

# Agenda



## Cabinet

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Date: Wednesday, 11 November 2020

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: Virtual Meeting

To: Councillors Councillor J Mudd (Chair), Councillor R Jeavons, P Cockeram, G Giles, D Harvey, D Mayer, Councillor R Truman, D Davies and M Rahman

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Item		Wards Affected
1	<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
3	<u>Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 3 - 16)</u>	
4	<u>September Revenue Budget Monitor (Pages 17 - 40)</u>	All Wards
5	<u>Capital Programme Monitoring and Additions - September 2020 (Pages 41 - 60)</u>	All Wards
6	<u>Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Report (Pages 61 - 110)</u>	All Wards
7	<u>Audit Wales - Audit of Newport City Council's 2020-21 Improvement Plan (Certificate of Compliance) (Pages 111 - 118)</u>	All Wards
8	<u>Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2019/20 (Pages 119 - 170)</u>	All Wards
9	<u>Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' Report and Newport City Council progress (Pages 171 - 184)</u>	All Wards
10	<u>Annual Report on Compliments, Comments and Complaints Management 2020 (Pages 185 - 198)</u>	All Wards
11	<u>Local Toilet Strategy (Pages 199 - 206)</u>	All Wards
12	<u>Newport City Council Covid 19 Response and Recovery Update (Pages 207 - 226)</u>	All Wards

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| 13 | <u>Newport City Council Brexit / Trade Negotiations Preparations Update</u><br>(Pages 227 - 236) | All Wards |
| 14 | <u>Cabinet Work Programme</u> (Pages 237 - 244)  | All Wards |
| 15 | <u>PSB: Summary of Business September 2020</u> (Pages 245 - 248)                                 | All Wards |
| 16 | <u>Live event</u><br><a href="#">To watch live event please click here</a>                       |           |



# Minutes

## Cabinet

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Date: 14 October 2020

Time: 4.00 pm

Present: Cllrs Jane Mudd (Chair); P Cockeram, D Davies, G Giles, D Harvey, R Jeavons; D Mayer, M Rahman.

In attendance: Mrs B Owen, Mr G Price, Mr M Rushworth, Mr R Cornwall, Mrs S Jenkins, Mrs T Brooks.

### Part 1

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

Councillor R Truman.

#### 2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest.

#### 3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020 were confirmed as a true record.

Before proceeding on to the next item on the agenda, the Leader took the opportunity to mention the current local lockdown and thanked the people of Newport who are working really well together and following the rules around Covid-19 in order to keep others safe.

#### 4 Corporate Annual Report 2019/20

The Leader presented the report which is the third Annual Report of the Council's five year Corporate Plan.

The purpose of the report is to reflect back on 2019/20 assessing the achievements the Council has made, areas for improvement and looking forward for the remaining period of the Corporate Plan.

The Leader confirmed that this year's report also reflects back on the Council's Covid-19 response against each of the Council's Well-being Objectives and how these have contributed towards the learning and development of the Council's Strategic Recovery Aims.

The Annual Report was presented in September to the Council's Overview and Management Scrutiny Committee. The Committee's detailed discussions on the Council's Covid-19 response and their feedback on the contents of the Annual Report were welcomed. Also, the Committee's recommendations have been considered and updated in this final version of the report to Cabinet.

The Leader sought Cabinet's endorsement of the Annual Report so that it can be published, at which time it will also be made available in Welsh.

The Leader recapped to confirm that at the beginning of this Cabinet's term, four Well-being Objectives were set to support the Council's mission of 'Improving People's Lives':

- *To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities;*
- *To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment*
- *To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient*
- *To build cohesive & sustainable communities.*

The report outlined that in 2019/20, Newport Council has continued to make good progress against its Well-being Objectives, despite the challenging financial pressures that many of the Council's front-line services have experienced.

Despite these financial pressures, the Council was able to report an under-spend in its final accounts of £1.8m which was contributed to by an unexpected grant income to support the Council's Social Services.

However, in the medium term and following the Covid-19 crisis, the Council is now facing new financial challenges which require some difficult decisions to be made going forward.

In 2019/20, Newport Council continued to make significant improvements in the delivery of its services and also delivered key initiatives that will improve people's lives. None of the achievements could have been made without the close partnership working with other organisations, the Health Board and service users.

The report also recognised the areas which need improving and where the Council will make necessary changes in the delivery of its services.

The Leader was pleased to note the following positive improvements:

#### **Well-being Objective 1 (Improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities)**

- Newport's Primary Schools continue to improve their performance which has seen year-on-year improvements in the categorisation of schools as 'Green' by Welsh Government.
- The City's School attendance rates have improved for both primary and secondary schools.
- Initiatives to improve the opportunities of disadvantaged children has seen improvements in their academic successes.
- The Council's Adult Learning offer also enables people in Newport to re-skill and re-train which is providing more opportunities in the workplace.
- It is acknowledged more can be done and the Council's Education service and Schools are working hard to reduce digital inequality, to support disadvantaged pupils and young people during this very difficult year.

#### **Well-being Objective 2 (To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment)**

- Continuous regeneration of the City through the support and delivery of schemes such as the Chartist Hotel, Indoor Market, Market Arcade, Mill Street Post Office building, Transporter Bridge Visitor Centre and now the Information Station.
- Implementation of the new smaller bins across households in the City, contributing towards improving the Council's recycling rates making Newport one of the best performing Council's in Wales and the UK.
- Introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement has seen over 19,000 tickets issued and improvements to the City's streets and behaviour of motorists.
- Continuous delivery of various bio-diversity and green projects to improve the City's environment. This includes the installation of solar panels across 21 sites to reduce the Council's energy consumption.
- In the Council's response to the Covid-19 crisis, Newport Council has administered over £19 million of rates relief to over 1,000 businesses and over £30 million of business grants to 2,250 eligible businesses.

The Leader stated this is a very difficult and challenging time for the City's economy with Covid-19 restrictions and the uncertainty surrounding the UK's relationship with the EU. This is why it is important that we support the City's economy and ensure Newport continues to attract new investment and opportunities.

### **Wellbeing Objective 3 (To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient)**

- Despite the continuing demand on the Council's Social Services, both Children and Adult Services have continued to innovate and deliver new initiatives. The Leader gave personal thanks to all colleagues across the council in social care for their outstanding commitment and service.
- The Baby & Me initiative demonstrates how collaborative working with organisations such as Barnardos and involvement of service users improve the opportunities and break down barriers for young people.
- The continued success of Rose Cottage to provide stability and safe environments for children can help them build confidence and actively support their development.
- The Council's First Contact team in Adult Services enabling people to signpost and access the services they need to continue to live independent lives.
- The Council's Active Travel schemes delivered at St David's Primary school, Fourteen Locks and Coed Melyn are providing alternative approaches to travelling around Newport.
- Adoption of the Sustainable Travel Strategy by Newport Council and its Public Services Board partners to encourage the move towards alternative/cleaner transport, use of more public transport, support infrastructure changes to enable safe routes and promote engagement across schools and communities.
- The Council's Social Services throughout Covid-19 have continued to deliver their services and the work of Community Connectors and Neighbourhood Hubs have been vital to ensure vulnerable people are able to access food parcels and the support they needed.
- The new funding to support the City's Active Travel schemes across Newport which will contribute towards Newport being a greener and healthier city in the future.

### **Well-being Objective 4 (To build Cohesive and sustainable communities)**

- Providing access to good quality affordable and safe housing remains a priority. During 2019/20 the Council supported the delivery of housing developments at Durham Road, Cot Farm and the former King's Head Public House site. Also the former Hillside Resource Centre, Centurion Public House, Tredegar Court Sheltered Accommodation and Central View.
- Ringland Community Hub renovation and the implementation of the four community hub model in the city to provide multi- community services.
- The role of the Safer Newport group to tackle ASB and provide diversionary activities. Involving local communities and residents to tackle ASB and find solutions.
- Participatory budgeting in Ringland and Alway to help support community activities through grant provision. Local people being involved to decide which bids received funding. Successful bids included Newport Samaritans, Gwent Police Cadets, Ringland Radio and Alway Boxing Club.
- Supporting rough sleepers and homeless into accommodation, collaborating with the Police and other support services. Supporting people presenting at risk of becoming homeless and finding long term solutions.
- Working with Registered Social Landlords to obtain funding to develop more affordable accommodation.
- Supporting BAME and marginalised communities that have been disproportionately impacted by Covid -19. Working with communities and local groups to deliver food packages.

- Undertaking Community Impact Assessment to understand the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown measures on communities in Newport.

The Leader was pleased to provide this overview of the range of activities and progress made as she felt there is a need to highlight this progress against the plan, because in spite of the pandemic, the city has been kept safe and the Council has maintained essential service provision and delivered against the corporate plan. The Leader thanked everyone for this collaborative endeavour.

The Leader invited her Cabinet Members to speak to the report:

Councillor Jeavons referred to Objective 2 and the recycling rates that are being achieved. He thanked the residents of Newport whose efforts mean that Newport may well be the best recycling city in the whole of the UK. He also referred to the recently purchased electric refuse truck, the first of its kind for any local authority, and the ultra-low-emission camera car – all of which is contributing to reducing Newport's carbon footprint

Councillor Davies referred to Objective 3 and the long term commitment to sustain green spaces – she welcomed the work by the PSB to make sure this happens. She was pleased that Newport has been recognised as a bee friendly city, and the biodiversity officer is working with schools to encourage children's interest in this. The walk to school campaign is going well and St David's primary school have shown great results. It is the Council's intention to be carbon neutral by 2030 and part of that commitment is to work with energy co-op. In addition, she welcomed the electric charging points that are being installed across the city by City Services to help residents to reduce their carbon footprint.

Councillor Giles commended the Education Service for the great achievements made. Secondary schools are performing better than expected, primary schools achieving, reducing the gap between minority groups, raising achievement. She referred to the significant changes since February in particular the huge shift to technology. The council had provided Childcare hubs, meal vouchers, 1300 devices provided for school children. She referred to the recovery aims noted in the report and highlighted the success of schools in maintaining really good attendance rates; secondary schools' attendance 93.9%, primary schools' attendance 94.8%, Free School Meal attendance 92.4% and work is ongoing to increase these percentages.

Councillor Mayer welcomed the report – he was proud that a lot of his portfolio covers areas to enable all other services to operate successfully, in particular IT and the community hubs.

The Leader reflected on the digital work within the Council and the commitment that has enabled officers and members to work from home so quickly in order to continue to deliver essential services.

Councillor Harvey welcomed the introduction of electric buses by Newport Transport which will help to reduce emissions and assist with Newport's reduction of its carbon footprint.

Councillor Cockeram applauded social services for everything it has achieved, in particular the Baby and Me initiative – a wonderful initiative started 2/3 years ago in partnership with Barnardos; Welsh Government is now hoping to push this initiative across the whole of Wales. He also referred to Rose Cottage where a social worker had tested positive for Covid-19; that member of staff and other colleagues had agreed to stay at the Cottage to self-isolate for two weeks – selfless action that he applauded.

Councillor Rahman referred to Objective 4, page 64 of the report, Asset Management, in particular the community asset transfer for the Maindee triangle as this is a much needed asset which will benefit the community. As the Council's BAME champion he welcomed the work being done to promote diversity in the work place and equality in the community, although there is still lots more work to be done.

The Leader invited the Chief Executive to say a few words who reiterated the Cabinet Members' comments, and was personally very proud to see what's been achieved in 2019/20 and to see a number of projects and programmes that were started at the beginning of the plan coming to fruition.

The Leader welcomed the comments made by her Cabinet colleagues and for the report to be endorsed for publication.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report and for it to be published at which time it will also be provided in Welsh.

## **5 Risk Report Quarter 1 (2020/21)**

The Leader presented the report that provided Cabinet with an update of the Council's Corporate Risk Register for the end of Quarter 1 (30<sup>th</sup> June 2020).

The report asked Members to consider the contents of the report and to note the changes to the risk.

The report stated that the Council's Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register enables the administration and officers to effectively identify, manage and monitor those risks which could prevent the Council from achieving its objectives in the Corporate Plan (2017-22) and the statutory duties as a local authority.

The report confirmed the Quarter 1 risk report will also be presented to the Council's Audit Committee in October 2020 to review the Council's risk management process and governance arrangements.

At the end of quarter 1 the corporate risk register included 19 risks requiring monitoring from Cabinet and the Council's Corporate Management Team. All other risks are monitored through the Council's service areas and Corporate Management Team. Mechanisms are in place to escalate any new or existing risk to the Corporate Risk Register.

In quarter 1 there are 13 Severe risks (risk scores 15 to 25); 4 Major risks (risk scores 7 to 14) and 2 Moderate risks (risk scores 1 to 3).

Seven risks had remained at the same risk score as quarter 4.

The Leader referred to the following:

#### **New/Escalated Risks**

- In quarter 1, there was one new risk (Ash Die Back Disease) and five escalated risks from service area risk registers.
- **Pressure on Adult & Community Services (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 16 to 20)** COVID-19 has increased the pressure on the finances and long term sustainability of adult care and services are having to redesign themselves to accommodate the COVID-19 guidelines. These also have an impact on the perception and delivery of services.
- **Pressure on the delivery of Children Services (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 16 to 20)** COVID-19 has caused the increase in pressure in terms of the quantum of work and nature of the work alongside the impact on staff with the societal changes. Attempts to mitigate the risk are reliant on maintaining communication and minimising tasks which are likely to increase during the year.
- **Cyber Security (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16)** in quarter 1 public sector bodies were notified of the increased threat level to the UK to gain access to data held by central and local government. This vulnerability has also increased due to the number of people working from home.
- **Pressure on Homelessness Service (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16)** The Welsh Government implemented new statutory legislation to support the homeless and rough

sleepers into accommodation and provide support. Welsh Government provided phase 1 funding to the Council and has recently received phase 2 funding to continue this support.

- **Pressure on Housing Service (Escalated Risk, risk score increase from 12 to 16** the delivery of the housing service has been impacted due to the implementation of the statutory legislation for homeless, rough sleepers and the most vulnerable. Furthermore, due to the vulnerable economic position and the furlough scheme ending in October, there could be more pressure to provide assistance for residents that may be at threat of redundancy and/or reduction in pay.

The Leader invited the Cabinet Members to comment:

Councillor Jeavons referred to Ash Die Back Disease (New Risk, Score 20) and confirmed a review by City Services of Council-owned trees identified approximately 8,600 Ash trees that had Ash Die Back or were at risk from it. The risk score reflects the high financial costs and urgency to remove the trees before they fall and cause damage. It was noted that Newport has a lot more of these trees than other authorities.

Councillor Cockeram referred to the enormous pressure on social services especially with an ageing population. Domiciliary care is also a concern with low wages and retention of staff. Residential homes is another concern as, whilst Welsh Government is currently subsidising this sector at the moment, if these homes go into administration this will have an impact on services. He also referred to the financial risk associated with spending on supported living when children become adults. As well as financial pressures within Children's services there is also pressure from Welsh Government for authorities to stop children coming into care. All of these services are statutory duties.

Councillor Mayer reported that the biggest risk in his portfolio is the threat associated with Cyber security.

Councillor Davies referred to agile working and the perceived benefit is the massive impact on the reduction of our carbon footprint; work has to be done now to look at how this can be sustained.

Councillor Rahman mentioned work needed to be done on how the Council utilises its buildings in the future whilst still providing a gold standard of service to Newport's residents.

The report also highlighted the change in direction of some risk scores which are referred to on page 73 of the agenda.

The Leader sought agreement from her Cabinet on the contents of the Quarter 1 Risk Report and to continue to monitor progress of actions taken to reduce the impact of the risks in the report.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report and to continue to monitor progress of actions taken to reduce the impact of the risks in the report.

## **6 Pay and Reward Policy**

The Leader introduced the report that confirmed the Council's Pay and Reward Policy for the workforce is an annual report that requires adoption by Council. The policy sets out the internal mechanisms for remunerating Council officers and provides any changes since the last adoption.

Two proposed changes identified in the report are:

- Firstly, the removal of the car block allowance for Chief Officers which will alter the way in which mileage expenses are incurred and will bring Chief Officers in line with the rest of the workforce who are required to claim for the journeys they make as opposed to receiving a fixed payment.
- Secondly, restricting re-employment to those who take voluntary redundancy or settlement agreements. This will mean that public funding towards severance packages is applied appropriately and that due diligence on staffing structures will be thoroughly applied before any decision to agree severance packages is taken.



In addition to these proposals, the Pay and Reward Policy reports on the annual gender pay gap which is also published on the Council's website. The report confirmed the mean gap has decreased to 3.6% from last year's reported 4.8%. The Leader was pleased to report that the median gap has now closed as the analysis of the data shows that the median point of hourly pay is the same for both men and women. The Council's gender pay gap compares favourably with other Councils across Wales and the UK average of 17%.

The Leader confirmed the Council will continue to review and continually monitor its gender pay gap to find ways of closing the mean pay gap through the objectives published in the annual gender pay gap report and by undertaking a second equal pay audit in 2021 to identify any further areas for improvement.

The report sought Cabinet's approval of the policy for recommendation to Council.

The Leader invited the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources to speak to the report and he confirmed that the annual Pay and Reward Policy offers the opportunity to publish the Council's intentions regarding remuneration for its officers and make any appropriate amendments. He confirmed that the Council's Trades Union representatives have been consulted on the two proposed changes noted above, and their feedback is contained within the report, as is an assessment of the Fairness and Equality impact that the proposal to restrict re-employment may have.

The Cabinet Member also confirmed that Cabinet had previously committed to paying a supplement to the lowest paid employees to ensure that they receive a salary equivalent to the Real Living Wage and the policy confirms that supplement will continue to be made.

The Cabinet Member reiterated the Leader's comments regarding the gender pay gap and the progress made in the 2019 report; he was pleased that the report identifies that there is no pay gap between women and men when comparing the median hourly rate, and a drop from 4.8% to 3.6% when comparing the mean hourly rate. The Cabinet Member believes this shows good progress in eliminating the gap at Newport City Council and commended the policy to Cabinet.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report and for it to be taken to Council for formal adoption.

## **7 SRS Data Centre**

The Leader introduced the report that confirmed that following the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group in 2016, Cabinet agreed to join the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and transfer the Council's IT service into this partnership with Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent local authorities and Gwent Police.

Eleven investment objectives highlighted the important improvements Newport wished to get from this arrangement, at the core of these were the following requirements:

- to develop a responsive, continuously improving IT service;
- the rationalisation of systems across the partnership;
- high quality, continuous staff development;
- an IT infrastructure that delivers resilience and quality of service;
- the development of business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements including out of hours support as appropriate;
- support for the delivery of digital goals as outlined in Newport City Council's Digital Strategy.

The report confirmed that the Council recognised the importance of investing in its IT provision. This meant that when lock down began the Council was already equipped to enable both staff and Members to continue working whilst not attending their usual place of work.

Since joining SRS there have been improvements to both the IT kit and the support systems. The partnership has jointly developed new systems, such as the CRM system, and have rolled out Office 365. Whilst being part of a wider partnership has helped the Council to improve its service, the Leader thanked the Council's in-house Digital Team for the work they have done to ensure a continued improvement in performance and also enabling the Council to maximise its investment.

The report stated that in order to meet the objectives of a resilient IT infrastructure and improvements to business continuity, the plan was to move the current data centre from the Civic Centre to the SRS purpose built data centre in Blaenavon. However, following a further evaluation by SRS of the costs for Newport and the other partners of continued operations within Blaenavon, compared to a move to an even newer purpose built data centre, the outcome of the evaluation is that it is, overall, cheaper for all partners to move to a new data centre.

The business case developed by SRS is supported by the Finance and Governance Board of the Partnership and a recommendation to proceed then made to the SRS Strategic Board (the Council is represented on both Boards at senior officer and Cabinet Member level). The business case has recently been signed off by the Strategic Board and now each Cabinet of each local authority in the partnership is being asked to give approval.

The report details both the revenue and capital costs of the move. The report noted that moving the data centre to ensure resilience in line with the original Cabinet decision would always have a cost, regardless of whether this was a move to the current SRS data centre or a new location.

The report confirmed that moving all partners to the new premises will take up to three years and at that point there will be an increased revenue cost for Newport. However, this has been anticipated and is within the MTRP. Within this is also a budget for the on-going update of the data centre, which will be required every five or so years. It was noted that this increased revenue cost is partially off-set by a decrease in the energy costs at the Civic Centre. The Leader was pleased to report that this will also support the Council's carbon reduction plans and will see an approximate 92 tonne annual reduction in carbon as a result of less energy consumption at the Civic Centre.

The report confirmed the required Capital expenditure is within the current IT capital refresh plan and does not impact on the ability to ensure the on-going resilience of the remaining core infrastructure that is needed across the estate to operate.

The Leader invited the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources to speak to the report and as the Cabinet representative on the SRS Strategic Board he confirmed he fully supports the agreement of this proposal. He stated that the safeguarding of systems and data and future proofing this is vitally important as we have all become reliant on IT and Digital infrastructure, never more so than since March when we entered lock-down; he confirmed that within four days of lockdown 1200 council staff were enabled to work from home.

The Cabinet Member referred to the Corporate Plan's commitments in relation to this which was to become a Modernised Council, where digital was the default, and to create a Newport Intelligence Hub, so that the Council had better access to intelligence to support its operations. The Cabinet Member believes the way the Council responded to lock-down, in a very short period of time, is absolute proof that we have become a Modernised Council.

The move of the data centre to a modern, purpose built location ensures stability and security. It also gives a rock solid springboard to fulfil the ambition of 'cloud by default' – moving from on-premises solutions to hosted or cloud based solutions. This will make the Council more flexible and will ensure business continuity. That journey has started with some of the biggest systems being either hosted or in the cloud – HR and Payroll, CRM, WCCIS and email as examples.

The Cabinet Member thanked both SRS for the on-going support and the in-house Digital Team who have responded amazingly well to the challenge of supporting a whole range of services now operating virtually.

The Leader thanked the Cabinet Member and stated that the work of the Newport Intelligence Hub is invaluable; she praised the leadership and expertise of the Newport Intelligence Hub Manager, Shaun Powell, who continues to provide excellent service with regard to the work done in the response to Covid-19.

**Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report.

**8 Forecast Number of Looked After Children**

The Leader introduced the report that confirmed that Children's Services continue to work proactively to support children and families. Staff work to ensure children are safely cared for in their families and if this is not possible children are looked after and offered the best possible opportunities.

The report confirmed that Welsh Government has continued to focus on reducing the numbers of looked after children in Wales. In Newport the number of children overall in the care of the Local Authority has remained stable. Children continue to come into care but children are also leaving care, either to return to family, or to be placed for adoption, or because they reach the age of 18. Since reporting to Cabinet in May 2019, officers have continued to provide regular reports as required to Welsh Government. Since March 2020 this has included weekly reporting.

The report stated that staff have worked tirelessly since the onset of Covid-19 and have continued to deliver full services. Referrals have increased and the pressures on families have inevitably heightened.

Several new initiatives introduced by Children's Services and funded by Welsh Government grant and LA resources are working well, for example:

- Family Group Conferencing
- Baby and Me to support families.

It was also noted that staff from a broad swathe of agencies are involved in supporting vulnerable families and Children's Services' staff continue to engage to share practice and work to a culture of safe risk management for children.

The Leader, along with the Cabinet Member for Social Services and officers, was deeply disappointed to receive a letter from the Deputy Minister with such a negative tone as the letter on the back of the past 8 months does not reflect the increasing challenges faced by families or the work across all agencies to try to mitigate some of those pressures. (For reference the letter is attached as an appendix to the report).

The Leader invited the Cabinet Member for Social Services to speak to the report:

The Cabinet Member referred to the letter received from Welsh Government and whilst understanding their approach confirmed that the Council has a duty of care to ensure children are safe. He referred to page 153 of the report which details numbers of looked after children over the last 18 months; he confirmed that the numbers are presently quite stable.

He commended the hard work of officers within Children's Services who constantly strive to ensure children and families are safe. Whilst setting targets is not always helpful, staff have continued to work across Children's services and other agencies to only bring children into care when it is absolutely necessary.

He was pleased to report that in the past two years the Council has:

- opened Rose Cottage – now nominated for a Social Care Excellence Award,
- significantly increased the support for foster carers,
- are well on the way to opening Rosedale and are moving forward with Windmill Farm.
- In 2019/20 approval of 6 new households as foster carers. Already in 2020/21 approved 13 households with more currently being assessed. This is as a result of increased financial support and a comprehensive recruitment campaign.

He reported that the Minister has made an announcement that more money will be forthcoming for looked after children but the figure has yet to be confirmed.

The Cabinet Member reported that whilst the Welsh Government emphasis is on reduction, the work of Children's Services is safely supporting families and whilst becoming looked after is always a last resort, the Council is ensuring it provides the best possible care when that need does arise.

The Leader invited the Head of Children and Young People Services, Sally Jenkins, to speak to the report; she confirmed that as at today's figure the number of looked after children is 378. She re-emphasised the comments made by the Leader and Cabinet Member that the priority is to keep children safe and to offer them the best level of care possible. She confirmed that bringing children into care is the last resort and will only take this path if no other alternative is available.

The Leader thanked the Head of Service and all officers within social services for their hard work and diligence.

**Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report.

**9 LDP Annual Monitoring Report and LDP Review**

The Leader presented the report that primarily sought Cabinet's approval for:

1. Endorsement of Newport's Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report for submission to Welsh Government;
2. Giving officers' permission to begin preparations for a review of the Newport Local Development Plan (which is the main recommendation within the AMR).

The Leader confirmed the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) essentially monitors the effectiveness of the delivery of targets and policies set out in the Local Development Plan (LDP), e.g., since the start of the LDP plan period (which runs from 2011), achievements worthy of note are:

- a. Almost 6,000 new homes have been delivered
- b. 94% of housing completions have been on brownfield land
- c. 20% of the new homes built have been affordable
- d. Almost 26ha of new employment land has been created

The Leader reported that this is the fifth AMR to be produced since the LDP was adopted in January 2015.

Usually this report is endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development and submitted to Welsh Government every October. However, as this AMR is recommending the commencement of a review of the LDP, it is considered appropriate to put this decision before Cabinet.

There are several reasons why a review of the LDP is now being recommended:

- The Council is required to commence a full review of the LDP every four years. Newport's plan will be six years old in January and the reason it has not considered triggering a review before now is because the LDP has been successful. It has delivered on the targets set and Welsh Government have been content to allow the Council to continue with its adopted plan.
- However, many of Newport's larger housing sites are now complete or approaching completion. For example, Mon Bank and Lysaght's Village sites are complete, and Jubilee Park is expected to be completed in the next couple of years. Consequently, there is a need to ensure there is an adequate supply of future housing land available to provide homes for residents and achieve the aspirations for growth.
- New legislation and policies, such as the Well-being of Future Generations Act, have also been introduced since the adoption of the LDP. The Future Wales Plan was also laid before the Senedd last month and provides a national framework for growth and development until 2040. This Plan recognises Newport as being part of a national growth area and we need to ensure that the LDP aligns with these new policies.
- A review of the LDP would also help to refresh certain policies which are now out of date and could help the City's economic recovery post-Covid. For example, retailing policies, particularly in the city centre where retail is struggling.
- It is important to note that the LDP is not just about growth. It will also protect Newport's best environmental and historical assets for future generations.

The Leader invited the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development to comment:

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, Councillor Davies, referred to the aim of the LDP and Planning to create sustainable places. The approach will tackle issues such as safety, flood risk, health, air quality, amenity, availability of jobs, energy efficiency and carbon reduction, opportunities for skills and education as well as the protection of cultural facets. All options that will help create spaces which prevent negative impacts on health and wellbeing, environmental and economic factors.

The report sought Cabinet's agreement so that officers can start preparing for an LDP review and work on the Review Report and Delivery Agreement.

The Review Report is a comprehensive document which effectively sets out what policies have worked well in the LDP and what policies are in need of review.

The Delivery Agreement sets out the proposed timeframe for the delivery of a new LDP as well as setting out what resource will be required. It will identify how and when stakeholders and the community will be engaged and how they can become involved in the LDP review process.

The report confirmed the draft Review Report and draft Delivery Agreement will be brought back to Cabinet in December, when Cabinet will be asked to review the reports and give permission to consult with residents and stakeholders on the reports.

Feedback from the consultation event will then be reported back to Cabinet in March 2021 and Cabinet will be asked to endorse a referral to Full Council around April time. The legislation dictates that Full Council needs to approve a Council's LDP Delivery Agreement. It is also worth noting that Full Council will be responsible for adopting the final LDP once it has been through public examination.

Once Full Council approves the Delivery Agreement, it will be sent to Welsh Government for approval. This will signify the formal commencement of the LDP review process and the Council will be expected to adopt a new LDP within 3.5 years from that point.

In respect of budget, the report noted the LDP has a specific budget and a reserve has been built up over previous years to ensure that the Council is in a position to deliver a new LDP when required to do so.

The report sought Cabinet's approval to submit the AMR to Welsh Government, noting that this will confirm that a formal review of the LDP is required.

Councillors Rahman and Cockeram welcomed the major work undertaken within the city to strengthen the river's flood defences which had been carried out in collaboration with the Council, Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government.

The Leader paid tribute to the team, under the guidance of the Acting Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing, Tracey Brooks, for the work done on developing the LDP and AMR.

#### **Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report with further reporting to Cabinet in December 2020 and March 2021 prior to taking the report to Council in April 2021 for approval of the LDP Delivery Agreement.

## **10 Covid-19 Recovery Update**

The Leader presented the report that provide an update on the progress made by Newport Council and its partners to support the City to comply with the localised lockdown measures and supporting Newport's communities as part of the Council's Strategic Recovery Aims.

In June, Cabinet had endorsed the four Strategic Recovery Aims that support the delivery of the Council's Wellbeing Objectives but also ensure the Council's services can return safely and manage future outbreaks.

The report noted that:

- Since the last report, localised lockdown measures have been put in place to control and further reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the City following a significant increase in cases.
- Since the restrictions have been in place, Newport Council has been using all of its communications to remind residents and businesses to adhere to the new restrictions.
- Throughout this period the Council's emergency response team (Covid Gold) has been overseeing the delivery of operational and strategic activities by the Council and the wider Strategic Co-ordination Group.
- Newport Council has also introduced Incident Management Teams to manage community outbreaks and support the City's Track, Trace and Protect (TTP) system.
- At this point in time, Covid-19 remains prevalent in the City and throughout the remainder of this financial year and this will be a linear process. It is for this reason that we remain vigilant but also flexible to support any necessary measures and to also support the communities across the city.
- The report also highlighted the Council's response across its service areas including the collaborative work with the Council's partners in the Public Services Board, community groups and third sector partners.

The report also identified the progress made by the Council against the Strategic Recovery Aims, identified on pages 326 and 327 of the agenda.

The Deputy Leader thanked all staff for their tremendous work throughout the pandemic.

The Leader took the opportunity to stress to everyone the importance of following the rules. She appealed to the public that, if contacted by the TTP service the importance of following up on that contact, as you

will have been in touch with someone who has tested positive for covid-19. The service is confidential and people will not be judged, but it is an important step in trying to stop this disease.

The Leader thanked all staff, partners and councillors for supporting communities and services.

The Leader promised a further update on the Council's progress at the next Cabinet meeting.

**Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report.

## **11 Brexit Update Report**

The Leader presented the report that provided an update on the Council's Brexit preparations and current Trade Negotiations between the UK Government and EU.

The report recapped on information provided to previous Cabinet meetings that on 31<sup>st</sup> January the UK formally left the European Union and entered into the Transition Period to negotiate future trade arrangements and a future relationship with the EU.

In the last nine months the country's and this Council's focus has been on its Covid-19 response. Throughout this time the trade negotiations have been continuing between the UK Government and the EU. The outcomes of these negotiations remain a significant risk for Wales and Newport.

The UK Government and the EU have until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 to conclude the negotiations and the UK Government have publically stated that there is no intention to extend these negotiations beyond this date.

With less than two months remaining there is now a risk that the UK will fall back onto World Trade Organisation (WTO) Tariffs and new regulatory requirements may need to be implemented to manage ongoing import and export arrangements.

In September the UK Government introduced the Internal Market Bill which sets out the rules for the operation of the UK Internal market between Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland after 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

This Bill will allow greater freedom for devolved nations when setting policies but there are risks of new regulatory barriers. The Welsh Local Government Association have also raised concerns in response to the Bill

The report provided an update on progress made by the Council's Brexit Task and Finish Group – the summary of progress is identified in Appendix 1 of the report.

The report sought agreement from Cabinet to accept the contents of the report and to receive regular updates as progress is made through the transition period.

**Decision:**

Cabinet voted and unanimously agreed the report and to receive regular updates as progress is made through the transition period.

## **12 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Leader presented the Cabinet Work Programme.

**Decision:**

Cabinet agreed the updated programme.

The meeting concluded at 1748 hours.

**13 Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 11 November 2020 at 4pm.





# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

**Date:** 11 November 2020

**Subject** **September Revenue Budget Monitor**

**Purpose** To highlight the current forecast position on the Council's revenue budget and the risks and opportunities that present themselves within the September position.

**Author** Head of Finance (HoF)

**Ward** All

### Summary

The September 2020 revenue position forecasts an underspend of £1,679k. This is an improvement on the July forecast (£683k overspend), and reflects the confirmation of funding made available from Welsh Government (WG) in relation to Covid related lost income and increased expenditure for the full financial year. The bottom line underspend is inclusive of the £1.4m revenue budget contingency which is currently not required. It therefore makes up the vast majority of the underspend with a small c£200k underspend from service and non –service budgets. If service/non-service budget positions worsen in the coming months, the contingency may be required to offset those and therefore, from a financial position, the Council is in a good position entering the second half of this most challenging financial year.

As well as an improved position coming from reimbursement of Covid related expenditure/lost income, other non-Covid related service area forecasts have improved significantly since the July update and it is pleasing to note that around £400k of the improvement is in respect of the delivery of MTFP savings. Not only does this give rise to an in year improvement in the financial position but also removes the additional pressure of having to deliver these savings when new budget savings are likely to be required for full delivery from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. There is still a significant budget variance resulting from non-delivery of MTFP budget savings and represents the largest individual budget variance / issue at this time.

Whilst confirmation of WG support for Covid related expenditure / lost income has allowed officers to 'firm up' on a number of projections, there does remain a level of unavoidable uncertainty on the forecasts. The future of the pandemic and the likely financial consequence of further local and national lockdowns is unknown at this time.

Although overall an underspend is forecast there remain key budget issues in a number of areas. The key areas of overspending include:

(i)	Undelivered 2020/21 and prior year budget savings	£1,159k
(ii)	Increased demand for independent fostering agencies	£450k
(iii)	Impact of on-going school budget overspending	£186k

These overspends have been offset by savings against other service / non-service area underspends totalling £2,001k resulting in a small underspend of c£200k which to this is then added the currently unused general contingency budget £1,473k.

Another area of significant concern is the level of forecast overspending across schools though the HoF is currently asking schools to review their current projections in light of the cost savings they have and continue to make resulting from closures back in the Spring/Summer Terms and support given to them with Covid related expenditure. Schools are currently forecasting an overspend of £1,299k and given the rate at which the schools reserves have reduced over the last 2-3 years these reserves are now insufficient to cover this level of forecast overspend in full. Whilst an improvement on the July update this continues to cause problems for the Council in that a net £186k overspend and a forecast negative reserve at the end of the financial year will need to be funded by other Council budgets or from other Council reserves. This will have on-going negative consequences as set out within the report.

Appendix 1 Overall budget dashboard – September 2020  
Appendix 2 Revenue summary monitor – September 2020  
Appendix 3 Schools funding and balances  
Appendix 4 Planned movement in reserves

**Proposal**

Cabinet is asked to:

- Note the overall budget forecast position and the significant overspending areas which is predominately resulting from undelivered MTFP savings impacted by the on-going pandemic, the risks associated with this and recommend that HoS continue to focus on implementation of agreed savings as soon as is possible;
- Note the planning assumptions within the forecast position and in particular, the uncertainty around (i) the ongoing impact that Covid will have upon service areas and (ii) funding support available from Welsh Government (WG) for the remainder of the financial year;
- Note the forecast movements in reserves;
- Note the significant financial challenges facing schools and the serious impact it will likely have on the Councils other revenue budgets and reserves and that further work is in progress to review forecasts..

**Action by**

Cabinet Members / Head of Finance/ Senior Leadership Team / Corporate Management Team to:

- HoS complete their review of key demand areas which are forecasting an overspending position to take action/ mitigate where possible financial pressures in future years;
- HoS deliver agreed 2020/21 budget savings as soon as practically possible under the current situation but by end of the financial year at latest;
- Promote and ensure robust forecasting throughout all service areas.

**Timetable**

On going  
This report was prepared after consultation with:

Chief Executive  
Heads of Service  
Budget Holders  
Accountancy Staff

**Signed**

## 1 Background

- 1.1 Since the confirmation from Welsh Government (WG) of Covid-19 financial support for specific areas and greater certainty of this funding continuing to end of the financial year that has allowed the release of the general contingency budget; the September forecast shows a much-improved position of £1.7m underspend (£683k overspend in July).
- 1.2 At this stage of the year, this is a very positive position, but there is a need to be mindful that as we move into the second wave of the pandemic, there may be currently unknown costs that arise in the coming months, which will affect the current forecast.
- 1.3 The positive position reflects that the significant additional costs and loss of income in relation to Covid-19 have been funded by the WG hardship fund, and the Council has been able to manage its other expenditure within its overall budgets including staff savings and specific savings resulting from new ways of working over this period e.g. less travel, across the Council.
- 1.4 The key changes to forecasts since the July update relate to the following:

July forecast	<b>£683k</b>
Reduction in service area forecast overspend	(£864k)
Reduction in schools forecast overspend	(£119k)
Non service (inc. C Tax collection and CTRS)	<u>£94k</u>
Sub Total – service/non-service budgets	<b>(£206k)</b>
General contingency budget	(£1,473k)
<b>Overall September forecast</b>	<b>(£1,679k)</b>

- 1.5 Whilst it is evident that the Covid-19 virus and associated lockdown measures have had significant financial implications for the Council, in terms of both additional costs and loss of income the financial support in the form of the hardship fund has meant that the financial consequence to the council has been kept to a minimum. That said, these issues are in addition to the 'usual' challenges placed upon the Council budget and, in addition, the reality is that the council could be facing the consequence of the pandemic and the impact of the economic downturn for many months and years to come. The key areas likely to be affected include:
- (i) Demand led service areas and delivering agreed savings, which have been directly or indirectly affected by the current situation;
  - (ii) Impact of on-going school budget overspending;
  - (iii) Demand for council tax reduction scheme and the downturn in council tax collection rates, especially as furlough scheme ends and the ongoing economic impact of the pandemic.
- 1.6 The following section highlights the key areas contributing to the position as well as the risks embedded within these forecasts.

## 2 Key areas contributing to position

- 2.1 The following highlights the key areas that contribute to the overall Council position, with the report providing further details below:

(i) Loss of income resulting from Covid-19 (para 2.4)	£2,933k
(ii) Offset by WG funding	(£2,933k)
(iii) Increased demand across key social care areas (para 2.6)	£496k
(iv) Undelivered budget savings (para 2.14)	£1,159k

(v)	Council tax reduction scheme	(£900k)
(vi)	Collection of council tax	£500k
(vii)	Other mitigating savings (inc staff savings)	(£1,505k)
(viii)	Impact of on-going school budget overspending (section 4)	£186k
(ix)	General contingency budget	(£1,473k)

2.2 The key 'downsides' to this forecast, which have the potential to worsen the position, are

- Within children's services, additional pressure/challenges in families resulting from Covid could increase demand in the future;
- Specific costs of 'service recovery actions' are not reflected in detail in these forecasts as services continue to work these through and in current circumstances, are paused / affected by the worsening Covid-19 situation. Where not eligible for reimbursement, they will worsen forecasts and services are therefore recommended to minimise these wherever possible;
- There is an assumption that there will be full reimbursement of Covid related costs and loss of income to end of the financial year. As funding is currently fixed and demand on it grows and might grow further/faster with the worsening situation, there may not be sufficient funding to offset these costs. Therefore, there is a potential that these will negatively affect the forecast.

