategic Equalities Plan was published in 2012 and outlines five key equality objectives: engagement, accessible services, community cohesion and tackling hate crime, domestic abuse and worklessness. Commitments under the Plan are reviewed regularly and an annual report is produced highlighting progress made.

Strategic Equality Plan

http://inraweb/stellent/groups/public/documents/plans_and_strategies/cont621707.pdf

Strategic Equality Plan annual report 2013/14

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont727365.pdf>

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments are required by law under the Equality Act 2010. The Council's assessments also examine 'Fairness' and the Welsh language to ensure that the needs of other vulnerable people are considered, as well as the effect on different areas within Newport.

F&EIAs look at the effect of any change to services or employment from everybody's standpoint to make sure that it's fair. For example, when opening new services a comparison would be made of the experiences of disabled people with those of people who are not disabled to see how good the access is and whether it allows everybody fair and equal access.

The assessment covers all the protected characteristics (Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, the Welsh language and Sexual Orientation.)

Details of completed F&EIAs can be found on our [website](#).

Welsh Language Scheme

The Council published its Welsh Language Scheme in 2009; the Scheme outlines how the Council will promote and support the Welsh language. In accordance with the requirements of the former Welsh Language Board, an annual report is produced that monitors the progress made against key themes including compliance with Welsh language scheme, frontline services, management and administration of the scheme, Welsh language skills, mainstreaming the Welsh language and risks and priorities. Furthermore, the annual report details progress against the Board's six Welsh language indicators (procurement, front line services, e-government, human resources and staff skills, human resources and equality and diversity, and standard of Welsh language services). The most recent annual report is available below.

Welsh Language Scheme 2009

http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/plans_and_strategies/cont499493.pdf

Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2013/14

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont727366.pdf>

Update on Wales Audit Office Recommendations and Proposals for Improvement

During 13/14 the Council was subject to a Corporate Assessment which was carried out by the Wales Audit Office. At the time of writing, the Council are waiting for the conclusion of a follow up review of the Corporate Assessment. The Council received recommendations and proposals for improvement as part of the outcome of the original Assessment; monitoring of open recommendations and proposals for improvement is undertaken quarterly.

Corporate Assessment

The Corporate Assessment can be found on the link below:

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont716631.pdf>

The Statement in response to the recommendations made in the Corporate Assessment under section 20 of the Local Government Measure 2009 can be found on the link below:

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/article/cont717942.pdf>

Monitoring Proposals for Improvement

Cabinet receive quarterly monitoring of proposals for Improvement and the links to the reports considered over the last 12 months can be found below:

Cabinet 9th June 2014 (page 62 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont724223.pdf>

Cabinet 8th September 2014 (page 42 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont727364.pdf>

Cabinet 8th December 2014 (page 44 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont730383.pdf>

Cabinet March 2015 (page x onwards)

Have your say

Newport City Council is committed to improving our services and it is important that we listen to what the community have to say. We welcome your comments or suggestions at any time of the year.

If you have any comments, would like any further information, or to request a copy of this plan please contact:

Business Improvement and Performance Team
Newport City Council
Civic Centre
Newport
NP20 4UR

Email: performance.management@newport.gov.uk

Telephone: 01633 656656

1. Supporting older people leaving hospital

Link to Corporate Plan: A Caring City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Head of Adult and Community Services

Description of Improvement Objective

We want to ensure that people who require social care support do not stay in hospital beds any longer than necessary. When we are responsible for organising to discharge someone from hospital and we are unable to do so within reasonable time, they will be recorded as delayed for social care reasons.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

In 2013/14 we were reported as 21st out of 22 Local Authorities in Wales for delayed transfers of care for social care reasons. In 2014/15 we have improved performance significantly and have reported in December 2014 a figure of 4.5/1000 of the population delayed in hospital which is around a 50% improvement from 2013/14.

We have chosen this as an improvement objective to continue to improve the performance and to reduce delays people face when planning to be discharged from hospital. Continuing to improve as we are will ensure we perform above the best performing Local Authorities in Wales.

What have we done so far?

In September 2013 we made some changes to the hospital discharge social work team. We transferred an experienced team manager to examine the current process for assessments and discharge planning and to examine the inter-relation with frailty and secondary health process. As a result the social care hub was placed at the heart of our hospital discharge planning; an intake team involving frailty and social work linked to the Royal Gwent Hospital complex discharge team.

These changes have improved the way we manage this area of our work and more importantly, the levels of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons have reduced since October 2014; this reduction has been maintained, this improvement is seen in the associated performance indicator.

As changes were made late into the year the reduction in DTOC levels will still place us high across Wales as they are based on an annual average figure. Therefore, we established this Improvement Objective to ensure we maintained the continuous improvement in this area of our work and to place us at a better position across Welsh Councils performance.

We continue to work closely with health partners to refine the discharge process. We have built on the improvements made previously, by improving referral process within the RGH to implement a

single referral for discharge rather than multiple referrals which created duplication and wasted assessment resources.

We have also worked to create alternative service models supporting discharge from hospital. The development of 'step down' beds is one example where we provide another option for people to discharge from hospital to a venue where they can continue to rehabilitate before returning to their own homes.

Actions

What are we going to do this year?	What difference will it make?
1.1 Reduce DTOC levels for social care reasons to 4/1000 of the population	Less people waiting on hospital wards is widely seen by people as a positive thing. It is also widely accepted that people's recovery is enhanced in their own surroundings.
1.2 Fully implement a single referral for discharge at RGH site which links therapist, social work and frailty team.	By developing systems with less duplication then people will have clarity on how their discharge is being supported and planned and the health staff are also assured that referrals are being consistently managed.
1.3 Working in partnership to adopt a 'discharge to assess' approach, where patients are discharged from hospital once they are medically fit and have their support needs assessed within an agreed timescale on arrival at home.	<p>This approach will ensure people are not staying within hospital environments for any longer than medically necessary.</p> <p>This will also establish rehabilitation needs within the home environment and not based on hospital ward conditions.</p>

How will we know?

Measure	Current performance (December 2014)	Comparative performance (December 2013)	Target for 15/16
How much did we do?			
1A Delayed Transfers of Care	4.5/1000	9.68/1000	4/1000
1B No of Social Services hospital discharge assessments completed per annum	981	n/applicable	800 (volumes expected to fall as we continue to streamline referral process and reduce duplication)
1C DToC –No. 18 + Service Users Delayed	52	111	46 per year = 3.8 per month
How well did we do it?			
1D % of people whose needs were met to their satisfaction following a planned discharge from hospital and needing social care support	95%	n/applicable	95%
Is anyone better off?			
1E No of people fully reabled to independent living after using step down style intervention	263	n/applicable	270

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Health Aneurin Bevan Health Board – Secondary services (Royal Gwent Hospital)
 Community division – linked to GP networks, District Nursing, Frailty
 Commissioned providers of social care services – Residential and nursing providers
 Domiciliary care providers
 Carers support services
 Other Council Partners – Housing to facilitate adaptations where applicable

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Lack of supply in market for care and support services	Review contractual arrangements required to create supply within budget parameters	Low
Financial risk – budget based on current levels of service users, high discharge levels based on community health issues can increase demand for services in the community	Continue to develop preventative services that reduce demand on statutory services	Medium

2. Improving care and support services for adults

Link to Corporate Plan: A Caring City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Head of Adult and Community Services

Description of Improvement Objective

It is part of adult services statutory duty to review packages of care and support for individual service users. Achieving this objective will improve our planning with individuals proactively, ensuring a planned and efficient approach to our reviewing framework.

We are also required to develop an integrated assessment process for older people. By developing more integrated approaches to the management of care and support packages, we aim for more multi-professional involvement in reviewing care plans. This should also contribute to improving care plan reviewing.

During 2014/15 we made improvement to the volumes of reviews completed in the year and this improvement objective has been set to ensure we continue to improve on this and exceed other Local Authority performance in Wales.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

We developed a generic review team to improve review performance and that improved in 2014/15. It is important for the performance to continue to improve to ensure that we complete reviews at and above the Welsh average, that is, to achieve a volume of 85%.

The need to review support packages is an essential component as people's needs are becoming more complex in the community and therefore we must set this as a cornerstone of our practice.

We are also inspected against our delivery of social work practice and currently the reviewing of care and support plans is a key activity where we need to demonstrate continuous improvement.

What have we done so far?

In order to establish the importance of the review function a dedicated review team was put in place. However, the review team was dedicated to mainly older persons, vulnerable and physically disabled people. The review of care plans for adults with mental health or learning disabilities, as well as older people with mental health needs, remain with those social work teams and this should be the next step in reorganising workload requirements.