2.3 The forecast is unavoidably subject to some potentially significant changes as we progress through the financial year much of which will be dependent upon the longevity of the hardship funding from WG and furthermore the impact of the 'fire-break lockdown' recently announced. In the meantime, the Council continues to:

- Ensure that all costs that are being claimed are eligible as per the latest terms and conditions and ensure we know and understand the 'terms' / 'eligibility' for the hardship fund to help ensure this. The HoF distributes and discusses this with services on a regular basis and finance staff supporting services to assist with this.
- Review current levels of staff overtime and agency costs required to cover for staff who are shielding or cannot work in the current situation; ensuring they are unavoidable and therefore claimable. The situation where these are claimable are now more restricted than previously.

Key assumptions & budget variances include:

**Assumption - WG Financial Support on Expenditure:**

- The following areas of eligible spend will be reimbursed for the remainder of the financial year:
  - o Homelessness and continued support for adult social care providers;
  - o Staffing additional hours and overtime as a direct result of Covid. It is expected that these costs will reduce significantly in the second part of the year as service areas move to recovery phase;
  - o Any expenditure in relation to social distancing measures and enhanced infection control;
  - o Quarter two expenditure in relation to additional free schools meals will be reimbursed in full;
  - o Children's services – there is no further support in respect of placements costs post June even though Covid continues to have an impact;
  - o City Services - Home to school transport payment rate 100% will resume from September.

### **Assumption - WG financial Support on Loss of income due to Covid-19 - £2,933k**

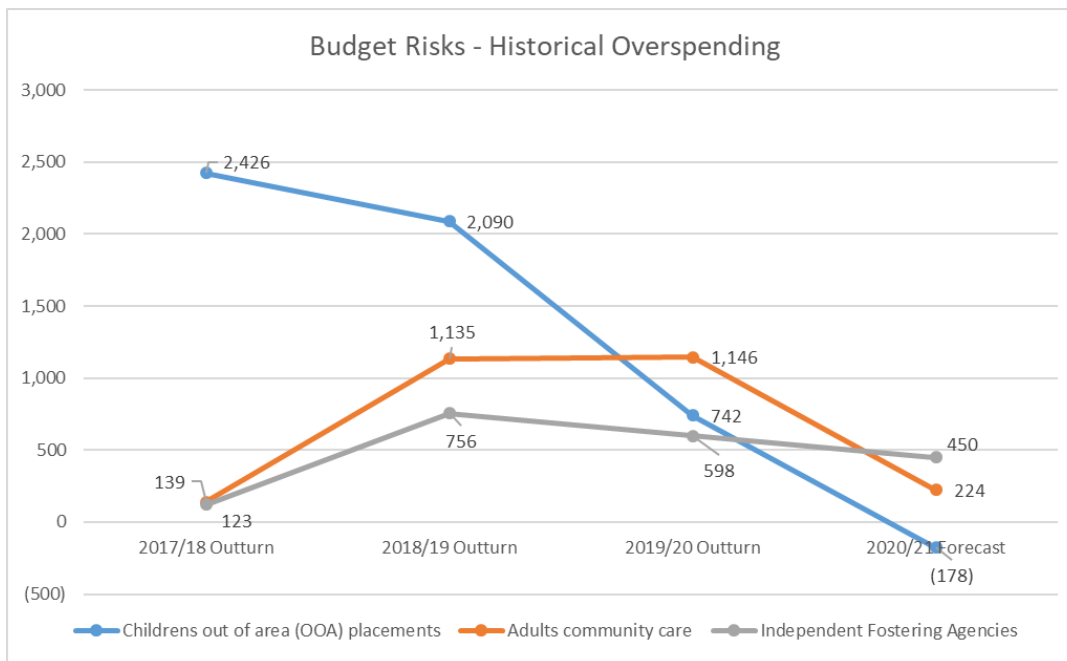
- 2.4 In addition to the increased costs, the Council is also impacted by reduced external income from activities such as car parking and adult social care. Given that some of the income will not recover immediately the forecasts have been updated to reflect the anticipated impact over the remainder of the year.
- 2.5 Although WG announced funding to compensate for lost income for the remainder of the year there is a risk that this may not be sufficient to subsidise all Welsh authorities especially given recent further national lockdown. It is currently assumed that all relevant lost income will be claimed in full from WG.

#### **Key assumptions in this area include:**

- All relevant lost income (net of reduced costs) for 2020/21 financial year will be reimbursed by WG. The councils claim for lost income in quarter 1 was in the region of £2m and quarter 2 claim has been requested from WG and is due to be submitted early November.
- The forecast includes reimbursement of some types of income that WG are withholding payment on currently i.e. planning fees. This will be reviewed by WG at the back end of the financial year and therefore there is a risk that full reimbursement may not be achieved.

### **Variance - Demand led budgets - £496k overspend**

- 2.6 The three areas of continued risk in terms of significant overspending against budget have been well documented throughout the year:
- Children's out of area placements
  - Independent fostering agencies
  - Adult community care
- 2.7 These are recurring issues and demand in most of these areas have been increasing over the last 2-3 years. Although these areas have received significant investment year on year, previously the demand continued to accelerate beyond the budget available. The 2019/20 outturn report identified that whilst the demand continued to increase in children's social care the level of investment in 2020/21 was deemed adequate as that accommodated the range that the Head of Service targeted in terms of placement numbers for the year.
- 2.8 The following chart represents the forecasts over the last 3 years in these areas. Whilst the level of overspending in these areas has reduced due to significant investment in 2020/21, independent fostering agencies continue to forecast an overspend of £450k.



- 2.9 **Children's out of area placements** – After investment of £182k, over and above inflation, in the 2020/21 budget, this budget can support 20 out of area placements. In September, the number of out of area placements are at 19, forecasted to increase to 20 at the end of the year resulting in a forecasted underspend of £178k for the year.
- 2.10 **Children's independent fostering** – Investment of £382k, over and above inflation, in 2020/21 enables the budget to support 60 placements which is reasonable given the level of increasing demand that was experienced in 2019/20. This year demand has continued to increase with placements peaking at 73 as at the end of July. A number of these placements, however, have been adopted therefore reducing the number of placements to 67 by the end of September. The expectation is that numbers will be maintained at this level until the end of the year resulting in an overall forecast overspend of £450k for the year.
- 2.11 **Adults community care** - £1.4m has been invested into the adult's community care budget for 2020/21, over and above inflation. Whilst the numbers of residential / nursing users have been reducing since the start of the year, these numbers are starting to increase. Despite the number of service users being slightly lower than at this time last year (2019/20 – 1,621 and 2020/21 – 1,544) the increase in package costs due to individual needs increasing has resulted in a forecast overspend of £224k. This also assumes that income in respect of non-residential placement income lost due to Covid will be reimbursed in full (£400k).
- 2.12 Given the inherent nature of this budget risk, numbers in this area could change throughout the year as has been the case over the last 2-3 years and this therefore represents a risk. These areas will continue to be closely monitored.
- 2.13 The emergency placements budget within children's services is also under significant pressure due to current circumstances and is forecasting an overspend of £354k. This is an area, which will continue to be closely monitored and will feature within future updates as a risk area once placement information has been received and analysed further.

**Variance - Delivery of agreed budget savings - £1,159k overspend**

- 2.13 The position on delivery of savings is shown in appendix 1. Although the performance on forecast delivery of savings has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 situation, there has been an improvement since the last update to Cabinet. The levels of projected savings are 84% of target. In addition to the £876k shortfall this represents, there remains £283k of undelivered

savings from 2019/20, which need to be addressed by children's and adult social services. Whilst the current delay is unavoidable, services will need to deliver these savings at least by the end of current financial year so that they do not carry forward as an issue into next year, alongside potentially further new savings requiring delivery. Cabinet are asked to note and approve this, which will require on-going focus by HoS and their teams.

<b>Summary by Portfolio</b>	<b>People</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Corporate</b>	<b>Non Service</b>	<b>Total</b>
2020/21 MTRP Target (£) Total	2,211	1,282	794	1,130	<b>5,417</b>
Total Savings Realised by Year End 2020/21	1,902	1,034	676	930	<b>4,541</b>
Variation to MTRP Target	-309	-248	-119	-200	<b>-876</b>
Variation % to MTRP Target	-14%	-19%	-15%	-18%	<b>-16%</b>
Undelivered Savings from Previous Years	-283	0	0	0	<b>-283</b>
Total Undelivered Savings	-592	-248	-119	-200	<b>-1,159</b>

2.14 Whilst these areas are considered as part of our future financial planning and budget process, overall they contribute £1.2m of overspending against the current year's budget and the current overall overspending of the Council's budget.

2.15 Some of the key areas and projects experiencing delays in 2020/21 due to Covid are set out below:

#### **Adult Services (£309k)**

- Reduction in Projected Cost of Accommodation Based Care and Support Services for People with Learning Disabilities - £209k
- Telecare service - £100k

#### **Regeneration, Investment and Housing (£167k)**

- Implementation of neighbourhood hubs - £137k
- Increased Revenue from Newport Norse profit share - £30k

#### **City Services (£81k)**

- Increase in fees – £24k
- Increased Recycling - Bag Sorting at Household Waste Recycling Centre - £57k

#### **People & Business Change (£119k)**

- Innovation and Transformation Offering - reduction in programme management capacity - £71k
- Digital Savings - Public Building Wi-Fi - "Community Cloud" - £48k

#### **Non-service (£200k)**

- Challenge the Council's Risk Appetite for Investments, and Undertake Larger Long-Term Investments (£10m) in Riskier Instruments - £200k

### **3 Council Tax and Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)**

3.1 In previous monitoring reports, the risk to the collection of council tax income and the potential increased cost of the CTRS has been highlighted. Following six months of collection data, there is now a bit more certainty to be able to provide an initial projection on these.

- 3.2 In terms of council tax income, collection at end of September income is c£2m down on comparative period in 2019/20, with in-year collection being down over 1.8%. This will ultimately lead to an increased arrears balance at year-end and while collection of this debt can take place over a number of years, there will be a required increased bad debt provision at year-end. The calculation of the increase in provision has led to a forecast overspend on council tax income of £500k, this will be closely monitored to assess whether there will be further impact on collection as national and local lockdowns impact on the ability of households to pay and how arrears collection processes might impact on this over the second half of the year.
- 3.3 At the end of September CTRS has seen an increase in the claims compared to the same time last year, however this has not been as significant as may be expected. However, there may be a lag between the claim and the value coming through and there may be an increase in coming months. There is also a risk that as the furlough scheme ends and lockdowns are put in place, this will cause job losses or significant reductions in income and an increase in CTRS claims will follow. The increase in CTRS has been mitigated somewhat with WG agreeing that increases in costs for quarter 1 and quarter 2 over and above 'baseline caseloads' as of February 2020 will be funded, and therefore it could realistically be assumed that increases to the end of the year will be covered. In Newport, as in previous years, we have set a prudent budget for CTRS and this has given rise to underspends for a number of years, and this is estimated to be the case in 2020/21 with a forecast underspend of £900k, after taking into account increase in demand and associated reimbursement from a baseline of February 2020 demand levels. As with council tax income, this will be monitored closely for the rest of the year.

#### 4 Schools

- 4.1 Appendix 3 highlights that overall schools are currently forecasting an overspend of £1,299k. This is based on budgets that have been approved by Governing Bodies where school reserves are positive or the current budget position in those schools who have temporary licensed deficits as they continue to work on their financial recovery plans. As with other service areas schools have assumed that eligible Covid expenditure and lost income will be reimbursed.
- 4.2 Over half of the overspend originates from the secondary sector with the primary sector following closely accounting for 35% of the overspend. A summary table is shown below:

	Reserves balance 31/03/20	In year Under/(overspend)	Reserves Balance 31/03/21
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Nursery	(36)	(89)	(125)
Primary	3,332	(452)	2,880
Secondary	(2,178)	(711)	(2,889)
Special	(5)	(47)	(52)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>(1,299)</b>	<b>(186)</b>
Assumed grant and other compensation		-	.
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>(1,299)</b>	<b>(186)</b>

- 4.3 Schools reserves have been depleted significantly over the last two years resulting in a closing balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 of £1,113k. Therefore, the forecast level of overspending across schools far outweighs the reserves that are available to offset. This causes a significant concern for the Council:



- The forecast negative reserve at 31/3/2021 year-end will need to be funded by other Council budgets or from other Council reserves. This will have on-going negative consequences;
  - The current level of in-year overspending is unlikely to be resolved after this financial year by current 'deficit recovery plans' given the size of that or deal with the large, historical deficits which have been built up. It has the real potential to negatively impact on other Council budgets and reserves for more than this one year.
- 4.4 Ten schools are anticipating a negative balance position at the end of the current financial year, one from the nursery sector, two from the primary sector, six from the secondary sector and one from the special sector. The cumulative forecast deficit for these schools is over £3.4m.
- 4.5 Even though the current projections from schools highlights a challenging position, schools are delivering through unprecedented and uncertain times, therefore this may be reflected in their forecast position. There is potential that this position will improve as the year progresses as WG have confirmed that increased cost in relation to Covid for cleaning and staffing cover will be reimbursed from the hardship fund, and schools would have benefited financially from reduced utility costs and agency costs while they were closed. The HoF is asking schools to review these forecasts given this.
- 4.6 There is also a review being undertaken within central education on SEN/ ALN funding and whether this can be directed to schools where there is a specific need. This has the potential to improve the overall schools balances position to a positive balance.
- 4.7 The Cabinet approved additional funding in the 2020/21 budget to resource some analytical and senior leadership capacity to this challenge and the current situation has delayed recruitment to date, which is unhelpful given the position, but unavoidable. Currently officers, including the Chief Education Officer and AHoF / HoF are engaged on this alongside colleagues.

## **5 Use of reserves**

- 5.1 Appendix 4 illustrates the planned movements in reserves throughout the year. Cabinet should note the opening balance as at 31st March 2020, forecasted planned transfers in/ (out) of reserves in 2020/21 and the forecast balance as at 31st March 2021. Current projections suggest that 10% of the Council reserves will be utilised by the end of the financial year, which is in line with planned and expected use. The general fund reserve is at the minimum level required (£6.5m) representing 2% of the overall net budget.
- 5.2 The above position on reserves is based on planned use of reserves. It does not include the impact of un-planned use resulting from 'making good' school reserves. As the general reserve is at the minimum level and other reserves are earmarked, any un-planned use will require the Cabinet to approve use of current earmarked reserves for these, which could affect future finances of the Council.
- 5.3 The Council has a good level of reserves but these are virtually all earmarked and committed but they do ultimately provide, in the last resort, some mitigation for overspending. If this was to happen, then future projects, which were funded from these reserves, may not be able to progress or in using other reserves, budgetary provision would need to be made to 'repay' these, creating further pressure on the Council's MTFP. There are no easy, impact free solutions through reserves but they do ultimately provide some cover in the last resort and in the short term.

## **Timetable**

Ongoing

## 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?
Risk of overspending	H	M	Regular forecasting and strong financial management  Revenue budget contingency	
Poor forecasting	M	M	Better forecasting in non-service areas where large variances occurred in 1920  Review and refinement in service areas of risk based modelling  CX/HoF setting out clear expectations	Asst. HoF  SFBP's and budget managers  CX / HoF

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Despite the uncertainty that the current pandemic presents, strong financial management continues to underpin services and medium term financial planning.

## Options Available and considered

In terms of the overall forecast, position and financial management there are no options – the Council needs to operate within its overall budget. Although a forecast underspend is anticipated there remains a risk that with the second wave of the pandemic there may be currently unknown costs that arise in the coming months, which will affect the current forecast. Furthermore, with the WG hardship fund likely to become under further strain to support local authorities there is a need to carefully manage key demand areas/ areas of significant overspending and identifying mitigation for these wherever possible. Schools must also take action to ensure they manage within available funding as the current forecast overspends takes the schools into negative reserve, though more work is required to refine these and ensure the cost savings within schools in the current year are fully reflected in figures.

## Preferred Option and Why

CMT take a targeted approach to reducing spend across service areas whilst ensuring management of key budgets and risks.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Since receiving confirmation from WG that financial support would continue to the end of the year the 2020/21 revenue budget forecast position has improved. This has allowed the release of the general contingency budget and that represents the vast majority of the 'bottom line' underspend. The Council is well placed going into the second half of this most challenging financial year.

Whilst the overall position is positive, there remain issues requiring on-going review and focus to improve, in particular

- the delivery of agreed savings, which although it has improved this month, continues to be relatively significant. Particular focus is required to improve this further and provide the best 'platform' to go into the 2021/23 financial year as any new savings required for that year would be in addition to any non-delivered one's and increase our challenges
- further work is needed to refine school budget monitoring and ALN/SEN funding

In addition, Council Tax collection is an on-going potential problem and could be significant if the collection of this income does not improve. Although the first six months data has been used to reflect collection rates this will continue to be carefully monitored to assess whether there is a further impact on collection as national and local lockdowns impact on the ability of households to pay.

### **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no legal issues arising from the report.

### **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The report notes the forecast financial position of the Council. Welsh Government will continue to reimburse the Council for the remainder of the financial year for additional staff hours and overtime incurred as a direct result of Covid-19. Service areas continue to review current levels of staff overtime and agency costs required to cover for staff who are shielding or cannot work in the current situation; ensuring they are unavoidable and therefore claimable. The situations where these are claimable are now more restricted than previously.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to apply the five ways of working to any financial planning, which will address short-term priorities with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs. This report gives an early indication of the revenue forecast position and the issues affecting financial management during 2020/21 and notes that any future reductions in funding will need to reflect and be consistent with the five ways of working. Sound financial planning and monitoring by the Council support the well-being goal of a Prosperous Wales.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

#### **Local issues**

N/A

#### **Scrutiny Committees**

N/A

#### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

N/A

#### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

N/A

#### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This update is against a backdrop of prolonged pressure on public services as a combination of reduced income, rising demands on services, increased expectations, compliance with new legislation and the

increasing costs of running services, which has seen the delivery of significant budget savings over the last five years. Any future reductions in funding will need to reflect and be consistent with the five principles underpinning the Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 forms an integral part of the financial management of the Council and the MTFP process of which the outturn of the Council is an essential part. Analysis and review of reserves are an important aspect on the future generations and the Head of Finance reviews and assesses the robustness and adequacy of these reserves as part of this report.

### **Consultation**

N/A

### **Background Papers**

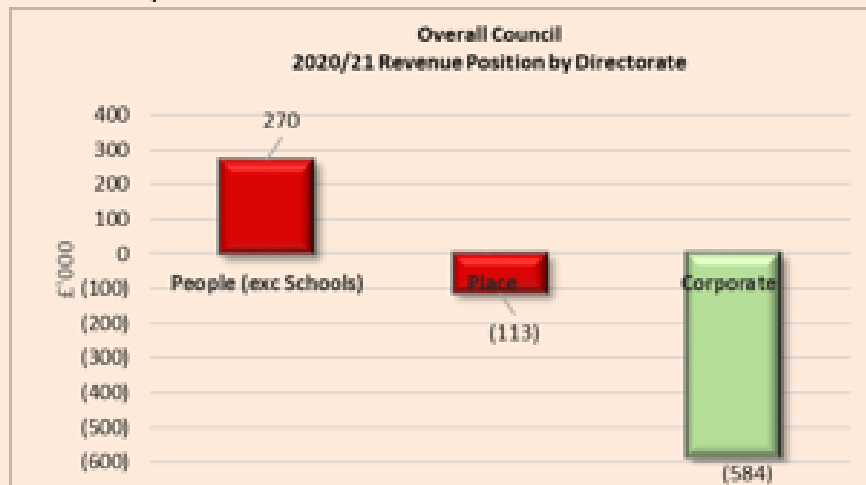
Dated:

## Appendix 1

## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

Position by Directorate	Current Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
People (exc Schools)	90,434	90,704	270
Place	34,516	34,403	(113)
Corporate	19,105	18,521	(584)
<b>Service Area Budget</b>	<b>144,055</b>	<b>143,628</b>	<b>(427)</b>
Schools	106,527	107,827	1,299
<b>Service Area Budget (inc Schools)</b>	<b>250,583</b>	<b>251,455</b>	<b>872</b>
Schools - transfer from reserve	0	(1,113)	(1,113)
Non Service	48,215	48,250	35
<b>Total Budget (excluding contingency)</b>	<b>298,797</b>	<b>298,592</b>	<b>(205)</b>
General Contingency	1,473	0	(1,473)
<b>Total Budget (including contingency)</b>	<b>300,270</b>	<b>298,592</b>	<b>(1,679)</b>

Detailed explanations can be found within service area dashboards



### Undelivered Savings:

- 2020/21 - £876k
- Previous years - £283k
- Overall, undelivered savings are resulting in forecast overspend against budget of £1.2m. This is predominantly due to delays in implementation due to Covid.

### Position Summary

- Revenue outturn reports an underspend of £1,679k which includes an underspend against the general contingency of £1.4m.
- In addition to the general contingency, service area forecasts have improved, £400k of which is due to the delivery of MTFP savings anticipated by the end of the year.
- The forecast has also benefitted from some one off budget savings this year:
  - Vacancy savings are significant due to delays in recruitment in the current situation
  - A number of staffing costs e.g. overtime claimed under the hardship fund which may have ordinarily been incurred
  - Loss of income assumed to be reimbursed although some areas may have seen a downturn in income levels despite Covid
  - Far less miscellaneous expenditure being incurred that would have been ordinary.
- Although the overall position is positive there are key budget issues in a number of areas which need to be addressed:
  - Undelivered 20/21 and prior year savings (£1,159k)
  - Increased demand for independent fostering agencies (£450k)
  - Impact of school budget overspending (£186k)
- It is important to note that the future of the pandemic and the likely financial consequence of further local and national lockdowns is unknown at this time and has the potential to affect forecasts should the WG hardship fund be insufficient to cover.

## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

### Key Assumptions and Risks - Covid

#### WG Financial support

- Forecasts assume that all eligible Covid related spend incurred for the remainder of the financial year will be reimbursed by the WG hardship fund; Significant areas which will be claiming from this fund include continued homelessness costs, continued support of Adult Social Care; cover cost of overtime and agency for shielding and covid related sickness; and additional cost of cleaning in schools and social distancing measures.
- Whilst it is assumed that lost income will also be reimbursed by WG the value of this is yet to be confirmed as the forecast includes reimbursement of some types of income that WG are withholding on currently, i.e. planning fees. This will continue to be reviewed as there is a risk that full reimbursement will not be achieved.
- Key areas of lost income include:
  - Adult Social Care – Charges for externally provided residential care (£234k)
  - RIH – Planning income; Commercial & Industrial property income; & Norse profit share (£118k)
  - City Services – Bus shelter advertising; Bus station departures; car parking (£587k)
  - Corporate (registrars) – drop in ceremony income (£137k)
- Additional cleaning costs in schools from September expected to have nil impact on the overall Education position.

### Other Key Assumptions and Risks

- Vast majority of schools have spent more than their funding in 20/21;
- The forecast overspending in schools still outweighs the level of reserves available to fund which now sees schools with a negative reserve. Schools are currently forecasting on overspend of £1.3m against an available reserve of £1.1m resulting in a net overspend impact on the council of £0.2m – this is a serious concern for the Council and something that requires immediate attention.

In summary the forecast position is made up of the following:

MTFP undelivered savings 2020/21	£1,159k
Key demand led areas across social care	£496k
Schools overspend	£186k
Staffing and other service area variances	(£1,647k)
Council tax collection and CTRS	(£400k)
General contingency	(£1,473k)
Forecast position	(£1,679k)

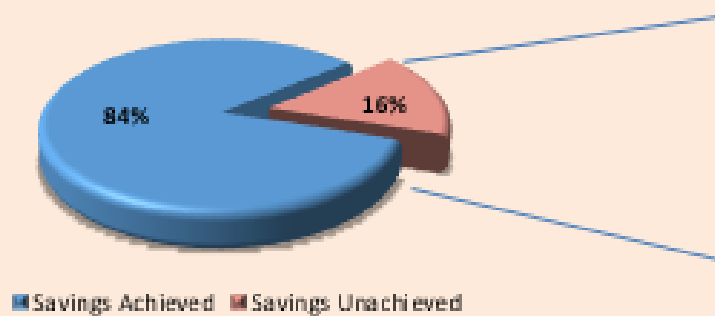
## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

### Staff Forecasts

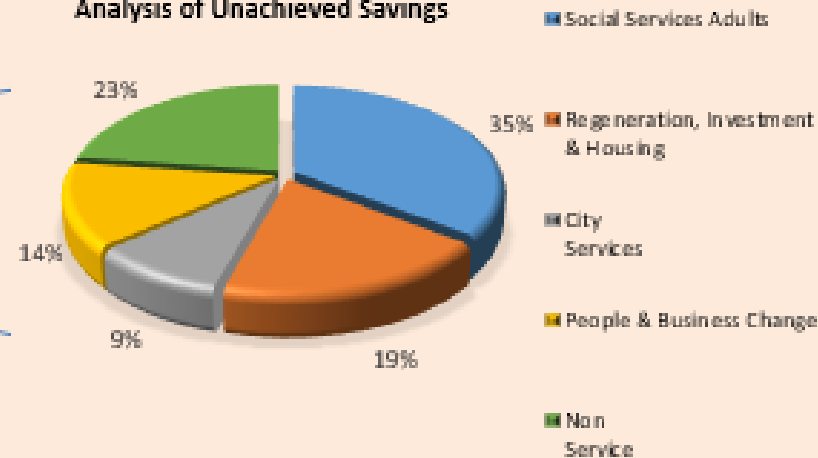
Overall Staffing	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Budget (£'000)	0	59,926	60,116	60,201	59,425	59,431	59,431	59,431	59,431	59,431	59,431	59,431
Forecast (£'000)	0	59,958	59,157	58,838	57,875	57,026	57,026	57,026	57,026	57,026	57,026	57,026
Variance (£'000)	0	32	(959)	(1,362)	(1,550)	(1,405)	(1,405)	(1,405)	(1,405)	(1,405)	(1,405)	(1,405)

- Whilst there are a number of vacancies across the council and recruitment into these non essential posts has been somewhat delayed these savings are being offset in part by an increased requirement for additional staff time and agency staff.

### 2020/21 Delivery of Savings (Forecast)



### Analysis of Unachieved Savings



- The first chart shows that 84% of the total savings are forecast for full delivery in 2020/21;
- The second chart illustrates the areas where savings are forecast not to be delivered (16% of overall target);
- The delivery of savings in 2020/21 has been significantly affected by the ongoing pandemic and the resulting overspends against budget have been reflected within the forecast;
- In addition to the £876k undelivered savings in 20/21 there remains £283k of undelivered savings from previous years within social care.

Overall Summary by Directorate	People	Place	Corporate	Non Service	Total
2020/21 MTRP Target (£) Total	2,211	1,282	794	1,130	5,417
Total Savings Realised by Year End 2020/21	1,902	1,034	676	930	4,541
Variation to MTRP Target	-309	-248	-119	-200	-876
Variation % to MTRP Target	-14%	-19%	-15%	-18%	-16%

## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

	Annual Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Graph Reference
<b>Risk Based Areas</b>				
<b>Children &amp; Young People</b>				
Independent Fostering Agencies	2,382	2,832	450	i
Out of Area Residential	3,009	2,831	(178)	ii
In House Fostering	3,479	3,319	(160)	
Leaving Care	672	935	263	
Legal fees	950	950	0	
In House Residential	2,190	2,433	243	
Emergency Placements	0	354	354	
<b>Adult &amp; Community Services</b>				
Community Care - Residential	21,300	21,116	(184)	
Community Care - Supported Living	10,499	11,035	536	iii
Community Care - Non Residential	11,317	11,317	0	iv
Community Care Income - Residential & Non Residential	(8,096)	(8,139)	(43)	
<b>Education</b>				
SEN Out of County - Local Authority	2,425	933	(1,492)	v
SEN Out of County - Independents	2,092	2,824	732	v
SEN Local Provision Development	621	1,453	832	
SEN Transport	1,674	1,674	0	
Special Home to School Transport	815	815	0	
Bridge Achievement Centre	1,190	1,190	0	
<b>Regeneration, Investment &amp; Housing</b>				
Homelessness - B&B Costs	746	1,175	429	
Commercial & Industrial Properties Income	(1,460)	(1,260)	200	
<b>City Services</b>				
Commercial/ Asbestos Income	(1,245)	(1,214)	31	
Home to School Transport - Primary	989	825	(164)	
Home to School Transport - Secondary	1,171	1,078	(93)	
Home to School Transport - College	117	116	(1)	
OPE - Fines Income	(691)	(532)	159	
Burial fees	(561)	(580)	(19)	
Car parking income	(892)	(873)	19	
<b>Law &amp; Regulation</b>				
Licensing - Hackney carriages / private hire	(361)	(457)	(96)	
<b>Total Net Budget</b>	<b>54,331</b>	<b>56,149</b>	<b>1,818</b>	

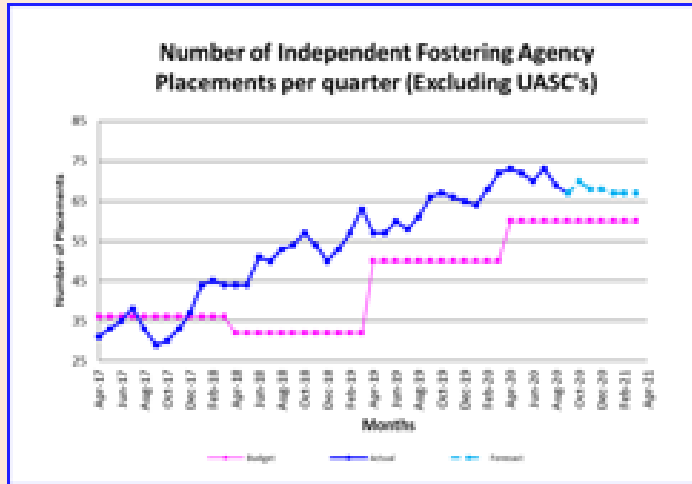
- In 2020/21, there were over 25 budget areas identified as having the potential to be high risk or highly volatile. This list was reviewed on an on-going basis
- Although some of these areas have come in underspent against budget, they have continued to be monitored given the potential to have a significant impact
- There are six budget 'hotspot' areas within the risk based monitoring which demonstrate the significant financial impact and risk that only a small number of areas pose to the financial position of the Authority (graph ref i – v)
- The figures here do not reflect the Covid related loss of income being claimed from WG to highlight the risk in these areas.



## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

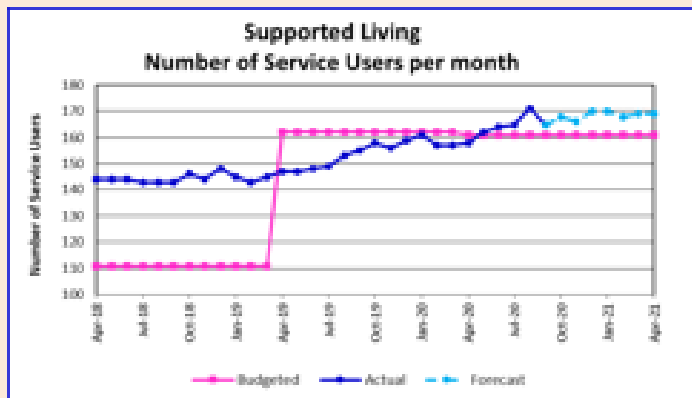
### Risk Based Monitoring graphs

#### (i) Independent Fostering Agencies



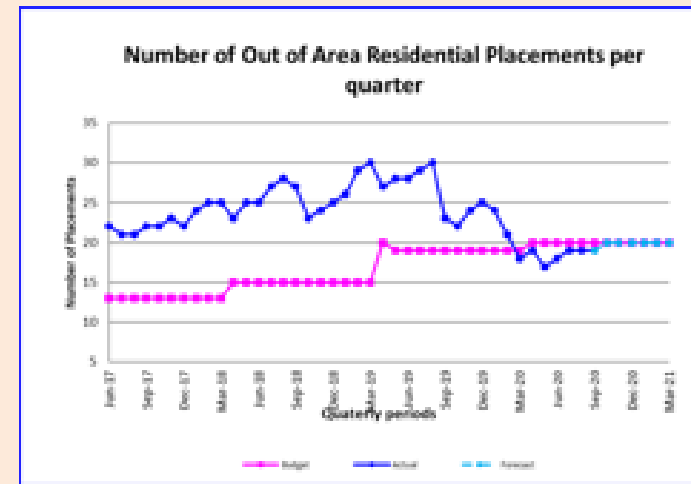
- The 2020/21 budget can afford 60 placements at an average cost. The number of placements reduced to 67 by the end of September and are forecast remain consistent to the end of the year, giving an overall overspend in this area of £450k.

#### (iii) Community Care – Supported Living



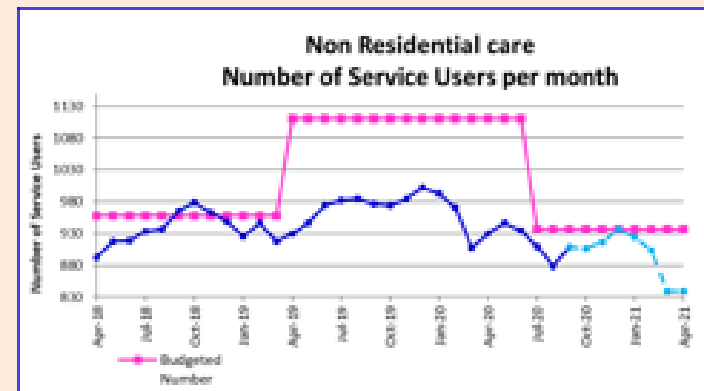
- Budget can afford 161 placements at an average cost. Currently numbers are at 165 with almost a third of costs being higher than the average resulting in an overspend of £536k.

#### (ii) Out of Area (OOA) Residential Placements



- Budget can afford 20 placements at an average cost. The service anticipates the number of placements being 20 at the end of the financial year resulting in an underspend of £178k.

#### (iv) Community Care – Non Residential

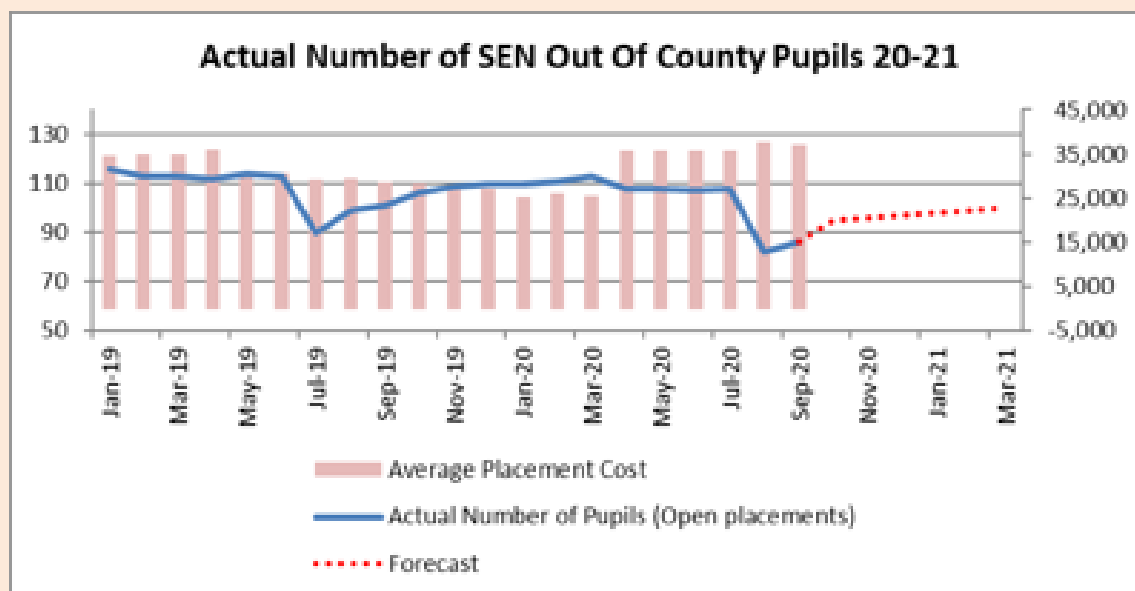


- Budget can afford 937 users per month at an average cost. Although over a quarter of users exceed this cost per week the numbers of users are lower. The net underspend assumes lost income of £400k being reimbursed by WG.

## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

### Risk Based Monitoring graphs

(v) SEN Out of County Placements – Local Authority and Independent



- SEN OOC budget can accommodate 125 placements at an average cost of £36k. In September there are 86 open, 1 confirmed placement due to start plus 8 potential new placements which have been included within the forecast. The forecast highlights an anticipated underspend against budget for local authority of £1.5m and an overspend of £700km for independent. Therefore no budgetary pressure currently exists within current forecasts.
- Placements ranging between £20k and £30k account for 28% of the total number of placements

## Budget Monitoring Position – September 2020

### Schools

Overall, schools are anticipating an overspend of £1,299k with no assumed grant or other compensation being received throughout the year. Over half of this overspend originates from the secondary sector with primary's accounting for 35%. This pattern is consistent with previous years, flagged as unsustainable and has now resulted in schools balances becoming negative.

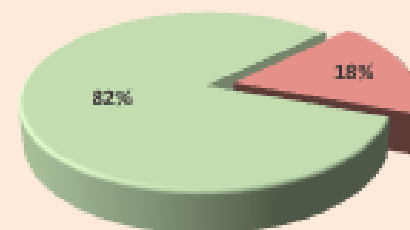
Schools reserves are no longer available to cover the full extent of the forecast overspend. The forecast by sector is shown below;

- Nursery £89k overspend (2 out of 2 nurseries reporting an in-year overspend position)
- Primary £452k overspend (22 out of 43 schools reporting an in-year overspend position)
- Secondary £711k overspend (4 out of 9 schools reporting an in-year overspend position)
- Special £47k overspend (1 out of 2 special schools reporting an in-year overspend position)

Schools forecasting deficit reserves at YE	August
Kimberley Nursery	(129)
High Cross Primary	(55)
St Woolos Primary	(34)
Newport High	(133)
Caerleon Comprehensive	(1,053)
Llisswenny High	(733)
Llanwern High	(681)
St Julians	(500)
Malpas CIW Primary	(16)
Maes Ebbw	(103)
<b>Total Net Budget</b>	<b>(3,437)</b>

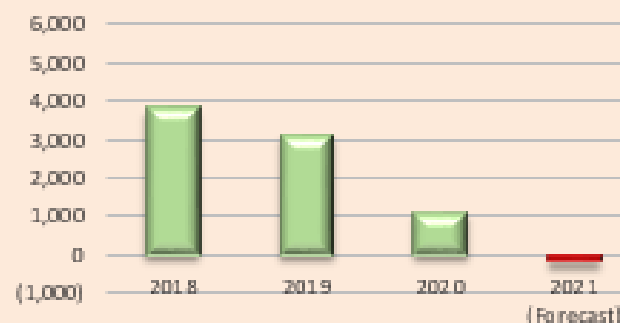
Schools are forecasting an in year overspend of £1,299k therefore reducing school balances to a negative balance as there remains only £1,113k in school reserves as at the end of March 2020. This is therefore forecast to cause a pressure of £186k for the Council. This is a significant issue which requires continued action.

Proportion of Schools Forecasting Deficit as at 31st March 2021



■ Schools in surplus as at 31st March 2021  
 ■ Schools in deficit as at 31st March 2021

Balances held by Schools as at 31st March



## APPENDIX 2 Revenue Summary Monitor – September 2020

Summary Revenue Budget 2020/21	April 20	Current	Projection	(Under) /
	Approved	Budget		Over
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>People</b>				
Children and Young People	25,904	25,855	26,727	872
Adult and Community Services	49,261	49,215	48,895	(320)
Education	15,365	15,364	15,082	(282)
Schools	106,527	106,527	107,827	1,299
	<b>197,057</b>	<b>196,962</b>	<b>198,531</b>	<b>1,569</b>
<b>Place</b>				
Regeneration, Investment and Housing	9,910	9,892	10,093	201
City Services	24,673	24,624	24,310	(314)
	<b>34,583</b>	<b>34,516</b>	<b>34,403</b>	<b>(113)</b>
<b>Chief Executive</b>				
Directorate	516	515	291	(225)
Finance	3,434	3,432	3,431	(1)
People and Business Change	8,005	7,998	7,735	(263)
Law and Regulation	7,183	7,159	7,064	(95)
	<b>19,138</b>	<b>19,105</b>	<b>18,521</b>	<b>(584)</b>
<b>Capital Financing Costs and Interest</b>				
Capital Financing Costs and Interest (Non-PFI)	14,462	14,462	14,462	-
Public Finance Initiative (PFI)	8,854	8,854	8,854	0
	<b>23,316</b>	<b>23,316</b>	<b>23,316</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Sub Total - Service/Capital Financing</b>	<b>274,094</b>	<b>273,899</b>	<b>274,771</b>	<b>872</b>
<b>Contingency Provisions</b>				
General Contingency	1,473	1,473	-	(1,473)
Centralised Insurance Fund	581	581	581	0
Non Departmental Costs	-	-	-	-
Other Income and Expenditure	683	879	1,532	653
	<b>2,737</b>	<b>2,932</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>(820)</b>
<b>Levies / Other</b>				
Discontinued Operations - pensions	1,567	1,567	1,361	(206)
Discontinued Operations - Ex Gratia Payments	2	2	2	0
Levies - Drainage Board, Fire service etc	8,704	8,704	8,692	(12)
CTAX Benefit Rebates	13,465	13,465	12,565	(900)
Extraordinary Items	-	-	-	-
	<b>23,738</b>	<b>23,738</b>	<b>22,620</b>	<b>(1,118)</b>
<b>Transfers To/From Reserves</b>				
Base budget - Planned Transfers to/(from) Reserves	(299)	(299)	(299)	(0)
Earmarked reserves: Transfer to/(from) Capital	-	-	-	-
Earmarked reserves: Transfer to/(from) Schools	-	-	(1,113)	(1,113)
Earmarked reserves: Transfer to/(from) Schools Redundancy	-	-	-	-
Invest to Save Reserve	-	-	1,679	1,679
Invest to Save Reserve (from)	-	-	(1,679)	(1,679)
	<b>(299)</b>	<b>(299)</b>	<b>(1,412)</b>	<b>(1,113)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300,270</b>	<b>300,270</b>	<b>298,091</b>	<b>(2,179)</b>
<b>Funded By</b>				
WG funding (RSG and NNDR)	(228,077)	(228,077)	(228,077)	-
Council Tax	(72,193)	(72,193)	(72,193)	-
Council Tax Surplus	-	-	500	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,679)</b>	<b>(1,679)</b>

## APPENDIX 3 – Schools Funding and Balances

School Name	Opening Reserve 20/21	ISB Allocation (inc Post 16)	In Year U/(O) Spend September 20	Projected Closing Reserve 31/03/21
	£	£	£	£
Bassaleg School	218,531	7,818,716	(192,858)	25,673
Newport High	(233,397)	5,347,446	100,059	(133,338)
Caerleon Comprehensive	(1,064,561)	6,912,566	11,262	(1,053,299)
The John Frost School	76,130	6,660,840	(42,468)	33,662
Llanwern High	(290,421)	4,641,017	(390,366)	(680,787)
Lliswerry High	(754,031)	4,729,788	21,377	(732,654)
St Josephs R.C. High	90,450	6,240,112	61,548	151,998
St Julians School	(180,821)	7,460,513	(319,351)	(500,172)
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	(39,385)	2,072,009	39,517	132
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(2,177,504)</b>	<b>51,883,007</b>	<b>(711,280)</b>	<b>(2,888,784)</b>
Alway Primary	60,116	1,610,630	(26,416)	33,700
Caerleon Lodge Hill	96,832	1,201,596	13,603	110,435
Charles Williams CIW	224,970	1,818,335	(50,963)	174,007
Clytha Primary	16,709	795,869	4,854	21,563
Crindau Primary	147,659	1,378,398	(40,574)	107,085
Eveswell Primary	242,539	1,501,889	(55,956)	186,583
Gaer Primary	81,402	1,694,154	41,597	122,999
Glan Usk Primary	36,470	2,136,355	39,966	76,436
Glan Llyn Primary	53,135	943,720	14,649	67,784
Glasllwch Primary	73,001	781,116	(62,160)	10,841
High Cross Primary	(42,257)	910,950	(12,925)	(55,182)
Jubilee Park	(8,018)	1,209,463	18,496	10,478
Langstone Primary	104,577	1,113,506	(66,153)	38,424
Llanmartin Primary	21,641	761,269	3,745	25,386
Lliswerry Primary	117,548	2,090,994	7,934	125,482
Maesglas Primary	(18,822)	1,021,309	29,988	11,166
Maindee Primary	66,774	1,787,176	24,422	91,196
Malpas CIW Primary	63,613	1,154,702	(79,666)	(16,053)
Malpas Court Primary	46,823	1,200,996	(37,978)	8,845
Malpas Park Primary	41,131	856,916	48,395	89,526
Marshfield Primary	65,929	1,384,485	(41,718)	24,211
Millbrook Primary	82,741	1,064,677	(25,683)	57,058
Milton Primary	24,777	1,615,390	(18,172)	6,605
Monnow Primary	161,652	1,517,654	(78,476)	83,176
Mount Pleasant	34,117	875,251	(10,794)	23,323
Pentrepoeth Primary	51,847	1,536,928	(16,893)	34,954
Pillgwenlly Primary	121,114	2,107,157	(16,859)	104,255
Ringland Primary	49,111	1,071,328	(46,253)	2,858
Rogerstone Primary	(32,929)	1,926,637	63,230	30,301
Somerton Primary	144,338	662,946	(74,239)	70,099
St Andrews Primary	52,774	2,354,850	40,637	93,411
St Davids RC Primary	67,457	775,183	2,082	69,539
St Gabriels RC Primary	34,230	694,208	22,045	56,275
St Josephs RC Primary	33,472	705,062	3,873	37,345
St Julians Primary	309,759	2,163,980	(90,503)	219,256
St Marys Rc Primary	58,503	1,335,681	21,474	79,977
St Michaels RC Primary	27,137	761,344	(5,624)	21,513
St Patricks RC Primary	48,321	725,678	45	48,366
St Woolos Primary	(47,163)	1,132,978	13,015	(34,148)
Tredegar Park Primary	203,343	1,527,984	42,282	245,625
Ysgol Gym Bro Teyrnon	167,308	748,924	(22,021)	145,287
Ysgol Gym Casnewydd	148,725	1,256,012	12,157	160,882
Ysgol Gym Ifor Hael	99,385	688,626	(40,422)	58,963
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,331,795</b>	<b>54,602,306</b>	<b>(451,959)</b>	<b>2,879,836</b>
Fairoak Nursery	29,788	164,168	(26,151)	3,637
Kimberley Nursery	(66,244)	240,738	(62,654)	(128,898)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(36,456)</b>	<b>404,906</b>	<b>(88,805)</b>	<b>(125,261)</b>
Maes Ebbw	(117,594)	3,432,192	15,096	(102,498)
Bryn Derw	112,917	1,574,763	(62,332)	50,585
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(4,677)</b>	<b>5,006,955</b>	<b>(47,236)</b>	<b>(51,913)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,113,157</b>	<b>111,897,174</b>	<b>(1,299,280)</b>	<b>(186,123)</b>

## APPENDIX 4 – Planned Movement in Reserves

Reserve	Balance at 31-Mar-20	Planned Movements in Year												Balance at 31-Mar-21
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Fund:	(6,500)													(6,500)
Balances held by schools for future use	(1,113)												1,299	186
<b>Earmarked Reserves:</b>														
Music Service	(127)													(127)
Pay Reserve	(1,418)													(1,418)
Insurance Reserve	(664)													(664)
MMI Insurance Reserve	(602)													(602)
Health & Safety	(16)													(16)
Education Achievement Service	(92)													(92)
Schools Redundancies	(725)													(725)
General Investment Risk Reserve	(658)													(658)
European Funding 12A & CFW	(394)													(394)
Micro Bus	(9)												9	-
EU S Redundancies	(78)													(78)
<b>SUB TOTAL - RISK RESERVES</b>	<b>(4,783)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>(4,774)</b>
Capital Expenditure	(5,344)												35	(5,309)
Invest to Save	(9,938)												1,979	(7,959)
Super Connected Cities	(426)												128	(298)
Landfill (fines reserve)	(332)													(332)
School Reserve Other	(182)													(182)
School Works	(452)													(452)
Investment Reserve	(342)												342	-
Usable Capital Receipts	(8,259)												3,098	(5,161)
Streetscene Manager Support	(117)												117	-
<b>SUB TOTAL - ENABLING RESERVES</b>	<b>(25,391)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,699</b>	<b>(19,692)</b>
Municipal Elections	(130)												(36)	(166)
Local Development Plan	(625)												(29)	(654)
Strategic Development Plan **NEW	-												(55)	(55)
Glan Usk PFI	(1,607)												4	(1,603)
Southern Distributor Road PFI	(40,691)												299	(40,392)
Loan modification technical reserve (IFRS 9)	(1,085)												175	(910)
Building Control	(104)												10	(94)
<b>SUB TOTAL - SMOOTHING RESERVES</b>	<b>(44,242)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>(43,874)</b>

		Planned Movements in Year												
Reserve	Balance at 31-Mar-20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Balance at 31-Mar-21
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Works of art	(21)													(21)
Theatre & Arts Centre	(232)													(232)
Cymorth Income	(25)													(25)
Blaen Y Pant	(18)												8	(10)
Homelessness Prevention	(38)													(38)
Environmental Health - Improve Air Quality	(49)												49	-
Refurbishment of a Children / Older People Homes	(41)												41	-
Apprenticeship Scheme	(29)													(29)
City Economic Development Reserve	(90)													(90)
Welsh Language Standards	(169)													(169)
Port Health	(16)													(16)
CRM	(244)												244	-
Financial System Upgrade	(400)												400	-
Events	(216)													(216)
WSP Reserve	(2,037)													(2,037)
Voluntary Sector Grants	(49)												12	(37)
Bus Wifi	(17)												17	-
Bus Subsidy	(15)												4	(11)
Feasibility Reserve	(117)													(117)
IT Development	(53)												53	-
Leisure Delivery Plan	(103)												-	(103)
Chartist Tower	(256)												256	-
Joint Committee City Deal Reserve	(626)													(626)
NEW - Civil Parking Enforcement	(175)												175	-
<b>SUB TOTAL - OTHER RESERVES</b>	<b>(5,036)</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1,259</b>	<b>(3,777)</b>
Forecast Overspend - July 2020														-
<b>RESERVES TOTAL</b>	<b>(87,065)</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>8,634</b>	<b>(78,431)</b>

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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

**Date:** 11 November 2020

**Subject** **Capital Programme Monitoring and Additions – September 2020**

**Purpose** To submit to Cabinet for approval, requests for capital projects to be added to the Council's Capital Programme.

To update Cabinet on the current available capital resources ('headroom').

To update Cabinet on current spending against the Capital Programme schemes highlighting the forecast outturn position for the programme as at September 2020

**Author** Chief Accountant & Assistant Head of Finance

**Ward** All

**Summary** The Council has an extensive capital programme, investing across the authority in areas such as schools, heritage assets, energy efficiency schemes, invest to save programmes and investing in the regeneration of the city centre. This report builds on the investment already approved by Capital with an additional £2,445k being added to the programme to further enable the delivery of the Councils Corporate Plan priorities.

The September 2020 monitoring position highlights the following:

- £475k net underspend on completed projects.
- £3,808k slippage from 2020/21 into 2021/22
- Additions to the capital programme of £2,445k, taking the overall programme 2019/20 to 2024/25 to £206,723k.

### Proposal

1. **To approve the additions and amendments to the Capital Programme requested in the report (Appendix A)**
2. **To approve slippage of £3,808k into 2021/22**
3. **To note the available remaining capital resources ('headroom') until 2022/23**
4. **To note the capital expenditure forecast position as at September 2020**
5. **To note the balance of and approve the allocation of in-year capital receipts including the use of £2.030m receipts for to reduction of payments for loan premiums.**

**Action by** Assistant Head of Finance

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Heads of Service
- Accountancy teams for relevant service areas
- Relevant Service Area Project Managers
- NORSE Property Services

**Signed**

## Background

The Council has set an extensive capital programme that was extended to 7 years to reflect projects whose completion date continues beyond the original 5-year programme. Cabinet have received monitoring updates throughout the financial year and the capital programme has been updated to reflect changes as they are received i.e. additions, slippage (moving budget into future years) and any amendments as detailed in Appendix A

The changes to the programme made throughout the financial year are shown in the table below, the detail of which is shown in Appendix B.

Report	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£000's
	Outturn	Outturn	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget*	Budget*	
<b>Outturn Report (Outturn 19/20)</b>	29,466	31,358	64,544	48,474	13,868	11,517	2,349	<b>201,578</b>
<b>August Report (July Forecast)</b>	29,466	31,360	39,826	49,601	44,382	9,623	140	<b>204,398</b>
<b>This Report (Sept Forecast)</b>	29,466	31,360	36,450	54,615	45,069	9,623	140	<b>206,723</b>

\*The budgets included within 2023-2025 reflect the total budgets to complete schemes that were approved in the original 5-year programme but spanned into these future years. This includes budgets for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Band B programme which end in 2024/25, Welsh Medium School Grant and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal funding commitments which extend beyond even these future years.

The budget changes and their associated funding are detailed in Appendix A and are requested to be approved by Cabinet. A summary of the latest additions to the programme are detailed below:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Value £'000</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Note</b>
21st Century Schools	1,912	£500k Borrowing / £1,412k S106 monies	To increase funding envelope for YGGIC
Milton IT replacement	26	Service Area Repayment	To invest in IT Equipment for School
Sorrell Drive Repairs+Glasllwch Kickwall Installation	27	S106 monies	To refurbish the existing MUGA at Sorrel Drive and to install play facilities alongside the Glasllwch Play Area
Marshfield Community Centre	16	S106 monies	To allow for Improvement to Marsh field village Sports Pitches

Ultra Low Emission Grants	205	100% WG Grant	To purchase one new Electric Powered RCV + Charging Infrastructure
Flood Recovery works - Tredegar Park	100	100% WG Grant	Permanent repair of scour damage to reservoir embankment caused by River Ebbw
TRI Thematic Funding - Covid-19	109	100% WG Grant	To support businesses to survive/ continue trading through the winter months and Covid
Kingsway car park operation	25	Invest to Save	Expansion of car park services to take on the operation of Kingsway Car Park
Increased Recycling	25	Invest to Save	Bag Sorting at Household Waste Recycling Centre
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,445</b>		

The slippage of £3,808k into future years follows the extensive re-profiling that took place in the previous reporting period. The slippage is across various schemes as their delivery is monitored and reviewed. The main areas of slippage in this report relate to regeneration schemes at the information station and indoor market which are now likely to continue into the 2021/22 financial year.

### Update on available capital resources ('headroom')

Since February 2018 the Council has been working within a framework agreed which maximises capital expenditure whilst keeping within the level of capital resources and planned borrowing funded within the Council's Medium Term Financial Projections (MTFP). The framework agreed that:

- Funding from sources other than borrowing needs to be maximised, by securing grant funding whenever possible and, maximising capital receipts
- Regeneration schemes would be funded from ring-fencing the capital expenditure reserve only and Joint Venture funds. Other kinds of support through making of loans etc. would then be considered to support schemes, where it was needed and appropriate, in particular taking account of existing loans already confirmed/approved and the risk profile this represents at any point in time.
- Any change and efficiency schemes or schemes which save money requiring capital expenditure would be funded by netting off the savings achieved
- Schemes and projects which generate new sources of income would need to fund any capital expenditure associated with those schemes.

The framework seeks to limit the revenue pressures resulting from increased borrowing as far as possible whilst creating capacity to generate capital resources for use.

As we approach the end of the current 5 year programme and are in the process of updating the Medium Term Financial Plan the affordability of the borrowing headroom and future cost of capital needs to be reviewed. While there are future budget pressures included in the MTFP for the borrowing headroom below, the MTFP has a budget gap and therefore, in reality, is currently not funded. Therefore if it is identified the headroom can be reduced as alternative funding is realised i.e. specific grants, this will have a positive impact in reducing the future MTFP gap.

The headroom is made up of:

- (1) 'currently available capital resources' represented by unallocated capital reserves, capital receipts and confirmed general/specific capital grants; plus

- (2) 'future planned capital resources' represented by future new borrowing, coming from the future planned investment into the capital financing revenue budget and forecasted capital receipts. As previously stated, this is unfunded as it is included within the future MTFP which is not balanced.

The latter resources can only be confirmed and committed once in the revenue budget in terms of borrowing costs and received in terms of capital receipts / general grants. The framework, subsequently approved at Council agreed the following:

The table below gives the latest position on the available headroom as at September 2020 and includes future planned revenue budget investment for new borrowing up until 2022/23 – the same timescales as the revenue MTFP.

<b>Capital Headroom to 2022/23</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Confirmed and already available:	
Unallocated Capital Expenditure Reserve	5,270
Unallocated Capital Receipts*	2,030
Unallocated JV monies	1,096
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,396</b>
Not Yet Confirmed / Available:	
Uncommitted Borrowing Headroom	12,416
Forecast Capital Receipts**	448
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,864</b>
<b>Total Available Headroom</b>	<b>21,260</b>

\*Usable Capital Receipts only include the amount that has actually been received by the authority through disposals.

\*\* The forecast for future capital receipts is an indicative figures only. This will change throughout the year as there is more certainty on the capital disposals.

\*\*\* This excludes Joint Venture funds, currently £1,096k

The level of available capital resources is very small relative to the demand for resources, though it represents further capital expenditure over and above the existing large capital programme of nearly £206.7m. A capital strategy has been approved by full Council in their February 2020 meeting which outlined the long-term challenge the Council faces in regards to funding future new capital expenditure and the impact and affordability of this on the Council's revenue budget. The strategy in going forward due to be approved in February 2021 will set out an approach to manage this challenge.

## **2020/21 Capital Expenditure Position as at September 2020**

Following the additions and slippage detailed earlier in the report, the 2020/21 capital programme budget totals £36,450k. Capital expenditure incurred up to the end of September 2020 totalled £6,193k, which is 17% of the overall budget within the first half of the financial year. A significant level of capital expenditure tends to be incurred in the third and fourth quarters of the financial year, and has been the trend for many years and is often unavoidable. However, there is a significant gap between spend and forecast at this stage of the year and this is after the programme has been re-profiled after discussions and agreement with budget/project managers. It should also be noted that a large proportion of the 20/21

programme is funded via external grants that are required to be fully spent by the end of the financial year.

The impact of 'Covid' is also a new factor this year and this will need close scrutiny and monitor over the next 3 months to assess the impact. Project / budget managers are expected to continue to control their schemes robustly and monitor them closely. Accurate forecasting is important for the Council's MTFP and the management of the delivery of these important projects.

The forecast outturn position for the 2020/21 programme is currently estimated to be £35,980k as detailed in the following table. An update on the headline/ high value schemes is provided in the next section

Service Area	July Budget 2020/21 £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Variance £000's	Slippage £000's	(Under)/Over Spend £000's
Education	10,382	9,634	(748)	(699)	(50)
Regeneration, Investment & Housing	14,730	11,965	(2,765)	(2,761)	(5)
People & Business Change	1,151	636	(515)	(515)	-
Adult & Community Services	250	249	(1)	-	(1)
Children & Young People Services	2,270	2,270	-	-	-
City Services	11,473	11,226	(247)	168	(414)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,256</b>	<b>35,980</b>	<b>(4,276)</b>	<b>(3,808)</b>	<b>(470)</b>
<b>2020/21 Budget After slippage</b>	<b>36,448</b>	<b>35,980</b>	<b>(468)</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>(470)</b>

\*July Budget as agreed by Cabinet plus any additions included with this report

The table above shows the variance split between slippage of £3,808k and underspend of £470k. Thorough monitoring of the programme is allowing us to constantly review issues arising on schemes and provide updated forecasts throughout the year.

## Update on Capital Receipts

The table below shows the latest position in regards to capital receipts. Capital receipts of £52k have been received this financial year and a further £448k is forecast to be received before March 2021. The table below also shows capital receipts held for 'Newport Unlimited', which are attributable to the previous joint arrangement between Newport City Council and Welsh Government. As previously reported to Cabinet, these funds are earmarked for city centre regeneration.

Asset Disposed	Receipts Received in Year £	Total Available Receipts 2020/21 £
<b>GENERAL CAPITAL RECEIPTS</b>		
Balance b/f from 2019/20		7,013,074
Land at Lliswerry Road	27,000	27,000
Land at Tregwilym Road	25,000	25,000
Total Committed – 21st Century Schools		(25,000)
Total Committed – Fleet Replacement Programme		(2,980,013)
Total Committed – Reduce Loan Premiums		(2,030,000)

<b>Total Amount Uncommitted</b>		<b>2,030,061</b>
<b>NEWPORT UNLIMITED</b>		
Balance b/f from 2019/20		1,245,875
Total Committed from JV monies		(150,000)
<b>Total Amount Uncommitted</b>		<b>1,095,875</b>
<b>TOTAL NCC RECEIPTS (Uncommitted)</b>		<b>3,125,936</b>

The committed use of capital receipts has increased by £2m from the previous month. The Council are currently accounting for a “premium” of c£507k pa for loans which were paid off early in 2015/16. This accounting treatment hits the interest payable budget and while not a cash transaction is an expenditure item on the revenue budget. Following discussion with our treasury advisors it was highlighted that we could use uncommitted capital receipts to pay off the remaining premium which would result in revenue savings going forward. Following review it is recommended that £2.030m of capital receipts is utilised to pay off the remaining 4 years of the premium, which will result in £507k revenue savings from 2021/22. If required for capital expenditure the offsetting borrowing cost in the future would be significantly less, therefore achieving an overall net saving still.

## Update on Headline / High Value Schemes

### Education

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B - Newport Norse and the Education Department have been working closely together in order to robustly plan and deliver the programme. Four schools were identified as priority projects within the programme and feasibility and construction works are to continue into 2020/21 with a reprofiled budget of £3,528k.
  - Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed – Following the approval of the planning applications for temporary and permanent works at YGGIC, works commenced during the summer to install all temporary facilities required by the school. The Full Business Case for the project is expected to be considered by Welsh Government in November with a decision to be provided in December 2020 at the earliest.
  - Bassaleg School – Design development has progressed well and the, proposal is to develop the designs further to RIBA 3 before appointing a contractor in the hopes to let the market stabilise and reduce design development costs. An Outline Business Case is being drafted for the Bassaleg School project and costs are required to support the business case process. It is hoped that the business case can be submitted before the end of the current term.
  - Caerleon Comprehensive School – Design meetings commenced in September which had been delayed due to the impact of Covid-19.
  - Whiteheads Primary Site – Negotiations with Tirion, the Housing Developer appointed by Welsh Government are ending. Designs will continue to progress, which will include the schools leadership team. Following the licence being granted by Welsh Government, site surveys and feasibility works will be arranged by Norse to support the project. The project remains on programme for January 2023 although the risk to this is increasing due to the delays with commencement of the development and associated land transfer.

- Newport Norse are also developing the Band B projects for Maindee & Maesglas primary schools. This will provide early indications concerning options and costs that may need to be considered further into the programme.
- Welsh-medium school grant – As highlighted above, the issue with the land transfer will also have an impact on the delivery of this scheme. This scheme is complex and involves a number of different sites and funding from both 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Band B and the Welsh-medium school grant.
  - Seedling school to be established at the former Caerleon Lodge Hill infant school
  - Pill primary school to relocate and expand to a new 3FE primary school on the Whiteheads site
  - Seedling WM school to transfer to a refurbished Pillgwenlly primary school building

The design works for the refurbishment of the vacant Lodge Infant School building is expected to be complete in the coming months with works expected to commence on site early in 2021. It is expected that the refurbished facility will be available next summer to allow the setup of the school to open in September 2021.

- Education Maintenance Grant – The 19/20 allocation of £1,828k was expected to be fully spent however due to Covid-19 some projects could not progress and were slipped into 20/21 with full spend expected .

The allocation of £2,140k and its proposed projects have now been finalised and work has already started on a number of schemes

- Reducing Infant Class Size:
  - Maesglas primary school – After significant delays, the Sustainable Drainage Application for the new nursery was approved on 28th August 2020. Information is now required from Norse and the contractors to allow the project to commence as soon as possible although the nursery building may not be available until January 2021.
  - St Woolos primary school – Refurbishment work to the annexe is progressing on site. Material supply chain issues due to Covid-19 mean that some works will not be complete until the end of November. However, the contractor is proposing to return to site to complete these works so that the school's expected date to be able to access to the upper dining area is not delayed.

## **Regeneration, Investment and Housing**

- Gypsy/ Traveller Site Development – The site is currently illegally occupied and a hearing is being scheduled for November / December, however, further legal challenges and/or appeals may delay this further. There are still works remaining to be finished which until the site can be accessed cannot be completed, therefore slippage of this budget is required.
- The Renovation Grants budget - split between Disabled Facilities Grants (£1,100k) and Safety at Home (£270k) but can be flexed as necessary. A survey programme has commenced following Covid-19 and the team are currently working through the backlog of referrals as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.. The budget has been enhanced in 2020/21 by the ENABLE Support for Independent Living grant (£197k) awarded by Welsh Government.
- Market Arcade – The contractor has confirmed that all roof works are done and there are only two chimneys left to do. Minor works to complete the installation of the glazed canopy are

required. Some shopfronts have gone into production and the High Street elevation is now almost completed. Final costs have been confirmed and is expected to finish within budget.

- Civic Centre Floor Two Works – Due to Covid-19 the works were stopped during lockdown therefore there are still some additional alterations needed to the outside steps.
- Transporter Bridge – Stage 2 application has been submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund with approval anticipated to be received in December 2020. Works cannot commence in full until the scheme is formally approved however works surrounding fundraising are continuing and final stage 1 works are being concluded..
- Indoor Market Facility Improvements – Planning application has been submitted and once approved works can move forward, however due to the delay in submitting works slippage of £1,000k has been included.
- Renewable Energy – The solar farm scheme is still live but delayed due to changes which affect the business case, namely a forecast increase in construction costs and lower electricity prices due to the impact of Covid-19. No investment will take place in 20/21.
- Asset Maintenance – The September forecast shows expected spend of £1,075k by the end of this financial year, a £94k increase from what reported in July. This budget is required to be closely monitored as it is a budget that consistently underspent each year despite Newport City Councils vast estate and maintenance requirements.
- Targeted Regeneration Investment - Thematic Funding – Following an amendment to the grant an additional £109k has been awarded specifically targeting business to provide support through the winter and Covid. There is no spend to take, although works on one project has commenced and work is currently focused on getting other projects approved and started.

### **Children's and Young People Services**

- New Children's homes – Renovations works have commenced at Rosedale. These building works are anticipated to be completed by the end of November 2020.
- Windmill Farm – This project is to provide residential accommodation for Children in Care by refurbishing and extending an existing Council property.

This project is being funded via an Integrated Children's fund allocation from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. Planning approval was granted on 7th October 2020. With building works yet to commence on site, confirmation is still to be received from ABUHB that any unspent allocation will be able to be claimed, should the building works not be completed by the 31st March 2021. Should this approval not be forthcoming, Newport City Council will become liable for funding the balance of the project. This must be considered as a financial risk for the Council, until any confirmation has been received to confirm that the funding of the project from ICF is available.

### **City Services**

- Fleet Replacement Programme – Detailed work has been undertaken to understand the total requirement for the Fleet replacement, and whilst this may change slightly as demands change, such as moving more towards the use of electric vehicles, all known requirements have been included.
- Decriminalised Parking – An underspend of £280k is being reported, this is due to issues surrounding signs and lines not being able to be placed has meant that the full budget was not utilised. This scheme has now been finalised.



- City Services Grants – Newport has received a significant amount of grants in relation to Active Travel (£2.7m, which includes the first phase of Newport Station Footbridge), and a range of Transport related funding for Safe Routes and Sustainable Transport totally £1,343k. Progress across all of the schemes is continuing with contractors being appointed to the majority of the works, however there are still some schemes which are still to go to tender. This will be monitored closely over the coming months.

## 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?
Overspend against approved budget	M	L	Regular monitoring and reporting of expenditure in accordance with the timetables set by Cabinet/Council should identify any issues at an early stage and allow for planned slippage of spend.	Corporate Directors / Heads of Service / Head of Finance
Programme growing due to unforeseen events	M	M	Good capital monitoring procedures and effective management of the programme should identify issues and allow for plans to defer expenditure to accommodate urgent works. Priority asset management issues are now being dealt with through a specific programme allocation.	Corporate Directors / Heads of Service / Head of Finance

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The programme supports a large number of the Council's aims and objectives

## Options Available and considered

- To approve the changes to the Capital Programme and note the monitoring position as set out in the report, including the use of capital receipts.
- To note the current available headroom and prioritise future capital expenditure in order to maintain spend within the current affordability envelope.
- The Cabinet has the option not to put forward some or all of the changes to the Capital Programme set out in the report

## Preferred Option and Why

- To approve the changes to the Capital Programme and note the monitoring position as set out in the report, including the use of capital receipts.
- Agree to prioritise capital expenditure to maintain spend within current affordability envelope, recognising that the revenue pressures from future borrowing are part of the overall MTFP budget gap.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

This report gives an update on the current capital programme and the position for 2020/21, and it is important to flag the impact on the revenue budget and overall MTFP. While the revenue implications of the current programme and the “headroom” highlighted in the report are included within the MTFP, this is in the backdrop of a current medium term budget gap and future uncertainty of funding. Therefore as highlighted in the agreed framework capital expenditure funded from borrowing needs to be prioritised and where possible funded from alternative sources. This will enable the future capital financing pressures to be kept to a minimum, alleviating pressure on other service area revenue budgets.

The annual capital strategy will be produced for approval by Council in February, which will set out the long-term capital strategy and will set the borrowing limits in which the capital programme will need to be delivered.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no direct HR implications associated with the report. Budget additions will need to continue be considerate of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

N/A

## **Local issues**

As the report deals with the Capital Programme for the Authority as a whole, there are no local issues.

## **Scrutiny Committees**

N/A

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

N/A

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

N/A

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

An effective capital programme enables the Council to support long term planning in line with the sustainable development principle of the Act.

## **Consultation**

N/A

## **Background Papers**

Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy - February 2019 and February 2020  
Capital Programme Outturn 2019/20 – July 2020  
Monitoring and Additions Report – August 2020

Dated: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

## Appendix A – Additions and changes to the Programme

Report / Scheme Change	Funding Source	Service Area	18/19 Actual Change (£000's)	19/20 Budget Change (£000's)	20/21 Budget Change (£000's)	21/22 Budget Change (£000's)	22/23 Budget Change (£000's)	23/24 Budget Change (£000's)	24/25 Budget Change (£000's)	Total Budget Change (£000's)
<b>2020/21 budget - July Monitoring Reported to Cabinet</b>			<b>29,466</b>	<b>31,360</b>	<b>39,826</b>	<b>49,601</b>	<b>44,382</b>	<b>9,623</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>204,398</b>
<b>Reprofile</b>										
Slippage (see appendix 3 for detail)	Various	Various			(3,808)	3,808				<b>0</b>
<b>New</b>										
21st Century Schools	S106 / Borrowing	Education				1,206	706			<b>1,912</b>
Milton IT replacement	Service Area	Education			26					<b>26</b>
TRI Thematic Funding	WG Grant	RIH			109					<b>109</b>
Sorrell Drive Repairs and Glasllwch Kickwall Installation	S106	City Services			27					<b>27</b>
Marshfield	S106	City Services			16					<b>16</b>
Ultra Low Emission Grants	Grant	City Services			205					<b>205</b>
Flood recovery works - Tredegar Park	Grant	City Services			100					<b>100</b>
Kingsway car park operation	Reserves	City Services			25					<b>25</b>
Increased Recycling	Reserves	City Services			25					<b>25</b>
<b>Amendments</b>										
21st Century Schools	Grant	Education			(103)		(19)			<b>(122)</b>
<b>Updated Programme</b>			<b>29,466</b>	<b>31,360</b>	<b>36,450</b>	<b>54,615</b>	<b>45,069</b>	<b>9,623</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>206,723</b>

## Appendix B – Detailed Budget Breakdown of the 7 year Programme

	Outturn 18/19	Outturn 19/20	Budget 20/21	Budget 21/22	Budget 22/23	Budget 23/24	Budget 24/25	Total
21st Century Schools - Band A	8,046	1,220	74	-	-	-	-	9,340
21st Century Schools - Band B	675	1,711	3,425	23,020	36,355	10,046	140	75,372
Jubilee Park - Fixtures, Furniture & Equipment	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
Gaer Annexe Education Use	-	416	79	-	-	-	-	495
Blaen-y-Pant Bungalow (Educational Use)	52	-	8	-	-	-	-	60
St Mary's Toilet Refurbishment.	-	42	-	-	-	-	-	42
Somerton Primary - ICT Equipment	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Feminine hygiene hardware & toilet facilities.	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
Lliswerry High (S106 Funds)	110	80	-	-	-	-	-	190
Maesglas Reducing classroom size	-	64	457	-	-	-	-	521
Lliswerry IT Replacements	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
Welsh Medium Primary School	-	150	727	1,623	1,000	2,300	-	5,800
Reducing Classroom size bids	-	61	527	-	-	-	-	588
Bassaleg Demountables	-	116	90	-	-	-	-	206
ICT Equipment Lease (Clytha Primary)	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	20
ICT Equipment Lease (St Mary's)	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	11
St Patricks ICT	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	12
Bassaleg ICT	-	69	-	-	-	-	-	69
ICT Equip Lease Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
Ringland Perimeter Fence	-	-	85	-	-	-	-	85
Llanmartin Primary ICT	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Malpas Park Primary	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Education Maintenance Grant 2018/19	-	1,470	358	-	-	-	-	1,828
Education Maintenance Grant 2019/20	-	-	1,141	1,000	-	-	-	2,141
Education Asset Improvements - balance to be drawn down	1,055	200	27	-	-	-	-	1,282
Bassaleg Demountables - year 7	-	-	785	-	-	-	-	785
EdTech Grant	-	-	362	-	-	-	-	362
Education Accessibility Studies	-	-	268	-	-	-	-	268
Charles Williams Renovations	-	-	1,017	603	-	-	-	1,620
Lliswerry Safeguarding	-	-	57	-	-	-	-	57
Maindee Primary Toilets	-	-	172	-	-	-	-	172
Milton IT replacement	-	-	26	-	-	-	-	26
Prior Year Scheme - Various	(38)	(39)	-	-	-	-	-	(77)
<b>Education</b>	<b>10,032</b>	<b>5,614</b>	<b>9,686</b>	<b>26,246</b>	<b>37,355</b>	<b>12,346</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>101,418</b>
Gypsy/Traveller Site Development	2,993	78	10	55	-	-	-	3,136

Indoor Newport Market	-	-	1,000	3,000	-	(4,000)	-	-
HLF Market Arcade Townscape Heritage Scheme	39	266	1,556	980	-	-	-	2,841
Indoor Market Facilities Improvements	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(2)
Civic Centre / Info Station Service Relocations	116	121	29	-	-	-	-	266
Info Station NSA enabling	536	-	-	-	-	-	-	536
123-129 Commercial Street (Pobl Regen)	623	623	-	-	-	-	-	1,246
Cardiff City Region Deal	1,208	-	1,522	782	782	1,277	-	5,571
Mill Street Development Loan	-	2,341	1,659	-	-	-	-	4,000
Neighbourhood Hubs	915	1,344	-	-	-	-	-	2,259
Arva Investment Loan	385	333	32	-	-	-	-	750
Disabled Facilities	898	1,092	1,100	1,000	1,000	-	-	5,090
Safety at Home	364	375	270	300	300	-	-	1,609
ENABLE Adaptations Grant	197	197	197	-	-	-	-	591
Homelessness Prevention Grant	98	-	-	-	-	-	-	98
Asset Management Programme	1,066	1,245	1,076	3,062	1,500	-	-	7,949
Flying Start Schemes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FS Maintenance 1819 / 1920	31	38	-	-	-	-	-	69
FS Shaftsbury Community Centre	183	-	-	-	-	-	-	183
Childcare - Flying Start	-	546	1,322	200	-	-	-	2,068
Central Library - Structural Works	72	17	200	374	-	-	-	663
Transporter Bridge	72	913	265	10,287	1,400	-	-	12,937
Chartist Tower	-	1,344	256	-	-	-	-	1,600
PAC System	-	57	-	-	-	-	-	57
OLEV Residential EV charging Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medieval Ship	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	12
Information Station	-	-	140	1,610	-	-	-	1,750
Renewable Energy Investment	-	2	5	1,722	-	-	-	1,729
FS City Wide Maintenance & Repair of Premises	-	-	133	-	-	-	-	133
Improvements to Flying Start Facilities	-	-	118	-	-	-	-	118
TRI Thematic Funding	-	-	1,080	-	-	-	-	1,080
Prior Year Scheme - Various	(7)	(18)	-	-	-	-	-	(25)
<b>Regeneration, Investment and Housing</b>	<b>9,787</b>	<b>10,915</b>	<b>11,970</b>	<b>23,384</b>	<b>4,982</b>	<b>(2,723)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,314</b>
IT Replacement Schemes	94	9	-	665	150	-	-	918
Corporate EDMS Rollout	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	13
CRM	250	276	243	-	-	-	-	769
I Trent Development	-	91	144	-	-	-	-	235
Print 2010- Managed Printer Service	131	-	249	-	-	-	-	380
<b>People and Business Change</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,315</b>

Telecare Service Equipment	97	12	36	30	30	-	-	205
Equipment for Disabled Grant (GWICES)	165	165	165	165	165	-	-	825
Home Care System	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
Centrica Lodge	(6)	(3)	-	-	-	-	-	(9)
SMAPF	320	305	49	-	-	-	-	674
<b>Adults and Community Services</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,727</b>
Disbursed accommodation and Covid-19 equipment			251					251
3 New Homes	701	792	629	-	-	-	-	2,122
Oaklands Respite Home	505	102	-	-	-	-	-	607
Windmill Feasibility Study	41	110	1,390	-	-	-	-	1,541
<b>Children's and Families Services</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,521</b>
Fleet Replacement Programme	797	1,912	2,633	948	1,850	-	-	8,140
Bus station - Friars Walk Development	29	93	-	-	-	-	-	122
Flood Risk Regulation Grant	24	34	33	-	-	-	-	91
Cemetery Infrastructure Improvements	16	30	64	-	-	-	-	110
Peterstone Sewage Scheme	1	28	194	-	-	-	-	223
Road Safety Capital 2018/19	-	1,379	-	-	-	-	-	1,379
Composting	567	-	-	-	-	-	-	567
Docksway Cell 4 Development	1,555	1,046	-	-	-	-	-	2,601
CCTV	-	37	8	-	-	-	-	45
Smaller Bins - MTRP BC	70	1,177	-	-	-	-	-	1,247
Newport Station Footbridge - LTF	77	314	1,024	2,645	-	-	-	4,060
Decriminalised Parking	232	874	280	-	-	-	-	1,386
Update Facilities in Parks	18	47	-	-	-	-	-	65
Decommissioning of Cemetery Office & Toilets	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Building Improvements to Lodges	14	94	-	-	-	-	-	108
Small Scale Works Grant	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
Road Refurbishment Grant Scheme	931	198	711	-	-	-	-	1,840
Street Lighting LEDs	564	2,202	132	-	-	-	-	2,898
Park Square Lights	-	-	65	-	-	-	-	65
Velodrome Lights	-	173	-	-	-	-	-	173
Local Transport Fund - Active Travel Northern 2018/19	290	196	114	-	-	-	-	600
Tredegar Park Car Park	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	12
Tredegar Park - Pedal Power	-	3	152	35	35	-	-	225
Lliswerry Road (81)	-	9	2	-	-	-	-	11
28-30 Stow Hill (11/0269)	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	7
Forbisher Road (15/0720)	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	9
Festive lighting	-	109	-	-	-	-	-	109