We will be developing the pathway for people accessing social services and will then be planning a structure to deliver that. Key to that structure will be further definition of the review team to ensure it is review only activity that they undertake and do not hold cases for too long which should really be completed within the assessment areas of our service.

We have continued to improve the data on the system through this year to ensure we have recorded all reviews completed appropriately and also that services listed on the database are up to date. Cleaning the data and setting a more consistent approach will improve the review performance and this will feature as an on-going function.

The monitoring of performance continues to be part of the social services leadership arrangements where all service manager's report on levels of performance activity and reviews of care plans have been noted as an area for improvement.

During 2014/15 the volume of reviews completed has improved from the previous year but the target set was under the Wales average report from the previous year.

Actions

What are we going to do this year?	What difference will it make?
2.1 To continue to improve the volumes of reviews of care plans completed up to 85% by the 2015/16 year end	Completion of reviews in timely way will ensure that we are more proactive and not reactive in our approach. This will ensure that we can identify issues for clients where their care needs can fluctuate and provide reablement at the right times maintaining independence and avoiding use of other services e.g. Unplanned hospital admissions.
2.2 Agree review team structure in line with client pathway so we ensure consistent review practice	Improving team structure will improve contact arrangements for people should their needs change, i.e. knowing which team clearly holds responsibility for their case work.
2.3 Develop and implement a revised process as part of integrated assessment to include the needs of carers and ensure that all cases are reviewed appropriately.	This will improve our approach in line with the Social Services Act (2014) for implementation in 2016

How will we know?

Measure	Current performance (December 2014)	Comparative performance (December 2013)	Target for 15/16
How much did we do?			
2A Care plan reviews	71.9%	58.9% NCC 81.1% Wales average	85% NCC
How well did we do it?			
2B OT Assessments & Reviews	N/A	N/A	85%
Is anyone better off?			
2C Carers offered assessment or review	18.9%	90.2%	90%

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Health colleagues in integrated teams (other care coordinators)

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Staff shortages in frontline social work teams	Managing staffing shortages through sickness procedures Utilisation of agency staff on a managed basis	Medium
Data integrity, not detailing reviews completed	Improved Quality Assurance process to audit review activity on a planned basis	Low

3. Developing and regenerating the city

Link to Corporate Plan: A Learning and Working City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development and
Cabinet Member for Skills and Work

Lead Officer: Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing

Description of Improvement Objective

The objective is to make Newport an attractive place for:

- The creation of opportunities for businesses to set up in Newport
- Businesses to continue to deliver their services and develop their business
- The city is seen as a destination for tourism, culture, sport and retail
- Where the residents of the city benefit through increased employment and community benefits

We will provide support to local businesses in order to promote economic growth and will enhance the city's skill base, generating additional employment for Newport residents through a variety of physical and social regeneration projects.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

Newport continues to assert itself as a major area of business in the South Wales Region and beyond. Newport is continuing to develop as a venue of major sporting events and continuing improve as a destination for tourism and culture. The completion of a number of projects in the coming years along with those in the early stages of development all demonstrate the importance of this objective and ensuring the co-ordination of all the projects deliver what is expected of them and that the communities and residents of the city benefit from this investment and economic growth.

Schemes such as :

- The construction of the new Admiral offices is complete and the company has moved to Newport City Centre.
- Friars Walk shopping development is now well under construction, delivering big name retailers and jobs back into the centre of Newport brings with it a great opportunity for the city's resurgence as the retail and commerce hub for Greater Gwent,
- The Vibrant and Viable Places programme has commenced with £6.6 million of schemes starting on site from the Welsh Government grant along with the investment from the private sector to bring properties back into commercial and residential use. This will continue to maintain a robust construction industry presence attracting short and long term employment post scheme completion.
- The Business sector voted to establish a Business Improvement District which will commence on 1st April 2015 and run for an initial 5 years. The Council will work with the BID

to link all of the developments in the city to increase footfall and vibrancy in the city therefore supporting its regeneration.

- The potential development of an International Convention Centre,
- Continued funding for work on the canal system and locks
- Continued external funding for major schemes of work to existing homes creating housing lead regeneration and employment
- Heritage Lottery has confirmed Newport as a number 1 priority and so the securing of resources for heritage projects will be a key part of the work.
- Activities connected to the emerging details from Re Newport City Council
- Superfast Connected City work will see an increase in working with businesses to make the most of services on offer

What have we done so far?

The last 5 years has already seen considerable investment and change In Newport both in the city centre and in the city more generally and in terms of both physical and social regeneration.

- Welsh Government key building programme of £2.5 million (covering a range of key buildings and a new High Street entrance to the Indoor Market),
- A £4 million package of city centre improvements was completed in 2010 in preparation for the Ryder Cup,
- The creation of a new riverside park and walkway has been completed along with a number of public realm improvements,
- Preparation and demolition work was completed for the Friars Walk shopping and leisure development, with the site now being developed by Queensbury. The successful securing of resources through Welsh Government Vibrant and Viable Places bid with an award of £14.9 million pounds for the period of April 2014 to March 2017,
- The completion of multiple large scale energy savings schemes across hard to treat properties in Newport, creating employment, reducing poverty and making Newport communities more sustainable and attractive places to live.
- The completion and successful reuse of two key listed building – Malpas Court and Beechwood House
- The completion of the renovation of a number of locks in the 14 locks canal system and the restoration of the canal system with neighbouring authorities.
- The transition to the new Communities 1st Cluster arrangement and securing the role as Lead Delivery Body for the whole of Newport.
- The establishment of the Work Based Learning Academy

Actions

What will we do this year?	What difference will it make?
<p>3.1 To finalise and continue schemes started in year 1 of the programme and to commence new schemes identified as part of Vibrant & Viable Places Year 2.</p> <p>3.2 Regeneration Strategy focussing on the physical environment and infrastructure, improvement in skills, training and job creation along with continued provision of robust business support for new and existing businesses. The strategy also provides support for the newly developed Business Improvement District and the opportunity to link themes within the strategy to similar themes within the BID</p> <p>3.3 To continue to secure external funding for Regeneration programmes such as the continued redevelopment of the fourteen locks system and identification of a project to work with the Heritage Lottery Fund.</p> <p>3.4 Continue to develop new and innovative large scale energy improvement work with energy companies and Welsh Government</p>	<p>Deliver new homes and employment in the city centre in line with the agreed plan approved by Welsh Government. Will regenerate buildings for commercial and residential use providing and creating employment in many sectors.</p> <p>Produce a clear framework for regeneration and economic development in the city along with a clear structure supporting delivery. Allow businesses to support the activity of the local authority and partners to make the city centre a vibrant place for businesses and visitors and allow them to take ownership through financial contributions. Ensure the Work Based Learning Academy is embedded in all regeneration activities along with the delivery of Central Government work programs Support for businesses through a variety of support from advice, inward investment support, loan provision, grant provision etc.</p> <p>It will allow improvement to Newport as a destination location for tourism and return existing property heritage to successful use benefitting the communities of Newport.</p> <p>Create and maintain employment, sustain communities, reduce carbon emissions, reduce fuel poverty.</p>

How will we know?

Measure	Current performance (date)	Comparative performance (date)	Target for 15/16
How much did we do?			
3A. VVP- Increase in city centre housing	n/a new programme	n/a	19 (2014/15)
3B. Provision of coherent Business Support	400 businesses assisted	n/a	500 businesses assisted
How well did we do it?			
3C. Number of people engaged in employment programmes	1300		1000
3D. Number of people supported into employment	605		600
Is anyone better off?			
3E. Number of homes benefitting from improved domestic energy performance measures and removed from fuel poverty	91 (Q3 14/15)	300 (13/14)	300

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Members of the Local Service Board;
 The business community and city centre traders;
 Welsh Government;
 Welsh Government Task Force

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Properties no longer available for refurbishment	Suitable alternative properties / schemes will be identified as reserve schemes	Low
Partners unable to deliver match funding	Source additional match funding	Medium
Unable to achieve the number of people supported into employment activity.	The improvement in the economy and the support programmes provided in the city has reduced the number of unemployed people in Newport	High
Unable to support people to find employment	WBLA sourcing employment opportunities with employers, introduction of large capitol regeneration projects, the enforcement of community benefits within regeneration programmes.	Low

4. Supporting young people into education, employment or training

Link to Corporate Plan: A Learning and Working City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Skills and Work

Lead Officer: Strategic director - people

Description of Improvement Objective

Engagement in learning and training are critical if young people are to make successes of their lives and meet their own needs and the needs of the city of Newport as an economic community. The council and its partners have an important role to play in helping young people to make the most of opportunities for training and employment. The Improvement Objective measures the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training at key stages of their lives.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

This priority is an Outcome Agreement for the period 13/14 to 15/16 and has important links to the Welsh Government's Programme for Government, and locally links to the Single Integrated Plan for Newport. Following consultation this came out as the most important Improvement Objective for respondents. Recently, local authorities have been charged with implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, which focuses on local accountability. Making this an Improvement Objective ensures this accountability. Whilst Newport has the fourth best percentage reduction in NEETS in Wales we still have amongst the highest rate of young people not in education, employment or training in Wales.

What have we done so far?

Newport has made a significant impact on the numbers of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) over the past five years. In 2008 the number of young people leaving year 11 and becoming NEET in Newport was 10.4%. By 2013 we had reduced this figure to 4.9% – a 53% improvement. Over this time we have worked with other local authorities and partners to identify best practice. We feel we have made the impact we have on the numbers of NEETS for the following reasons:

1. The development of the Work Based Learning Academy to act as a portal for young people seeking work experience, training and employment, this was launched in December 2013.
2. Resource for the Young People's Entitlement Officer post, to focus on reducing the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training. This has now been developed into the role of Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Co-ordinator.

3. The development and support of a Pre-16 NEET Partnership to focus on prevention; this has undertaken pupil analysis to support early identification at year 7 and has led to the production of the Good Practice Guide to support senior managers in school and has fostered significantly better working relationships between educational institutions and other agencies.

4. The training of learning coaches by the Young People’s Entitlement Officer to support early identification and put in place support packages at the earliest opportunity.

5. The Post 16 NEET Partnership which has a focus on information sharing, provision and developing specific employment/learning opportunities and events. This facilitates the engagement of Careers Wales with the Youth Service and other Youth Support provision within Newport.

6. Funding for an Engagement Worker to support the engagement of young people ‘unknown’ within the system, jointly through Families First and Community Development.

7. The development of a Learning Provider Network that ensures that the supply of learning opportunities meets the needs and that placements are available at the correct times.

8. The development of an alternative provision handbook, additional support around safeguarding issues and a service level agreement between schools and providers.

Actions

What are we going to do this year?	What difference will it make?
4.1 Develop and deliver specific employability programmes through WBLA to meet the needs of those young people who are only seeking employment	A significant proportion of our NEET total are only looking for employment so this will proactively help them achieve their goals and reduce the numbers who are NEET
4.2 Implement the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework action plan	This will improve provision and tracking systems so that we are better able to meet the needs of young people entering the labour market
4.3 Map provision for those young people unable to progress against their specific needs	Some young people are unable to continue in education, learning or employment for a variety of reasons, such as caring responsibilities, illness (including mental health problems) or involvement in the criminal justice system. Being better able to understand the needs and resource issues will enable us to make a real difference in their lives.
4.4 Meet regularly with Careers Wales, Schools, Work Based Learning Providers and Coleg Gwent to ensure provision appropriately meets the needs of young people	This will ensure better information exchange and shared accountability for those young people unplaced. Ensure all resources in Newport City Council aligned with this work are jointly managed and focused on this strategic priority
4.5 Development of Skills and Work service within Newport City Council	

How will we know?

Measures	Current Performance (date)	Comparative Performance (date)	2015-16 Targets
How much did we do?			
4A. Number of families accessing Family Skills Project	280 (Q3 14/15)	219 (13/14)	270
4B. Number of young people accessing Children and Young People's Skills Project	954 (Q3 14/15)	1,373 (13/14)	885
4C. Number of enrolments on basic skills courses	Annual measure data not yet available	490 (13/14)	400 (2014/15 academic year)
4D. Number of entrants into work based learning academy	531 (Q3 14/15)	160 (13/14)	480
How well did we do it?			
4E. Retention rate for enrolments on accredited Basic skills courses	Annual measure data not yet available	80.6% (13/14)	80% (2014/15 academic year)
4F. Achievement rate for enrolments on accredited Basic skills courses	Annual measure data not yet available	58.4% (13/14)	70% (2014/15 academic year)
4G. Retention rate for learners on community learning courses (excluding basic skills)	Annual measure data not yet available	90.1% (13/14)	85% (2014/15 academic year)
4H. Achievement rate for enrolments on community learning courses (excluding basic skills)	Annual measure data not yet available	79.1% (13/14)	80% (2014/15 academic year)
Is anyone better off			
4I. % of year 11 NEETS	Annual measure data not yet available	4.9% (13/14)	4.8% (2014/15 academic year)
4J. % of year 13 NEET	Annual measure data not yet available	5.1% (13/14)	7.0% (2014/15 academic year)
4K. % of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (October)	Annual measure data not yet available	8.0% (13/14)	10% (October 15)
4L. Number of graduates from Work Based Learning Academy progressing to further opportunity (six months paid employment placement)	123 (Q3 14/15)	37 (13/14)	80

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Newport City Council – Education, Community Development, Youth Service, Children and Families Services, Community Learning and Libraries, Partnerships and Policy
 Gyrfa Cymru Careers Wales
 Coleg Gwent – Newport Campus
 Secondary Schools
 University of South Wales
 Communities First
 Voluntary Youth Sector
 Work Based Learning Providers
 Employers
 Welsh Government

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Lack of partner engagement and/or support in meeting this improvement objective	The partnership environment around reducing NEETS is well established and robust enough to survive issues around engagement, etc. The continued support and facilitation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Co-ordinator is critical to the continued success	Medium
Continued deterioration of the youth employment structure leading to lack of impact on medium to long term unemployed young people	Resource to address the skills requirements of employers focused on young people. Continued work to support the engagement of employers with the world of education	Medium

5. Ensuring the best educational outcomes for children

Link to Corporate Plan: A Learning and Working City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Education and Young People and Cabinet Member for Skills and Work

Lead Officer: Chief Education Officer

Description of Improvement Objective

To ensure all our pupils are effectively engaged in education so that they can attain the best possible educational outcomes. This includes vulnerable learners that may be at risk of not reaching their expected level of attainment.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

In order to ensure that all pupils reach their learning potential at every key stage they need to be in school; barriers to learning need to be mitigated (especially poverty) and extra support given to literacy and numeracy. The indicators will inform the forward planning of the Education Service in partnership with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and schools.

What have we done so far?

Between April 2014 and March 2014 Education Services has secured a work programme delivered by the South East Wales Education Achievement Service which has focussed on improving teaching and learning in the classroom. The 'Excellence in Teaching' programme has supported the development of Maths and English teachers in delivering high quality lessons to support pupils at primary and secondary level. This work has been shared between and within Newport schools. The 'Excellence in Teaching' framework has also been introduced to help support school leaders observe lessons and give quality feedback to teachers. This tool has been used effectively to demonstrate improvement in learning.

All Newport schools have been through 'National Categorisation'. This process has identified which schools require extra support in order to improve. Schools have received overall colour categorisations (green, yellow, orange and red). Schools in a red category will receive intensive support from the Local Authority, whilst schools in a green category will be encouraged to share their best practice with others.

In order to improve attainment we have focussed on improving attendance and reducing exclusions. Over the past year we have revised the Local Authority Attendance Policy and introduced

Fixed Penalty Notices linked to truancy , lateness and unauthorised absence (in line with Welsh Government policy). Behaviour support staff have worked closely with secondary head teachers to reduce fixed term and permanent exclusions. A greater emphasis has been placed on ‘alternative education provision’ in order to prevent pupil exclusions.

Working with schools and Children’s Services we have appointed 5 Education Social Workers with the intention of removing barriers to learning through working with families and other agencies in support of the Seamless Wellbeing and Learning Pathway. The Pioneer stage is coming to a close with the first two clusters and this will be rolled out across all clusters and be fully operational by September

Six nursery units opened in September 2014, enabling more primary schools (two of which are RC Primaries) to develop the 3 – 11 vision. Two more primary schools will have a nursery in September 2015 and another two are on target for September 2016. This will mean that all community maintained primary schools can deliver a smooth transition through the key stages for our pupils, so enhancing the opportunities to achieve higher attainment.

Actions

What are we going to do this year?	What difference will it make?
<p>5.1 Improve the number of pupils achieving the expected level of attainment at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (Level 2 inclusive indicator).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority will continue to commission the services of the Education Achievement Service to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in Newport schools. • The local authority will continue to focus on the national priorities of <i>‘improving literacy, improving numeracy and reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation’</i>. <p>5.2 Improve Primary & Secondary Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority will co-construct an attendance work plan with schools. Sub groups will be established to lead and develop specialist work streams e.g. minority-ethnic issues, Early years, good practice including adopting CALLIO processes and practices <p>5.3 Reduce pupil exclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Authority will agree exclusion targets with secondary schools and monitor their success. • A Primary Learning Resource Base Review will take place to ensure that there is appropriate provision for pupils who require specialist support. 	<p>Pupils achieving the expected level at each Key Stage are more likely to have the opportunity to progress to Further and Higher Education (improving their life chances of gaining economic, physical, social and emotional well-being).</p> <p>Improved attendance is linked to improved pupil attainment. This objective will support opportunities and life chances. <i>(Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of school, only 35 per cent manage to achieve five A* to C GCSEs, including English and maths).</i></p> <p>Pupils who are excluded are more likely to become NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training). Reducing exclusions will help to improve pupil attainment and support their chances in becoming successful in the workplace.</p>

How will we know?