<b>City Services</b>	<b>7,316</b>	<b>12,958</b>	<b>11,640</b>	<b>4,128</b>	<b>2,385</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,427</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,466</b>	<b>31,360</b>	<b>36,450</b>	<b>54,615</b>	<b>45,069</b>	<b>9,623</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>206,723</b>
<b><u>Financed By:</u></b>								
General Capital Grant	4,754	3,858	4,107	4,000	4,000	1,701	49	22,469
Supported Borrowing	4,058	4,077	4,097	4,058	4,000	1,277	-	21,567
Unsupported Borrowing	2,125	5,787	5,205	13,228	9,098	(2,185)	-	33,260
Prudential Borrowing	84	123	-	1,000	-	-	-	1,207
External Grants	12,911	13,053	18,719	29,145	24,937	8,830	91	107,686
S106	868	523	691	2,170	2,446	-	-	6,699
Other Contributions	242	268	65	397	-	-	-	972
Capital Receipts	3,136	820	2,325	243	588	-	-	7,114
Revenue Contributions	75	68	79	374	-	-	-	596
Reserve	1,081	2,777	913	-	-	-	-	4,771
Finance Lease	131	-	249	-	-	-	-	380
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,466</b>	<b>31,360</b>	<b>36,450</b>	<b>54,615</b>	<b>45,069</b>	<b>9,623</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>206,723</b>



## Appendix C – Capital Programme 2020/21

	Adjusted Budget 2019/20 £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Variance £000's	Slippage £000's	(Under)/Over Spend £000's
21st Century Schools - Band A	74	16	(57)	(0)	(57)
21st Century Schools -Band B	3,425	3,425	0	0	0
Gaer Annexe Education Use	79	79	0	0	0
Blaen-y-Pant Bungalow (Educational Use)	8	8	0	0	0
Maesglas Reducing classroom size	457	460	3	0	3
Welsh Medium Primary School	1,050	727	(322)	(322)	0
Reducing Classroom size bids	527	656	130	0	130
Bassaleg Demountables	90	110	20	0	20
Ringland Perimeter Fence	85	85	0	0	0
Education Maintenance Grant	358	358	0	0	0
Education Maintenance Grant 2019/20	1,141	996	(145)	0	(145)
Education Asset Improvements - balance to be drawn down	27	27	0	0	0
Bassaleg Demountables - year 7	785	785	0	0	0
EdTech Grant	362	362	0	0	0
Education Accessibility Studies	268	268	0	0	0
Charles Williams Renovations	1,393	1,017	(377)	(377)	0
Lliswerry Safeguarding	57	57	0	0	0
Maindee Primary Toilets	172	172	0	0	0
Milton IT replacement	26	26	0	0	0
Prior Year Scheme - Various	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Education</b>	<b>10,382</b>	<b>9,634</b>	<b>(748)</b>	<b>(699)</b>	<b>(50)</b>
Gypsy/Traveller Site Development	65	10	(55)	(55)	0
Indoor Newport Market	2,000	1,000	(1,000)	(1,000)	0
HLF Market Arcade Townscape Heritage Scheme	1,556	1,556	0	0	0
Civic Centre / Info Station Service Relocations	29	29	0	0	0
123-129 Commercial Street (Pobl Regen)	0	0	0	0	0
Cardiff City Region Deal	1,522	1,522	(0)	(0)	0
Mill Street Development Loan	1,659	1,659	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Hubs	0	0	0	0	0
Arva Investment Loan	32	32	0	0	0
Disabled Facilities	1,100	1,100	0	0	0

Safety at Home	270	270	(0)	(0)	0
ENABLE Adaptations Grant	197	197	0	0	0
Asset Management Programme	982	1,076	94	94	0
FS Maintenance 1819 / 1920	0	0	0	0	0
FS Shaftsbury Community Centre	0	0	0	0	0
Childcare - Flying Start	1,522	1,318	(205)	(200)	(5)
Central Library - Structural Works	200	200	0	0	0
Transporter Bridge	265	265	0	0	0
Chartist Tower	256	256	0	0	0
PAC System	0	0	0	0	0
Renewable Energy Investment	5	5	0	0	0
Information Station	1,740	140	(1,600)	(1,600)	0
FS City Wide Maintenance & Repair of Premises	133	133	0	0	0
Improvements to Flying Start Facilities	118	118	0	0	0
TRI Thematic Funding	1,078	1,078	0	0	0
Prior Year Scheme - Various	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Regeneration, Investment and Housing</b>	<b>14,730</b>	<b>11,965</b>	<b>(2,761)</b>	<b>(2,761)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
IT Replacement Schemes	515	0	515	(515)	0
Corporate EDMS Rollout	0	0	0	0	0
CRM	243	243	(0)	0	0
Itrent Development	144	144	0	0	0
Print 2010- Managed Printer Service	249	249	0	0	0
<b>Total People and Business Change</b>	<b>1,151</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>(515)</b>	<b>0</b>
Telecare Service Equipment	36	36	(0)	0	0
Equipment for Disabled Grant (GWICES)	165	165	0	0	0
Centrica Lodge	0	0	0	0	0
SMAPF	49	48	1	0	(1)
<b>Total Adults and Community</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1)</b>
Disbursed accommodation and Covid-19 equipment	251	251	0	(0)	0
3 New Homes	629	629	(0)	0	0
Oaklands Respite Home	0	0	0	0	0
Windmill Feasibility Study	1,390	1,390	0	0	0

<b>Total Children and Families Services</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>
Fleet Replacement Programme	2,400	2,633	233	233	0
Flood Risk Regulation Grant	33	27	(6)	0	(6)
Cemetery Infrastructure Improvements	64	64	0	0	0
Peterstone Sewage Scheme	194	194	(0)	(0)	0
CCTV	8	8	0	0	0
Newport Station Footbridge - LTF	1,089	1,024	(65)	(65)	0
Decriminalised Parking	280	0	(280)	0	(280)
Road Refurbishment Grant Scheme	711	711	0	0	0
Street Lighting LEDs	132	132	0	0	0
Park Square Lights	65	65	0	0	0
Velodrome Lights	0	0	0	0	0
Local Transport Fund - Active Travel Northern 2018/19	114	69	(45)	0	(45)
Tredegar Park Car Park	12	12	0	0	0
Tredegar Park - Pedal Power	152	62	(90)	0	(90)
Liswerry Road (81)	2	2	0	0	0
Bus Stop Enhancements	376	375	(1)	0	(1)
Core AFT Allocation	0	0	0	0	0
Inner City Links	206	238	32	0	32
Safe Routes - St David's RC Primary	60	37	(23)	0	(23)
Gwastad Mawr Flood Attenuation Improvement Works	53	53	0	0	0
Green Infrastructure	234	234	0	0	0
City Services Annual Sums	501	501	(0)	(0)	0
Safe Routes - St David's RC Primary Year 2	278	278	0	0	0
Sustainable Transport Improvements Year 2	291	291	0	0	0
Upgrading and Replacement of Bus Stops	100	100	0	0	0
Road Safety Capital A48 Llandevaud	74	74	0	0	0
Resilient Roads	65	65	0	0	0
Western Corridor-Inner City Links	607	607	0	0	0
Monkey Island Bridge Year 2	990	990	0	0	0
Core Allocation Year 2	99	99	0	0	0
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	105	105	0	0	0
Carnegie Court Emergency River Works	1,000	1,000	0	0	0
Parry Drive Play Area Improvements	23	23	0	0	0
Brecon Road Play Area Improvements	3	3	0	0	0
Improvements to Throwing Facilities at Newport Athletics Stadium	154	154	0	0	0
Sorrell Drive Repairs and Glasllwch Kickwall Installation	26	26	0	0	0
Marshfield Community Centre	16	16	0	0	0

Local sustainable transport measures in response to Covid	600	600	0	0	0
Ultra Low Emission Grants	205	205	0	0	0
Flooding	100	100	0	(0)	0
Kingsway car park operation	25	25	0	0	0
Increased Recycling	25	25	0	0	0
Prior Year Schemes	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total City Services</b>	<b>11,473</b>	<b>11,226</b>	<b>(246)</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>(414)</b>
<b>Total Capital Forecast 2020/21</b>	<b>40,255</b>	<b>35,980</b>	<b>(3,244)</b>	<b>(3,808)</b>	<b>(470)</b>



# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** **Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Report**

**Purpose** To present to Cabinet Audit Wales report on their 'Financial Sustainability Assessment on Newport City Council'

**Author** Head of Finance

**Ward** All

**Summary** As part of the programme of regulatory activity, and in accordance with the Well-being for Future Generations Act 2015, Audit Wales (AW) undertakes a programme of work to ensure the Council is discharging its duties under the Act. The report outlines AW findings from the review and concludes that: "The Council has a relatively strong financial position, but has recently recognised the need to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach to consolidate its position"

**Proposal** Cabinet are requested to note the outcome of the review, the Council's response and implementing the necessary actions raised.

**Action by** Cabinet

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Management Team

**Signed**

## Background

The Audit Wales (AW) is an independent public body that aims to ensure that the people of Wales know whether public money is being managed wisely and that public bodies in Wales understand how to improve outcomes. As part of the Council's regulatory activity, the AW undertakes a programme of work to ensure the Council is discharging its duties.

In 2019/20, AW undertook a review of 'Financial Sustainability Assessment on Newport City Council'. This was part of a national review and all Councils across Wales were assessed using a consistent framework.

The intention was then to produce a national report on the sector as a whole but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been delayed given the potential and still uncertain impact on Council finances from this. A national report, taking into account the current position of Council finances and building on their 2019/20 review at individual Councils is due to be produced in the Autumn 2020.

In conclusion, AW found that "The Council has a relatively strong financial position, but has recently recognised the need to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach to consolidate its position"

### Summary of findings from Audit Wales report

Detailed findings of the report is attached at Appendix 1 (Welsh) and Appendix 2 (English).

The summary and some of the underlying main issues and observations are listed below for Members attention and information.

**The Council has a relatively strong financial position, but has recently recognised the need to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach to consolidate its position.** The AW reached this conclusion because of the following observations and evidence:

- (1) The Council does not yet have a sustainable strategy to support financial resilience and sustainability over the medium term:
  - We found that although the Council has a high-level medium-term financial projection that sets out its key financial challenges, its focus has primarily been on annual budgeting. The Council has recognised that it has not yet developed a strategic change programme to deliver a balanced and sustainable medium-term financial position.
  - The Council does not explicitly consider sustainable development in its medium-term projection and it does not have a medium-term approach to close its forecast deficit. The Council has not set out a strategic vision for the future direction of council services in light of the financial deficit. The Council recognises that further work is required to ensure the budget is balanced

Response/Actions: The Council recognises this and the newly appointed Chief Executive will work with Business Change/Finance colleagues to develop a more strategic approach with the Council's Strategic & Corporate Management Teams based on the development of strategies and medium term plans for key elements within service areas which will need to take into account the financial challenges forecasted. This is challenging due to the lack of certainty of future funding from Welsh Government.

The current Covid-19 pandemic and local elections in 2023 means this work will unavoidably delayed until 2021 realistically and will need to incorporate any new administration's strategic plans for the city from 2023.

- (2) While the Council has continued to underspend against its budget in recent years, its plans highlight that maintaining financial balance over the coming years will be more difficult;

- In recent years, overall the Council has underspent against its annual budget. However, within this overall underspend position, the financial outturn position has consistently reported continued overspends in a number of key service areas including social care and education
- Year on year the Council has seen significant overspends within service areas (excluding schools), in areas such as looked after children's out of county placements, adult community care, additional learning needs and independent fostering. These areas of budgetary pressure present an ongoing risk to the Council's financial position.
- The overall underspends in the table above have been supported by factors such as Council Tax surpluses, underspends against the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and revenue contingency budgets, and corporate services underspends, which have outweighed the pressures above. However, many of these underspends are uncertain in nature and there is no guarantee that they will continue in the future.
- Delegated school budgets are also under significant pressure with a forecast overspend of £3.1 million in 2019-20. This would see overall school reserves falling below zero at the end of the year. Such overspends by schools could add further pressure to the Council's financial position.

Response/Actions: The Council has consistently shown good financial management during difficult periods and is confident it will continue with this. It has a budget contingency to manage a limited amount of unforeseen budget issues and is also now putting in place specific review meetings with services where they overspend to understand the position and actions being taken. It continues to work hard with schools and many are now implementing 'deficit recovery plans' though the position has deteriorated since the WA review here.

(3) While the Council's delivery of planned savings has been strong in recent years, its ability to continue to deliver savings within demand-led services is becoming more challenging;

- the Council achieved 92% of its planned savings in 2018-19
- Education and social care accounted for the majority of the underachievement and those service areas contain some of the Council's major budget pressure areas

Response/Actions: The Council has a good track record in delivering savings and this is monitored carefully by Strategic & Corporate Management Teams

(4) The Council has a high level of useable reserves, although most are currently earmarked for specific use;

- We found that the Council has not previously made any unplanned use of reserves to fund revenue budget pressures and in recent years has increased its overall level of reserves. The Council has only started to use reserves from 2018-19 to balance its budget.
- While many of the reserve balances could be applied by the Council for alternative use if needed, they are to some extent already earmarked for a specific future purpose (other than the £6.5 million Council Fund reserve). Therefore, using such earmarked reserves could lead to planned future activity being curtailed or delayed, or risks being inappropriately managed, unless they were later replenished.
- Furthermore, the Council identifies that the following reserves from the above list are not readily available for alternative use: school reserves of £3.1 million (for the specific use of individual schools only), and capital receipts reserves of £8.3 million (largely limited to use on capital projects). This leads to a total of £91.1 million of 'usable reserves' which the Council could access, but would consequently have to manage the impact of such use

Response/Actions: The overall position on reserves is 'somewhat distorted' by the single earmarked PFI reserve which currently make up nearly 50% of total reserves and represents a pre-payment of grant by WG to fund a large part of the Council's PFI costs over the next c18 years. The Council has a good level of reserves and whilst these are virtually all earmarked, they do ultimately provide, in the last resort, some mitigation for overspending / funding. If this was to happen, then future projects, which were funded from these reserves, may not be able to progress or in using other reserves, budgetary provision would need to be made to 'repay' these, creating further pressure on the Council's medium term financial plan (MTFP). There are no

easy, impact free solutions through reserves but they do ultimately provide some cover/capacity in the last resort.

(5) While council tax represents a growing proportion of the Council's income, its level of arrears is increasing;

- We found that although the proportion of the Council's budget funded by council tax is increasing, council tax arrears have increased over time.
- Between 2008-09 and 2018-19, the Council has improved the amount of council tax it collects annually from 95.8% to 96.6%. Despite this improvement, council tax arrears have increased from £2.2 million in 2008-09 to £4.6 million in 2018-19, an increase of 109%. This compares to an increase in annual council tax debit of 69% over the same period. Over this period, in real terms the Council's arrears balance has fallen from the 4th lowest in Wales to the 12th lowest.

Response/Action: The Council has consistently raised more Council Tax cash over the last few years than budget. This is because of the in-year collection of Council Tax, which is below budget, but still reasonable, the collection of arrears and the growing tax base in the city. The current Covid-19 pandemic period is an on-going challenge to Council Tax collection and is being managed and reviewed.

The Head of Finance (HoF), with the revenues manager is currently developing an improvement plan in the revenues function & customer services to improve collection rates.

(6) In implementing its commercialisation strategy, the Council will need to manage risks associated with any increased borrowing.

- The Council's overall cost of borrowing in 2018-19 was 9.1% of its total net revenue budget, which was high in comparison with other Welsh councils
- The Council has made previous efforts to limit its borrowing as far as possible by using 'internal borrowing' (that is, using available internal resources first before borrowing from other entities). Over time, the Council will need to borrow from third parties to cover for previous internal borrowing, in order to fund its planned activity. Doing so will attract further interest costs in the medium to long term. The Council will therefore need to carefully consider the affordability of further interest costs when deciding whether to take on any further external borrowing above that already planned.
- In April 2019, the Council's Cabinet agreed a commercialisation strategy which aims to contribute to addressing the financial deficit that the Council faces. The strategy includes three main approaches:
  - current services provided on a more commercial basis;
  - new services being provided by the Council; and
  - property investment, both commercial and residential.
- The Cabinet agreed to examine each of these areas and to examine business cases before taking any decisions. It agreed in its Capital Strategy to establish a £50 million property investment fund to be funded via additional borrowing, but no such investments have yet been undertaken. The Cabinet recognised that such an approach creates additional financial risks with the significant increase in the Council's long-term debt and potential uncertainty around the return on any investments. Given these risks, Cabinet agreed a framework in which it will review and assess opportunities to assess the level of risk and benefit within agreed parameters.

Response/Action: The HoF will be preparing an updated Capital Strategy for the Council which will need to set out future borrowing limits for the Council and will need to be cognisant of, and address the relatively large borrowing levels the Council currently has. This will be approved as part of the 2021/22 budget process.

There have been no investments made in properties in pursuit of the commercialisation strategy and there is likely to be a change in borrowing rules from PWLB which will prohibit borrowing from the PWLB for this purpose. The current commercialisation strategy has not developed since



the departure of the previous Chief Executive who was going to drive this. In light of the above, the HoF will need to discuss how we progress this with the new Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

## Financial Summary

There are no direct financial consequences stemming from the report here and the AW review. It confirms the Council is in a good position but has some issues it needs to address in the short to medium term.

## 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?
Findings of the report are not considered as part of further financial monitoring and reporting	Medium	Low	Regular monitoring and reporting of the Council's financial position and actions identified to manage key financial risks.	Corporate Management Team

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This work is aligned with the Council's Well-being Plan, Corporate Plan Well-being objectives and Strategic Recovery Aims.

## Options Available and considered

- a) To note the outcomes from the Audit Wales report and its findings;
- b) To disregard the contents of the report and its findings.

## Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is (a) and for Cabinet to note the outcomes of the report and to be provided with regular updates on the progress of the service area implementing the necessary management actions.

## Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The review was carried out in 2019, utilising facts from previous financial years and the Council's balance sheet as at March 2019. The position since then has changed significantly with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic which has put unprecedented pressure on Council finances across the UK. Audit Wales's initial plan was to prepare a national report on the whole sector but this has been delayed to this Autumn which can take account of the issues raised. In the meantime, the Council is working hard to manage the financial impacts of Covid-19 and this is reported through normal monitoring processes to senior management and Cabinet.

The AW report confirms that the Council has, in overall terms, a good financial position and manages its finances well. It highlights a number of issues which are challenging as the Council moves forward such as its relatively high level of debt, on-going overspending in demand led services and delivery of savings but more significantly, the need to develop a medium term approach to planning services / savings.

## Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. The Report from WAO sets out their findings following a review of the Council's financial sustainability, in accordance with the overriding objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The overall conclusion is that the Council is in a relatively strong financial position but further work is required to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach in the medium to long term. The cover report identifies key elements of the WAO findings and sets out proposed actions to address those issues. Cabinet are required to consider the report and the proposed actions, in exercise of their statutory role to oversee the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls and the administration of its financial affairs, and formulate any comments or recommendations.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The Council welcomes the report from Audit Wales as part of our regulatory framework and there are no staffing / governance impacts raised in this report. As highlighted by the Head of Finance, the Council has demonstrated good financial management and prudence over the years and in this current administration which has involved both the Council's Cabinet and senior managers. With the impact of Covid 19 the Council has been careful to ensure services are managing their budgets effectively and raising any potential financial risks that could impact on the delivery of the Council's objectives and budget. As reflected across the Welsh public sector, medium to long term planning is a challenging area, and we will need consider the future Welsh Government's (WG) priorities and plans as we go into WG elections next year and local council elections in 2022

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Cabinet Member has noted the findings of the Audit Wales report and management responses to implementing the necessary actions to improve the delivery of the service.

## **Local issues**

None

## **Scrutiny Committees**

Not Applicable

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Not Applicable

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Not Applicable

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Councils financial sustainability is a key underpin for the Council in delivering on the requirements of the Act. In particular:

- Having a long term strategic approach to planning services within the funding /resources available
- Taking a long term approach to managing debt levels which will impact on the Councils finances in the long term
- Ensuring financial sustainability to secure development and delivery of essential services

These issues are being addressed, as needed, in the actions noted in the report

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Not applicable

**Consultation**

Not applicable.

**Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Audit Wales Report August 2020 (Welsh)

Appendix 2 – Audit Wales Report August 2020 (English)

Dated: September 2020

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# Asesiad o Gynaliadwyedd Ariannol – **Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd**

Blwyddyn archwilio: 2019-20

Dyddiad cyhoeddi: Awst 2020

Cyfeirnod y ddogfen: 1987A2020-21

Paratowyd y ddogfen hon ar gyfer defnydd mewnol Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd fel rhan o waith a gyflawnir yn unol ag Adran 17 o Ddeddf Archwilio Cyhoeddus (Cymru) 2004 ac adran 18 o Fesur Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2009.

Ni chymerir unrhyw gyfrifoldeb gan yr Archwilydd Cyffredinol na staff Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru mewn perthynas ag unrhyw aelod, cyfarwyddwr, swyddog neu gyflogai arall yn eu cymhwyster unigol, nac mewn perthynas ag unrhyw drydydd parti.

Os ceir cais am wybodaeth y gall y ddogfen hon fod yn berthnasol iddi, tynnir sylw at y Cod Ymarfer a gyhoeddwyd o dan adran 45 Deddf Rhyddid Gwybodaeth 2000.

Mae Cod adran 45 yn nodi'r arfer o ran trin ceisiadau a ddisgwylir gan awdurdodau cyhoeddus, gan gynnwys ymgynghori â thrydydd partion perthnasol. Mewn perthynas â'r ddogfen hon, mae Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru a Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru yn drydydd partion perthnasol. Dylid anfon unrhyw ymholiadau ynglŷn â datgelu neu ailddefnyddio'r ddogfen hon i Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru yn [swyddog.gwybodaeth@archwilio.cymru](mailto:swyddog.gwybodaeth@archwilio.cymru).

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Saesneg. This document is also available in English.

# Cynnwys

Mae gan y Cyngor sefyllfa ariannol gymharol gryf, ond yn ddiweddar mae wedi cydnabod yr angen i ddatblygu dull mwy strategol a chynaliadwy i gyfnerthu ei sefyllfa.

## Adroddiad cryno

Crynodeb 4

## Adroddiad manwl

Mae gan y Cyngor sefyllfa ariannol gymharol gryf, ond yn ddiweddar mae wedi cydnabod yr angen i ddatblygu dull mwy strategol a chynaliadwy i gyfnerthu ei sefyllfa 7

Nid oes gan y Cyngor strategaeth gynaliadwy eto i gefnogi cydnherthedd a chynaliadwyedd ariannol dros y tymor canolig 7

Er bod y Cyngor wedi parhau i danwario yn erbyn ei gyllideb dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei gynlluniau'n amlygu'r ffaith y bydd mantoli'r cyfrifon ariannol dros y blynyddoedd nesaf yn anos 10

Er bod y modd y mae'r Cyngor wedi cyflawni arbedion wedi'u cynllunio wedi bod yn gryf dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei allu i barhau i gyflawni arbedion o fewn gwasanaethau sy'n ymateb i'r galw'n dod yn fwy o her 12

Mae gan y Cyngor lefel uchel o gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy, er bod y rhan fwyaf ar hyn o bryd wedi'u clustnodi ar gyfer defnydd penodol 14

Er bod y dreth gyngor yn cynrychioli cyfran gynyddol o incwm y Cyngor, mae lefel ei ôl-ddyledion yn cynyddu 16

Wrth roi strategaeth fasnacheiddio newydd ar waith, bydd angen i'r Cyngor reoli risgiau sy'n gysylltiedig ag unrhyw lefelau benthyca uwch 18

# Adroddiad cryno

## Crynodeb

### Yr hyn y gwnaethom ei adolygu a pham

- 1 Roedd y prosiect yn ceisio asesu cynaliadwyedd sefyllfa ariannol cynghorau yn y tymor byr a chanolig.
- 2 Roedd hyn yn cynnwys ffocws ar strategaeth ariannol pob cyngor yn ogystal ag adolygu 'dangosyddion' ariannol o sefyllfa ariannol pob cyngor mewn perthynas â'r canlynol:
  - Perfformiad yn erbyn y gyllideb
  - Cyflawni cynlluniau arbedion
  - Defnyddio cronfeydd wrth gefn
  - Y dreth gyngor
  - Benthycu

### Arddangosyn 1: ynglŷn â'r Cyngor

Mae'r arddangosyn hwn yn nodi peth gwybodaeth gefndir am gyllideb refeniw net y Cyngor, nifer y staff y mae'n eu cyflogi a gwerth ei asedau sefydlog.



**Roedd cyllideb refeniw net y Cyngor ar gyfer 2019-20 yn £280.6m<sup>1</sup>**



**Mae'r Cyngor yn cyflogi tua 5,750 o bobl, gan gynnwys tua 1,350 o athrawon<sup>2</sup>**



**Roedd asedau sefydlog y Cyngor ar 31 Mawrth 2019 yn £503m<sup>3</sup>**

- 3 Fe gynhaliom ni'r asesiad hwn am ein bod wedi adnabod cynaliadwyedd ariannol fel risg i allu cynghorau i sefydlu trefniadau priodol i sicrhau gwerth am arian o ran defnyddio adnoddau. Yn rhannol, cafodd hyn ei oleuo gan brofiadau diweddar rhai cynghorau yn Lloegr, ein gwybodaeth am y sefyllfa ariannol mewn cynghorau yng Nghymru, a'r duedd gyffredinol bod adnoddau ar gyfer llywodraeth leol yn lleihau ar y cyd â galw cynyddol am rai gwasanaethau.

<sup>1</sup> Dangosfwrdd Cyllideb Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd 2019-20

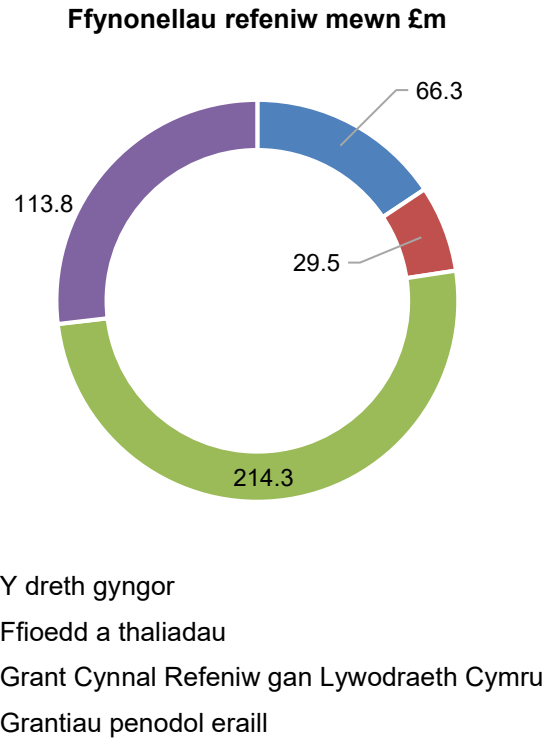
<sup>2</sup> Swyddogion y Cyngor

<sup>3</sup> Datganiad Cyfrifon Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd 2018-19



## Arddangosyn 2: ffynonellau refeniw'r Cyngor

Mae'r siart cylch isod yn dangos faint o arian a gafodd y Cyngor o wahanol ffynonellau cyllid yn ystod 2018-19.



Ffynhonnell – hunanasesiad y Cyngor

- 4 Fe gynhaliom ni'r adolygiad yn ystod y cyfnod rhwng mis Hydref 2019 a mis Rhagfyr 2019.

## Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 5 Ar y cyfan, canfuom fel a ganlyn: **Mae gan y Cyngor sefyllfa ariannol gymharol gryf, ond yn ddiweddar mae wedi cydnabod yr angen i ddatblygu dull mwy strategol a chynaliadwy i gyfnerthu ei sefyllfa.** Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rhesymau canlynol:
  - nid oes gan y Cyngor strategaeth gynaliadwy eto i gefnogi cydnerthedd a chynaliadwyedd ariannol dros y tymor canolig;
  - er bod y Cyngor wedi parhau i danwario yn erbyn ei gyllideb dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei gynlluniau'n amlygu'r ffaith y bydd mantoli'r cyfrifon ariannol dros y blynyddoedd nesaf yn anos;

- er bod y modd y mae'r Cyngor wedi cyflawni arbedion wedi'u cynllunio wedi bod yn gryf dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei allu i barhau i gyflawni arbedion o fewn gwasanaethau sy'n ymateb i'r galw'n dod yn fwy o her;
- mae gan y Cyngor lefel uchel o gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy, er bod y rhan fwyaf ar hyn o bryd wedi'u clustnodi ar gyfer defnydd penodol;
- er bod y dreth gyngor yn cynrychioli cyfran gynyddol o incwm y Cyngor, mae lefel ei ôl-ddyledion yn cynyddu; ac
- wrth roi strategaeth fasnacheiddio newydd ar waith, bydd angen i'r Cyngor reoli risgiau sy'n gysylltiedig ag unrhyw lefelau benthyca uwch.

# Adroddiad manwl

Mae gan y Cyngor sefyllfa ariannol gymharol gryf, ond yn ddiweddar mae wedi cydnabod yr angen i ddatblygu dull mwy strategol a chynaliadwy i gyfnerthu ei sefyllfa

Nid oes gan y Cyngor strategaeth gynaliadwy eto i gefnogi cydnerthedd a chynaliadwyedd ariannol dros y tymor canolig

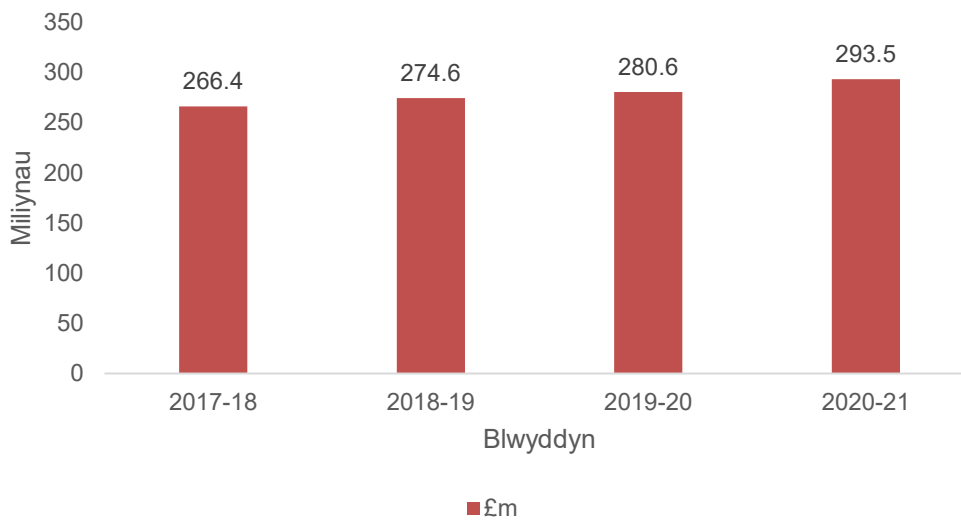
## Pam fod cynllunio ariannol strategol yn bwysig

- 6 Mae strategaeth ariannol eglur a chadarn yn bwysig i adnabod y lefel debygol o gyllid sydd ar gael i gyngor, yn ogystal â lefel ddisgwyliedig y galw am wasanaethau a chost eu darparu. O ystyried y pwysau o ran cyllid a fu'n ddiweddar ac a ragwelir ar gyfer yr holl gynghorau mae hefyd yn bwysig nodi sut y mae'n bwriadu ymateb i'r pwysau hynny, ac yn enwedig sut y bydd yn llenwi bylchau a ragwelir yn y cyllid.

## Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 7 Canfuom fel a ganlyn: Er bod gan y Cyngor amcanestyniad ariannol tymor canolig lefel uchel sy'n nodi ei heriau ariannol allweddol, mae ei ffocws yn bennaf wedi bod ar gyllidebu blynyddol. Mae'r Cyngor wedi cydnabod nad yw wedi datblygu rhaglen newid strategol eto i gyflawni sefyllfa ariannol dros y tymor canolig sy'n fantoledig ac yn gynaliadwy.
- 8 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rhesymau canlynol:
  - Mae cyllideb refeniw net y Cyngor wedi cynyddu rhwng 2017-18 a 2020-21. Fodd bynnag, mewn termau real mae gwariant net y Cyngor ar wasanaethau wedi gostwng yn ystod yr un cyfnod.
  - Mae **Arddangosyn 3** isod yn nodi cyfanswm cyllideb net y Cyngor rhwng 2017-18 a 2020-21:

### Arddangosyn 3: cyfanswm y gyllideb net rhwng 2017-18 a 2020-21<sup>4</sup>

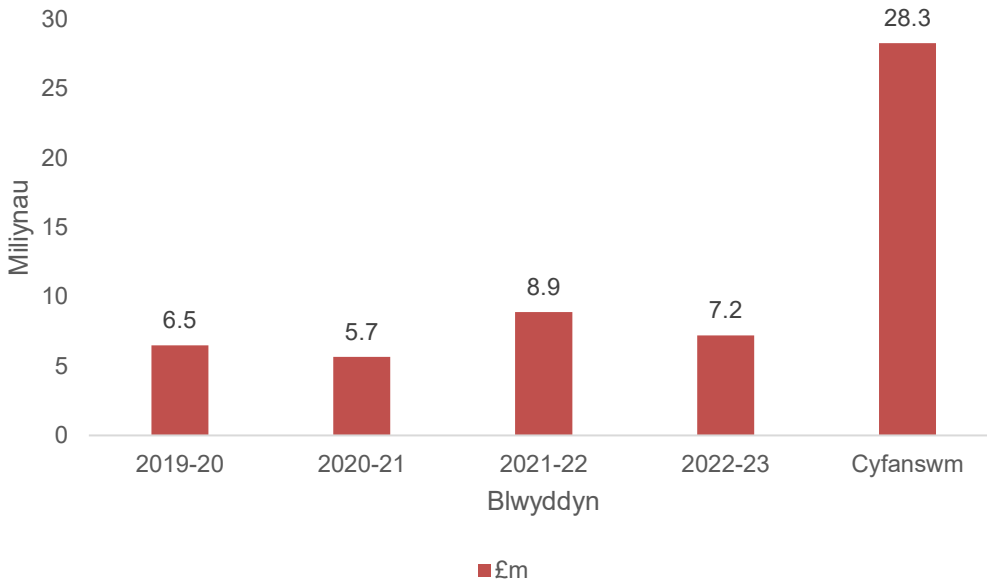


- Mae amcanestyniad ariannol tymor canolig y Cyngor a gyflwynir i aelodau etholedig yn grynodedb lefel-uchel o'r her ariannol sy'n wynebu'r Cyngor rhwng 2020-21 a 2022-23. Ym mis Rhagfyr 2019, cyn cyhoeddi setliad grant cynnal reffeniw Llywodraeth Cymru, roedd y Cyngor yn rhagweld diffyg ar y cyfan o £21.8 miliwn rhwng 2020 a 2023, y mae £5.6 miliwn ohono'n codi yn 2020-21. Mae [Arddangosyn 4](#) isod yn nodi'r bwch a ragamcanir yng nghyllid y Cyngor rhwng 2019 a 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Datganiad Cyfrifon Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd

#### Arddangosyn 4: bwloch o ran cyllid a ragamcanir<sup>5</sup>

Mae'r graff canlynol yn dangos y bwloch o ran cyllid y mae'r Cyngor wedi'i adnabod ar gyfer eleni, a'r tair blynedd ganlynol.



- Roedd amcanestyniad y Cyngor ar gyfer 2020-21 yn seiliedig ar gynnydd o 1% yn y grant cynnal refeniw (GCR) gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Ym mis Rhagfyr 2019, 5.4% oedd setliad GCR terfynol y Cyngor gan Lywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer 2020-21, sy'n cyfateb i gynnydd o £14 miliwn mewn arian parod. Fodd bynnag, mae peth o'r cynnydd hwn yn cynnwys symiau a ddarparwyd yn flaenorol gan Lywodraeth Cymru fel grantiau penodol ar gyfer pensiynau athrawon a'r gwasanaethau cymdeithasol. Gan ystyried hyn, mae'r Cyngor yn amcangyfrif y bydd yn cael £7 miliwn yn fwy nag a ragwelwyd yn wreiddiol gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn 2020-21.
- Mae amcanestyniad y Cyngor yn cynnwys crynodeb o'r tybiaethau allweddol a ddefnyddiwyd i fodelu maint yr her ariannol, gan gynnwys rhagolygon o wariant cyfalaf a refeniw, a phwysau o ran cyflogau a'r galw. Cyflwynir crynodeb byr sy'n manylu ar y pwysau a'u heffaith i Aelodau'r Cyngor hefyd.
- Nid yw'r Cyngor yn ystyried datblygu cynaliadwy'n benodol yn ei amcanestyniad tymor canolig ac nid oes ganddo ddull dros y tymor canolig i unioni'r diffyg a ragwelir ganddo. Nid yw'r Cyngor wedi nodi gweledigaeth strategol ar gyfer cyfeiriad gwasanaethau'r Cyngor yn y dyfodol yng ngoleuni'r diffyg ariannol. Mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod bod angen gwaith

<sup>5</sup> Ffynhonnell – ffigur 2019-20 wedi'i gymryd o gyfarfod Cabinet Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd 12 Rhagfyr 2018 – Eitem ar yr Agenda; Cyllideb 2019-20 ac Amcanestyniadau Ariannol Tymor Canolig. Ffigyrau o 2020-21 ymlaen wedi'u cymryd o gyfarfod Cabinet Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd 20 Rhagfyr 2019 – Eitem ar yr Agenda; Cyllideb Refeniw a Chynigion Drafft y Cynllun Ariannol Tymor Canolig.

pellach i sicrhau bod y gyllideb yn cael ei mantoli dros y tymor canolig gan hefyd gyflawni'r amcanion yn ei Gynllun Corfforaethol a'i amcanion llesiant.

- Er bod y Cyngor wedi adnabod ystod o arbedion wedi'u cynllunio i fynd i'r afael â'i ddiffyg ariannol hyd at 2022-23, nid yw'r arbedion wedi'u cynllunio hynny o £5.7 miliwn yn 2020-21, £759,000 yn 2021-22 a £585,000 yn 2022-23 yn unioni'r diffyg a ragwelir o £21.8 miliwn yn llwyr, ac mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod y bydd cyflawni arbedion yn mynd yn anos.
- Yn flaenorol mae'r Cyngor wedi defnyddio modelau darparu amgen ar gyfer ei wasanaethau hamdden ac eiddo yn ogystal â chydweithio i ddarparu gwasanaethau gwella ysgolion yn rhanbarthol gyda chynghorau eraill trwy'r Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg. Yn ystod ein hadolygiad, mae'r Cyngor wedi dynodi y bydd o bosibl yn rhoi ystyriaeth yn y dyfodol i ystod eang o opsiynau ar gyfer darparu gwasanaethau'n gynaliadwy, ond nid yw wedi cytuno ar strategaeth i wneud hynny eto.
- Nid yw'r Cyngor wedi cynnal adolygiad ar draws y Cyngor cyfan o wasanaethau statudol a dewisol i oleuo'i amcanestyniadau ariannol cyfredol. Rydym wedi canfod tystiolaeth o adolygiad o'r fath o wasanaethau statudol a dewisol yn ein Hadolygiad Dilydol o lechyd yr Amgylchedd<sup>6</sup>.