Measures	Current Performance (date)	Comparative Performance (date)	2015-16 Targets (AY 14/15)
How much did we do?			
5A. Percentage of schools achieving full spend SEG (School Effectiveness Grant)	20.69 % (Jan 15)	80.00% (13/14)	90%
5B. Percentage of schools achieving full spend PDG (Pupil Deprivation Grant)	15.52% (Jan 15)	85.00% (13/14)	95%
How well did we do it?			
5C. Number of days lost to fixed term exclusions in secondary schools	Annual measure data not yet available	2486 (13/14)	2450
5D. Attendance levels primary school EDU/016a	94.2% (Jan 15)	93.0% (13/14)	93.6%
5E. Attendance levels secondary schools EDU/016b	92.9% (Jan 15)	92.1% (13/14)	92.1%
Is anyone better off			
5F. Pupils achieving the expected CSI outcome at the end of Key Stage 3 EDU/004	87.0% (Jan 15)	87.3% (13/14)	77.0%
5G. Number of FSM pupils achieving the expected Core Subject Indicator at KS2.	73.1% (Jan 15)	N/A	74%
5H. Pupils achieving the expected outcome at the end of the Foundation Phase	87.0% (Jan 15)	87.3% (13/14)	84%
5I. Leavers without qualifications EDU/002i	Annual measure data not yet available	0.6% (13/14)	0.4%
5J. Pupils achieving Level 2 Threshold inc. English and Maths EDU/017	52.8% (Jan 15)	51.3% (13/14)	52.9%
5K. Number of pupils gaining KS2 Level 4+ English in Teacher Assessment	89.6% (Jan 15)	N/A	89.8%
5L. Number of pupils gaining KS3 Level 5+ English in Teacher Assessment	83.7% (Jan 15)	N/A	83.5%

AY is Academic Year, FY is financial year. Data for the Academic Year 14/15 will be reported in the financial year 15/16.

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Welsh Government
 EAS
 Schools and Head teachers
 Citizens of Newport including parents & pupils
 Social Services
 Health
 Police
 Youth Offending Team
 Youth Services
 Communities First
 Voluntary Groups
 South East Wales consortia area working groups
 SE Wales Safeguarding children board

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Increasing numbers of new arrivals into Newport schools	Restructure of GEMS service to maximise support for new community languages (April- September 2015)	High - possible compulsory redundancies
	Commission a GEMS translation and interpretation Service to income generate and “pump-prime” pool of suitable BTAs and volunteers to assist in schools (April 2015)	High - scarce resources to implement Time to establish reputation and client base
Changing demographics due to “churn” factors	Activities above apply plus convening minority- ethnic attendance issues group	Medium - group in existence, influence disseminated
	Revise and refine Children Missing Education protocol	Low - work on-going
	Ensuring data capture to inform future service provision (possible IBM project delivery)	Medium - work on-going

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Pressure on school places	<p>A primary school expansion programme is underway with directed capital investment to areas of the city where Section 106 monies are unable to be accessed.</p> <p>Plans are progressing to gain full WG approval for a new Welsh-medium secondary school within Newport to provide much needed education places for Newport and south Monmouthshire. This will support the smooth transition for Welsh-medium primary pupils into high school within the city.</p>	<p>Low – work in progress, no barriers</p> <p>Low – work in progress, supported by South East Wales partners and WG</p>
Numbers of pupils with additional learning needs increasing	<p>Working more closely with Children’s Services to look at provision and budgets</p> <p>Investigating temporary capacity Maes Ebbw Special school</p> <p>Employing additional locum EP to ensure Statements are completed by deadlines</p> <p>Small EP team with impact of maternity leave for 2 colleagues</p> <p>Following the recent appointment of an SEN Manager a review of the capacity of the team needs to be considered</p>	<p>Medium - work on going</p> <p>High – will not be in place until September at the earliest</p> <p>Low - personnel in place</p> <p>Medium – recruitment plan in place</p> <p>Medium – may need time to achieve</p>
Underpinning all of these risks is the continuing financial pressure	<p>The Service Area will need to be realistic around the resources available.</p> <p>The Service Area will continue to monitor the existing budget regularly</p>	<p>Medium - Robust service area planning will consider resource allocation</p> <p>Low – Systems in place</p>

6. Helping children have a flying start in life

[Link to Corporate Plan: A Green and Healthy City](#)

[Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Skills and Work](#)

[Lead Officer: Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing](#)

Description of Improvement Objective

"Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the lives of children in the most disadvantaged communities". The Flying Start programme offers eligible parents free quality childcare for 2-3 year olds, parenting support, an enhanced health visitor service and support for early language development.

Our improvement objective for the programme includes:-

Improve Parenting Skills - Providing parents with accessible information on parenting and outlines the wide menu of parenting support options available. Our vision is to enable parents to participate in the design, delivery and review of services. To develop engagement with 'hard to reach' groups and enable parents to acquire the skills and strategies to parent effectively. Flying Start priority - To ensure that there is a team of appropriately trained staff supported by effective management support and supervision available to deliver parenting programmes. We aim to recruit and retain parents on a range of parenting programmes within the home and groups in identified communities.

To support the role of parents as first educator and to improve language and communication development - To deliver a pathway of Early Language Support to all children aged 0 - 4 years of age within the home and group settings including Language and Play and Number and Play.

To improve the development of children - The potential for all (100%) eligible parents to access Flying Start childcare for 2-3 year olds offered as a maximum of 12.5 hours (5 sessions x 2.5 hours) of childcare per week (over a 39 week term).

To improve access to Health services for disadvantaged groups - Delivering an intensive core programme for all Flying Start beneficiaries aged 0-4 years of age and to provide client led antenatal and postnatal support

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

To reduce risk factors associated with parental supervision and discipline such as family conflict, family histories of problem behaviour, attitudes condoning crime and low income/poor housing. To support the role of the parents as the first educator through group and home visiting support; to support the improvement of language development for children 0-4 years through play.

To improve children's overall development in readiness for the foundation phase and to improve health outcomes for those children identified as living in poverty, linking into the Councils Corporate Plan and the following two aims 'A Caring City' and 'A Learning & Working City'. These themes link into Welsh Governments seven core aims for children and young people, which summarise the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and form the basis for decisions on priorities and objectives nationally. The Welsh Government have adopted the UNCRC as the basis of all our work for children and young people, which are expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

What have we done so far?

The Flying Start programme was introduced in 2006 and is a continually expanding programme. There are four core entitlements these being intensive health visiting, childcare, early language intervention and parenting and progress across each area is tracked below.

Health - We have 22.8 health visitors, a skill mix team, midwife and mental health practitioner working with families in identified areas of Newport delivering a core programme from antenatal period to children aged 4. Within the health strand support for breast feeding/ postnatal depression support has been offered either within groups or individually and the Flying Start midwife promotes antenatal care and support working with first time parents as a priority. Assessments are carried out on all children at age 2 and 3 monitoring developmental areas and progress against key milestones.

Childcare - There are 17 Flying Start playgroups providing 12.5 hours of free childcare to 600 children in identified areas. Within the childcare settings, quality of provision is a high priority with all settings undertaking quality assurance awards and on-going self-evaluation. Significant evidence in up-skilling of the workforce has been made to ensure that the standards meet the requirements of the Welsh Government Childcare Annex.

Early Language Intervention – A distinct Flying Start Speech, Language and Communication pathway has been developed with key actions embedded in all four Flying Start strands. A speech and language therapist has been appointed who has a fundamental role within this strand up-skilling the Flying Start workforce and providing support and supervision to the Flying Start multiagency teams. All Flying Start playgroup settings have a weekly Language and Play session. The Health Visiting core programme which is a universal service for all Flying Start families also incorporates four Language and Play sessions. An Early Language development screening tool is also being piloted in two Flying Start areas.

Parenting - at least one Infant programme has run in each Flying Start area during the year. Family Links Nurturing and Incredible Years Toddler programmes have run in each Flying Start area. Delivery of the (Webster Stratton) Incredible Years Infant and Toddler programme centrally on a rolling programme. Family intervention delivery officers deliver the Parent as First Educators programme within the home to all families identified as red or amber via assessment.

Actions

What are we going to do?	What difference will it make?
<p>6.1 To provide targeted intervention to children aged 9 months to 4 years old identified as requiring additional language support.</p> <p>6.2 To ensure children identified with Additional Needs are supported within the programme promoting seamless transition into and out of Flying Start childcare</p> <p>6.3 To support parents to acquire the skills/strategies to parent effectively.</p>	<p>The intervention will aim to up-skill parents in providing appropriate support and activities to enhance language development in identified young children.</p> <p>Children with additional needs will be identified far earlier through multi agency support and seamless transition strategies will be implemented.</p> <p>The intervention will aim to up-skill / support parents in providing the following to their children emotion and affection, play and enjoyment, empathy and understanding, control, discipline and setting boundaries, learning and knowledge.</p>

How will we know?

Measure	Current performance (date)	Comparative performance (date)	Target for 15/16
How much did we do?			
6A. Delivery of Tiny Talker language and Chatty Children groups across Flying Start areas for children aged 9 months to 4 years	New		10 groups (50 Children)
How well did we do it?			
6B. Percentage of parents that report an improvement in their child's language and communication skills post intervention within the Tiny Talker group	New		70%
6C. Percentage of parents reporting positive transition of children with ALN	New		70%
Is anyone better off?			
6D. Percentage of children that show an improvement in their Wellcomm assessment score within the Chatty Children group	New		50%
6E. Percentage of families that have shown an improvement in their TOPSE Scores following completion of PAFT during the term	100%	100%	80%

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Aneurin Bevan Health Board,
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales,
other departments within the local authority,
WPPA,
MYM,
Private and Voluntary Organisations,
Welsh Government

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Withdrawal/cessation of funding via the Welsh Government	Develop a robust exit strategy.	High
Poor/non-attendance at group sessions	Promotion and communication of benefits of groups; Positive marketing strategy; Multi-agency delivery; Relationships developed with the most vulnerable families.	Medium

7. Increasing recycling

[Link to Corporate Plan: A Greener and Healthy City](#)

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

Lead Officer: Head of Streetscene and City Services

Description of Improvement Objective

To increase recycling and divert waste from landfill. To ensure Newport delivers the Welsh Government objectives for the increasing of recycling and the European targets for diversion of waste from landfill, every recycling and diversion opportunity available to the city must be explored and where applicable, implemented.

The diversion of residual municipal waste from landfill will largely be covered by the operation of Prosiect Gwyrdd and Cwm-y-Fory. Therefore, this objective will largely focus on encouraging businesses and residents within the city to recycle more which will maximise the potential currently being classified and treated as residual waste.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

This objective has been chosen as it has a significant implication for council budgets and is a topic of high interest to our residents. This objective will be focused mostly on the benefits that can be gained through customer education and guidance on how to recycle, how to recycle more and why it is important.

It is accepted that around 30% of our residents either fail to recycle their waste or only recycle when their residual waste bin is full. If all these residents performed in line with the Newport average then an estimated 2,600 tonnes would be diverted from landfill at a saving of £208,000 a year in tax/disposal costs.

Additionally, we will explore the diverse nature of the city with a view to improving communication, informing and helping the numerous cultural and ethnic groups we have within our city to recycle and recycle more.

What have we done so far?

The Council provides a high quality low cost recycling service and in 2013/14 recycled/composted 51.70% of its municipal waste and landfilled 19,634 tonnes. Newport is also a lead member of Prosiect Gwyrdd a £1bn project to divert waste from landfill, create energy from waste and also provide increased recycling.

Newport offers a comprehensive household kerbside recycling collection service including card, garden, dry recyclables and food waste. The Council delivers an alternate week residual waste collection service and has commenced the roll-out of smaller wheeled bins. The Council also offers a

comprehensive household waste recycling facility which has recently added a reuse shop to its provision.

Actions

What are we going to do this year?	What difference will it make?
7.1 To understand the reasons why 30% of Newport residents do not recycle	It will facilitate development of appropriate targeted strategies and interventions.
7.2 In partnership with WG and WLGA under the Collaborative Change programme, Newport City Council is planning to undertake a comprehensive trial of approximately 660 properties using the best practice options on a small number of properties to evaluate how we might meet the 70% target.	Enable NCC to evaluate various recycling options.
7.3 The Council will further increase recycling at the household waste recycling centre by increasing staff presence and assisting residents to segregate the waste they bring to the centre.	Less waste going to unsustainable landfill. Raise awareness of the need to re-cycle.
7.4 Commence full Prosiect Gwyrdd waste to energy contract in Q3.	This will divert all remaining NCC municipal waste from landfill.
7.5 Commence Cwm-y-Fory food waste recycling contract end of Q1.	This will provide a long term recycling outlet for our municipal food waste.

How will we know?

Measure	Current performance 2013/14	Comparative performance (date)	Target for 15/16
7A. Percentage of municipal waste recycled or composted.	51.70%		55%
7B. Amount of waste sent to landfill	45.08%		25%
7C. Percentage of municipal waste recycled at the HWRC site	60.13%	NEW	65%
7D. NCC/WG proposed trial to encourage 600 households to recycle 70%.	N/A	NEW	600 households

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Welsh Government
 Wastesavers
 Waste Awareness Wales
 The residents and businesses in Newport.
 WLGA

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating – March 2016
Failure to meet Welsh government recycling targets could result in substantial fines.	Initiatives to increase recycling.	Medium
Failure to meet European Landfill Diversion Targets could result in substantial fines.	Prosiect Gwyrdd will eliminate this risk.	Low
Failure to increase recycling could result in increased costs.	Initiatives to increase recycling.	Medium

8. Improving Outcomes for Youth Justice

Link to Corporate Plan: A Safer City

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Education and Young People

Lead Officer: Head of Children Young People Services

Description of Improvement Objective

The principle aim of the youth justice system, established by section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is to prevent offending by children and young people.

This relates to prevention of

- anti-social behaviour and offending;
- appropriate use of Out of Court Disposals to divert young people from the criminal justice system
- reducing the rate of proven re-offending and
- reducing the proportion of young people sentenced to custody.

In line with Welsh Government and Youth Justice Board policy, we believe that prevention is better than cure and that children are young people first and offenders second.

Why have we chosen this Improvement Objective?

The objectives above are statutory ones for all Youth Offending Services (YOS) and the YOS's performance in relation to these evidence it's success or otherwise to contribute towards them. In order to meet these objectives, effective use of preventative interventions and Out of Court Disposals, are proven important aspects of achieving and maintaining safer communities and improving the perception of safety within communities. The increasing use of restorative approaches in all interventions is also critical.

In Newport, two teams directly deploy resource to meet the core aim - the Team Around the Family (prevention team) which offers specific individual voluntary early intervention in the form of Community Resolutions, as well as more generic voluntary support for young people and families in need, and the YOS, which facilitates out of court disposals and the raft of statutory court ordered interventions. Both teams can call upon a variety of specialist resource/intervention/agency involvement to support their work with young people, families, victims and communities. The multi-agency, collaborative nature of the service provides a cohesive approach to issues and assists with addressing the holistic needs of the service users to help tackle the root causes of offending.

What have we done so far?

Within the past two years changes have been made in Gwent regarding how young people are 'processed' in relation to their criminal behaviour – largely this relates to the introduction of the Bureau system. The aim is to ensure a consistent approach, which as far as possible seeks to keep young people out of the Court system, unless their criminal behaviour is very serious and/or prolific. Operational processes and procedures have been developed to support this new process, and the use of restorative approaches in all interventions has continued.

With regard to young people having appropriate accommodation, the YOS has been part of a resettlement consortium which promotes the use of a Resettlement Panel to focus on the needs of those young people leaving custody, including those with specific accommodation needs. With regard to addressing re-offending, the YOS began to utilise the Youth Justice Board's re-offending toolkit – which facilitates better analysis of specific performance which in turn informs future targeting of resources and gaps in service provision.

In May/June 2014 the YOS was subject of a full joint Inspection undertaken by colleagues from Criminal Justice, Social care, health and learning and skills inspectorates. Within the subsequent Inspection report published in September 2014 the YOS was assessed as delivering poor and unsatisfactory performance in relation to several key areas of work and twelve recommendations were made for the YOS to improve its work. Much of the focus and effort of the latter part of the year focussed on developing, and implementing a robust Improvement plan to address the deficiencies highlighted.