## Er bod y Cyngor wedi parhau i danwario yn erbyn ei gyllideb dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei gynlluniau'n amlygu'r ffaith y bydd mantoli'r cyfrifon ariannol dros y blynyddoedd nesaf yn anos

### Pam ei bod yn bwysig rhagweld gwariant yn gywir

- 9 Mae'n bwysig bod gorwariant a thanwariant yn cael eu cadw dan reolaeth a bod gwariant gwirioneddol mor agos â phosibl at y lefelau y cynlluniwyd ar eu cyfer. Mae Cyngor sy'n methu â rhagweld gwariant yn gywir a chynllunio'n gywir ar ei gyfer yn wynebu risg o greu pwysau ariannol nas rhagwelwyd a allai beryglu'r gallu i bennu cyllideb fantoledig. Gall patrymau sylweddol o danwariant fod yn lleihau gallu cyngor i gyflawni ei amcanion allweddol neu gyflawni ei gyfrifoldebau statudol.

### Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 10 Dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, ar y cyfan mae'r Cyngor wedi tanwario yn erbyn ei gyllideb flynyddol. Fodd bynnag, o fewn y sefyllfa hon o danwariant ar y cyfan, mae'r sefyllfa alldro ariannol wedi nodi'n gyson bod gorwariannau parhaus mewn nifer o feysydd gwasanaeth allweddol gan gynnwys gofal cymdeithasol ac addysg.

<sup>6</sup> Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru, [Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd – Adolygiad dilydol o lechyd yr Amgylchedd, 2020](#)

Mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod, yng ngoleuni'r pwysau a ragwelir wrth ymateb i'r galw, y bydd cyflawni yn erbyn ei gyllideb yn fwy o her.

11 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rheswm canlynol:

- yn y ddwy flynedd ddiwethaf fe gyflawnodd y Cyngor yn erbyn ei gyllideb ac mae **Arddangosyn 5** isod yn nodi'r perfformiad hwn.

#### Arddangosyn 5: swm y gorwariant/tanwariant yn berthynol i gyfanswm y gyllideb refeniw net

Mae'r arddangosyn canlynol yn dangos swm y gorwariant neu'r tanwariant ar gyfer cyllideb refeniw net y Cyngor ar y cyfan am y ddwy flynedd ddiwethaf a hefyd y sefyllfa diwedd blwyddyn a ragwelir ganddo ar gyfer 2019-20 yn seiliedig ar y sefyllfa ym mis Hydref 2019.

	<b>Cyllideb Wreiddiol y gyllideb refeniw net</b>	<b>Alldro Gwirioneddol y gyllideb refeniw net</b>	<b>Swm y gwarged/ gorwariant ar y cyfan</b>	<b>Gwahaniaeth canrannol o'i gymharu â'r gyllideb refeniw net</b>
2017-18 <sup>71</sup>	£266.4m	£265.1m	Tanwariant o £1.3m	Tanwariant o 0.5%
2018-19 <sup>82</sup>	£274.6m	£272.2m	Tanwariant o £2.4m	Tanwariant o 0.9%
2019-20 yn seiliedig ar y sefyllfa ar ddiwedd mis Hydref 2019 <sup>9</sup>	£280.6m	£281.3m	Gorwariant o £0.7m	Gorwariant o 0.2%

- O un flwyddyn i'r llall bu gorwariannau sylweddol o fewn meysydd gwasanaeth (heb gynnwys ysgolion) y Cyngor, mewn meysydd megis lleoliadau y tu allan i'r sir ar gyfer plant sy'n derbyn gofal, gofal oedolion yn y gymuned, anghenion dysgu ychwanegol a maethu annibynnol. Mae'r pwysau ariannol yn y meysydd hyn yn risg barhaus i sefyllfa ariannol y Cyngor.

<sup>7</sup> Data 2017-18 wedi'i gymryd o Adroddiadau Alldro'r Gyllideb Refeniw a gyflwynwyd i'r Cabinet ym mis Mehefin 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Data 2018-19 wedi'i gymryd o Adroddiadau Alldro'r Gyllideb Refeniw a gyflwynwyd i'r Cabinet ym mis Mehefin 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Data 2019-20 wedi'i gymryd o gyfarfod Cabinet Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd 20 Rhagfyr 2019 – Eitem ar yr Agenda; Cyllideb Refeniw a Chynigion Drafft y Cynllun Ariannol Tymor Canolig Atodiad 8 Cydnerthedd Ariannol.

- Mae'r tanwariannau ar y cyfan yn y tabl uchod wedi cael eu hategu gan ffactorau megis gwargedau'r Dreth Gyngor, tanwariannau yn erbyn Cynllun Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor a chyllidebau hapddigwyddiadau refeniw, a thanwariannau yn y gwasanaethau corfforaethol, sydd wedi gwrthbwysu'r pwysau uchod. Fodd bynnag, mae llawer o'r tanwariannau hyn yn ansicr o ran eu natur ac ni ellir gwarantu y byddant yn parhau yn y dyfodol.
- Mae cyllidebau dirprwyedig ysgolion dan bwysau sylweddol hefyd gyda gorwariant rhagamcanol o £3.1 miliwn yn 2019-20. Byddai hyn yn golygu bod cronfeydd wrth gefn ysgolion ar y cyfan yn cwmpo islaw sero ar ddiwedd y flwyddyn. Gallai gorwariannau o'r fath gan ysgolion ychwanegu pwysau pellach at sefyllfa ariannol y Cyngor.
- Er bod y Cyngor wedi adnabod ei brif bwysau cyllidebol ar hyn o bryd, nid yw wedi nodi sut y mae'n bwriadu mynd ati'n strategol i reoli'r pwysau cyllidebol hyn mewn ffordd gynaliadwy.
- Yn y 18 mis diwethaf, mae'r Cyngor wedi ceisio mynd i'r afael â'r pwysau ar ei gyllideb a achosir gan leoliadau preswyl y tu allan i'r sir ar gyfer plant sy'n derbyn gofal. Yn 2019, fe wnaethom adolygu camau gweithredu'r Cyngor i fynd i'r afael â'r pwysau hynny ar y gyllideb a chanfuom, er ei fod wedi cymryd rhai mesurau effeithiol i fynd i'r afael â'r pwysau ar ei gyllideb a achosir gan leoliadau y tu allan i'r sir, fod pwysau parhaus sylweddol yn dal i fodoli a bod angen rhagor o waith i ddatblygu dull hirdymor cynaliadwy.

**Er bod y modd y mae'r Cyngor wedi cyflawni arbedion wedi'u cynllunio wedi bod yn gryf dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae ei allu i barhau i gyflawni arbedion o fewn gwasanaethau sy'n ymateb i'r galw'n dod yn fwy o her**

**Pam fod y gallu i adnabod a chyflawni cynlluniau arbedion yn bwysig**

- 12 Mae'r gallu i adnabod meysydd lle gellir gwneud arbedion ariannol penodol, ac i wneud yr arbedion hynny wedyn, yn agwedd allweddol ar sicrhau cynaliadwyedd ariannol parhaus yn erbyn cefnlen o bwysau ariannol cynyddol. Lle nad yw cynlluniau arbedion yn cael eu cyflawni gall hyn arwain at orwariannau sy'n golygu bod angen defnyddio cronfeydd wrth gefn cyfyngedig gan gynyddu lefel yr arbedion y mae eu hangen ar gyfer blynyddoedd yn y dyfodol i wneud iawn am hyn. Lle nad yw cynlluniau arbedion yn cael eu cyflawni a lle mae'n ofynnol i feysydd gwasanaeth wneud arbedion heb eu cynllunio, mae hyn yn cynyddu'r risg naill ai na fydd arbedion yn gyson â blaenoriaethau'r Cyngor, neu o ddatrysiadau 'byrdymor' nad ydynt yn gynaliadwy dros y tymor canolig.

**Yr hyn a ganfuom**

- 13 Dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf mae'r Cyngor wedi cyflawni lefel uchel o'i arbedion wedi'u cynllunio. Fodd bynnag, mae gwasanaethau sy'n ymateb i'r galw megis



gofal cymdeithasol ac addysg bellach yn ei chael yn fwy o her cyflawni arbedion wedi'u cynllunio.

14 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rheswm isod:

- cyflawnodd y Cyngor 92% o'i arbedion wedi'u cynllunio yn 2018-19, fel a ddangosir yn **Arddangosyn 6** isod.

### Arddangosyn 6: arbedion a gyflawnwyd yn ystod 2018-19 fel canran o'r arbedion wedi'u cynllunio <sup>10</sup>

Mae'r arddangosyn canlynol yn nodi faint o arian yr oedd y Cyngor yn bwriadu ei arbed trwy arbedion wedi'u cynllunio yn ystod 2018-19 a faint o hyn y gwnaeth ei arbed mewn gwirionedd.

<b>£8.6m</b>	<b>£7.9m</b>	<b>£0.7m</b>	<b>92%</b>
Cyfanswm yr arbedion wedi'u cynllunio	Arbedion wedi'u cynllunio a gyflawnwyd	Arbedion wedi'u cynllunio nas cyflawnwyd	Canran yr arbedion a gyflawnwyd

- Addysg a gofal cymdeithasol oedd yn rhoi cyfrif am y mwyafrif o'r arbedion nas cyflawnwyd ac mae'r meysydd gwasanaeth hynny'n cynnwys rhai o'r prif bwysau ar gyllideb y Cyngor.
- Mae'r Cyngor wedi adnabod ystod o arbedion wedi'u cynllunio i fynd i'r afael â'r diffyg yn ei gyllideb o £21.8 miliwn tan 2022-23. Fodd bynnag, mae lefel yr arbedion hynny y tu hwnt i 2020-21 yn £1.3 miliwn sy'n sylweddol is na'r lefel sy'n ofynnol ac mae hyn yn dangos bod ei ddull o fynd i'r afael â'i ddiffyg ariannol yn fyrdymor ar y cyfan. Mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod y bydd yn anos o lawer cyflawni arbedion yn y dyfodol.
- O'r £7.0 miliwn o arbedion sydd wedi'u cynllunio ar gyfer 2019-20, bydd £1.5 miliwn yn cael eu cyflawni trwy addasiad cyfrifyddu technegol (Darpariaeth Isafswm Refeniw) ac mae £879,000 yn ostyngiad yng nghynllun gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor. Roedd adroddiadau monitro'r Cyngor yn dangos ei fod, ar ddiwedd mis Hydref 2019, ar y trywydd iawn i gyflawni 93% o'i arbedion wedi'u cynllunio yn 2019-20 gyda'r mwyafrif o'r rhai na fyddent yn cael eu cyflawni ym maes gofal cymdeithasol.
- Er mwyn cyflawni'r arbedion angenrheidiol rhwng 2020-21 a 2022-23, mae'r Cyngor wedi cydnabod y bydd angen iddo ddefnyddio dull gwahanol i'r un y mae wedi'i ddefnyddio hyd yma. Mae'r Cyngor wedi dynodi ei fod yn bwriadu

<sup>10</sup> Ffynhonnell – Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd, 2019

cynnal adolygiad gwraidd a changen o'i wyth maes gwasanaeth i helpu i gynyddu ei gydnerthedd ariannol.

- Ar y cyfan, roedd gan gynlluniau arbedion ar gyfer 2019-20 a adolygwyd gennym ddata a thybiaethau tanategol cadarn. Fodd bynnag, mewn nifer fach o achosion nid yw'r Cyngor yn rhagweld y bydd yn cyflawni'r arbedion wedi'u cynllunio i ddechrau. Mewn ymateb, byddai angen i'r Cyngor felly ohirio'r arbedion hynny i flynyddoedd dilynol neu eu cydnabod fel pwysau cyllidebol yn y dyfodol, y mae'r naill neu'r llall yn ychwanegu pwysau pellach at sefyllfa ariannol y Cyngor.
- Roedd cynigion drafft ar gyfer arbedion yn 2020-21 a adolygwyd gennym yn amrywio o ran lefel y tybiaethau manwl a'r data tanategol ac roedd llawer o'r cynigion yn nodi effaith ddisgwyliedig gyfyngedig o ganlyniad i'r lefel is o gyllid.
- Er bod cynigion drafft ar gyfer arbedion yn cyfeirio at Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol 2015, nid yw'n glir sut y mae'r Cyngor wedi defnyddio egwyddorion y Ddeddf yn gyson i oleuo penderfyniadau ynglŷn â'r arbedion hynny. Mae'r Cyngor hefyd yn cynnal asesiadau o degwch cynigion ar gyfer arbedion ac o'u heffaith ar gydraddoldeb.

## Mae gan y Cyngor lefel uchel o gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy, er bod y rhan fwyaf ar hyn o bryd wedi'u clustnodi ar gyfer defnydd penodol

### Pam ei bod yn bwysig rheoli cronfeydd wrth gefn yn gynaliadwy

- 15 Mae lefelau iach o gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy yn rhwyd ddiogelwch bwysig i ategu cynaliadwyedd ariannol. Yn ogystal â bod ar gael i ariannu pwysau annisgwyl o ran cyllid, gall cronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy fod yn ffynhonnell cyllid bwysig i ariannu mentrau 'buddsoddi i arbed' sydd wedi'u bwriadu i leihau cost barhaus darparu gwasanaethau hefyd. Mae cynghorau sy'n dangos patrwm o ddefnydd heb ei gynllunio o gronfeydd wrth gefn i lenwi bylchau yn eu cyllideb refeniw sy'n arwain at ostyngiadau ym malansau eu cronfeydd wrth gefn yn lleihau eu cydnerthedd i ariannu pwysau cyllidebol nas rhagwelwyd mewn blynyddoedd yn y dyfodol.

### Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 16 Canfuom nad yw'r Cyngor wedi gwneud unrhyw ddefnydd heb ei gynllunio o gronfeydd wrth gefn yn y gorffennol i ariannu pwysau ar y gyllideb refeniw a'i fod wedi cynyddu lefel ei gronfeydd wrth gefn ar y cyfan dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Dim ond o 2018-19 y mae'r Cyngor wedi dechrau defnyddio cronfeydd wrth gefn i fantoli ei gyllideb.

17 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rhesymau canlynol:

- Mae gan y Cyngor hanes cryf o warchod ei gronfeydd wrth gefn. Rhwng 2012-13 a 2017-18, fe ychwanegodd y Cyngor at falensau ei gronfeydd wrth gefn.
- Yn ôl ei Ddatganiad Cyfrifon ar gyfer 2018-19 roedd gan y Cyngor gyfanswm o £103.0 miliwn mewn cronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy, a hynny'n cynnwys:
  - £47.9 miliwn o 'gronfeydd wrth gefn esmwytháu', a neilltuwyd gan y Cyngor i esmwytháu amrywiadau mewn cyllid dros gyfnodau o amser (mae £45.5 miliwn o hyn yn ymwneud â dau gynllun Menter Cyllid Preifat a fydd yn cael eu dirwyn i ben dros y 18 mlynedd nesaf);
  - £28.5 miliwn o 'gronfeydd wrth gefn galluogi', a gedwir ar gyfer buddsoddi posibl yn y dyfodol gan gynnwys cronfa wrth gefn Buddsoddi i Arbed o £11.1 miliwn a derbyniadau cyfalaf defnyddiadwy o £8.3 miliwn;
  - £11.5 miliwn o 'gronfeydd wrth gefn risg', a ddelir i liniaru effeithiau unrhyw risgiau penodol a nodwyd yn flaenorol gan y Cyngor;
  - £6.5 miliwn o Gronfa'r Cyngor, sydd ar gael at unrhyw ddiben;
  - £5.5 miliwn o 'gronfeydd wrth gefn eraill', a ddelir ar gyfer prosiectau/materion penodol; a
  - £3.1 miliwn o falensau cronfeydd wrth gefn sy'n ymwneud ag ysgolion unigol.
- Er y gallai balansau unrhyw rai o'r cronfeydd wrth gefn uchod gael eu cymhwyso gan y Cyngor ar gyfer defnydd arall pe bai angen, maent eisoes wedi'u clustnodi i ryw raddau ar gyfer diben penodol yn y dyfodol (ac eithrio Cronfa'r Cyngor, sydd â swm wrth gefn o £6.5 miliwn). Felly gallai defnyddio cronfeydd wrth gefn wedi'u clustnodi o'r fath arwain at gwtogi ar weithgarwch arfaethedig yn y dyfodol neu oedi cyn ei gyflawni, neu at reoli risgiau'n amhriodol, oni bai eu bod yn cael eu hail-lenwi'n ddiweddarach.
- Ar ben hynny, mae'r Cyngor yn nodi nad yw'r cronfeydd wrth gefn canlynol o'r rhestr uchod ar gael yn rhwydd ar gyfer defnydd arall: cronfeydd wrth gefn ysgolion o £3.1 miliwn (ar gyfer defnydd penodol gan ysgolion unigol yn unig), a chronfeydd wrth gefn derbyniadau cyfalaf o £8.3 miliwn (sy'n bennaf yn gyfyngedig i gael eu defnyddio ar brosiectau cyfalaf). Mae hyn yn arwain at gyfanswm o £91.1 miliwn o 'gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy' y gallai'r Cyngor gael mynediad atynt, ond y byddai'n rhaid iddo reoli effaith defnydd o'r fath o ganlyniad. Mae **Arddangosyn 7** isod yn nodi lefel y Cyngor o gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy yn erbyn ei gyllideb flynyddol yn 2018-19.

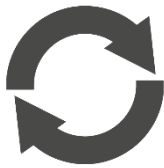
## Arddangosyn 7: swm y cronfeydd wrth gefn o'i gymharu â'r gyllideb flynyddol, 2018-19<sup>11</sup>

Mae'r arddangosyn hwn yn dangos swm y cronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy a oedd gan y Cyngor yn ystod 2018-19 o'i gymharu â'i gyllideb referniw net ar gyfer yr un flwyddyn.



**£274.6m**

Cyllideb Referniw Net



**£91.1m**

Cyfanswm Cronfeydd wrth  
Gefn Defnyddiadwy



**33%**

Cyfanswm Cronfeydd wrth  
Gefn Defnyddiadwy fel  
canran o'r Gyllideb  
Referniw Net

- 2018-19 oedd y tro cyntaf dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf i'r Cyngor ddefnyddio'i gronfeydd wrth gefn i fantoli ei gyllideb. Defnyddiodd £1.2 miliwn yn 2018-19, ac mae'n bwriadu defnyddio dim ond £900,000 yn 2019-20 a £459,000 yn 2020-21. Mae'r Cyngor yn rhagweld y bydd ei gronfeydd wrth gefn defnyddiadwy'n gostwng i £71.5 miliwn yn 2019-20 a £66.0 miliwn yn 2020-21.
- Mae gan y Cyngor strategaeth cronfeydd wrth gefn gyhoeddedig ac mae aelodau etholedig yn cael eu hysbysu ynghylch sefyllfa'r Cyngor mewn perthynas â'r holl gronfeydd wrth gefn wrth gytuno ar gyllidebau'r Cyngor yn flynyddol. Yn 2019-20, fe gytunodd aelodau etholedig i gynnal Cronfa'r Gyngor ar lefel o £6.5 miliwn, a hynny'n cael ei ategu gan ddarpariaeth hapddigwyddiadau o £1.5 miliwn yn y gyllideb. Canfu asesiad gan y Cyngor fod y risgiau yn y gyllideb yn ddigon isel i alluogi'r lefel isel hon o gronfa wrth gefn gyffredinol, er ei bod yn is na'r 5% o wariant referniw net heb gynnwys ysgolion (£9.2 miliwn) y mae'r Cyngor yn ei ddefnyddio fel egwyddor arweiniol wrth gyfrifo'r lefel isaf ar gyfer Cronfa'r Cyngor.

## Er bod y dreth gyngor yn cynrychioli cyfran gynyddol o incwm y Cyngor, mae lefel ei ôl-ddyledion yn cynyddu

### Pam fod cyfraddau casglu'r dreth gyngor yn bwysig

- 18 Bydd methu â chasglu swm y dreth gyngor sy'n ddyledus i'r Cyngor yn arwain at lai o incwm. Gall hyn yn ei dro gynyddu'r pwysau ariannol ar y Cyngor a'i gwneud yn

<sup>11</sup> Ffynhonnell – Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd, 2019

ofynnol iddo wneud arbedion ychwanegol. Er nad y dreth gyngor yw ffynhonnell cyllid fwyaf cyngorau yng Nghymru, mae'n dal i fod yn ffynhonnell incwm allweddol.

### Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 19 Canfuom fel a ganlyn: Er bod y gyfran o gyllideb y Cyngor a ariennir gan y Dreth Gyngor yn cynyddu, mae ôl-ddyledion treth gyngor wedi cynyddu dros amser.
- 20 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rhesymau canlynol:
  - Fe bennodd y Cyngor ei sylfaen dreth ar gyfer 2019-20 yn seiliedig ar gynnydd o 1.2% (£58.5 miliwn yn 2018-19 i £59.2 miliwn yn 2019-20), a oedd yn sylweddol uwch na'r cyfartaledd ar gyfer Cymru gyfan o 0.5% i 0.8% dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Mae hyn wedi arwain at gynnydd o £634,000 yn incwm y dreth gyngor ond o ganlyniad fe arweiniodd at ostyngiad o £391,000 yn y cynnydd yn y Grant Cynnal Refeniw gan Lywodraeth Cymru.
  - Mewn termau real, mae'r ganran o'r gyllideb gros a ariennir gan y dreth gyngor wedi codi o 9.2% yn 2008-09 i 13.3% yn 2018-19. Er bod y gyfran o'r gwariant gros a ariennir gan y dreth gyngor wedi cynyddu, mae'n dal i fod yr ail isaf ar draws yr holl gynghorau yng Nghymru. Yn ôl amcangyfrifon y Cyngor, pe bai'n cynyddu'r dreth gyngor i'r lefel gyfartalog ledled Cymru, byddai hyn yn cyfateb i tua £7 miliwn o gyllid ychwanegol. Fodd bynnag, byddai angen cynnydd o oddeutu 18% yn y dreth gyngor i gyflawni hyn.
  - Rhwng 2008-09 a 2018-19, mae'r Cyngor wedi gwella'r ganran o'r dreth gyngor y mae'n ei chasglu'n flynyddol o 95.8% i 96.6%. Er gwaethaf y gwelliant hwn, mae ôl-ddyledion y dreth gyngor wedi cynyddu o £2.2 miliwn yn 2008-09 i £4.6 miliwn yn 2018-19, sy'n gynnydd o 109%. Mae hyn yn cymharu â chynnydd yn nebyd y dreth gyngor bob blwyddyn o 69% dros yr un cyfnod. Dros y cyfnod hwn, mewn termau real mae balans ôl-ddyledion y Cyngor wedi cwmpo o'r 4ydd isaf yng Nghymru i'r 12fed isaf.
  - Caiff amcanestyniad ariannol tymor canolig y Cyngor (sy'n nodi diffyg ar y cyfan o £21.8 miliwn rhwng 2020 a 2023) ei foddelu ar sail cynnydd blynyddol o 4% yn y dreth gyngor tan 2022-23 ond mae'r Cyngor llawn yn ystyried ac yn pennu lefel y dreth gyngor yn flynyddol. Mae'r amcanestyniadau hynny'n is na'r codiadau yn y dreth gyngor y cytunwyd arnynt yn y ddwy flynedd ariannol ddiwethaf (5.95% yn 2019-20 a 4.8% yn 2018-19). Ym mis Rhagfyr 2019, fe gytunodd y Cabinet i ymgynghori ynghylch cynnydd yn y dreth gyngor o 7.95%

## Arddangosyn 8: cyfraddau casglu'r dreth gyngor <sup>12</sup>

Mae'r arddangosyn hwn yn dangos y ganran o'r dreth gyngor a oedd yn ddyledus a gasglwyd gan y Cyngor yn ystod 2018-19.



Roedd yr arian a gasglwyd o'r Dreth Gyngor ar 31 Mawrth 2019 yn **£64.4m** (96.6%) o'i gymharu â debyd casgladwy o **£66.7m**

## Wrth roi strategaeth fasnacheiddio newydd ar waith, bydd angen i'r Cyngor reoli risgiau sy'n gysylltiedig ag unrhyw lefelau benthyca uwch

### Pam ei bod yn bwysig cynnal lefelau benthyca cynaliadwy

- 21 Gall benthyca fod yn ffynhonnell cyllid werthfawr, er enghraifft i ariannu prosiectau cyfalaf ar raddfa fawr megis ysgolion neu ganolfannau hamdden newydd. Fodd bynnag, gall cost ad-dalu arian a fenthyciwyd gan gynnwys costau llog gael effaith hirdymor ar gyllidebau refeniw parhaus. Mae cynghorau sy'n methu â tharo cydbwysedd priodol rhwng manteision a chostau benthyca ar y naill law a'u cyllidebau refeniw cyfredol a rhagamcanol ar y llaw arall yn wynebu risg o leihau swm y cyllid sydd ar gael i ddarparu gwasanaethau. Mae benthyca i ariannu gweithgarwch masnachol yn cynnig y potensial i greu incwm ychwanegol i ariannu gwasanaethau'r cyngor; fodd bynnag, gall hefyd ddwyn risgiau sylweddol a fyddai'n gysylltiedig ag unrhyw weithgarwch masnachol.

<sup>12</sup> Ffynhonnell: StatsCymru – Cyfraddau Casglu'r Dreth Gyngor yng Nghymru: 2018-19

## Yr hyn a ganfuom

- 22 Canfuom fel a ganlyn: Wrth roi strategaeth fasnacheiddio newydd sy'n dod i'r amlwg ar waith, bydd angen i'r Cyngor reoli'r risgiau cysylltiedig o ran benthycia.
- 23 Daethom i'r casgliad hwn am y rhesymau canlynol:
- Incwm cyfyngedig sydd gan y Cyngor o eiddo masnachol, 0.4% o'i gyllideb gwariant net ar y cyfan. Yn 2018-19, datgelodd y Cyngor incwm rhent o £1.3 miliwn o eiddo buddsoddi yr oedd ei werth yn £7.8 miliwn.
  - Yn 2018-19, roedd gan y Cyngor gyfanswm benthyciadau a oedd yn dal yn ddyledus o £192.8 miliwn o gymysgedd o ffynonellau gan gynnwys y Bwrdd Benthyciadau Gwaith Cyhoeddus (PWLb), benthyciadau Opsiwn Rhoddwr Benthyciadau Opsiwn Cymerwr Benthyciadau (LOBO), a benthyciadau hirdymor eraill. Ar ben y swm yma, mae gan y Cyngor rwymedigaethau pellach i'w cyflawni dan drefniadau Menter Cyllid Preifat (PFI) a phrydlesu.
  - Roedd cost benthycia'r Cyngor ar y cyfan yn 2018-19 yn 9.1% o gyfanswm ei gyllideb refeniw net, a oedd yn uchel o'i gymharu â chynghorau eraill Cymru. Un o brif ysgogiadau'r gost benthycia hon yw rhwymedigaethau Menter Cyllid Preifat y Cyngor, sydd eu hunain yn cyfrannu dros £5 miliwn o gostau llog blynyddol ar gyfer y Cyngor (allan o gyfanswm costau llog blynyddol o £13.6 miliwn).
  - Mae'r Cyngor wedi gwneud ymdrechion blaenorol i gyfyngu ar ei lefelau benthycia hyd y gellir trwy ddefnyddio 'benthycia mewnol' (hynny yw, defnyddio adnoddau mewnol sydd ar gael yn gyntaf cyn benthycia gan endidau eraill). Dros amser, bydd angen i'r Cyngor fenthycia gan drydydd partion i gymryd lle benthyciadau mewnol blaenorol, er mwyn ariannu ei weithgarwch arfaethedig. Bydd gwneud hynny'n dwyn costau llog pellach yn y tymor canolig a hir. Felly bydd angen i'r Cyngor roi ystyriaeth ofalus i fforddiadwyedd costau llog pellach wrth benderfynu a yw'n mynd i gymryd benthyciadau allanol pellach y tu hwnt i'r hyn sydd eisoes yn yr arfaeth.
  - Ym mis Ebrill 2019, fe gytunodd Cabinet y Cyngor ar strategaeth fasnacheiddio sydd wedi'i bwriadu i gyfrannu at unioni'r diffyg ariannol y mae'r Cyngor yn ei wynebu. Mae'r strategaeth yn cynnwys tri phrif ddull:
    - darparu gwasanaethau cyfredol ar sail fwy masnachol;
    - darparu gwasanaethau newydd gan y Cyngor; a
    - buddsoddi mewn eiddo, yn eiddo masnachol a phreswyl.
  - Fe gytunodd y Cabinet i archwilio pob un o'r meysydd hyn ac i archwilio achosion busnes cyn gwneud unrhyw benderfyniadau. Cytunodd yn ei Strategaeth Gyfalaf y byddai'n sefydlu cronfa buddsoddi mewn eiddo sy'n werth £50 miliwn a fydd yn cael ei hariannu trwy fenthyciadau ychwanegol, ond ni ymgwymerwyd ag unrhyw fuddsoddiadau o'r fath eto. Cydnabu'r Cabinet fod dull o'r fath yn creu risgiau ariannol ychwanegol gyda'r cynnydd sylweddol yn nyled hirdymor y Cyngor ac ansicrwydd posibl ynghylch yr adenillion ar unrhyw fuddsoddiadau. O ystyried y risgiau hyn, fe gytunodd y

Cabinet ar fframwaith lle bydd yn adolygu ac yn asesu cyfleoedd i asesu lefel y risg a budd o fewn paramedrau y cytunwyd arnynt.

### Arddangosyn 9: Arian a fenthyciwyd gan y Cyngor <sup>13</sup>

Mae'r arddangosyn isod yn dangos cyfanswm yr arian y mae'r Cyngor wedi'i fenthycu i ariannu buddsoddiadau masnachol, yn ogystal â chost yr holl fenthyciadau sydd gan y Cyngor fel cyfran o'i gyllideb referniw net.



**£0m**

Swm y benthyciadau i ariannu buddsoddiadau masnachol



**9.1%**

Cost cyfanswm y benthyciadau fel cyfran o'r gyllideb referniw net 2018-19<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ffynhonnell – Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd, 2019

<sup>14</sup> Mae'r ffigur hwn yn cynnwys costau llog Mentrau Cyllid Preifat a'r Ddarpariaeth Isafswm Referniw





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# Financial Sustainability Assessment – **Newport City Council**

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# Summary report

## Summary

### What we reviewed and why

- 1 The project sought to assess the sustainability of councils' short to medium-term financial position.
- 2 This included a focus on the financial strategy of each council as well as reviewing financial 'indicators' of each council's financial position in relation to:
  - Performance against budget
  - Delivery of savings plans
  - Use of reserves
  - Council tax
  - Borrowing

### Exhibit 1: about the Council

This exhibit sets out some background information on the Council's net revenue budget, the number of staff it employs and the value of its fixed assets.



**The Council's net revenue budget for 2019-20 was £280.6m<sup>1</sup>**



**The Council employs around 5,750 people, including around 1,350 teachers<sup>2</sup>**



**The Council's fixed assets as at 31 March 2019 were £503m<sup>3</sup>**

- 3 We undertook this assessment because we identified financial sustainability as a risk to councils putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources. In part, this was informed by the recent experiences of some councils in England, our knowledge of the financial situation in councils in Wales, and the general trend of decreasing resources for local government combined with rising demand for some services.

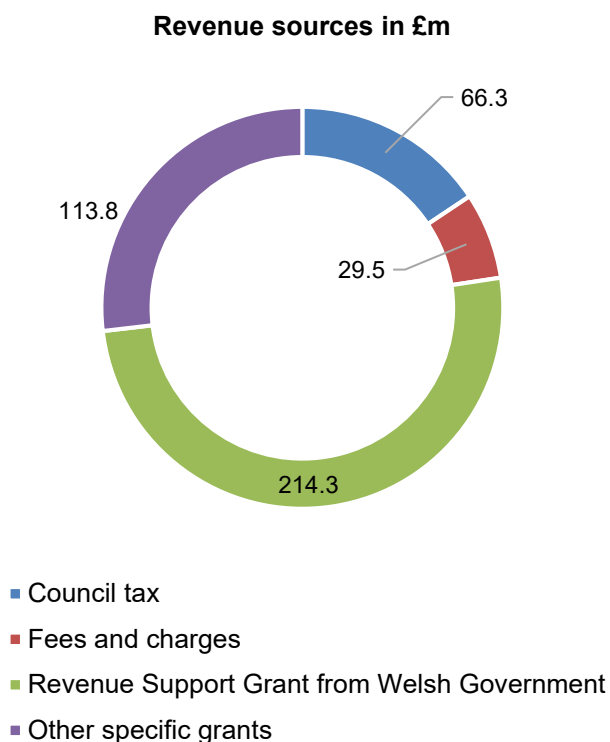
<sup>1</sup> Newport City Council Budget Dashboard 2019-20

<sup>2</sup> Council Officers

<sup>3</sup> Newport City Council 2018-19 Statement of Accounts

## Exhibit 2: the Council's sources of revenue

The pie chart below shows how much money the Council received from different funding sources during 2018-19.



Source – Council self-assessment

4 We undertook the review during the period October 2019 to December 2019.

## What we found

- 5 Overall we found that: **The Council has a relatively strong financial position, but has recently recognised the need to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach to consolidate its position.** We reached this conclusion because:
- the Council does not yet have a sustainable strategy to support financial resilience and sustainability over the medium term;
  - while the Council has continued to underspend against its budget in recent years, its plans highlight that maintaining financial balance over the coming years will be more difficult;
  - while the Council's delivery of planned savings has been strong in recent years, its ability to continue to deliver savings within demand-led services is becoming more challenging;

- the Council has a high level of useable reserves, although most are currently earmarked for specific use;
- while council tax represents a growing proportion of the Council's income, its level of arrears is increasing; and
- in implementing its commercialisation strategy, the Council will need to manage risks associated with any increased borrowing.



# Detailed report

The Council has a relatively strong financial position, but has recently recognised the need to develop a more strategic and sustainable approach to consolidate its position

The Council does not yet have a sustainable strategy to support financial resilience and sustainability over the medium term

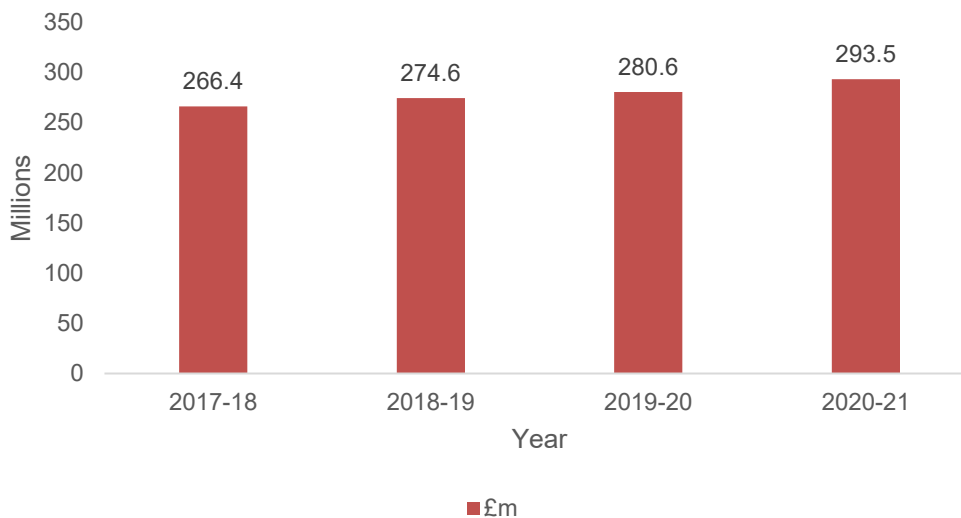
## Why strategic financial planning is important

- 6 A clear and robust financial strategy is important to identify the likely level of funding available to a council, as well as the anticipated level of demand for, and cost of, providing services. Given the recent and anticipated funding pressures facing all councils it is also important to identify how it intends to respond to those pressures, and particularly how they will meet projected funding gaps.

## What we found

- 7 We found that although the Council has a high-level medium-term financial projection that sets out its key financial challenges, its focus has primarily been on annual budgeting. The Council has recognised that it has not yet developed a strategic change programme to deliver a balanced and sustainable medium-term financial position.
- 8 We reached this conclusion because:
  - The Council's net revenue budget has increased between 2017-18 and 2020-21. However, in real terms the Council has seen a reduction in its net revenue expenditure on services during the same period.
  - **Exhibit 3** below sets out the Council's total net budget between 2017-18 and 2020-21:

Exhibit 3: total net budget between 2017-18 and 2020-21<sup>4</sup>

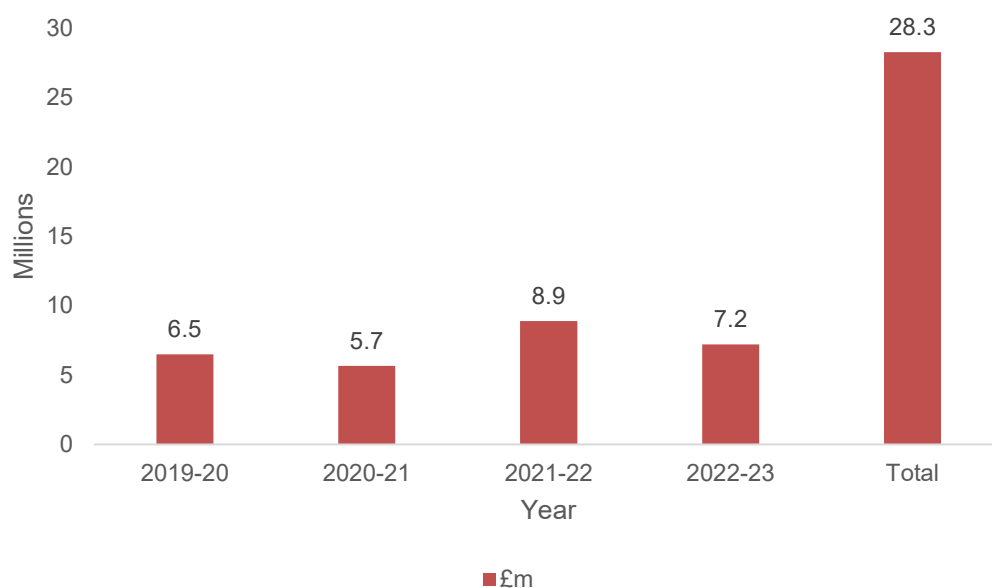


- The Council's medium term financial projection presented to elected members is a high-level summary of the financial challenge facing the Council between 2020-21 and 2022-23. In December 2019, prior to the announcement of the Welsh Government's revenue support grant settlement, the Council projected an overall deficit of £21.8 million between 2020 and 2023, of which £5.6 million arises in 2020-21. Exhibit 4 below sets out the Council's projected funding gap between 2019 and 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Newport City Council Statement of Accounts

#### Exhibit 4: projected funding gap<sup>5</sup>

The following graph shows the funding gap that the Council has identified for this year, and the following three years.



- The Council's projection for 2020-21 was based on a 1% increase in revenue support grant (RSG) from the Welsh Government. In December 2019, the Council's final RSG settlement from the Welsh Government for 2020-21 was 5.4%, which equates to a £14 million cash increase. However, some of this increase includes amounts previously provided by the Welsh Government as specific grants for teachers' pensions and social services. Taking this into account, the Council estimates that it will receive £7 million more than it originally anticipated from the Welsh Government in 2020-21.
- The Council's projection contains a summary of the key assumptions used to model the size of the financial challenge, including forecasts of capital and revenue expenditure, and pay and demand pressures. Brief details of the pressures and their impact are also presented to Council Members.
- The Council does not explicitly consider sustainable development in its medium-term projection and it does not have a medium-term approach to close its forecast deficit. The Council has not set out a strategic vision for the future direction of council services in light of the financial deficit. The Council recognises that further work is required to ensure the budget is balanced

<sup>5</sup> Source – 2019-20 figure taken from Newport City Council 12 December 2018 Cabinet meeting – Agenda Item; 2019-20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Projections. 2020-21 onwards figures taken from Newport City Council 20 December 2019 Cabinet meeting – Agenda Item; Revenue Budget and MTFP Draft Proposals.

over the medium term whilst meeting its Corporate Plan and wellbeing objectives.