Improvements required included:

- Increased and improved governance and scrutiny of the YOS,
- Improved quality and use of performance and management information
- More effective management and leadership from the management team;
- Increased quality assurance and gatekeeping
- Improved content of interventions provided

The Improvement plan was accepted by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and Inspectorate as appropriate to support the necessary actions to ensure the YOS improved. The Youth Justice Board have been monitoring progress and supporting actions within the Improvement plan, and will be conducting a review/mini inspection in February 2015 to see what progress has been made. The Management Board has similarly increased the frequency of meetings and its scrutiny of the work to ensure and support improvements. The YOS has been advised that *'due to the poor performance identified we will return to Newport to undertake a further inspection, which is likely to occur 12 to 24 months from the publication...'* The YJB has confirmed it is very likely that the re-inspection will take place in the summer of 2015.

The YOS has reviewed, revised and updated many aspects of its operation, and with the increased governance and scrutiny by the Management Board and active involvement of partners, is ensuring the direction of travel for the year to come results in significantly better performance and outcomes for service users and thus for performance against the statutory aim.

Actions

What will we do this year?	What difference will it make?
8.1 Reduction in first time entrants	More young people diverted from crime and anti-social behaviour
8.2 Reduction in youth re-offending	Less young people committing further offences results in fewer victims of crime
8.3 Reduction in the use of youth custody	More young people supported to refrain from offending whilst subject to community sentences.
8.4 Effective public protection / managing risks	Managing risk effectively will lead to safer communities.
8.5 Effective safeguarding (identifying vulnerable young people)	Young people are kept safe in custody and in the community
8.6 Access to Education, Training and Employment	Children and young people have access to full time education training and employment (ETE), suitable to their needs.

How will we know?

Measures	Current Performance (date)	Comparative Performance (date)	2015-16 Targets (period reported)
How much did we do?			
8A. Number of young people referred for Community Resolution	109 (Q3 14/15)	140 (13/14)	168 (April 15- Mar 16)
8B. Number of young people referred to Newport Bureau for Out of Court Disposals	92 (Q3 14/15)	123 (13/14)	118 (April 15 – Mar 16)
How well did we do it?			
8C. Number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System (data from Police National Computer)	Annual measure data not yet available	73 (13/14)	128 (Oct 14 – Sept 15)
8D. The rate of proven re-offending for young people (follow up for 2 years after committing an offence)	Annual measure data not yet available	37.6% (13/14)	37% (April 13 – Mar 14)
8E. The proportion of young people sentenced to custody	0.69 per 1,000 (Q4 14/15)	0.61 per 1,000 (13/14)	1.18 (Oct 14 - Sept 15)
Is anyone better off?			
8F. Access to suitable accommodation for young people in the Youth Justice System. At the end of their intervention provided they are not in custody (WG indicator WYJI5)	81.1% (Q3 14/15)	N/A	80% (Jan 15 – Dec 15)
8G. Average hours of education, training or employment received by young people at the end of YOS intervention. (WG indicator WYJI4)	16.0 (Q3 14/15)	19.6 (13/14)	19.5 (Jan 15 – Dec 15)

Measures	Current Performance (date)	Comparative Performance (date)	2015-16 Targets (period reported)
Is anyone better off? (cont.)			
8H. Number of children and young people in the Youth Justice System in Wales, with identified substance misuse needs, who have access to appropriate specialist assessment. (WG indicator WJYI6)	93.5% (Q3 14/15)	N/A	80% (Jan 15 – Dec 15)
8I. Percentage of victims satisfied with the service they received from YOS/TAF team.	53.0% (Q3 14/15)	N/A	50% (Jan 15 – Dec 15)
8J. Percentage of young people who receive Out of Court disposals who re-offend within the next 12 months.	54.2 (Q3 14/15)	N/A	30% (Jan 15 – Dec 15)

Partnership: Who do we need to work with?

Gwent Police
 All Wales Probation Trust
 Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
 Barnardo's B@1
 Careers Wales
 Positive Futures

What risks do we need to manage?

Risk	Mitigation Activity	Risk Rating
Reduction in grant funding could affect staffing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of volunteers and sessional workers to provide mentorship for young people and investigate alternative funding streams. • Through increased gatekeeping and quality assurance, ensure that staff use time and resource effectively, and where possible in partnership with others to reduce costs and/or maximise economies of scale. 	Medium
Increase in re-offending of young people with very complex needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners and YJB to identify 'what works' in diverting those with complex needs from further offending. • Through increased quality assurance and improved use of performance information, target preventative activity towards those young people most at risk, and ensure those who are in the system have the most robust and impactful interventions. • Ensure thorough and effective use of partner expertise and skills – effective multi-agency working. 	Medium
Lack of suitable education/training and employment (ETE) provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and seek to increase YOS ETE worker to assist in identifying suitable placements. • Ensure YOS monitors and uses performance information regularly and effectively • Ensure the YOS Management Board maintains a strategic overview of performance and resource in this area, and take appropriate action as needed. 	Medium



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28th April 2015

Item No: 7

Subject Member's Remuneration 2015-16

Purpose This report highlights the main remuneration details for Member's for 2015/16 and asks the Council to make a decision on the remuneration of the City's Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2015/16.

Author Head of Finance

Ward All Wards

Summary This report sets out the Council's main remuneration details for its Member's in 2015/16, as directed to it by the 'Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales'. The Council is not required to approve a "Scheme of Allowances" nor can it vary the level of the allowances payable to Members, with the exception of the remuneration of the city's Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Section 153 of the Local Government Measure requires relevant authorities to comply with the requirements imposed on it by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

There has been no changes recommended for 2015/16 from current level of remuneration and the Council agreed the banding of the remuneration for the city's Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2014/15 financial year, the first year that a local decision was required for this. No change to the current banding is being recommended.

Proposal (1) To note the key details of the 2015/16 Member's remuneration, which are those directed to it by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' in Appendix A

(2) To maintain the current banding on the remuneration of the City's Mayor for 2015/16.

(3) To note the publicity and information Schedules requirement

Action by Chief Democratic Services Officer - advertise the Schedule of allowances payable in 2015/16 and the allowances and other expenses paid in 2014/15 in accordance with Remuneration Panel for Wales requirement and report the same to them, as required

Timetable Schedule of allowances payable in 2015/16 is required to be reported to the Panel and made public by 31st July and allowances/expenses paid in 2014/15 by September 30th 2015

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Democratic Services Officer
- Head of Law and Standards
- Chief Executive

Background

1. The 'Remuneration Panel' of the Welsh Government sets prescribed rates payable for Basic and Senior Salaries and also the rates and conditions for expenses paid by public authorities. This being the case, the Council no longer approves a scheme of allowances and does not have the discretion to amend these values, with the exception, of the payment bandings used to pay the Mayor and deputy mayor. For these roles, the Panel have provided 3 bandings of remuneration which individual Councils must choose from and the Council decided on the banding for the 2014/15 financial year, the first year the current framework came into being.
2. Details of the Council's positions, payments and conditions are required to be maintained and published. The following are the key requirements to meet its obligations:
 - The Council must maintain an annual Schedule of Member Remuneration and make arrangements for the Schedule's publication within the authority area and send the Schedule to the Panel as soon as practicable and not later than 31 July in the year to which it applies. Any amendments to the Schedule made during the year must be conveyed to the Panel as soon as possible after the amendment is made
 - The Council must make arrangements for publication within the authority area of the total sum paid by it to each member and co-opted member in respect of salary (basic, senior and civic), allowances, fees and reimbursements as soon as practicable and no later than 30 September following the close of the year to which it relates. It must be submitted to the Panel no later than this date.

Basic Salary

3. Each Member of the Council is entitled to a basic salary for the year in accordance with the prescribed amounts. They have not been changed from the rates paid in 2014/15.

Senior Salaries

4. Each authority falls into one of three bands (A, B or C) depending on size, and this band determines the value of 'Senior Salaries' payable. Newport falls into the middle band 'B' again for 2015/16. Each Council has a limit imposed on the number of senior salaries which can be paid. In Newport, this is 18 positions, which is unchanged from the current limit. The Panel prescribes the allowances payable for each position. The positions identified as payable are included in Appendix A, along with the prescribed amounts, which have not changed from the rates paid in 2014/15.

Co-opted Member Payments

5. Payments are also prescribed for co-opted Members of the various committees. The proposals continue as current with base payments on a per day/half day arrangement. The relevant positions and payments, which have not changed from current rates, are included in Appendix A.

Civic Salaries

6. Civic salaries are payable to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as prescribed by the Panel. Recognising the significant differences in these roles from one Council to another, the Panel introduced a 3 tier banding system from 2014/15 and Councils were free to choose which one to

apply locally. The 3 bands are shown in Appendix A. Given the above, this was reviewed by the Council's Democratic Services Committee in 2014/5 and their recommendation at that time, which was agreed by and subsequently approved by Council, was to pay both roles at Band 'B'. A decision for 2015/16 by Council is now required and no change is being recommended, that is, to pay the City's Mayor and Deputy Mayor allowances (inclusive of their basic members allowance) of £21,500 and £16,000 respectively.

Other allowances

7. The remaining allowances for care and travelling & subsistence also remain unchanged. Appendix B shows the Council's terms and conditions applicable to allowances in payment in Newport City Council.

Allowances from Bodies to which Members are appointed

8. The Remuneration Panel recommendations retain the existing caveat which prevents Local authority Members in receipt of a Senior Salary in Band 1 and 2 (Leader, Deputy and Cabinet members) from receiving allowances from Fire and Rescue Authorities. This scheme of allowances therefore continues to place a restriction on those Members appointed to such bodies from claiming allowances with the exception of appropriate reimbursement of travel and subsistence.

Financial Summary

9. The Council's budget includes provision to meet the annual costs of all these salaries and allowances and was reduced for 2015/16 due to a planned reduction of 1 senior salary role.

Members' Acceptance of prescribed allowances

10. The prescription introduced by the Remuneration Panel means that the Council has to pay the rates included within it. No Member can be forced to accept the payment. Under Section 154 of the Measure, any member or co-opted member may, by notice in writing to the Head of Law & Standards, elect to forgo any part of their entitlement to a salary, allowance or fee under the determination of the Panel for that particular year.

Financial Summary

11. The Council's budget includes amounts for the payments of Members allowances and expenses and this is reported on annually, in line with requirements of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Failure to abide by the Panel's recommendations	H	L	This report sets out the Panel's recommendation and the Council's approach to their adoption	

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The role of all council members is to support the democratic arrangements involved in running an effective and efficient Council

Options Available

The Council cannot amend the prescriptive elements of the Panel recommendations.

Preferred Option and Why

To adopt the remuneration Panel requirements in accordance with the legislative framework

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The financial implications of these payments are included annually in the Council's budget.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

In accordance with Section 153 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Council is required to comply with the levels of Members allowances and remuneration prescribed the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and the conditions applicable to their payment. The Council has no discretion to fix its own members Scheme of Allowances. Therefore, for the most part, the Report is for information purposes only and the salary and expenses are fixed by the IRP, subject to the discretion for individual members to forego all or part of their salaries by giving notice to the Proper Officer. However, the IRP gives councils a discretion regarding the level of Civic Salaries payable to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council, to reflect the different responsibilities attached to these roles in different authorities. The Civic Salaries are based on three bands and the Council has a discretion as to which of the salary bands should apply.

Members have a "personal" interest in relation to this Report regarding the general Allowances Scheme but this is not deemed to be a "prejudicial" interest because of the saving provisions in paragraph 12 of the Members Code of Conduct. However, because there is a general discretion regarding payment of the Civic Salaries, then the Mayor elect and the intended Deputy Mayor should declare an interest and take no part in this aspect of the decision.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

No direct impact

Comments of Cabinet Member

This report deals with a matter requiring a full Council decision.

Local issues

No local issues

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment

N/A

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

N/A

Consultation

N/A

Background Papers

Annual report of the 'Independent Remuneration Panel 2015/16'

Dated:

APPENDIX 'A' – PRESCRIBED REMUNERATION RATES

Basic salary (payable to all elected members) £13,300			
	Group A (Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea)	Group B (Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Newport , Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham)	Group C (Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Isle of Anglesey)
Senior salaries (inclusive of basic salary)			
Band 1			
Leader	£53,000	£48,000	£43,000
Deputy leader	£37,000	£33,500	£30,000
Band 2			
Other executive	£32,000	£29,000	£26,000
Band 3			
Committee chairs		£22,000	
Band 4			
Leader of largest opposition group		£22,000	
Band 5			
Leader of other political groups (must make up at least 10% of Council)		£17,000	

Remuneration of civic leaders (Mayor) and deputy civic leaders (Deputy Mayor) (inclusive of basic salaries)		
	Civic leaders	Deputy Civic Leader
A	£24,000	£18,000
B	£21,500	£16,000
C	£19,000	£14,000

Fees for co-opted members (with voting rights) of local authorities	
Chairs of standards committees and audit committees	£256 (4 hours and over) £128 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for community and town councils	£226 daily fee (4 hours and over) £113 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees; education scrutiny committee; crime and disorder scrutiny committee and audit committee	£198 (4 hours and over) £99 (up to 4 hours)

APPENDIX B - Terms and conditions applicable to allowances in payment in Newport City Council

1. Introduction

1.1. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out the arrangements for Members' Allowances and as such, the Council is required to adopt the requirements of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. This document constitutes the requirements of the Panel and the method by which this Council will comply with those requirements

1.2. Full details of the Panel's requirements in respect of Members' salaries and Allowances can be found in their annual report published at www.remunerationpanelwales.org.uk. The Council will administer the payment of Members' salaries and allowances according to the Panel's requirements

1.3 Specific guidance on processes adopted by the council is included below.

2. General Rules

2.1. Members are reminded of the need to ensure value for money at all times when incurring expenses on Council business.

2.2. Each individual Member is responsible for the correctness and validity of any claim they make. It is up to individual Members to justify and/or substantiate each claim they submit for reimbursement. Any abuse or failure to observe the rules of this Scheme will constitute a breach of the provisions in the Members Code of Conduct concerning integrity and the stewardship of public funds and will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Local Government Act 2002.

2.3. Payment of any annual Allowance will be calculated by reference to the number of days in office this being determined by the date of election or a decision of Council formalising appointments. If a Member is suspended from office, then all entitlement to allowances and expenses will cease for the period of suspension.

2.4. Members may elect to forego all or any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme by giving written notice to the Head of Law & Standards.

2.5. The Measure requires that the Council publish its arrangements for Members' allowances. Information relating to payments and processes for Members' salaries and allowances will be made available via the Authority's website.

2.6. Records are maintained of payments made. Each year the Council must publish the amounts paid to Members to fulfil the requirements of the Measure. This requirement will be fulfilled by publication on the Authority's website and in the Council's newspaper or such other publication circulating widely in the Authority's area.

2.7. Rates and allowances are set annually by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

2.8. Travel expenses can only be claimed for approved duties.

2.9. Subsistence allowances can only be claimed for approved duties taking place outside

the City boundaries.

2.10. No claim for expenses of any kind will be paid without original supporting receipts.

2.11. If by virtue of suspension, cessation of duties or any other reason, any Member receives a salary or allowance to which they are not entitled, they will on demand, pay back to the authority such sums that are repayable.

3. Co-opted Member Allowances

3.1. Co-opted Members entitled to claim allowances by virtue of their appointed position, can do so using claim forms available from the Head of People and Transformation. The maximum payable is the equivalent of 12 full days' allowances claimable as full days, half days or any combination of the two.

4. Travel Allowances

4.1. Members can claim travel expenses whilst travelling to or from official business where they necessarily incur expenditure up to the maximum published rates.

4.2. A Member's home is considered the base for any expense claims. Where a Member claims a mileage allowance, it should be the lesser of

- The actual mileage travelled or
- The distance from home to the official business.

4.3. Wherever possible, Members should arrange for the Council to pay all expenses direct to the provider rather than paying and then reclaiming expenses.

4.4. Costs incurred in travel by means other than a private motor vehicle will be reimbursed at actual cost upon production of appropriate original receipts proving actual expenses.

(NB: 'appropriate' receipts are not credit card vouchers, as they do not contain adequate information to support the detail of the expenditure incurred).

4.5. Where a Member is required to travel on official business, the following rules apply;
a Travel by Rail – Standard rate rail fare is normally payable for all journeys.

Where possible, tickets should be obtained in advance via Members Services;

b Travel by Private Car - the mileage rate for travel by a Member's car is payable plus a supplement for each passenger up to a maximum of four. An original receipt for fuel must be submitted to support any mileage claim to enable the Council to seek reimbursement of the VAT paid;

c In the exceptional circumstance that a Member chooses to travel by taxi to undertake an approved journey then reimbursement will be 'standard rate rail fare in lieu';

d Travel by Air - the actual air fare is payable in appropriate circumstances. Where possible, flights should be booked via Members Services to avoid claims being necessary;

e Reimbursement of appropriate actual cost of tolls, ferries, taxis at destination and parking fees will be made on production of the relevant receipts;

f Where the same duty is being attended by more than one Member or with officers, transport should be shared wherever possible.

5. Subsistence Allowances

5.1. Members will not be able to claim subsistence expenses in respect of official business within the City boundary.

5.2. Subsistence allowances are payable to all Members who necessarily incur expenditure in the performance of official business outside the City boundary.