- Although the Council has identified a range of planned savings to meet its financial deficit to 2022-23, those planned savings of £5.7 million in 2020-21, £759,000 in 2021-22 and £585,000 in 2022-23 do not completely close the anticipated deficit of £21.8 million, and the Council recognises that delivering savings will become more difficult.
- The Council has previously used alternative delivery models for its leisure and property services as well as working collaboratively to deliver school improvement services regionally with other councils through the Education Achievement Service. During the course of our review, the Council has indicated that in future it may consider a wide range of options to deliver services sustainably, but has not yet agreed on a strategy to do so.
- The Council has not undertaken a Council-wide review of statutory and discretionary services to inform its current financial projections. We have found evidence of such a review of statutory and discretionary services in our recent Environmental Health Follow Up review<sup>6</sup>.

## While the Council has continued to underspend against its budget in recent years, its plans highlight that maintaining financial balance over the coming years will be more difficult

### Why accurately forecasting expenditure is important

- 9 It is important that overspending and underspending are kept under control and that actual expenditure is as close to the levels planned as possible. A council that is unable to accurately forecast and plan expenditure runs the risk of creating unforeseen financial pressures that may compromise the ability to set a balanced budget. Significant patterns of underspending may be reducing the ability of a council to deliver its key objectives or meet its statutory responsibilities.

### What we found

- 10 In recent years, overall the Council has underspent against its annual budget. However, within this overall underspend position, the financial outturn position has consistently reported continued overspends in a number of key service areas including social care and education. The Council recognises that in light of the forecast demand led pressures, it will be more challenging to deliver against its budget.

<sup>6</sup> Wales Audit Office, [Newport City Council – Environmental Health follow-up review, 2020](#)

11 We reached this conclusion because:

- in the past two years the Council delivered against its budget and **Exhibit 5** below sets out this performance.

**Exhibit 5: amount of overspend/underspend relative to total net revenue budget**

The following exhibit shows the amount of overspend or underspend for the Council’s overall net revenue budget for the last two years and also its forecast end of year position for 2019-20 as at October 2019.

	<b>Original Budget net revenue budget</b>	<b>Actual Outturn net revenue budget</b>	<b>Amount of overall surplus/overspend</b>	<b>Percentage difference from net revenue budget</b>
2017-18 <sup>71</sup>	£266.4m	£265.1m	£1.3m underspend	0.5% underspend
2018-19 <sup>82</sup>	£274.6m	£272.2m	£2.4m underspend	0.9% underspend
2019-20 as of end of October 2019 <sup>9</sup>	£280.6m	£281.3m	£0.7m overspend	0.2% overspend

- Year on year the Council has seen significant overspends within service areas (excluding schools), in areas such as looked after children’s out of county placements, adult community care, additional learning needs and independent fostering. These areas of budgetary pressure present an ongoing risk to the Council’s financial position.
- The overall underspends in the table above have been supported by factors such as Council Tax surpluses, underspends against the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and revenue contingency budgets, and corporate services underspends, which have outweighed the pressures above. However, many of these underspends are uncertain in nature and there is no guarantee that they will continue in the future.
- Delegated school budgets are also under significant pressure with a forecast overspend of £3.1 million in 2019-20. This would see overall school reserves

<sup>7</sup> 2017-18 data taken from Revenue Budget Out-Turn Reports presented to Cabinet June 2018.

<sup>8</sup> 2018-19 data taken from Revenue Budget Out-Turn Reports presented to Cabinet June 2019.

<sup>9</sup> 2019-20 data taken from Newport City Council 20 December 2019 Cabinet meeting – Agenda Item; Revenue Budget and MTFP Draft Proposals Appendix 8 Financial Resilience.

falling below zero at the end of the year. Such overspends by schools could add further pressure to the Council's financial position.

- Whilst the Council has identified its current major budget pressures, it has not set out how it intends to strategically manage these budget pressures in a sustainable way.
- In the past 18 months, the Council has sought to address its looked after children's out of county residential placements budget pressure. In 2019, we reviewed the Council's actions in addressing that budget pressure and found that although it has taken some effective measures to address its budget pressures for out of county placements, significant ongoing pressures remain and more work is required to develop a sustainable long-term approach.

## While the Council's delivery of planned savings has been strong in recent years, its ability to continue to deliver savings within demand-led services is becoming more challenging

### Why the ability to identify and deliver savings plans is important

- 12 The ability to identify areas where specific financial savings can be made, and to subsequently make those savings, is a key aspect of ensuring ongoing financial sustainability against a backdrop of increasing financial pressures. Where savings plans are not delivered this can result in overspends that require the use of limited reserves whilst increasing the level of savings required in future years to compensate for this. Where savings plans are not delivered and service areas are required to make unplanned savings, this increases the risk either of savings not being aligned to the Council's priorities, or of 'short-term' solutions that are not sustainable over the medium term.

### What we found

- 13 In recent years the Council has delivered a high level of its planned savings. However, demand led services such as social care and education are now finding it more challenging to deliver planned savings.
- 14 We reached this conclusion because:
- the Council achieved 92% of its planned savings in 2018-19, as illustrated in **Exhibit 6** below.

Exhibit 6: savings delivered during 2018-19 as a percentage of planned savings<sup>10</sup>

The following exhibit sets how much money the Council intended to save through planned savings during 2018-19 and how much of this it actually saved.

<b>£8.6m</b>	<b>£7.9m</b>	<b>£0.7m</b>	<b>92%</b>
Total planned savings	Planned savings delivered	Planned savings not delivered	Percentage savings achieved

- Education and social care accounted for the majority of the underachievement and those service areas contain some of the Council's major budget pressure areas.
- The Council has identified a range of planned savings to close its financial shortfall of £21.8 million until 2022-23. However, the level of those savings beyond 2020-21 is £1.3 million which is considerably lower than the level required and this demonstrates that its approach to meeting its financial deficit is generally short term. The Council recognises that delivering savings will become much more difficult going forward.
- Of the £7.0 million savings planned for 2019-20, £1.5 million will be delivered through a technical accounting adjustment (Minimum Revenue Provision) and £879,000 is a reduction in its Council tax reduction scheme. The Council's monitoring reports showed that at the end of October 2019, it was on target to make 93% of its planned savings in 2019-20 with the majority of that underachievement in social care.
- The Council has recognised that in order to achieve the necessary savings between 2020-21 and 2022-23 it will need to take a different approach to that which it has used to date. The Council has indicated that it plans to undertake a root and branch review of its eight service areas to help increase its financial resilience.
- Savings plans for 2019-20 that we reviewed generally had robust underpinning data and assumptions. However, in a small number of cases the Council is not forecasting that it will fully achieve the planned savings initially. In response, the Council would therefore need to either defer those savings to subsequent years or recognise them as future budgetary pressures, either of which adds further pressure to the Council's financial position.

<sup>10</sup> Source – Newport City Council, 2019

- Draft savings proposals for 2020-21 that we reviewed varied in the level of detailed assumptions and underpinning data and many of the proposals set out limited anticipated impact of the reduced funding.
- Although draft savings proposals refer to the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015, it is unclear how the Council has consistently used the principles of the Act to inform decision making around those savings. The Council also carries out fairness and equality impact assessments on savings proposals.

## The Council has a high level of usable reserves, although most are currently earmarked for specific use

### Why sustainable management of reserves is important

- 15 Healthy levels of usable reserves are an important safety net to support financial sustainability. As well as being available to fund unexpected funding pressures, useable reserves can also be an important funding source to support 'invest to save' initiatives designed to reduce the ongoing cost of providing services. Councils that show a pattern of unplanned use of reserves to plug gaps in their revenue budget that result in reductions of reserve balances reduce their resilience to fund unforeseen budget pressures in future years.

### What we found

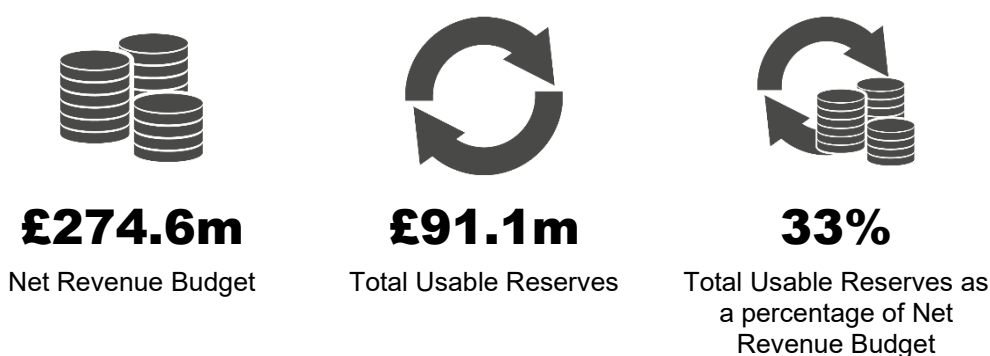
- 16 We found that the Council has not previously made any unplanned use of reserves to fund revenue budget pressures and in recent years has increased its overall level of reserves. The Council has only started to use reserves from 2018-19 to balance its budget.
- 17 We reached this conclusion because:
- The Council has a strong track record of protecting its reserves. Between 2012-13 and 2017-18, the Council added to its reserve balances.
  - According to its 2018-19 Statement of Accounts the Council held a total of £103.0 million in usable reserves, consisting of:
    - £47.9 million of 'smoothing reserves', set aside by the Council to smooth funding variations over periods of time (£45.5 million of this relates to two PFI schemes which will be wound down over the next 18 years);
    - £28.5 million of 'enabling reserves', retained for potential future investment including an Invest to Save reserve of £11.1 million and usable capital receipts of £8.3 million;
    - £11.5 million of 'risk reserves', held to mitigate against specific risks previously identified by the Council;
    - £6.5 million of Council Fund, available for any purpose;



- £5.5 million of 'other reserves', held for specific projects/issues; and
- £3.1 million of reserve balances relating to individual schools.
- While many of the above reserve balances could be applied by the Council for alternative use if needed, they are to some extent already earmarked for a specific future purpose (other than the £6.5 million Council Fund reserve). Therefore, using such earmarked reserves could lead to planned future activity being curtailed or delayed, or risks being inappropriately managed, unless they were later replenished.
- Furthermore, the Council identifies that the following reserves from the above list are not readily available for alternative use: school reserves of £3.1 million (for the specific use of individual schools only), and capital receipts reserves of £8.3 million (largely limited to use on capital projects). This leads to a total of £91.1 million of 'usable reserves' which the Council could access, but would consequently have to manage the impact of such use. **Exhibit 7** below sets out the Council's level of usable reserves against its annual budget in 2018-19.

**Exhibit 7: amount of reserves vs annual budget, 2018-19<sup>11</sup>**

This exhibit shows the amount of usable reserves the Council had during 2018-19 compared with its net revenue budget for the same year.



- 2018-19 was the first time in recent years that the Council used its reserves to balance its budget. It used £1.2 million in 2018-19, and plans to only use £900,000 in 2019-20 and £459,000 in 2020-21. The Council forecasts that its usable reserves will fall to £71.5 million in 2019-20 and £66.0 million in 2020-21.
- The Council has a published reserves strategy and elected members are informed of the Council's position in relation to all reserves when agreeing the Council's budgets annually. In 2019-20, elected members agreed to

<sup>11</sup> Source – Newport City Council, 2019

maintain the Council Fund at £6.5 million, supported by a revenue contingency of £1.5 million in the budget. The Council assessed that the risks in the budget were low enough to allow for this level of general reserve, although it is below the 5% of net revenue expenditure excluding schools (£9.2 million) that the Council uses as a guiding principle in establishing the minimum Council Fund level.

## While council tax represents a growing proportion of the Council's income, its level of arrears is increasing

### Why council tax collection rates are important

- 18 Failure to collect the amount of council tax due to the Council will result in less income. This in turn may increase the financial pressures on the Council and require it to make additional savings. Whilst council tax is not the biggest source of funding for councils in Wales, it remains a key income source.

### What we found

- 19 We found that although the proportion of the Council's budget funded by council tax is increasing, council tax arrears have increased over time.
- 20 We reached this conclusion because:
- The Council set its tax-base for 2019-20 based on an increase of 1.2% (£58.5 million in 2018-19 to £59.2 million in 2019-20), significantly higher than the all-Wales average of 0.5% to 0.8% over the last few years. This resulted in a £634,000 increase in council tax income but consequently reduced the Revenue Support Grant increase from the Welsh Government by £391,000.
  - In real terms, the percentage of gross budget funded by council tax has risen from 9.2% in 2008-09 to 13.3% in 2018-19. Although the proportion of gross expenditure funded by council tax has increased, it remains the second lowest across all councils in Wales. The Council estimates that if it were to increase council tax to the average level across Wales, this would equate to around £7 million in additional funding. However, this would require a council tax increase of around 18%.
  - Between 2008-09 and 2018-19, the Council has improved the amount of council tax it collects annually from 95.8% to 96.6%. Despite this improvement, council tax arrears have increased from £2.2 million in 2008-09 to £4.6 million in 2018-19, an increase of 109%. This compares to an increase in annual council tax debit of 69% over the same period. Over this period, in real terms the Council's arrears balance has fallen from the 4th lowest in Wales to the 12th lowest.
  - The Council's medium-term financial projection (setting out an overall deficit of £21.8 million between 2020 and 2023) is modelled on the basis of a 4%

council tax increase annually until 2022-23 but full Council considers and sets the level of council tax on an annual basis. Those projections are below the council tax increases agreed in the past two financial years (5.95% in 2019-20 and 4.8% in 2018-19). In December 2019, Cabinet agreed to consult on a council tax increase of 7.95%.

#### Exhibit 8: council tax collection rates<sup>12</sup>

This exhibit shows the percentage of council tax due that the Council collected during 2018-19.



Cash collected from Council Tax at 31 March 2019 was **£64.4m** (96.6%) against a collectable debit of **£66.7m**

### In implementing its commercialisation strategy, the Council will need to manage risks associated with any increased borrowing

#### Why maintaining sustainable levels of borrowing is important

- 21 Borrowing can be a valuable source of funding, for example to fund large scale capital projects such as new schools or leisure centres. However, the cost of repaying borrowing including interest costs can have a long-term impact on ongoing revenue budgets. Councils that fail to properly balance the benefits and costs of borrowing with their current and predicted revenue budgets risk reducing the amount of funding available for service delivery. Borrowing to fund commercial activity has the potential to generate additional income to fund council services, however, it can also bring significant risks that would be associated with any commercial activity.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Stats Wales Council Tax Collection Rates in Wales: 2018-19

## What we found

- 22 We found that in implementing a new emerging commercialisation strategy, the Council will need to manage the associated risks in terms of borrowing.
- 23 We reached this conclusion because:
- The Council has limited income from commercial properties, 0.4% of its overall net expenditure budget. In 2018-19, the Council disclosed rental income of £1.3 million from investment properties valued at £7.8 million.
  - In 2018-19, the Council had total outstanding borrowings of £192.8 million from a mixture of sources including the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans, and other long-term loans. On top of this amount, the Council has further obligations to meet under Public Finance Initiative (PFI) and lease arrangements.
  - The Council's overall cost of borrowing in 2018-19 was 9.1% of its total net revenue budget, which was high in comparison with other Welsh councils. A large driver of this cost of borrowing is the Council's PFI obligations, which contribute over £5 million of annual interest costs for the Council alone (out of total annual interest costs of £13.6 million).
  - The Council has made previous efforts to limit its borrowing as far as possible by using 'internal borrowing' (that is, using available internal resources first before borrowing from other entities). Over time, the Council will need to borrow from third parties to cover for previous internal borrowing, in order to fund its planned activity. Doing so will attract further interest costs in the medium to long term. The Council will therefore need to carefully consider the affordability of further interest costs when deciding whether to take on any further external borrowing above that already planned.
  - In April 2019, the Council's Cabinet agreed a commercialisation strategy which aims to contribute to addressing the financial deficit that the Council faces. The strategy includes three main approaches:
    - current services provided on a more commercial basis;
    - new services being provided by the Council; and
    - property investment, both commercial and residential.
  - The Cabinet agreed to examine each of these areas and to examine business cases before taking any decisions. It agreed in its Capital Strategy to establish a £50 million property investment fund to be funded via additional borrowing, but no such investments have yet been undertaken. The Cabinet recognised that such an approach creates additional financial risks with the significant increase in the Council's long-term debt and potential uncertainty around the return on any investments. Given these risks, Cabinet agreed a framework in which it will review and assess opportunities to assess the level of risk and benefit within agreed parameters.

Exhibit 9: Council borrowing<sup>13</sup>

The exhibit below shows the total amount of money that the Council has borrowed to fund commercial investments, as well as the cost of all the borrowing that the Council has as a proportion of its net revenue budget.



**£0m**

Amount of borrowing to fund commercial investments



**9.1%**

Cost of total borrowing as a proportion of net revenue budget 2018-19<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Source – Newport City Council, 2019

<sup>14</sup> This figure includes the interest costs of PFI and MRP

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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** **Audit Wales – Audit of Newport City Council’s 2020-21 Improvement Plan (Certificate of Compliance)**

**Purpose** To present Cabinet with the Audit Wales first Assessment of Performance Certificate on the 2020/21 Improvement Plan. The certificate confirmed that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

**Author** Head of People and Business Change

**Ward** All

**Summary** As part of the programme of regulatory activity in accordance with the Local Government Measure 2009, the Auditor General is required to issue two Certificates of Compliance to demonstrate that Council is discharging its duties under the Measure. This is the first certificate following the publication of the Council’s objectives on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and a review of Well-being Objectives 19/20 in October 2020.

**Proposal** Cabinet is requested to note the positive outcome of the Certificate of Compliance in relation to meeting its statutory duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

**Action by** Cabinet

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Management Team
- Audit Wales

**Signed**

## **Background**

As part of the programme of regulatory activity in accordance with the Local Government Measure 2009, the Auditor General is required to issue two Certificates of Compliance to demonstrate that Council is discharging its duties under the Measure.

As part of the first certificate of compliance, the Council is required to publish its Improvement Plan in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. In June Newport Council published its Strategic Recovery Aims and also re-confirmed its position to deliver its four Well-being Objectives set in the Corporate Plan 2017-22 for the 2020/21 financial year.

As a result of this action completed by the Council, Audit Wales published its first Certificate of Compliance (Appendix 1), with the Auditor General for Wales certifying that:

*I certify that, following publication on 24 June 2020, I have audited Newport City Council's Improvement Plan in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.*

*As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.*

## **Certificate**

The certificate is attached as Appendix A (English) and Appendix B (Welsh) to this report.

## **Financial Summary**

There are no direct financial impacts in relation to this report. Where proposals for improvement have been made in individual Audit Wales reports these will be actioned through business as usual activities by the Council.

## **Risks**

There are no direct impacts of this report to the risks identified in the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

## **Links to Council Policies and Priorities**

Continuous improvement is central to the Council's ambitions for itself, organisationally, and in terms of its role in advancing the City's reputation and the quality of life for its citizens. A range of core priorities and programmes are influenced by this agenda, including:

- Newport Public Services Board 'One Newport' Well-being Plan.
- The Corporate Plan 2017-22
- Annual reporting arrangements

## **Options Available and considered**

Cabinet are asked to:

- (a) Consider and accept the conclusion contained in the Auditor General's Certificate of Compliance Report; or
- (b) Disregard the findings of the report.

## **Preferred Option and Why**

The preferred option is (a) as the Certificate of Compliance is positive and confirms that the council has discharged its duties under the Local Government Measure 2009 with regards to Improvement Planning.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There is no financial impact in presenting the Audit Wales Certificate to Cabinet. Any improvement actions included within the Corporate Plan are reported as part of the on-going medium term financial planning and budget monitoring processes and in that respect, clear responsibility and accountability for delivering the projects and managing resources is key.



## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. The Council has a duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 ("the Measure") to secure continuous improvement in the delivery of services and to publish an assessment of its performance. The Assessment of Performance Certificate issued by the Audit Wales confirms that the Council has discharged its duties in accordance with section 15 of the Measure guidance.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The certificate verifies that the Council has met its obligation of demonstrating continuous improvement under the Local Government Measure 2009. This is an on-going aim for the council and this also contributes to the Council's adherence to the Sustainable Development Principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. There are no direct staffing implications contained in this report.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Leader of the Council is briefed on all aspects of performance monitoring and management within the Council and related Audit Wales monitoring work.

## **Local issues**

Not Applicable

## **Scrutiny Committees**

Scrutiny Committees receive information on Audit Wales review outcomes as appropriate to the Committee responsibilities, and also received and commented on the Annual Report.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Not Applicable

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Not Applicable

## **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Auditor General helps to ensure that public bodies are held to account for their performance in relation to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government Measure (2009). Audit Wales consider the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in the planning and implementation of their work. The issue of the Certificate of Compliance demonstrates that the council is meeting its obligations under both Acts.

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

## **Consultation**

Not Applicable

## **Background Papers**

Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22  
Audit Wales Assessment of Performance Certificate  
Audit Wales Assessment of Performance Certificate (Welsh)  
Annual Report 2019/20

Dated: November 2020

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**Reference:** 2089A20-21

**Date issued:** October 2020

## Audit of Newport City Council's 2020-21 Improvement Plan

### Certificate

I certify that, following publication on 24 June 2020, I have audited Newport City Council's Improvement Plan in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

### Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Council is required to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan describing its plans to discharge its duties to:

- make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- make arrangements to secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- make arrangements to exercise its functions so that any performance standard specified by Welsh Ministers is met.

The Measure requires the Council to publish its Improvement Plan as soon as is reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year to which it relates, or after such other date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Council is responsible for preparing the Improvement Plan and for the information set out within it. The Measure requires that the Council has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in preparing and publishing its plan.

As the Council's auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit of the Improvement Plan, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether I believe that the Council has discharged its duties to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

## Scope of the Improvement Plan audit

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information, or whether the Improvement Plan published by the Council can be achieved. Other assessment work that I will undertake under section 18 of the Measure will examine these issues. My audit of the Council's Improvement Plan, therefore, comprised a review of the plan to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the plan complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing its plan.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.

**Adrian Crompton**  
**Auditor General for Wales**

CC: Lisa Hughes, Welsh Government  
Non Jenkins, Manager  
Martin Gibson, Performance Audit Lead

**Cyfeirnod:** 2089A2020-21

**Dyddiad y'i cyhoeddwyd:** Hydref 2020

## Archwiliad o Gynllun Gwella 2020-21 Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd

### Tystysgrif

Rwyf yn ardystio fy mod i wedi archwilio Cynllun Gwella Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd, ar ôl ei gyhoeddi ar 24 Mehefin 2020, yn unol ag adran 17 Mesur Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2009 (y Mesur) a'm Cod Ymarfer Archwilio.

O ganlyniad i'm harchwiliad, rwyf o'r farn bod y Cyngor wedi cyflawni ei ddyletswyddau dan adran 15(6) i (9) y Mesur a'i fod wedi ymddwyn yn unol â chanllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru yn ddigonol i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau.

### Priod gyfrifoldebau'r Cyngor a'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol

Dan y Mesur, mae'n ofynnol i'r Cyngor baratoi a chyhoeddi Cynllun Gwella sy'n disgrifio ei gynlluniau i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau o ran y canlynol:

- gwneud trefniadau i sicrhau gwelliant parhaus wrth gyflawni ei swyddogaethau;
- gwneud trefniadau i sicrhau ei fod yn cyflawni ei amcanion gwella; a
- gwneud trefniadau i gyflawni ei swyddogaethau mewn modd sy'n sicrhau ei fod yn bodloni unrhyw safon o ran perfformiad a bennir gan Weinidogion Cymru.

Mae'r Mesur yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r Cyngor gyhoeddi ei Gynllun Gwella cyn gynted ag sy'n rhesymol ymarferol ar ôl dechrau'r flwyddyn ariannol y mae'n ymwneud â hi, neu ar ôl unrhyw ddyddiad arall a bennir trwy orchymyn gan Weinidogion Cymru.

Mae'r Cyngor yn gyfrifol am baratoi'r Cynllun Gwella ac yn gyfrifol am y wybodaeth a geir ynddo. Mae'r Mesur yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r Cyngor ystyried canllawiau a gyhoeddir gan Weinidogion Cymru, wrth baratoi a chyhoeddi ei gynllun.

Fel archwilydd y Cyngor, mae'n ofynnol dan adrannau 17 ac 19 y Mesur i mi gynnal archwiliad o'r Cynllun Gwella, ardystio fy mod i wedi gwneud hynny ac adrodd ynghylch a wyf o'r farn bod y Cyngor wedi cyflawni ei ddyletswyddau i baratoi a chyhoeddi Cynllun Gwella yn unol â'r gofynion statudol a eglurir yn adran 15 ac mewn canllawiau statudol.

## Cwmpas yr archwiliad o'r Cynllun Gwella

At ddibenion fy ngwaith archwilio byddaf yn derbyn, os yw awdurdod yn bodloni ei ofynion statudol, y bydd hefyd wedi cydymffurfio â chanllawiau statudol Llywodraeth Cymru yn ddigonol i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau.

Ar gyfer yr archwiliad hwn, nid yw'n ofynnol i mi ffurfio barn ynghylch pa mor gyflawn neu gywir yw'r wybodaeth, nac ynghylch a oes modd cyflawni'r Cynllun Gwella a gyhoeddwyd gan y Cyngor. Bydd gwaith asesu arall y byddaf yn ymgymryd ag ef dan adran 18 y Mesur yn ystyried y materion hynny. Felly, roedd fy archwiliad o Gynllun Gwella'r Cyngor yn cynnwys adolygu'r cynllun er mwyn gweld a oedd yn cynnwys yr elfennau a bennir mewn deddfwriaeth. Euthum ati hefyd i asesu a oedd y trefniadau ar gyfer cyhoeddi'r cynllun yn cydymffurfio â gofynion y ddeddfwriaeth, ac a oedd y Cyngor wedi ystyried canllawiau statudol wrth baratoi a chyhoeddi ei gynllun.

Nid yw'r gwaith yr wyf i wedi'i gyflawni er mwyn adrodd a gwneud argymhellion yn unol ag adrannau 17 ac 19 y Mesur yn waith y gellir dibynnu'n gyfan gwbl arno i nodi pob gwendid neu bob cyfle i wella.

**Adrian Crompton**

**Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru**

CC: Lisa Hughes, Llywodraeth Cymru

Non Jenkins, Rheolwr

Martin Gibson, Swyddog Arweiniol Archwilio



# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2019/20

**Purpose** This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on delivering its 2016 - 2020 Strategic Equality Plan whilst also reporting on the essential equalities employment information that the Authority is required to publish under the Equality Act 2010.

The Annual Report is required to be published on the Council's website in accordance with statutory deadlines.

**Author** Connected Communities Manager

**Ward** All

**Summary** Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council is required to report annually on the progress it has made against the 9 Strategic Equality Objectives contained within its Strategic Equality Plan. The Equality Act also requires Local Authorities to publish staff equalities data, which this report also contains.

This report is the fourth and final Annual Report on progress towards meeting Equality Objectives set out in the Authority's second four year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), as approved by Council 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016. The council's new Strategic Equality Plan has been approved by Council and published on its website in accordance with legal requirements

**Proposal** To approve the attached final monitoring report and publish it on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.

**Action by** Head of People and Business Change, Heads of Service

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

Cabinet Member for Community and Resources  
The Council's Strategic Equalities Group  
HR and OD Manager

**Signed** Head of People and Business Change

## Background

In March 2016 Newport City Council published its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), identifying 9 Equality Objectives that the authority would measure itself against over the next four years. The objectives built on the work that had been delivered in earlier Equality Plans and Welsh Language Schemes, and were updated to incorporate new ways of working, outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

As stipulated within the Welsh specific duties of the Equality Act (2010), Local Authorities are required to produce an Annual Report and publish it within 12 months of the end of the financial year. These reports outline the progress the authority has made over a 12 month period against its Strategic Equality Objectives. The Annual Report also captures key workforce data as required by the Equality Act 2010.

This is the final report for the current Strategic Equality Plan, before the council commences its delivery of its Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

The 9 objectives in the plan are:

- **Objective 1: Workplace Diversity** - The Council's workforce will be representative of the population we service and the workforce are involved in decisions that affect them.
- **Objective 2: Engagement** - We will involve people in the development of Council services that affect them and base Council decisions on what people need.
- **Objective 3: Improving access** - People can access all the Council services and activities that they need in terms of physical access and communication access etc.
- **Objective 4: Tackling Poverty** - We will work to reduce poverty, especially persistent poverty amongst some of our poorest people and communities, and reducing the likelihood that people will become poor.
- **Objective 5: Cohesive Communities** - People have a sense of belonging to the city and feel safe.
- **Objective 6: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence** - People who are subject or witness to domestic abuse are supported by the Council and its partners in their current situation and through any changes they wish to make.
- **Objective 7: Homelessness** - To provide a safe, supporting, empowering and non-judgemental environment for homeless and marginalised people so that they can achieve their potential.
- **Objective 8: Welsh Language** - We will promote our bilingual public services and increase the use of Welsh in Newport.
- **Objective 9: Corporate compliance** - Strategic leadership, governance arrangements, ensuring standards are high and consistent across all the Council and its areas.

The Annual Report demonstrates the positive progress Newport City Council has made over the past year, and the lifetime of the SEP, and looks forward to the implementation of the new SEP, identifying key themes that will continue to be prioritised.

The 2020-24 SEP was approved by Cabinet in July and sets out six equality objectives, each with a number of related outcomes and key actions that will contribute to those outcomes. The objectives relate to Leadership and Governance, Access and Engagement, Representative Workforce, Community Cohesion, Learning Well and Independent Living, and were set as a result of comprehensive community engagement, and review of local and national data.

The effectiveness of the delivery arrangements of the 2016-20 SEP were also reviewed to ensure opportunities for improvement were maximised through the development of the new SEP 2020-2024.



## Legal context

The Equality Act 2010 (Wales) states that a listed body in Wales, including Local Authorities, must produce an Annual Report by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.

The Act requires that the report must specifically outline progress towards fulfilling each of the Authority's Equality Objectives, provide a statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the Authority has taken to fulfil each of these, and include specified employment information, including information on training and pay (unless it has already published this information elsewhere).

The report should also set out the steps the Authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information and how we have used this information in meeting the three aims of the Public Sector General Equality Duty, which are to:

1. Foster positive relationships between those who share Protected Characteristics and those who don't
2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a Protected Characteristic and those who don't

If relevant information has not been collected a statement on the effectiveness of the Authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information must also be included.

## Governance and management

Following the approval of the SEP in 2016, the Authority re-convened the member-led Strategic Equality Group (SEG), chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community and Resources as the member with responsibility for equalities.

The group takes a strategic lead on the implementation of the equalities agenda and it is through the SEG that progress on our Equality Objectives is monitored throughout the year.

## Financial Summary

The cost of implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and the Equality Objectives is met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area. The majority of the actions relate to work already identified in Service Plans, for example workforce monitoring, or which occurs in projects that have already been approved and prioritised, such as domestic abuse and hate crime.

	Year 1 (Current) £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £	Ongoing £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs (Income)					Not applicable
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?
That the Annual Report is not published	M	L	A draft report has been compiled and taken through relevant governance processes for approval	Heads of Service
That equality commitments are not understood by employees and members	M	M	Equality training for staff and members continues to be rolled out across the organisation, and development of our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment process has further embedded equalities considerations as part of the Authority's decision making process.	Head of People and Business Change and Elected Members
That Equality Objectives are not implemented and reviewed	M	M	Progress against equalities objectives are reported on regularly to the Strategic Equality Group	Connected Communities Manager

### Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Council's commitments under the Equality Act and the Strategic Equality Plan are aligned to the Authority's Wellbeing Objectives.

### Options Available

- a) To approve the attached report and publish on the council's website
- b) To not approve the attached report and redraft.

### Preferred Option and Why

Option a) is the preferred option, in order to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

### Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications associated with the proposal to approve and then publish the SEP Annual Report on the Council's website. The cost of implementing the SEP is met from existing budgets in service areas. Fairness & Equality Impact Assessments are included in business cases during the Medium Term Financial Plan process when applicable.

### Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the Council is required to publish an annual report setting out progress made and the effectiveness of the actions taken to meet its public sector equality duty and specific objectives. The annual report is also required to set out equalities data in relation to staffing information. The general public sector equality duty requires the Council to have due regard in the exercise of its functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct and to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

Regulations made by the Welsh Ministers impose specific duties on local authorities in Wales for the purpose of enabling better performance of these general duties. These include the duty to publish objectives designed to enable the authority to perform the statutory duty, to publish a statement setting out steps taken or intended steps in order to fulfil each objective and how long the authority will take in order to fulfil each objective.

This report provides an update on the fourth and final year of delivery against the Strategic Equalities Plan 2016-2020 and confirms that good progress has been made in meeting the 9 equalities objectives set out in the Plan, but also identifying those areas where further work is required.

### **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

This Annual Report reflects the positive progress made towards implementing our Strategic Equality Plan while also highlighting areas of work that we will carry over into the 2020 Strategic Equality Plan. The publication of the report also meets the requirements to annually publish staff equalities data for the Local Authority, The work delivered over the last 12 months contributes to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives and the national well-being goals, particularly a more equal Wales.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

This report is a summary of the work that has been undertaken during the fourth and final year of the Strategic Equality Plan. It sets out the Council's commitment to a workplace culture and approach to service delivery that values inclusion and difference.

We will continue to progress this work over the next 12 months through the new Strategic Equalities Plan. This was recently agreed by Council and reflects the strategic priorities of the wider organisation and key partners. Thanks to our effective consultation process the priorities set out in our new Plan also reflect the concerns of our citizens. The strategies have evolved significantly since 2016 and in close partnership with service areas, the work continues to develop well balanced priorities and outcomes.

### **Local issues**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

The report was received by the Overview and Management Committee at its meeting on [30<sup>th</sup> October 2020](#). The full details will be published in the minutes of the Committee meeting on the Council's democracy pages. The following issues were discussed:

- The Committee highlighted our current workforce metrics and whether or not this is representative of the Newport population. Over the last year, work has been ongoing to anonymise applicant data to ensure that a fair and consistent approach is taken to recruitment; work around engaging with underrepresented groups and continuous improvement for our workforce being reflective of our population is continuing.
- Newport has areas with high levels of poverty. Although we have projects and strategies in place to help combat this, work with our external partners should continue and we will look at comparative information with neighbouring local authorities, to ensure we are sharing best practice in our approach and measure of outcomes, to help reduce the impact of poverty within the community going forward and are proactive in our approach. Members also noted the introduction of the socio economic duty.
- It was acknowledged that there is a requirement for increased engagement with people identifying as LGBTQ. An internal staff network is being developed and work with young people and community groups has increased this year. A solid plan of internal communications and external social media posts ensures we celebrate and acknowledge various LGBTQ relevant history and significant dates. We are also an active part of the Proud Councils Network;

partnering with several other local authorities to share best practice and ideas. We are working to ensure that all underrepresented groups are supported.

- The Committee raised that engaging with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups, and keeping levels of communication with the police was paramount to enable open discussion and support to those requiring temporary spaces for housing. Although engagement in this area is significant across the Gwent wide project we work with, it is an area that has limited resource available through Wales Government grant funding.
- The Councils approach and commitment to supporting rough sleepers and people experiencing homelessness is encouraging; however from the numerous partnerships we work with, some are faith-based and it was suggested this can cause problems for those who want a non-secular provision and service.
- The Committee were pleased to note the range of work in this important area.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

No Fairness & Equalities Impact Assessment (F&EIA) is necessary for the Annual Report. By design, the Strategic Equality Plan and associated Annual Report are the mechanism by which the Authority's Equality Duties are discharged, and therefore have a positive impact on all Protected Characteristics.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

No consultation was needed for this report.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, which came into force in April 2016, places an obligation on Local Authorities to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Strategic Equalities Plan represents much of the work that the Authority undertakes to fulfil our Wellbeing objectives to work towards 'a more Equal Wales' and a 'Wales of Cohesive Communities', drawing on much of the research undertaken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission into fairness and inequalities in Wales.

The Strategic Equality Plan and its objectives aim to influence the way that the Council makes decisions that have a long term impact on communities, and engages and consults with diverse and seldom heard groups to ensure they are able to influence the design of service delivery. Early intervention to address issues such as hate crime and the risk of radicalisation prevent escalation of issues which may threaten community cohesion and collaboration with key partners in the delivery of our Equalities Plan ensures an effective, holistic approach. The Strategic Equalities Plan is influenced by national research, local data, and engagement with people in Newport that share Protected Characteristics.

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Not applicable.

### **Background Papers**

[The Essentials – Well-being of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)

Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020

Equalities Annual Report 2018/19

Welsh Language Annual Report 2019/20

NCC Well-being Objectives and Well-being Statement

Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2018-23

NCC Corporate Plan 2017-22

OMSC minutes 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

Dated: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020

Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20)  
Annual Report 2019/2020  
**Newport City Council**



*Please consider the environment before printing this document*

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## Foreword

To be added.

## Introduction

In March 2016 Newport City Council published its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), identifying 9 Equality Objectives that the authority would measure itself against over the next four years. The objectives built on the work that had been delivered in earlier Equality Plans and Welsh Language Schemes, and were updated to incorporate new ways of working, outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

As stipulated within the Welsh specific duties of the Equality Act (2010), Local Authorities are required to produce an Annual Report and publish it within 12 months of the end of the financial year. These reports outline the progress the authority has made, over a 12 month period, against the Strategic Equality Objectives identified in our Strategic Equality Plan. The Annual Report also captures key workforce data as required by the Equality Act 2010. This is the final report for the current Strategic Equality Plan, before the council commences its delivery of its Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

Progress on the SEP is monitored throughout the year by the authority's internal Strategic Equalities Group (SEG). This group is chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Equalities and Assets, and membership includes representation from the Fairness Commission, Trade Unions, Elected Members, Heads of Service and lead officers to ensure an appropriate breadth of representation.

## Equality Objectives 2016-20

<b>Well-being goals and Newport City Council Equality Objectives</b>	
<b>Wellbeing Goal: A more equal Wales</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Diversity in the workplace – Engaging Employees</b> The Council’s workforce will be representative of the population we service and the workforce are involved in decisions that affect them
<b>2</b>	<b>Engagement and democratic participation</b> We will involve people in the development of Council services that affect them and base Council decisions on what people need
<b>3</b>	<b>Improving Access to Services</b> People can access all the Council services and activities that they need in terms of physical access and communication access etc.
<b>4</b>	<b>Tackling Poverty</b> We will work to reduce poverty, especially persistent poverty amongst some of our poorest people and communities, and reducing the likelihood that people will become poor
<b>Wellbeing Goal: A Wales of cohesive communities</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cohesive Communities and tackling hate crime</b> People feel they are a part of Newport society and live their lives free from abuse and harassment.
<b>6</b>	<b>Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence</b> People who are subject or witness to domestic abuse are supported by the Council and its partners in their current situation, and through any changes they wish to make.
<b>7</b>	<b>Homelessness</b> To provide a safe, supporting, empowering and non-judgemental environment for homeless and marginalised people so that they can achieve their potential
<b>Wellbeing Goal: A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards</b> We will promote our bilingual public services and increase the use of Welsh in Newport
<b>9</b>	<b>Corporate Compliance</b> Strategic leadership, governance arrangements, ensuring standards are high and consistent across all the Council and areas of responsibility.



## Equality Objective 1: Workplace Diversity

<b>Diversity in the Workplace- Engaging Employees</b>	
<i>A more Equal Wales</i>	
<b>The Council's workforce will be representative of the population we service and the workforce are involved in decisions that affect them</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Develop a Workforce Planning Template
<b>Action 2</b>	Create a workforce data dashboard to compare workforce with Newport's population and develop a strategy to address areas of difference
<b>Action 3</b>	Identify partner organisations to work with on representation of different people
<b>Action 4</b>	Engage staff on matters that affect them

### Summary

The authority's People and Culture Strategy outlines the council's aims and objectives in developing and supporting the workforce, and contains a dedicated theme in relation to employee engagement. This will help ensure that the authority not only effectively engages with its staff, but also actively improves the ways in which it supports professional development. Work is ongoing to better understand these opportunities and how they are accessed by people that share protected characteristics in order to identify any disadvantage or gaps in provision.