5.3. Subsistence allowances are payable to reimburse expenditure incurred up to the maximum approved rates. Reimbursement will only take place upon production of appropriate receipts proving actual expenses incurred. Such receipts cannot include alcohol or tobacco. (NB: 'appropriate' receipts are not credit card vouchers, as they do not contain adequate information to support the detail of the expenditure incurred).

5.4. Where a meal is provided by the Authority or body to which the duty relates, the relevant subsistence allowance is not claimable.

5.5. Where seminar or conference fees paid directly by the Council are inclusive of accommodation but do not include meals then any subsistence incurred will be reimbursed upon production of valid receipts, up to the maximum approved rates. Where meals are included, no additional allowances will be paid.

5.6. Where official business involves an overnight stay and the hotel accommodation is paid directly by the Council, any additional subsistence incurred in respect of meals taken during the period of absence will be reimbursed upon production of valid receipts up to the maximum approved rates. Where meals are included, no additional allowances will be paid.

5.7. Where official business involves an overnight stay and the hotel accommodation is not paid for directly by the Council then accommodation and subsistence costs will be reimbursed on production of valid receipts, up to the maximum approved rates.

5.8. The production of appropriate receipts proving actual expenses incurred in support of subsistence claims is required. It is expected that the receipt will be provided in all circumstances. Claims not supported by a valid original receipt will not be paid. Claims in excess of the maximum allowed rates will be paid up to but not exceeding those rates.

6. Overseas Allowances

6.1. Detailed guidance on the procedure and entitlement is set out in the Appendix.

7. Attendance at other bodies

7.1. Members appointed to other bodies such as the Welsh Local Government Association must comply with any scheme operated by those bodies. If claims for expenses can be submitted to those bodies then this should be the course of action taken by Members.

7.2. Attendance at meetings of these bodies as a representative of the Council is official business.

7.3. Where claims cannot be submitted directly to such bodies, a claim should be submitted to the Council but clearly marked as recoverable from the body concerned.

7.4. No Member in receipt of a senior salary as Leader, Deputy Leader or Cabinet Member is entitled to receive a salary from a Fire and Rescue Authority in their capacity as an

appointed representative of the Council.

8. Pensions

8.1. Subject to the relevant provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme, Members are eligible to join the Local Government Pension scheme. Please contact the Head of People and Transformation for details of the scheme. Personal pension advice cannot be provided.

9. Payment of Allowances

9.1. Members are required to complete a New Appointment Form confirming personal details and to provide any other documents required by the Council to properly process payments. These documents will include items required to confirm identity such as passports or birth certificates. Failure to promptly provide any information required may delay payment.

9.2. The payment of Basic and Senior Salaries (where applicable) will be incorporated into the monthly payroll system and paid by bank credit transfer.

9.3. Travelling and subsistence and care allowance claims submitted to the Head of People and Transformation by the 5th working day of the month will normally be included in the payroll run of the same month.

9.4. Details of journeys undertaken and expenses incurred must be recorded on the approved log sheet.

9.5. Claim forms should be completed in full (including your home address and payroll reference number – which can be found on your payslip) and submitted with any related log sheets and receipts attached in support of the claim. Claim forms must be submitted on a monthly basis. **Claims will not be paid if they are over three months overdue.**

9.6. In accordance with Financial Regulations, claims at the end of the financial year are to be submitted by the 5th working day of April.

9.7. Each and every claim shall include a statement that the Member has not made, and will not make, any other claim in respect of the matter to which the claim relates.

Appendix

Overseas Allowances

1 Claims Procedure

1.1 Claims must be accompanied by a detailed itinerary of the trip giving the names of all people travelling, modes of transport between venues and specifying items of expenditure which have been paid in advance by the Council or provided by an outside body.

1.2 The Council minute or other document authorising the attendance should be quoted on the claim.

1.3 Each Councillor's expenses must be claimed on individual claim forms. The cost of group expenditure must not be pooled on one form unless this has been agreed in advance with the Head of Human Resources & Policy and is being claimed by an officer of the Council.

2 Travelling Allowance

2.1 Reasonable travelling expenses whilst abroad may be claimed at actual cost but the normal rules will apply to any part of the trip within the UK.

3 Subsistence Allowance

3.1 Reasonable subsistence allowance for accommodation and main meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner), if not included in the cost of the accommodation, may be claimed upon production of valid receipts.

(Note: receipts must be formal documents showing the name of the business, the date and the nature of the supply. Basic non-detailed till receipts will not be acceptable).

3.2 If subsistence is claimed for travelling time within the UK, full details of departure and arrival times must be given in the itinerary. Claims must be made in accordance with Section 9 and original receipts must be provided.

4 Other Expenses

4.1 The actual cost of currency conversion, business telephone calls and any other valid business costs will also be paid on production of the valid receipts.

Minutes



Standards Committee

Date: 24 March 2015

Time: 5.30 pm

Present: Mrs H Taylor OBE (Chair), Councillors Fouweather and Guy, Mr G Hancock, Mr B John and Ms T Britton

Mr G Price (Monitoring Officer), Mrs J Owen (Chief Legal Officer) and Mrs M Durkin (Democratic Administrator)

Apologies: Mr J Pickering and Mr P Westwood

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies are set out above

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Chair's Announcements

There were no formal announcements for this meeting.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January, 2015 were submitted.

Re Minute 4, Request for Dispensation, the Monitoring Officer reported that the Council had not removed Member Neighbourhood Allowances as a potential budget saving for the forthcoming year, the amount remained the same but the criteria had been tightened.

Agreed

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January, 2015 be taken as read and confirmed.

5 Complaints

The Monitoring Officer reported that there had been no further complaints received since the last meeting.

Agreed

That the report be noted.

6 Response to Wales Audit Office Review of Whistleblowing

Consideration was given to a report detailing an action plan responding to the six recommendations made by the Welsh Audit Office (WAO) as part of their analysis of Newport City Council's Whistleblowing Policy. Whilst strengths were noted and acknowledged by WAO, there were a number of recommendations made to strengthen the current policy. This action plan outlined the recommendations, detailed the action it was planned to take, appropriate timescales by which each action would be completed, and the responsible Officer for ensuring that these actions were taken.

The Monitoring Officer reported that progress had been made against the agreed action plan for the WAO recommendations on strengthening the Authority's whistleblowing procedures. The primary change had been an amendment to the policy and guidance for managers. The Senior HR Business Partner had revised the policy and ensured compliance not only with the recommendations listed by WAO, but had also aligned it with the Public Concern At Work (PCAW) Code of Practice. PCAW were the leading authority in the field of whistleblowing and campaign for the Government to adopt their drafted Code of Practice. Their campaign 'The First 100' encouraged public sector employers such as local authorities and health boards, private sector employers from a wide variety of industries, and regulators to adopt their Code of Practice; this might be an action that the Council wished to consider for the future and further information could be provided by Human Resources on the benefits and implications.

The proposed changes to the whistleblowing policy would need to be considered by the trade unions through engagement at the Employee Partnership Forum (EPF) and the Monitoring Officer would report back to the next meeting on any feedback from their meeting held on 19 March, 2015.

Agreed

To note the update

7 Procedure for Dealing with Complaints of Breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct

Consideration was given to a report detailing the procedure when Standards Committee were required to reach a decision following an investigation by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("the Ombudsman") or the Council's Monitoring Officer under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 ("the Regulations").

The Monitoring Officer reported on specific points detailed in the Report including potential conflicts of interest i.e. where the Monitoring Officer had already acted as Legal Advisor to the Standards Committee where the Ombudsman had investigated, the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer would then be involved in the meeting dealing with the breach of the Members' code of conduct, the treatment of documents insofar as being confidential solely for Standards Committee members, the composition of the proposed Committee (whether it should be a lesser number as recommended by the Monitoring Officer – 3 to 5 members with at least one Council Member).

Reference was also made to the conduct and the actual procedure at a meeting. The Monitoring Officer indicated that it might be useful for the Committee for a "mock hearing" to

be undertaken at a future date. He also reported that a short summary/flow chart on the procedure would be added to this current document for members' ease of reference.

The Monitoring Officer responded to members' questions including the points made by Mr Pickering who was not in attendance.

The Monitoring Officer asked members to further examine the procedure and let him have any comments.

Agreed

That the report be noted and that further consideration be given to the Procedure (with a summary/flow chart added) with a "mock hearing" being undertaken at the next meeting.

8 Future Work Programme

Members considered matters in the future Work Programme. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the next item on the Committee's list of priorities was Gifts and Hospitality.

Agreed

That the Monitoring Officer submit a report on Gifts and Hospitality.

9 Date of Next Meeting

The next meetings to be held on Thursdays, 16 July and 22 October, 2015 at 5.30 p.m. in Room 4, Civic Centre.

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