Our HR Department is redesigning the provision offered to service area managers and is positioning itself to encourage areas to focus on workforce design for the future, this includes considerations around workforce representation. Workforce planning and change management will be crucial in helping managers understand the services that will be provided in the next 3-5 years, and how the workforce should be shaped to achieve future goals.

### Action 1

The 'Workforce Planning Template' has been reviewed this year and a presentation to managers and accompanying guidance has been written ready for distribution and training. HR Business Partners will be cascading this in the last quarter of 2020/21. The performance management system 'MIHub' contains a dashboard for managers to have quick and easy access to the most up to date workforce information; this is being developed to ensure demographic information is more readily available.

### Action 2

The workforce Data Dashboard is now established and is reviewed annually along with the Workforce Planning Template as part of annual service area planning. The data allows service areas to identify specific areas of under representation.

The Apprenticeship scheme that was developed to increase the proportion of younger people within the organisation continues to grow, and NCC was a finalist in the ACT Training Employer of the Year 2019 award for our work in this area. In September 2019, we started the first cohort of the National Graduate Development Programme, a Local Government Association supported graduate scheme and two graduates started working for the Council in October 2019.

As part of our corporate parenting responsibility, we also hosted work experience placements for a diverse cohort of young people in care in August 2019.

### **Action 3**

The utilisation of partner organisations to improve workforce diversity is already featured within our workforce plan, and positive relationships with partner organisations, such as ACT, have been built to ensure additional representation from underrepresented groups. However, the authority is seeking to expand its network of partners to improve its ability to attract and recruit from more diverse community groups.

We have continued to provide work experience placements with 'Go Wales' who support undergraduate students with barriers to work experience opportunities and who are most at risk of not securing employment, education or training when leaving higher education.

### **Action 4**

The People and Culture Strategy 2018-2022 has a dedicated theme for employee engagement, and sets out objectives to:

1. Improve engagement by creating a listening culture that welcomes feedback throughout the organisation
2. Help managers to develop engaged teams
3. Contribute to employees feeling better engaged and informed
4. Help employees see the connection between their job and the organisation's vision
5. Improve levels of trust across the organisation

Electronic publishing of newsletters is embedded and features that are both organisational and social are included each fortnight. This communication is available to all staff irrespective of place of work or access to work based technology. This year, newsletters have included far more content related to the roles that people do in their day-to-day working lives. Content of our staff communications has included celebrations of key dates throughout the year, including Black History Month and LGBT History Month, Gypsy Roma Traveller Month and Pride. Feedback on this approach has been positive, with colleagues reporting that they have a greater understanding of challenges faced by others.

We have also reviewed the way that staff surveys are conducted, and have held shorter, more regular thematic surveys, focussing on key workplace policies/processes as well as a range of equality-related topics. These have included:

- Management of Attendance
- Reward and Recognition
- Smart Working
- Employee Benefits
- Employee Engagement
- Mental Health
- Complaints

This year, the council also established its first Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff Support Network. The BAME Network has identified its priorities as assisting the council to improve workforce representation, reviewing and improving workplace policies, and developing a programme of equalities and bias training for all staff.

For the first time, a panel of staff members were invited to participate in the recruitment of the new Chief Executive, including members of our Youth Council, and the Chair our BAME Network.

#### **Looking to the future**

Creating a workforce that is more representative of the communities that we serve remains a priority for the council. This objective will carry forward into our new Strategic Equality Plan, with a renewed focus and clear actions and outcomes. In particular, we will focus on increasing the number of BAME people that we attract, recruit, retain and develop within the organisation.

Building on the success of our BAME Network, we also seek to engage staff with other protected characteristics and seek to establish further networks where desired by those staff.

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## Equality Objective 2: Engagement and Participation

<b>Engagement and democratic participation</b>	
<i>A more equal Wales</i>	
<b>We will involve people in the development of Council services that affect them and base Council decisions on what people need</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Build on the foundations established in the Well-being assessment to develop and consult on a Well-being Plan for Newport.
<b>Action 2</b>	Gather data and intelligence through a range of methods to support the Situation Analysis required under the Well-being of Future Generations Act
<b>Action 3</b>	Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments undertaken on policy changes, projects etc. and published on the Council's website.
<b>Action 4</b>	Ensure effective engaged Youth Council in Newport who have access to decision makers
<b>Action 5</b>	Work with Newport's Welsh Language Forum / Fforwm Iaith Casnewydd to develop a strategy to increase the use of Welsh in Newport

### Summary

Meaningful engagement with the public is central to the equalities agenda, and over the past year the Policy, Partnership and Involvement Team has continued to take a corporate lead on consultation and engagement. Over the course of the 2019/20 financial year, the authority has consulted with significant number of people through a mix of face-to-face and online consultation exercises. This year, we have also included mandatory equalities monitoring as part of our consultation processes, ensuring that when we gather feedback from communities on proposed decisions, we are able to identify any patterns of disproportionate impact or disadvantage.

Over the duration of this Strategic Equality Plan the team has conducted large engagement exercises on key policies including the Newport Wellbeing Assessment, Budgetary Consultations, and the 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy.

### Action 1

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, we have a statutory duty to involve people with an interest in achieving our well-being goals, and ensuring that those persons reflect the diversity of the population. The Local Well-being Assessment was completed and signed off by the Public Services Board in April 2017 and published in May 2017.

Following the work carried within the Well-being Assessment, the Public Services Board (PSB) developed the Well-being Plan for Newport, which full Council agreed in April 2018 and was published in May 2018.

This plan has not only been informed by the work carried out in the Well-being Assessment, but also via extensive engagement with partners and stakeholders during the development of the response analysis and through an additional 12 week statutory consultation which ran from November 2017 through to February 2018.

The wellbeing assessment was accompanied a Community Wellbeing Profile and 20 individual local Ward Profiles. These documents included the findings of engagement with local communities. They were reviewed and updated in 2019 and are used to inform planning, strategies and funding

applications. The wellbeing assessments include a comprehensive overview of each Ward profile, including demographic information relating to all of the Protected Characteristics. This information continues to inform our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments.

### **Action 2**

As described in Action 1 the Local Well-being Assessment (Situation analysis) was completed and signed off by the PSB in April 2017 and published in May 2017.

This analysis includes a range of quantitative and qualitative data analysing the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of the population and the area.

This process was supported by a significant public engagement programme that took place over a 6-month period. During this programme, NCC engaged with residents via partner agencies and community events, and targeted specific groups with Protected Characteristics through positive outreach and utilising community languages. This information was used to inform the Well-being Plan.

### **Action 3**

Over the duration of the SEP, the authority has moved to an integrated model of equality impact assessment. The council's Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) combines considerations around Equalities, Welsh Language, Well-being of Future Generations and the parameters of fairness set out by our Fairness Commission, and places them within a single process. Guidance on completing FEIAs has been issued to staff reflecting this approach. The release of this guidance was promoted extensively to staff, communicating our statutory obligations, the benefits of completing at FEIA, and wider commitment to transparency. Staff feedback suggests that further staff engagement is required to ensure that these obligations are widely understood.

FEIAs are a vital part of the Council's planning and consultation process and are used to inform democratic decision making as a component of reports. This year, we delivered training on FEIAs to our Cabinet Members, our most senior decision makers.

As part of its response to the COVID19 health crisis, the Council has developed a Community Impact Assessment (CIA), which builds on the FEIA process and draws together lived experiences of people that share protected characteristics, as well as local and national research/data. The CIA will be used to inform strategic recovery planning, and inform the way that we support communities to build resilience and capacity to recover from the crisis.

### **Action 4**

Newport Youth Council (NYC) is a youth-led forum that involves young people aged 11- 25 years old. The NYC takes a participative approach to facilitate, empower and provide a platform for young people's voice, enabling them to influence decisions that affect their lives. It also focusses on building skills – personal life and vocational, confidence, and friendships as part of building personal resilience and tackling social inclusion for young people.

The delivery of the Youth Council is one way Newport City Council meets its duty under the Welsh Government's Young Person's (Wales) Measure 2011. The measure embeds Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and sets out the responsibility that public sector bodies have to consider the voices of young people in their decision-making processes.

NYC membership is for young people from all areas and backgrounds and has on-going recruitment. It is youth-led, and works towards an inclusive, socially supportive and fun environment. Media Academy Cardiff, a third sector organisation based in Cardiff, have secured a five-year contract to deliver Newport Youth Council on behalf of Newport City Council. They are the winners of Welsh Government Youth Work Excellence Award 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and have worked with over 1,500 young people who are at risk of offending and anti-social behavior.

The NYC focussed on rebuilding its membership and capacity during 2019-2020, and have developed their own vision and values, are working to establish elected roles, and have created an action plan outlining their key themes. The emerging priority themes have so far included:

1. Crime – perceived crime, in particular safety in Newport , hate crime and knife crime
2. Mental Health and Well-being
3. Transport
4. Climate change
5. Homelessness
6. LGBTQ+ issues
7. Education
8. Single use plastics

NYC led on a Newport-wide consultation focusing on the potential need for safe spaces and support services for LGBTQ+ young people in the city. Over 2000 responses were received, and the survey resulted in the council hosting an LGBTQ+ young person's event as part of LGBT History Month. Working with local partners from schools and the third sector NYC organised the event, which provided young people with access to information, support, and networking opportunities with other young LGBTQ+ people. A regular safe space is now being developed, and MAC is in the process of recruiting a specific LGBTQ+ youth worker to support this.

NYC have also contributed to work and consultation around:

- the council's Digital Strategy for Schools
- accessible transport for young people
- bullying in schools
- engagement with young people across the city in activities that were still possible during lockdown
- crime in the city centre and hate crime (via a Gwent-wide forum with the Police and Crime Commissioner)

As well as working to develop their key themes, NYC were at the forefront of delivering a Children's Charter. The Council's Corporate Plan states the intention to have in place a Children's Charter which will set out commitments to children and young people and their families, including specific commitments to children in care and care leavers. The Charter sets out the rights of children and young people when they use Newport City Council's services but also in what they can expect the Council to be doing for them. NYC have coordinated the development of the charter, including planning and delivering a youth engagement event with key partners , facilitating a workshop to obtain feedback of the charter and visiting underrepresented groups to ensure their voices are

heard. The charter has been renamed Newport's Youth Promise, to reflect the opinion of young people engaged in its development.

#### **Action 5**

In March 2017, Newport City Council published its 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy. This strategy sets an overarching target of increasing the number of pupils in Welsh medium education in the city, and contains a broad range of commitments from the authority to promote the Welsh language, both within the workforce and wider community. These commitments include a number of outcomes, including increasing the number of Welsh medium childcare places within the city, promoting engagement with the language amongst minority communities, and working with the private sector to promote the visibility of Welsh in the city.

#### **Looking to the future**

FEIAs are a vital part of our decision and policy making process, and we will continue to raise awareness of their effective use across the council. With the introduction of the Socio-economic Duty in March 2021, we will also be preparing these processes for change, and taking stock of their effectiveness.

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## Equality Objective 3: Improving Access

<b>Improving access to services</b>	
<i>A more equal Wales</i>	
<b>People can access all the Council services and activities that they need in terms of physical access and communication access etc.</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Audit Council buildings for accessibility
<b>Action 2</b>	Develop an Accessibility Strategy in relation to schools
<b>Action 3</b>	Develop and maintain an English - Welsh translation and interpretation service for the Council and arrangements for other languages and formats
<b>Action 4</b>	Develop guidance on standards of accessible and bilingual materials in relation to marketing, publicity and customer information
<b>Action 5</b>	Monitor satisfaction levels/ number of complaints regarding accessibility including physical, communication and Welsh language
<b>Action 6</b>	Front line staff in the contact centre and Information Station trained in accessible communications, customer service, disability awareness, conflict management etc.
<b>Action 7</b>	Digital Inclusion Council web site adheres to W3 standard at AA level and is bilingual

### Summary

Newport City Council has an important role to play in improving access to public services across the City. Over 73,000 people visit the Civic Centre and Information Station annually, accessing a huge number of services including housing advice, Council tax and licensing.

In addition to our physical locations, we also have an increasingly significant digital and remote presence, with the Contact Centre managing over 300,000 calls annually, and the NCC website receiving 1.6 million hits per year. As we move to further develop these services, we will need to ensure that access to Council services remains inclusive and accessible.

Over the past 12 months we also finished our statutory consultation on our Schools Accessibility Strategy, which aims to improve and upgrade the physical access to schools in Newport.

### Action 1

An internal Capital Strategy and Assets Management group has been set up to carry out a review of the use of NCC-owned buildings. As the review is on-going, it is anticipated that the work programme around accessibility will be taken at a later stage, and be completed by the end of the next financial year.

### Action 2

In 2018-19 Newport City Council, in partnership with Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and the Serennu Children's Centre, engaged with key stakeholders to co-produce an Accessibility Strategy for Schools. Workshops were conducted with senior leaders within all Newport schools to provide guidance and assistance with the development of school accessibility plans.

The Accessibility Strategy for schools was adopted in July 2019 and is published here:

<https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Schools-and-Education/Accessibility-strategy/Accessibility-Strategy-for-Schools-2019-2024.pdf>



The action plan set out in the strategy is being implemented and is currently on track. A budget has been approved by the Corporate Strategic Asset Management Group to develop projects which aim to improve accessibility to assembly and dining halls at 5 primary schools. These projects are currently at design stage. Feasibility studies have also been commissioned at a further 7 Newport schools where barriers to accessibility in classroom areas have been noted. Site surveys to inform these studies are scheduled for Autumn/winter 2020.

### Action 3

In the 2018/19 financial year, the authority established a formal Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Cardiff Council's translation unit, Bilingual Cardiff. This SLA has successfully streamlined the authority's translation process, improving the ease of access of translation for NCC staff. This SLA has helped the council move towards a more sustainable translation solution, with the responsibility for translation now decentralised.

The cost of translation remains in a centrally held budget, easing budgetary pressures within individual Departments.

### Action 4

Over the course of the SEP delivery, the council has commissioned a series of internal promotional and guidance materials which highlight how staff members should use the Welsh language in any marketing and promotion work done on behalf of the Council. This year we refreshed our Welsh Language FEIA guidance as a result of feedback from the Welsh Language Commissioner, delivered Welsh language training to Elected Members, and highlighted staff responsibilities on key dates, including Diwrnod Swmae and St David's Day. We also commissioned a mystery shopper exercise, testing our bilingual services, and used lessons learned to inform the focus of our Welsh language work.

### Action 5

In the 2019/2020 financial year, Newport City Council received two complaints via our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system relating to non-compliance with our Welsh Language Standards. One related to a form, which has now been amended and published in Welsh, and one which related to a letter which was sent in English only. An IT solution is currently being explored in order to resolve this. We have revisited the way in which we record Welsh language complaints, in order to better connect routes of entry, and are confident that we now have an approach to resolving complaints that allows for organisational learning and change. We continue to work positively with the Welsh Language Commissioner and look forward to this relationship developing further.

This year we have had 4 complaints relating to concerns around discrimination, 2 of which were upheld (one concerning waste collection and one regarding council tax).

### Action 6

Frontline customer service staff continue to receive appropriate training as part of their induction training, including disability awareness. Team meetings regularly incorporate guest speakers from a range of specialist areas, covering topics including neurodiversity, equality legislation and asylum seekers and refugees. This year, all customer services staff completed comprehensive Equalities training, focussed on their specific area of service delivery. Four members of staff are also completing Welsh language training as part of the council's piloting of the 'Say Something in Welsh' App. Further training in relation to Violence against Women, Domestic and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) and safeguarding has also been completed by staff.

The council's Complaints Team now works closely with our Equalities and Welsh Language officers in order to effectively assess and address reports relating to discrimination, and a specific forum has been established to consider repeat complainants, including whether there are any additional vulnerabilities or support needs that need to be addressed.

#### Action 7

Over the past 12 months, the authority has improved the processes it has in place for maintaining a website that is compliant with Welsh Language Standards, including a comprehensive audit of all web pages. The authority has also implemented improved processes to ensure that when non-compliant systems are renewed, replacement systems will have bilingual functionality that will ensure compliance.

#### Looking to the future

Accessibility of services will remain an area of focus for the council, and will be reflected in our next Strategic Equality Plan. A priority will be to further engage with people that share protected characteristics (particularly disabled people), in order to learn from lived experiences and increase public trust and confidence in council services.

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## Equality Objective 4: Tackling Poverty

<b>Tackling Poverty</b> <i>A more Equal Wales</i>	
<b>We will work to reduce poverty, especially persistent poverty amongst some of our poorest people and communities, and reducing the likelihood that people will become poor</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Ensuring children have the best start in life through the delivery of Flying Start, good quality, affordable childcare and supported transition to education and through other educational transition points.
<b>Action 2</b>	Focus on the early indications of need so that children and young people are able to achieve their potential (achievement of children entitled to Free School Meals, Looked After Children, act.)
<b>Action 3</b>	Implementing the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework so that young people are offered appropriate support when leaving school.
<b>Action 4</b>	Delivery of the Work Based Learning Academy, Community First, Communities 4 Work and Families First (Family Skills Project) to improve people's skills, remove barriers to employment and raise aspirations.
<b>Action 5</b>	Targeted work in our most deprived communities.

### Summary

Poverty in Newport is not uniform across the city, and we have pockets of both deprivation and wealth. The most recent Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD 2019) shows that Newport has the highest proportion of deprived areas (24.2% or 23 out of 95 areas) in the most deprived 10% in Wales. It is acknowledged that low income is a concern for Newport residents, with a 2016 survey finding that only 18% of respondents thinking that people in Newport have enough money to run their households. Wales has the highest rate of child poverty of all the UK Nations, with 1 in 3 children living in poverty and 14% in severe poverty.

During this year Cabinet established the role of Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, which includes responsibility for the poverty agenda.

### Action 1

Flying Start currently support 2712 children offering the following:

- Part time childcare 12.5 hours per week
- Parenting Support
- Speech, Language and Communication support
- Intensive health support

Our Language and Play team delivering chatty children sessions, are delivering the programme bilingually in some areas, and in other community languages, including Polish. In our North Hub, we are also starting work with Gwent Police to engage with survivors of sexual and domestic violence, using their lived experiences and feedback to change and improve the service the Police service provides.

Flying Start continue to support early identification of mental ill health through antenatal and postnatal mental health support as part of the Healthy Child Wales programme. The Flying Start programme funds a Clinical Psychiatric Nurse who supports the Health offer, undertaking listening visits and offering interventions where needed. Postnatal depression groups are also offered, working in partnership with students undertaking counselling courses.

## Action 2

Around 26,000 children and young people make up the population of Newport's schools at any one time and this number is growing. The May 2020 school census records Newport as having:

- 5463 pupils with Additional Learning Needs
- 285 children who were looked after
- 4714 pupils who have English as an additional language
- 134 service children

In addition, 5764 pupils were in receipt of free school meal vouchers at the end of the summer term 2020.

It is recognised that vulnerable pupils make better progress when they are identified and supported from early in their school career. To enhance this work, schools have been supported to improve their tracking and monitoring of vulnerable groups. This has allowed the local authority to work with partners to support schools to access a broad range of suitable interventions for these pupils. Two examples of the range of interventions available are the Early Identification Toolkit and a local authority wide focus on training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

The Early Identification Toolkit is used by schools and the local authority as part of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework. The consistent use of this toolkit helps schools to assess the needs of vulnerable pupils. It also helps them to identify those pupils who would benefit from additional support through a referral to the Educational Psychology Service or Inclusion Enrichment team.

Central Education Services officers along with staff in 55 of the 57 schools in Newport have received training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) from Public Health Wales or the Education Achievement Service. The 2 schools yet to receive training are due to undertake this in the near future. By ensuring local authority and school staff have a collective understanding of ACEs and the impact of these on behaviour and achievement, there is a shared understanding of the ways in which pupils who require additional intervention can be better supported.

This year, the council also began to implement its Learn Well Plan, a strategy which sets out our ambition to improve the well-being of pupils in our schools in ways that reflect the council's well-being objectives. This plan brings together all the actions we are taking to improve the outcomes achieved by all learners but in particular, vulnerable groups of learners. Each of the four strands of the Learn Well Plan have a working group, with a focus on each of the following themes:

- Connectedness
- Health Aware
- Participation
- Engagement

Vulnerable learners remain at the heart of the plan, with actions focussing on better understanding disparities in educational outcomes and wellbeing, early intervention to reduce any gaps, and ensuring that pupils are connected with both their schools and communities. A research project, exploring the relationship between attainment and attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals has recently been completed, and will further inform this work.

## Action 3

Newport has made a significant positive impact on the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework has ensured a continuous focus on young people who are NEET and the reduction in the number of young people who are NEET is a priority for Newport City Council.

There are high levels of engagement from internal and external partners and the process is well resourced by our Regeneration Investment and Housing (RIH) Team, alongside Education Services where the destination process is coordinated. This cross service approach has proved effective with the NEET figures reducing year on year, and Newport performing second in Wales in 2019 for Year 11 leavers and under the Welsh average for the fourth consecutive year.

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) has continued to be supported by all key partners. The Framework is strongly held to account by the strategic Youth Support Services Board (YSSB). The Pre 16 NEET group, the 16-18 practitioner group and the Learning Provider Network are the working groups that support the YSSB operationally and has had an effective impact on the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) reducing.

The local authority partnership relationships with all secondary schools, internal service areas and external agencies has proved crucial to positive outcomes for young people. The local authority employs a Youth and Engagement Progression Coordinator who has the responsibility for coordinating and working with schools and all partners to strive to keep the number of young people not in education, employment or training as low as possible.

This excellent relationship between all partners and schools has ensured shared accountability between the schools and the local authority regarding the numbers of young people who are NEET. The experience of working together and offering advice and practical solutions has contributed to the NEET figures significantly reducing in Newport and young people making successful meaningful transitions.

#### **Action 4**

Work Based Learning Academy continued to deliver its two European Social Fund programmes creating pathways to employment, education and training to reduce the number of disengaged young people. These are:

1. Inspire 2 Work – targeting young people transitioning from school to further learning or employment.
2. Inspire 2 Achieve – targeting young people in full time education aged 7 – 11 who have been identified as at risk of becoming NEET

The council is the lead organisation managing the programme for the South East Wales region, working in partnership with other Local Authorities, Further Education providers and Registered Social Landlords.

The Work Based Learning Academy has created job clubs, training courses and bespoke 13-week training provisions to meet the needs of young people who are seeking employment. These programmes have specifically targeted young people aged 16–24 years.

The Families First provision delivered by council Youth Services works in partnership with the European Social Fund's Inspire 2 Achieve programme to offer a range of provisions that seek to reduce the impact of poverty on educational outcomes. This includes interventions with young people to improve attendance and attainment and interventions with the wider families to ensure young people are supported to achieve.

## Action 5

The council has recently introduced a Neighbourhood Hub model, siting key community services in each area of the city. Each Neighbourhood Hub team is multi-disciplinary and includes staff working in Resilient Communities, Youth Service, Play Development, Libraries, Families First, Flying Start, and Work, & Skills. The model has enabled each Hub to develop new and unique ways to connect with communities. The assessment of local needs has been essential to the development of community engagement and development plans in each hub, and these are reviewed every quarter.

This year the delivery of Fit and Fed in partnership with local community centres, Newport Live and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service has enabled us to help tackle holiday hunger and engage with children, young people and parents with additional support needs. City-wide events have also been supported by Hub teams such as Families love Newport event, including Newport Jobs Fair, Adult Learners week, Police Interfaith event and Job Centre takeover event.

Several community association sessions and events has been supported and joint funded by the legacy programme, enabling us to work closer with community groups to develop initiatives to meet the needs of the local community. The development of volunteer pathways across the Hubs has been mutually beneficial to participants and groups. This has enabled the supporting of more community based sessions to meet the local need.

Community residents have noticeably become more active within their community and ongoing community consultations have taken place at events, weekly sessions and ongoing projects in order to continually adapt to local need.

The teams across Newport have developed and maintained effective relationships with partners such as Citizens Advice, Job Centre, Adult Community Learning, Careers Wales, Heddlu Gwent Police and Newport City Homes in order to better support some of Newport's most vulnerable communities.

## Looking to the future

With the introduction of the socio-economic duty in March 2021, future equality work relating to poverty will focus on the legal duty to pay due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome that may arise as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, as well as the intersectionality that exists between this disadvantage, and protected characteristics. Education, specifically inequalities that exist for vulnerable learners, will continue to form part of our equality priorities, and future work will be aligned with the progress of the Learn Well Plan.

We will be working with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, who now has responsibility for this agenda on these developments, as part of our equalities work.

## Equality Objective 5: Cohesive Communities

<b>Cohesive Communities and Tackling Hate Crime</b>	
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	
<b>People have a sense of belonging to the city and feel safe</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	We will encourage and support initiatives which provide opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of diverse cultures in Newport.
<b>Action 2</b>	To continue our support of the Hate Crime Forum in order to raise awareness of Hate Crime, increase reporting and deliver a multi-agency response to high risk cases.
<b>Action 3</b>	We will co-ordinate a partnership approach to reporting and tackling prejudice based bullying in schools and look to play a proactive role in challenging prejudice.
<b>Action 4</b>	We will encourage opportunities to increase the public's awareness of immigration and the inclusion of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants focusing on shared experiences of all residents in Newport regardless of migration status or ethnicity.

### Summary

NCC continues to deliver the Welsh Government's Community Cohesion programme priorities. Community cohesion involves us all, and how we relate to others who are different. The focus of the programme is on 'upstream' preventative work to foster tolerance and good relations, tackle deep-rooted inequality and support people to break down any feelings of fear and distrust. Working effectively on prevention is essential in order to prevent 'downstream' problems of community tensions, discrimination, hate crime and vulnerability to radicalisation.

### Action 1

Newport is home to a diverse population and as an authority we believe it is important to encourage and support initiatives which provide opportunities to increase awareness and understanding. This year we recognised a number of key dates, including Pride Cymru, Refugee Week, Black History Month, and Gypsy Roma Traveller Month. The council used its social media platforms to share positive, inclusive messaging, and focussed on lived experiences and personal stories in order to challenge negative perceptions and stereotypes.

Newport City Council remains part of the Proud Councils network, alongside other local authorities, and engaged with local LGBTQ+ people across a range of events this summer. We also sponsored a range of activities, including an LGBT History Month event at the Riverfront, delivered in partnership with third sector organisations and young LGBTQ+ people, and Black History Month and Windrush Day celebrations, hosted by Race Council Cymru, EYST, Caribbean Heritage Cymru and Newport Zimbabwean Volunteering Association.

### Action 2

The East Gwent Hate Crime Forum is attended by representatives from key stakeholders across Newport and Monmouthshire. The role of the forum is to discuss Hate Crime statistics and trends as well as raise awareness of Hate Crime and increase reporting. An associated multi-agency case-handling group coordinated by Gwent Police continues to manage high-risk cases on an individual basis. The council's Community Cohesion officers work closely with their counterparts in Gwent Police and meet regularly to discuss and address any emerging tensions.

During Hate Crime Awareness Week this year, the council delivered an engagement event in the city centre, focussed on promoting the positive contribution that diverse communities bring to Newport, alongside our local Polish school, BAME business owners and partners at Victim Support and Newport People First, a self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities. We also commissioned a puppet theatre production focussed on identity-based bullying which was showcased in a number of schools, and collected the views of Newport residents on hate crime and cohesion via a 'Big Brother' booth.

### **Action 3**

The council's Education Well-Being Group has re-focussed in response to the Welsh Government's new anti-bullying guidance, with an action plan which aims to ensure the guidance is properly embedded throughout our processes and within school policies. A review has been undertaken of the way that the council requires schools to record identity-based bullying, and improvements made to categorisation.

It is recognised that there is still under-reporting of identity-based bullying incidents, and further training is planned for all schools to raise awareness of the need to record and report. Racial incidents continue to be the most frequently recorded type, and support is provided to schools via the Cohesion Officers and work with partners including Show Racism the Red Card. The council's Learn Well Plan will further develop this area of work, considering further interventions and preventative work that can be undertaken in schools.

A template Strategic Equality Plan has been provided to all schools, along with example Equality Objectives, to better align schools' Plans with council priorities, and explicitly focus on identity-based bullying.

### **Action 4**

As one of 4 asylum dispersal areas in Wales, and with significant asylum seeker, migrant and refugee populations, Newport continues to prioritise both the delivery of services to these groups, as well as working to ensure positive integration, and challenging hostility where it occurs. The council hosts bi-monthly Migration Forum meetings, attended by a mix of statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations and continues to lead on local cases that require effective management of vulnerable individuals.

The council also continues to take part in the Home Office's Vulnerable Persons Relocation programme, working towards our commitment of relocating 50 refugee households to Newport over the life of the 5-year programme. The council provides a support service to those households, which focusses on successful integration and opportunities to contribute to local communities.

This year, the council also joined Oxford University's Inclusive Cities Programme, a 4 year knowledge exchange programme with cities across the UK, aiming to share best practice in welcoming newcomers and supporting migrant communities.

Welsh Government provided the authority with additional funding until 2021 to recruit a Cohesion Officer, whose role specifically addresses risks to cohesion posed as a result of Britain preparing to leave the EU. This role has been instrumental in opening up dialogue with EU nationals living in Newport, providing them with support to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme, and establishing a range of engagement mechanisms, including dedicated social media pages, online resources and a regular EU Citizens Meeting, bringing together all third sector agencies working in this area, community members, and partners.



### Looking to the future

Community cohesion remains a priority for the council, and the challenges have evolved significantly over the life of this Strategic Equality Plan. With Brexit still set to significantly affect community dynamics and the COVID-19 pandemic impacting on local tensions, delivery of work in this area will be reflected in our new Strategic Equality Objectives.

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## Equality Objective 6: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

<b>Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence</b>	
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	
<b>People who are subject or witness to domestic abuse are supported by the Council and its partners in their current situation and through any changes they wish to make</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Further develop the multi-agency Domestic Abuse (DA) Unit
<b>Action 2</b>	Roll out training on 'Ask and Act'
<b>Action 3</b>	Support the development and delivery of the VAWDASV Strategy for Gwent

### Summary

Domestic abuse is a major challenge for public services. It places significant, costly and increasing day-to-day demands on Local Authorities, police, health, housing and other support services.

In addition to the financial costs of domestic abuse, it has long-term implications for people that experience, witness or perpetrate it. Following a number of local reviews regarding strategic and operational planning and delivery of domestic abuse services across Gwent, it was identified that the development of a clear, accountable regional approach was a priority. Over the last 12 months, we have continued to work in partnership with the Gwent Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDSV) team and focused our efforts on ensuring victims and their families receive or are signposted to the most appropriate service to support their well-being.

### Action 1

The Domestic Abuse Unit continues to function as a multi-agency hub providing a 'one stop shop' for victims. In addition to providing a base for the fortnightly Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), the unit has continued to develop relationships with other agencies including Victim Support and Cyfannol Counselling Services to ensure that victims of domestic abuse can also benefit from the use of partner services.

Organisations operating from the multi-agency Domestic Abuse Unit include Newport Women's Aid, Llamau, BAWSO (which provides specific support to BAME victims) and the VAWDASV Newport Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service, as well as working alongside Victim Support.

Over the course of this financial year there were 5583 recorded incidents of domestic abuse recorded in Newport. This equates to 31.85% of all incidents (17,530) across Gwent. Of these cases, 443 (7.93%) were deemed high risk cases and were referred to MARAC. The council coordinate and host all fortnightly MARAC meetings at the Unit.

### Action 2

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to work closely with the VAWDASV 'Ask and Act' Training implementation group to support the rollout of 'Ask and Act' training.

The e-learning package has now been rolled out across all the relevant Authorities in Gwent, however, there were initially significant system access issues reported which had hampered progress. Access issues have now been resolved and numbers of staff completing the e-Learning continues to grow. A face to face resource has been commissioned and is available for staff without computer access. This year, Welsh Government also made e-Learning available via 'guest' access, which enabled staff, volunteers, community groups and citizens to complete the course. During

2019/2020 training became a part of the compulsory training package for all staff and information is regularly available and updated on the intranet, and via staff newsletters and communications.

### Action 3

The development of the Regional VAWDASV strategy has been informed through:

- Commissioning of a Welsh Women's Aid Needs Assessment
- Linking to the Population Needs Assessment of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act
- 5 Well Being Plans across Gwent as part of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- Safer Gwent Strategic Assessment

The strategy has 6 priorities and the team report annually on these:

1. Increase awareness of and challenge attitudes towards violence Against Women, Domestic abuse and Sexual violence ACROSS Gwent
2. Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behavior is always wrong
3. Increase focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety
4. Make early intervention and prevention a priority
5. Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors
6. Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strengths based, gender responsive services throughout the region

### Looking to the future

Domestic and sexual abuse continues to be a priority for the council and its partners. As we look forward to our next Strategic Equality Plan, we recognise that there are well established strategies and governance arrangements that exist to deliver this work, so will seek to re-focus on those areas which intersect most clearly with the equality agenda.

## Equality Objective 7: Homelessness

<b>Homelessness</b>	
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	
<b>To provide a safe, supporting, empowering and non-judgemental environment for homeless and marginalised people so that they can achieve their potential</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	To implement the Welsh Government’s Housing Support Grant Programme (formerly the Supporting People Programme) to assist and support potentially vulnerable and marginalized people to live independently within the community
<b>Action 2</b>	To prevent homelessness where possible
<b>Action 3</b>	To build people’s resilience to deal with shocks, stresses and uncertainty in their lives
<b>Action 4</b>	To support people develop skills for life to flourish independently

### Summary

Newport City Council has continued to work to combat homelessness in the City in the face of challenging economic circumstances and increasing demand. The landscape surrounding homelessness is constantly changing and the authority is in the process of implementing a number of new services in response to this reality.

The authority, in cooperation with partners across Gwent, published a regional Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022. As outlined in previous Annual Reports, adopting a regional approach to tackle homelessness was a key priority for the authority, and has laid strong foundations for greater co-operation in the future. This has also been a key focus of the response to the COVID pandemic.

### Action 1

In the past 12 months, the Social Services Supporting People/Housing Support Team has continued its programme of remodelling existing schemes and working on new projects. The team’s commissioned services supported over 5,000 people in its accommodation-based and floating support services in the year. Notable activities in the year include:

- The Financial Inclusion Support scheme has expanded its activities and has now secured over £800,000 additional annualised welfare benefits and grants for referrals since it started in 2018.
- The cross-authority (Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau-Gwent) Gypsy and Traveller Project continues to provide a valuable support service for Gwent’s Gypsy and Traveller communities, especially as new and improved sites are developed.
- The EU Migrant Support Service has become embedded within Newport Mind and continues to provide a valued service to migrants from a variety of backgrounds. Work is also focused on upcoming changes to residency status due to Brexit.
- Additional funding was secured to enable two full-time support workers to work for the Refugee Support Service and alternative office space agreed with the Welsh Refugee Council.
- The budget for interpretation and translation services with Language Line was again increased further as more people with less common languages/dialects were supported.
- Care and Repair’s Specialist Older Persons Support scheme continues to provide additional support for people with progressive sight loss and has a number of notable successes working closely with the Council’s First Contact Team’s Rehabilitation Officer for Visual Impairment (ROVI) officer.

- The re-commissioning of the Domestic Abuse Floating Support scheme has resulted in a more integrated service for women and men with domestic abuse and sexual violence issues by amalgamating BAWSO's scheme for women from BAME communities with the larger Llamau scheme. Funding also continues for BAWSO's 8-bed refuge in the city. Issues around the implementation of the VAWDASV Act are still ongoing including people with No Recourse to Public Funds and clarification on HSG funding of all VAWDASV services.
- The Lighthouse 55+ scheme for older people celebrated its first anniversary and supported over 250 people in the year.
- Dedicated support workers also work with people with sensory impairments, both sight and hearing loss (BSL-trained) and physical disabilities linking with other agencies, including aids and adaptations and Occupational Therapy teams.
- Preparatory work in the year for a new supported housing scheme for 6 young homeless people paved the way for the scheme to open in early 2020/21. This was only possible due to the excellent partnership working between Newport City Homes, Llamau Ltd. and the Council's Housing Needs Unit and Supporting People Team.
- Lastly, the team were able to provide additional funding for services for rough sleepers and people with no fixed abode in the City with Eden Gate (Night Shelter and Day Centre) and The Wallich (Assertive Outreach Team).

2019/20 was a transitional year in preparation for the full implementation of the new Housing Support Grant Programme in April 2020. The revised programme will focus more on homeless prevention and be more flexible and creative. Better collaboration and partnership working with statutory and third sector colleagues will enable the programme to develop more person-centered services to target support for some of our most vulnerable citizens, thus reducing the inequality of access to services further.

## Action 2

2019/2020 saw a steady increase in the number of households assisted to prevent homelessness to 50%, despite an increased number of presentations. Homelessness is identified as a strategic priority in the Strategic Recovery Aims – supporting vulnerable people as a priority.

In 2019/20 a total of 2070 households presented as homeless to the Council and 919 allocations of affordable housing were made via the Common Housing Register.

The Council prevented homelessness for 50% of the households that were at risk of homelessness within 56 days. A total of 2070 households presented to the Council seeking assistance due to either being homeless or at risk of homelessness within 56 days with an increase in the number owed a duty to either prevent or relieve homelessness. Service demands have increased whilst options to rehouse households has remained consistent. Partnership working and strategic approaches to address homelessness continue to develop, alongside the following actions:

1. The Gwent Homeless Strategy was implemented with an action plan which is regularly monitored and reviewed by partners in the Gwent region.
2. The Home Options Policy review was completed and is due to be implemented in 20/21
3. Nightshelte provision will be reviewed in light of Covid19 to ensure rough sleepers are supported and accommodated
4. Outreach Services for rough sleepers was reviewed in line with Homeless Action Group recommendations and changes to provision recommended
5. The Youth Pathway project continues to deliver education and information on homelessness in collaboration with the Youth Service

6. Supported housing for young people and supported lodgings have been developed with Welsh Government funding and in partnership with Llamau
7. Youth Homelessness protocols were developed with Social Services to assist 16/17 year olds at risk of homelessness
8. Work around accessing the Private Rented Sector commenced and a PRS strategy is expected to be adopted in 20/21
9. Partnership working and delivery of the Common Housing Register continues to facilitate rehousing into affordable housing units across the City
10. Adapted units of temporary accommodation were acquired for homeless households

#### **Actions 3 and 4**

In addition to the developments above, Tenancy Support services provided from within the council have been refocused in order to provide crisis intervention work for households at risk of homelessness, working alongside other staff within the Council's Housing Needs Unit in order to prevent homelessness as well as linking to other support services available.

Core funding from Housing Support Grant helps to enable a number of local third sector agencies to fundraise for additional services including Llamau's Learning 4 Life (pre-vocational skills), Solas Cymru's CRE8 project (work preparation skills), Newport Women's Aid's Freedom Programme (awareness and resilience building) and Newport Mind's suite of resilience courses.

Referrals to the Council's major floating support scheme, the Lighthouse Project, are now prioritised to ensure crisis/emergency referrals are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

#### **Looking to the future**

Provision of appropriate housing, and the support needed for people to manage and maintain their tenancies, is key in reducing inequalities of outcome for some of our most vulnerable communities. This will continue to be a priority for the council, with our equality work closely linked to supporting people to live independently, and providing tailored interventions for people that share protected characteristics.

## Equality Objective 8: Welsh Language

<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.</b>	
<i>We will promote our bilingual public services and increase the use of Welsh in Newport</i>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Review governance and performance monitoring
<b>Action 2</b>	Community promotion of the Welsh language, in particular around Welsh and BAME communities
<b>Action 3</b>	Partnership and stakeholder engagement to increase visibility of Welsh in the community
<b>Action 4</b>	Staff engagement with Welsh language classes and Welsh language awareness

### Summary

There are a number of expectations placed on the Council in relation to Welsh language, which include, but are not limited to:

- The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
- Mwy na Geiriau Strategy

The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, created the office of the Welsh Language Commissioner who in turn imposed Welsh Language Standards upon public sector bodies via [Compliance Notices](#). The Welsh Language Standards cover the way in which the council deliver bilingual public services, internal administration, the way we consider Welsh language in our decision making processes and the requirement for development of a [5 Year Promotional Strategy](#).

In 2019/20, the authority has continued to make good progress towards compliance with Welsh Language Standards. The agenda continues to benefit from a dedicated budget and Policy Officer, and during 19/20, the recruitment of a Welsh Language Promotion Officer.

The council has also made positive steps towards achieving the goals set out in its 5 Year Welsh Strategy; and we continue to work with key Welsh language stakeholders across the city, and support the development of our local Welsh language forum. This year, we have also been developing our partnership work to promote the Welsh language across minority communities across Newport.

Further information on the implementation of Welsh Language Standards, and of the promotion of Welsh language is included in the authority's [Welsh Language Annual Report 2019-2020](#).

### Action 1

Ensuring the Council's governance and performance structure are fit for purpose, will help progress the Welsh language agenda and increase compliance levels with the Welsh Language Standards. Work is underway to review and align current internal and external action plans, as well as identify key performance indicators which will provide an effective overview of compliance and progress.

A review of the council's Welsh Language Implementation Group, its membership and function, is also being progressed, with this work scheduled to be completed early next year.

### **Action 2**

Work towards external promotion of the Welsh language is set out in our Welsh Language 5 Year Strategy, which the council work towards delivering in partnership with members of the Welsh Language Forum and other stakeholders. The appointment of a Promotion Officer to increase awareness of Welsh medium education in the area of the proposed fourth Welsh medium school focused our work to ensure we increase awareness of the language amongst our BAME communities, and others who would not traditionally consider Welsh medium education. This year we have also commissioned research to look at why young people are not choosing childcare and early years education as employment/further education options, and how we can work to better address these gaps.

### **Action 3**

Work continues in partnership with key Welsh language stakeholders and local groups through the Welsh Language Forum, the Mwy na Geiriau Forum and the Gŵyl Newydd working group. This year, the council supported Gŵyl Newydd, the Welsh language festival, through sponsorship and hosting of a talk at the Civic Centre with the Welsh Language Commissioner. We have continued to develop our working relationship with Menter Iaith Casnewydd and supporting the Welsh Language Forum to facilitate the chances for the people of Newport to use Welsh by reaching out to new audiences.

### **Action 4**

To increase the number of Welsh speakers in front-line posts the council has piloted the 'Say Something in Welsh' App, utilising learning methods, which if successful, may be included as part of a wider learning and development programme. Work is ongoing to develop an online Welsh Language Awareness package, and our current face-to-face session was updated at the beginning of the year. Welsh language awareness now features as part of our staff induction, and we have delivered Welsh language training to all new Cabinet members.

### **Looking to the future**

The Welsh language agenda is now firmly embedded across the council through formal reporting arrangements. A Welsh language annual report is produced by the council and published on our website. As we move to a new Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24, the council will continue to monitor Welsh language progress via these routes, rather than inclusion within our Strategic Equality Objectives.



## Equality Objective 9: Corporate Compliance

<b>Corporate Compliance</b>	
<i>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</i>	
<b>Strategic leadership, governance arrangements, ensuring standards are high and consistent across all the Council and its areas</b>	
<b>Action 1</b>	Monitor performance, including customer satisfaction, through the Strategic Equality Group
<b>Action 2</b>	Report annually on equalities and the Welsh language to Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team, and publish relevant reports on the Council's website
<b>Action 3</b>	Webpages hold relevant equality information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Annual Equality and Welsh Language Reports</li> <li>• Equalities and Welsh language population and employment data</li> </ul>
<b>Action 4</b>	Council employees offered all the relevant training and guidance to facilitate compliance with the equalities, human rights and Welsh language legislation
<b>Action 5</b>	Review procedures on procurement, grants and sponsorships to mainstream equalities and Welsh language requirements

### Summary

Over the past financial year the authority has continued to demonstrate its commitment to transparency by publishing relevant equalities information online, and reporting progress on the Strategic Equality Plan to the SEG. The council also continue to undertake Gender Pay Gap reviews, although for 2019/20, the reporting has been suspended for the year due to ongoing priorities around COVID-19.

### Action 1

In 2019/20, the SEG continued to meet bi-monthly, rotating Strategic Equality Objectives for consideration. The council has also continued its commitment to developing Elected Member Champions, with leads for Race, LGBTQ+, Disability and Welsh Language raising the profile of equality work throughout the year.

### Actions 2 and 3

The authority will continue to publish all annual reports relating to Welsh language and equalities, and the required data associated with these reports, on the 'Equalities and Welsh Language' page of Newport City Council's [website](#). These reports are approved by our senior leadership team, Cabinet, and Council (Equalities only).

### Action 4

Currently, the council offers 'An Introduction to Equalities' and 'Welsh Language Awareness' training to all staff. These sessions are intended to promote a general awareness of the authority's Welsh language and equalities obligations, whilst also providing staff with information about where they can go for further advice and guidance.

### Action 5

Early in 2019, Cabinet officially adopted Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains, developed to protect suppliers and employees from risks including modern day slavery and other types of exploitation.

Progress against the Code will be reported to the SEG, and annual updates will appear within future Strategic Equality Plan Annual Reports. This reporting process will begin in 2020/21. The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Assets has also been nominated as Anti-Slavery and Ethical Employment champion.

Since the council signed up to the Code of Practice, our Procurement function has adopted a new approach in its tendering processes when appointing external contractors. In addition, Human Resources have developed internal processes and policies to ensure that, as an employer, we embed our own best practice approach to ensuring our employment practices are of the highest ethical standards.

In terms of the council's tendering processes, new documentation has been developed and rolled out for use across the council. The new qualification process applied to all open tenders sets out our stall as a proud adopter of the Code of Practice, and encourages all of our suppliers to sign up in their own right. There is a dedicated section in all tenders linking suppliers to the Code of Practice Policy, and asking for information on sign up. There are new sections throughout our qualification document covering areas such as Employment Practices, Modern Slavery, Equal Opportunities and Blacklisting. Tenderers are required to answer a suite of questions, and provide details of any actions where they have been found to have acted unlawfully or have been prosecuted for non-compliance with legislation.

Service specifications drawn up with service areas are now designed so that we do not apply undue pressure on suppliers which might negatively impact their supply chain and employees. We are committed to paying all our suppliers within 30 days of a valid invoice, and now require all sub-contractors to be paid with the same terms. Tenders now include questions around supply chains paying a fair wage to overseas staff.

#### **Looking to the future**

Effective leadership and governance is essential to ensure the delivery of the council's Strategic Equality Plan, and this will remain a priority. A particular area of focus will be the development of effective delivery plans and performance frameworks which will allow for better monitoring of progress against our new Strategic Equality Plan throughout the year. We will also mandate equalities training for all staff.

## Equality Data

Equality data is used by the council throughout its decision-making process and forms a vital part of how and why decisions are made to fulfil its public sector duties. This section will look at the role of our equalities data in two stages:

- Collecting data; how the authority collects data on Protected Characteristics, the Welsh language and Well-being of Future Generations
- Evaluating data; how the authority uses data through our internal processes, for example, our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments

### 1. Collecting Data

Collecting accurate information about our employees and the public is key to delivering services which are inclusive, and responsive to individual need. Newport City Council collects equalities data in various ways, which goes on to inform the services we deliver.

#### A. Systems

As an authority, we have developed a range of systems which collect data, through our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, and other databases linked to individual services. These systems allow service areas to build a picture and profile of their customers. This data is then utilised in developing service area plans and work programmes, and allows service areas to amend existing services where needed.

#### B. Consultations

The council regularly consults and engages with a variety of community groups, citizen panels and the public in general. We develop surveys and consultations based on needs for service changes, improvements or strategies that will affect the community. This year we have consulted on topics such as safety in Newport, attitudes towards migration, public complaints, the needs of LGBTQ+ young people, the setting of our budget and residents parking. Consultation methods have included face to face engagement sessions and bus wi-fi surveys, and this year we have received nearly 40,000 responses. During 2019/20 we also introduced compulsory demographic monitoring for all surveys and consultation exercises, which means we can now better understand the needs of people that share protected characteristics, and the differential impact of our proposals.

#### C. Community Well-being profiles

In line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), the council has completed and published our Community Well-being Profiles. The profiles are available on our website for the public, as well as internally on our intranet system for staff. These profiles provide a source of data across a number of different areas, including data on ethnicity, and are intended to be a resource for members of the public and officers within the authority. These profiles are also intended as an additional resource for staff when considering FEIAs.

### 2. Evaluating data

The Council use a range of processes which ensure that we use the data that we collect in a way that informs our planning, decision and policy making.

#### A. Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments

The completion of Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments at the outset of any decision or policy making process assists the council in evidencing that we are meeting our Equality duties, and, more importantly, using relevant equality data to ensure that any disproportionate impact is mitigated at

an early stage, and the best decisions for the public are made. The council has an integrated model of equality impact assessment, combining considerations around Equalities, Welsh Language, Well-being of Future Generations and the parameters of fairness set out by our Fairness Commission within a single process. FEIAs should be evidence based, drawing on internal and external data in order to support any findings.

## B. Service Area Plans

Annual plans are produced by each of the council's service areas, and act as a key reporting mechanism in the delivery of our Corporate Annual Report, as well against our Wellbeing Objectives. Each Service area has a number of performance indicators relating to priority actions, as well as areas of risk which are updated on a quarterly basis. Risks are currently identified in relation to non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

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## Workforce Data

The following workforce data shows information about the protected characteristics of our employees captured between April 2019 and March 2020. The data shows that at the time of reporting there were 5781 staff employed by Newport City Council.

It remains challenging to compare workforce data against national statistics due to differences in the way that data is collected by employee systems, compared to standard census data. There are also data gaps locally - for example, no information is currently available on the gender identity of employees, or on nationality – for example, no reliable figures are available in relation to people who define themselves as LGBTQ+ within the general population.

This data analysis has contributed to the setting of our new Strategic Equality Objective in relation to creating a representative workforce, which will be included in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.

### Key findings

#### A. Ethnicity

- 93.6% of the current staff identify their ethnicity as white – this includes white British, English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, European and other white ethnicity
- 4.1% of the current staff identify their ethnicity as Asian, Black, Chinese and Mixed heritage/ethnicity, compared to a BAME population figure of 13%
- National data points to a general under-representation in the workplace for BAME men compared to White men (70.6% compared to 76.7%) and a greater disparity for BAME women compared to White women (69.9% compared to 43.8%)
- Of those leaving the organisation; 91.6% were White and 4.8% were of BAME background
- The largest group of people within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups leaving are of Mixed White and Caribbean heritage (6) and Black British – African (4)
- The largest group of people by BAME backgrounds joining the organisation are Asian or Asian British Pakistani (34), Asian or Asian British other (27) and Mixed white and Caribbean (26) and Mixed other (26)
- Of 9000 applicants for new roles during this time, 8001 applicants described their ethnicity as White
- 4.2% of the Newport population are Asian, compared to just 1.8% of the workforce
- 0.8% of the workforce are Black, compared to 2.1% of the population

#### B. Age

- Of 24 staff aged over 75, zero left the organisation during this period
- The highest percentage of an age group applying for roles within the organisation is those between 25-34, however our largest age group of staff is 35-44, making up over 27% of the workforce
- 25-34 year olds made up 27.6% of leavers, which was the highest percentage
- 1.73% of applications were made by people over 60 years old. 9.3% of the current workforce are aged over 60, and last year 14.8% of those leaving the organisation were aged over 60
- Less than 1% of applicants were aged 16-18 years old, whilst the current workforce of 16-24 year olds is 4.1% and over 8% of the leavers last year were in this same age group
- In 2019 across Wales, 25.6% of males aged 16-19 were unemployed and 21.6% of females
- 66.5% of the workforce is aged 16-49 and over 50-74+ make up 33.5%

### C. Sex

- Of the current workforce 76.9% are female
- Over 70% of the staff that left last year were female
- 84.6% of all applicants for roles last year were female
- 51 people who applied chose to identify as, or not disclose their sex as 'unspecified'
- Across Wales in 2019 a gender pay gap of 13.5% still existed
- Newport as a local authority had a gender pay gap of 15.9% in 2019 (this is a similar statistic to neighbouring local authorities)

### D. Marital Status

- Married people (47.3%) and single people (30.5%) make up the majority of the workforce
- 0.8% of the current workforce are widowed, compared to 1.1% leaving the organisation and 0.24% applying for roles
- 0.2% of the current workforce are in a civil partnership
- 5.8% of the current workforce did not answer or disclose their marital status, as did 2.38% of people applying for roles

### E. Disability

- 2% of the current workforce are disabled, compared to a population figure of 15% for disabled adults of working age in Newport
- In 2019 in Wales 51.5% of disabled women and 53.9% of disabled men were economically inactive
- 2.7% of the leavers last year were disabled
- Data is not captured for any changes in impairments/disability once staff have started working within the organisation; data for people who started employment being disabled, but now identify as having no disability (and vice versa) is not currently captured within this report
- 'Not known' or left 'blank' accounts for 3.5% of current staff and 3.8% of leavers
- Disabled applicants for new roles make up 4.3% of the total
- 5.23% of applicants have listed 'Not known' or left 'blank' – in Wales, 16% of disabled women and 29% of disabled men have never disclosed or discussed their impairment or health condition with their employer
- 14.7% of the disabled workforce last year left the organisation

### F. Sexual Orientation

- 1.1% of the current workforce identified as lesbian, bisexual or homosexual
- 4.8% of the current workforce selected 'prefer not to say' when asked about their sexual orientation
- 55.8% of the current workforce left this question blank
- 2.2% of those leaving the organisation are lesbian, bisexual or homosexual
- Of applicants for new roles, 4.25% are lesbian, bisexual or homosexual
- We are losing more LGB people than we are employing in each recorded category
- Heterosexuals make up more than 88% of applicants for new roles

## G. Religion or Belief

- 12 people from 9000 applicants for new roles identified as Buddhist, Jewish or Taoist
- 51.8% of the current workforce chose to leave this answer blank
- The highest percentages of specified religion or belief in the current workforce are Christian Protestant at 10.8%, followed by 7.3% of people defining as Atheist
- The largest group identity (specified) for applicants to new roles was Atheist at 19.6%
- 1.1% of the current workforce are Muslim Shiite or Sunni, no Shiite Muslims left the organisation last year
- 9.7% of applicants selected 'other' as their religion or belief
- 1.4% of leavers last year were Sunni Muslims
- Data from our Wellbeing Profiles suggest that in 2011, 4.7% of Newport were Muslim

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## Pay band by sex

Pay Band (£)	2018/19				2019/20			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
10,000-14,999	13	0.9	38	0.8	10	0.7	23	0.5
15,000-19,999	476	34.0	2130	42.9	450	31.7	1927	39.2
20,000-24,999	266	19.0	909	18.3	288	20.3	956	19.5
25,000-29,999	175	12.5	462	9.3	128	9.0	389	7.9
30,000-34,999	60	4.3	163	3.3	121	8.5	279	5.7
35,000-39,999	293	20.9	1020	20.5	109	7.7	390	7.9
40,000-44,999	24	1.7	41	0.8	191	13.5	695	14.1
45,000-49,999	14	1.0	53	1.1	16	1.1	43	0.9
50,000-54,999	17	1.2	32	0.6	17	1.2	46	0.9
55,000-59,999	12	0.9	25	0.5	8	0.6	27	0.5
60,000-64,999	9	0.6	13	0.3	9	0.6	16	0.3
65,000-69,999	6	0.4	14	0.3	6	0.4	14	0.3
70,000+	19	1.4	24	0.5	17	1.2	33	0.7
Not Known	17	1.2	42	0.8	49	3.5	74	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4966</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1419</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4912</b>	<b>100</b>

## Contract type by sex

Contract Type	2018/19				2019/20			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
Permanent	1040	74.2	3493	70.3	1028	72.4	3499	71.2
Acting Up	11	0.8	42	0.8	6	0.6	31	0.6
Casual	148	10.6	400	8.1	145	10.2	368	7.5
Fixed Term	186	13.3	985	19.8	193	13.6	921	18.8
LTS Cover	2	0.1	3	0.1	1	0.1	2	0.0
Mat. Cover	3	0.2	5	0.1	0	0.0	4	0.1
Seasonal	6	0.4	30	0.6	5	0.4	29	0.6
Secondment	0	0.0	5	0.1	1	0.1	5	0.1



<b>Sessional</b>	5	0.4	3	0.1	40	2.8	53	1.1
<b>Supply</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Temporary</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	1401	100	4966	100	1419	100	4912	100

Working pattern by sex

Working Pattern	2018/19				2019/20			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
<b>Full Time</b>	950	67.8	1579	31.8	946	66.7	1619	33.0
<b>Part Time</b>	442	31.5	3319	66.8	468	33.0	3232	65.8
<b>Job Share</b>	9	0.6	68	1.4	5	0.4	61	1.2
<b>Total</b>	1401	100	4966	100	1419	100	4912	100

Age profile (data from current staff and leavers)

Age Group	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
<b>16-24</b>	242	4.1	862	18.6	20	5.6	236	4.1			51	8.2
<b>25-34</b>	1301	22.3	1539	33.2	73	20.3	1243	21.5			172	27.6
<b>35-44</b>	1527	26.1	1016	21.9	77	21.4	1565	27.1			130	20.9
<b>45-49</b>	809	13.8	415	8.9	45	12.5	795	13.8			54	8.7
<b>50-54</b>	800	13.7	391	8.4	49	13.6	782	13.5			63	10.1
<b>55-59</b>	609	10.4	235	5.1	45	12.5	618	10.7			61	9.8
<b>60-64</b>	390	6.7	105	2.3	33	9.2	371	6.4			61	9.8
<b>65-69</b>	100	1.7	8	0.2	17	4.7	106	1.8			25	4.0
<b>70-74</b>	43	0.7	3	0.1	1	0.3	41	0.7			6	1.0
<b>75+</b>	21	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	24	0.4			0	0.0
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	0	0.0	68	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0			0	0.0

<b>Total</b>	5842	100	4642	100	360	100	5781	100		623	100
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Age profile (applicants – categorisation of age range differs)

2019/20		
Age Group	Job Applicants	%
16-18	82	0.9
19-25	2178	24.2
26-35	2952	32.8
36-45	1956	21.7
46-60	1598	17.8
Over 60	156	1.7
Prefer not to say	78	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>

Sex profile (biological sex, not gender identity)

Sex	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
Female	4492	76.9	6377	76.1	284	78.9	4448	76.9	6720	74.7	438	70.3
Male	1350	23.1	1956	23.3	76	21.1	1333	23.1	2229	24.8	185	29.7
Unknown	0	0.0	47	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	51	0.5	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5842</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8380</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100</b>

## Marital status

Marital Status	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
Civil Partnership	8	0.1	39	0.8	1	0.3	11	0.2	70	0.7	3	0.5
Divorced	252	4.3	228	4.9	19	5.3	256	4.4	398	4.4	28	4.5
Living w/ Partner	532	9.1	737	15.9	36	10.0	550	9.5	1364	15.1	60	9.6
Married	2792	47.8	1463	31.5	182	50.6	2736	47.3	2886	32.1	279	44.8
Separated	80	1.4	100	2.2	3	0.8	88	1.5	169	1.9	9	1.4
Single	1774	30.4	1940	41.8	107	29.7	1761	30.5	3877	43.1	208	33.4
Widowed	49	0.8	16	0.3	1	0.3	45	0.8	22	0.2	7	1.1
Prefer not to say	37	0.6	63	1.4	3	0.8	39	0.7	131	1.5	9	1.4
Left blank	318	5.4	56	1.2	8	2.2	295	5.1	83	0.9	20	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5842</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4642</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100</b>

## Disability identity

Disability	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
Disabled	108	1.8	269	5.8	9	2.5	116	2.0	387	4.3	17	2.7
Not disabled	5526	94.6	4023	86.7	336	93.3	5459	94.4	8142	90.5	582	93.4
Unknown	46	0.8	109	2.3	8	2.2	49	0.8	136	1.5	4	0.6
Left Blank	162	2.8	241	5.2	7	1.9	157	2.7	335	3.7	20	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5842</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4642</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100</b>

## Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
Heterosexual	2241	38.4	4023	86.7	184	51.1	2526	43.7	7943	88.3	338	54.3
Homosexual	30	0.5	81	1.7	3	0.8	35	0.6	157	1.7	6	1.0
Bisexual	11	0.2	77	1.7	2	0.6	13	0.2	123	1.4	2	0.3
Lesbian	22	0.4	60	1.3	4	1.1	25	0.4	103	1.1	7	1.1
Prefer not to say	280	4.8	272	5.9	16	4.4	279	4.8	452	5.0	42	6.7
Left Blank	3258	55.8	129	2.8	151	41.9	2903	50.2	222	2.5	228	36.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5842</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4642</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100</b>

## Religion or belief

Religion/Belief	2018/19						2019/20					
	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%	Employees	%	Job Applicants	%	Leavers	%
Agnostic	193	3.3	404	8.7	14	3.9	236	4.1	894	9.9	35	5.6
Atheist	348	6	899	19.4	27	7.5	420	7.3	1764	19.6	68	10.9
Buddhist - Hinayana	2	0	1	0	1	0.3	1	0	2	0.02	1	0.2
Buddhist - Mahayana	4	0.1	2	0	0	0.0	4	0.1	6	0.06	1	0.2
Christian - Orthodox	243	4.2	348	7.5	26	7.2	262	4.5	661	7.3	33	5.3
Christian - Protestant	579	9.9	726	15.6	26	7.2	622	10.8	1375	15.3	84	13.5

Christian - Roman Catholic	299	5.1	540	11.6	24	6.7	325	5.6	1039	11.5	43	6.9
Confucianism	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hinduism	2	0	17	0.4	2	0.6	3	0.1	52	0.6	0	0
Islam - Shiite	2	0	29	0.6	0	0	5	0.1	28	0.3	0	0
Islam - Sunni	49	0.8	188	4	7	1.9	57	1	294	3.3	9	1.4
Judaism - Orthodox	0	0	3	0.1	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Judaism - Reformed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.02	0	0
Prefer not to say	600	10.3	783	16.9	56	15.6	631	10.9	1442	16.0	88	14.1
Other	177	3	424	9.1	20	5.6	219	3.8	874	9.7	27	4.3
Sikhism	1	0	9	0.2	0	0	1	0	15	0.16	0	0
Taoism	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0.02	0	0
Left Blank	3343	57.2	266	5.7	156	43.3	2994	51.8	550	6.1	234	37.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5842</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4642</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>100</b>

## Ethnicity

Ethnic Origin	2018/19			2019/20		
	Employees%	Job Applicants%	Leavers%	Employees%	Job Applicants%	Leavers%
Asian or Asian British-Bangladeshi	0.4	1.1	0	0.4	114	0.5
Asian or Asian British-Indian	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.3	82	0.5
Asian or Asian British-Other	0.4	0.6	1.7	0.5	88	0.3
Asian or Asian British-Pakistani	0.5	2.1	0.3	0.6	147	0.5
Black or Black British-African	0.4	2.2	1.1	0.4	106	0.6
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0.3	0.5	1.4	0.3	35	0.3
Black or Black British - Other	0.1	0.3	0	0.1	11	0

Chinese or Other - Chinese	0.1	0.2	0	0.1	26	0.2
Chinese or Other - Gypsy / Traveller	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chinese or Other - Other	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.1	3	0.2
Mixed - Black African	0	0.1	0	0	14	0.2
Mixed-Other	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.4	41	0.2
Mixed - White & Asian	0.2	0.3	0	0.3	54	0
Mixed - White & Black African	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.2	26	0.5
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	0.5	1.3	1.4	0.4	59	1
White - British	67.6	54.8	65.3	66.1	5080	62.4
White - English	1.7	2.2	1.4	1.9	255	1.8
White - Irish	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	31	0.3
White-Other	1.8	1.5	2.2	1.7	105	2.4
White - Other European	0.5	2	2.2	0.6	161	0.6
White - Scottish	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.2	17	0
White-Welsh	21.2	24.8	17.5	22.4	2352	24.1
Not Stated	0.3	0.6	1.1	0.2	0	0.5
Prefer not to say	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.2	42	0.6
Unknown	0	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.2
Left Blank	2	1.4	0.6	1.9	85	2.2
Total	100	100	100	100	9000	100

Ethnicity in Newport and Wales (from Wellbeing Profiles)

**Ethnicity**

	Newport	%	Wales	%
White; English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	126,756	87.0	2,855,450	93.2
White; Irish	769	0.5	14,086	0.5
White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller	84	0.1	2,785	0.1
White; Other White	3,416	2.3	55,932	1.8
Mixed	2,752	1.9	31,521	1.0
Indian	1,218	0.8	17,256	0.6
Pakistani	3,127	2.1	12,229	0.4
Bangladeshi	1,749	1.2	10,687	0.3
Chinese	600	0.4	13,638	0.4
Other Asian	1,292	0.9	16,318	0.5
Black African	1,499	1.0	11,887	0.4
Black Caribbean	782	0.5	3,809	0.1
Other Black	254	0.2	2,580	0.1
Arab	926	0.6	9,615	0.3
Other ethnic group	512	0.4	5,663	0.2

## Supporting Documents and Information

*Fairness Commission* <http://www.newport.gov.uk/fairnessCommission/en/Full-Report/Full-Report.aspx>

*Newport City Council: Welsh Language: 5 Year Strategy (2016)*. Available at: <http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Welsh/NCC-Welsh-Language-Strategy-2017-2022.pdf>

*Newport City Council: Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives 2016-2020 (2016)*. Available at: <http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/NCC-Strategic-Equality-Plan-and-Equality-Objectives-2016-1.1-Eng.pdf>

*Newport City Council Strategic Equality Plan: Annual Report 2016-17 (2017)*. Available at: <http://newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Equalities-annual-report-2016-17.pdf>

*Newport City Council Strategic Equality Plan: Annual Report 2017-18 (2018)*. Available at: <http://newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Equality-Plan-Annual-Report-2017-2018.pdf>

For statistics and data reporting:

*Newport City Council; Community Wellbeing Profiles 2019* <https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/One-Newport/Profiles/Community-Wellbeing-Profile-2019-Newport-Population.pdf>

*Chwarae Teg; 'State of the Nation 2019'* [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf)

*Chwarae Teg; Wales Gender Pay Gap: Updated Review* <https://chwaraeteg.com/news/wales-gender-pay-gap-increases/>

*Chwarae Teg; 'Society is the Disability' 2020* <https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Disabled-Women-and-Work-research-report.pdf>

*Stonewall; LBGT in Britain – Work Report 2018* <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-work-report>

*Office for National Statistics; Cultural Identity* <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity>

*Office for National Statistics; Local statistics* <https://www.ons.gov.uk/help/localstatistics>

*Office for National statistics; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2019* <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/adhoc/009953annualsurveyofhoursandearningsasheanalysisofjobchangersandstayers?:uri=employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/adhoc/009953annualsurveyofhoursandearningsasheanalysisofjobchangersandstayers>

*Equality Group Wales; Income Report 2018* <https://equalitygroup.wales/2019/01/30/income-reports/>





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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Subject** **Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' Report and Newport City Council progress**

**Purpose** To brief Cabinet on the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' Report and provide recommendations in light of the report for the Council.

**Author** Chief Executive and Head of People & Business Change

**Ward** All wards

**Summary** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016 and is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act requires the appointment of a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. The Commissioner's role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and support public bodies listed in the Act to work in a sustainable way. One of the duties of the Commissioner is to publish the Future Generations Report, which contains the commissioner's assessment of the improvements public bodies should make to achieve the well-being goals and their well-being objectives.

This report considers the Commissioner's report, highlights the progress made as a council and the recommendations and next steps arising from the report.

**Proposal** **For Cabinet to review and endorse the Areas of Focus and Recommendation as set out in this report to enable the council to meet the well-being goals and the council's well-being objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan.**

**Action by** Cabinet

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development
- Heads of Service

**Signed**

## Background

### The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016 and is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It is designed, to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. As one of the 44 bodies named in the Act, the council must consider the Act in everything it does.



### Well-being Goals

Seven well-being goals give clarity of the shared purpose of the public bodies listed in the Act for the long-term well-being of Wales.

- 1) A prosperous Wales
- 2) A resilient Wales
- 3) A healthier Wales
- 4) A more equal Wales
- 5) A Wales of cohesive communities
- 6) A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- 7) A globally responsible Wales

### Sustainable Development Principle (five ways of working)

The Act also puts in place a sustainable development principle, which sets out the way the council must go about meeting its duty under the Act. .

Long term		The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
Prevention		How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse, may help public bodies meet their objectives.
Integration		Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Collaboration		Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
Involvement		The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area, which the body serves.

### The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

The Act requires the appointment of a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. The Commissioner's role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and support public bodies listed in the Act to work in a sustainable way towards achieving the well-being goals. The Commissioner has a range of duties and powers under the Act.

## The Commissioner's Report

One of the duties of the commissioner is to publish the Future Generations Report, a year before an Assembly election. The report contains the commissioner's assessment of the improvements public bodies should make to achieve the well-being goals.

The report explains what improving our collective well-being in accordance with the Act is all about. It provides practical advice, guidance and tools for public bodies and is also intended to inspire action by highlighting big and small actions that are taking place in Wales and across the world. It also sets out where the commissioner feels progress is falling short and points at all the opportunities, to be addressed in the present or immediate future.

It is also worth noting the Auditor General for Wales' Report, which sets out the main findings from his sustainable development principle examination. This describes how public bodies in Wales are applying the Act and improving well-being across Wales.

## **Implementation of the Act in Newport**

The council has made good progress in implementing the Act over the last four years both internally and working with the Public Services Board (PSB). There are many examples of good practice detailed in this year's Corporate Plan Annual Report and the PSB Annual Report. A few of these are also cited in the Commissioner's report.

However, there are still areas where progress is still necessary and as a Local Authority and a PSB, the Annual Reports and the Commissioner's Report have given us an opportunity to review progress and reflect on where we are. More detail can also be gained from the Commissioner's [Journey Checkers](#), which outline helpful suggestions and examples of best practice.

It is also important to note that since the last update to Cabinet on the Act, there has been a change in Cabinet Member responsibilities, with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development now having formal responsibility for the Act, acknowledging the importance of this work and providing more focus on the requirements of the guidance.

## **Areas of Focus and Recommendations**

The Commissioner's report sets out a number of areas of focus for public bodies. These are:

- 1) Leadership and Change
- 2) Land Use, Planning and Place-making
- 3) Transport
- 4) Housing
- 5) Decarbonisation and Climate Change
- 6) Skills for the Future
- 7) Adverse Childhood Experiences
- 8) Health & Wellness System

The report also sets out a number of high-level recommendations for each of these areas of focus that will enable the council to move to the next stage of implementing our duties under the Act.

The council is already working on many of these areas in collaboration with partners and has continued to make progress, but there are still areas where further progress is required.

### **1) Leadership and Change**

*Further, integrate the well-being goals and sustainable development principle to the seven areas of change as set out in the Act will enable the council to embed the Act in to everything it does. The seven areas of change are:*

## Recommendations

- *Corporate Planning;*

Ensure the well-being objectives are what drives the organisation and the corporate plan. In addition, the right balance needs to be struck between dealing with short term pressures in the context of long-term priorities.

- *Performance Management.*

Enable performance management tools and frameworks to track, analyse and communicate progress against the well-being goals and the well-being objectives.

- *Risk Management;*

Use the well-being goals and five ways of working to frame risks in the short, medium and long term.

- *Financial Planning;*

Apply the five ways of working to financial planning particularly in terms of delivering for the long term and facilitating preventative action:

- *Procurement;*

Ensure procurement achieves value for money on a whole life basis, in terms of generational benefits to the organisation, society and the economy whilst minimising damage to the environment.

- *Workforce Planning;*

Ensure the workforce is fully aware of the well-being goals and the sustainable development principles so it becomes part of how they work.

- *Assets;*

Ensure that assets are for the benefits of our communities, enabling them to be utilised in the long-term with safeguards in place for the retention at the community level.

## Progress & Next Steps

The Corporate Plan Annual Report tracks, analyses and communicates progress of the well-being goals and well-being objectives, however the well-being objectives still need to be fully integrated in to the Corporate Plan when this is next reviewed. The council has modified its risk management system to consider longer term risks such as Climate Change and democratic reports and fairness & equality impact assessments consider the Act as part of the decision making process.

A new procurement strategy is about to be published which is based around the Act and highlights a number of areas that will be considered in procurement going forward. These are, fair and local procurement; ethical employment in supply chains, ethical consumption, welsh language, sustainability, carbon management and social value.

At the inception of the Act, training took place, across the council to raise awareness with staff and members. Currently staff policies such as sickness and recruitment are being updated to align closer to the well-being principles and also provide holistic support to staff.

Community Asset Transfers have been the primary method of using assets to empower, invest in and invigorate local communities for the benefit of residents. In the year 2019/2020 there were nine new or renewed leases handed to third sector organisations. Examples in the last few years include Maindee Library to Maindee Unlimited Charitable Trust and Allt-yr-yn Toilets, which is now a café.

The next step for the Council is to review the seven areas of change in more detail to ensure that a holistic approach is being taken across each area.

## 2) Land Use, Planning and Place-making

*Plan, design and build our communities and infrastructure for the future to address long-term challenges and ensure well-being nationally and locally. This will help protect and enhance our ecosystems, strengthen our communities by ensuring they can get together, access the right services and facilitate healthy and active lifestyles. There is a need to support modal shift and identify land for clean energy production and new ways of working and living.*

### Recommendations

- Implement Planning Policy Wales 10;
- Plan for greener places;
- Reduce inequalities through planning;
- Invest time and resources in planning services and place-making;
- Increase collaboration;
- Reconnect people with planning;

### Progress & Next Steps

The council has implemented Planning Policy Wales 10 as part of its decision making process, the place-making focus influences our day-to-day assessment of developments and policy development.

The review of the Local Development Plan (LDP) will provide an opportunity for communities to engage with the process and therefore help people to reconnect or to make a new connection with planning as a positive process. The engagement process of the development plan process will look to involve all types of stakeholders to influence strategic options and the policy framework as well as the direction of travel for the next 15 years. The Replacement LDP (RLDP) will continue to build on the current LDPs vision to create green, safe and resilient communities all within the scope of achieving sustainable development.

As a PSB member, the Council has signed up the Wales Place-making charter and will need to consider this in all types of decision making across the council. The context within which the RLDP sits has altered significantly since 2015 and the work programme will look to make direct links with the next Well-being Plan and the PSB's and Councils well-being objectives.

## 3) Transport

*Work with our partners to plan and provide an integrated, frequent, low carbon and accessible transport network that is affordable. This will reduce air pollution, promote environmental resilience whilst equalising opportunity.*

### Recommendations

- Decisions on transport must reflect the climate emergency
- Achieve modal shift and reduce our reliance on cars
- Embracing technology
- Consider mobility as a route to wider well-being

### Progress & Next Steps

The council is already working towards a sustainable travel approach to transport both internally and alongside our partners of the PSB and across the Gwent area.

Many examples of good practice are set out in the previous [Sustainable Travel Cabinet Report](#) in September and the [PSB Annual Report](#), including active travel routes, electric charging point infrastructure, moving to lower emission fleet and signing up to the Gwent Travel Charter.

This is a key area of focus for the council now and in the future as we await the South East Wales Transport Commission final report.

#### **4) Housing**

*Work with our partners to provide good quality, affordable, low carbon, well designed homes and communities that promote positive physical and mental well-being and reduce inequality, poverty and improve life chances.*

##### Recommendations

- Increasing the supply of the right type of affordable homes
- Rising to the challenge of the housing crisis
- Seeing housing as a driver of well-being
- Improving the way houses are planned and designed
- Decarbonising our homes

##### Progress & Next Steps

The Welsh Government has approved Social Housing Grant of £4.8 million for Newport for 2020/21, which will deliver 295 units of affordable housing in 202/21, with indicative amounts of £3.7 m and £2.6m for the following 2 years. These developments will help to meet housing need identified through the Local Housing Market Assessment and recognised in the Local Assessment of Wellbeing.

The council is developing plans to sign up as a 'pathfinder' authority under the Welsh Government's Private Rented Sector initiative, to secure better access to good quality, affordable private rented sector housing for homeless households and those at risk of homelessness.

Collaborating with housing association partners the council is looking to secure funding through the Welsh Government's Innovative Housing Programme for projects using modern methods of construction. The proposed schemes intend to collaborate with timber-framed manufacturers to develop a streamlined process, with homes designed for off-site manufacture and on-site assembly that will provide affordable warmth for residents whilst being near zero-carbon.

Utilising Welsh Government funding, the council is responding to the pressures of Covid19 and resulting housing need by expanding the number of units of supported housing and reconfiguring Housing Support Grant to ensure the most vulnerable households are able to improve their housing, wellbeing and health.

More broadly, the council is looking at the potential for a Local Area Energy Plan, which will examine options for the decarbonisation of homes, working with our partner housing associations, other housing stakeholders and local communities.

When providing adaptations to the private sector for the elderly and vulnerable residents of Newport plans are underway to increase collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure all aspects of short and long-term need is met. Increased collaboration will improve the quality of life for residents of Newport and reduce hospital admission of during the current pandemic.

As mentioned earlier in this report the review of the LDP will help to identify location and type of housing required. The policy framework developed for the authority will take a holistic view of housing which requires the provision of homes, going beyond meeting housing targets, but the creation of places that people can live, visit and work within.

#### **5) Decarbonisation & Climate Change**



*Work with partners and communities to integrate decarbonisation and climate resilience in to all that the council does whilst adapting to and preparing for the future impacts of climate change. Climate change is likely to be the biggest challenge for our future generations which will impact in many ways.*

#### Recommendations

- Understanding our emissions and where to prioritise action.
- Tackle the climate and nature crises through a holistic approach, capitalising on the role of young people.
- Implement solutions at scale to achieve multiple benefits.
- Invest more in tackling the Climate Emergency.

#### Progress & Next Steps

Since 2017, the council has created a new Energy & Sustainability team to lead on decarbonisation and deliver day-to-day energy management and carbon reduction schemes. In 2018, the council committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 as set out in the council's [Carbon Management Plan](#). Projects include:

- A £3m LED lighting project to convert 14,000 of the city street lights
- A collaborative community energy Solar PV project, delivering 7,000 solar panels (2.2MW) across 26 sites. The scheme increase the amount of roof mounted solar in the city of Newport by 25%. The renewable energy generated will be equivalent to 10% of the council's annual electricity demand.
- Development of a solar farm
- The completion of two heat network feasibility studies
- The installation of 20 EV chargers and 3 rapid chargers across 11 sites
- The addition of 15 electric vehicles into our fleet.

Due in part to the measures listed above the council has achieved a 20% reduction in emissions since 2016/17.

The next steps within the scope of the carbon management plan is to embark on an intended multi-million pound building energy efficiency scheme to deliver deep retrofits on council properties. In addition, investigation of a heat network opportunity will take place to continue the increase in the proportion of energy from local renewable sources. To-date we have 15 electric vehicles in our fleet and in March 2021 we will be one of three councils in Wales to begin operating electric refuse collection vehicles.

More broadly, to meet the recommendations above, the scope of our focus needs widening to consider carbon neutrality and climate resilience across the city of Newport by both mitigating and adapting to climate change.

### **6) Skills for the Future**

*Work with our partners to provide people with education and the opportunity to develop the right set of skills for their future to improve life outcomes including, health, socio-economic position and life expectancy. The world is changing quicker than at any time in living memory. These changes have profound implications to the future of work, community and well-being.*

#### Recommendations

- Skills must be seen as a driver of wider well-being;
- Plan and prepare for how technological breakthroughs will change the way we live and work;
- Champion the increasing demand for 'softer skills';
- Re-think qualifications to reflect skills for the future;
- Embrace lifelong learning as the new norm;

- Ensure that our education and skills system is flexible to demographic change and works for everyone;
- Take advantage of new environmental industries in Wales.

### Progress & Next Steps

The council is already working as part of the PSB on the Well-being Plan Right Skills Intervention with progress to date detailed in the [PSB Annual Report](#).

The intervention is currently being reviewed to update the vision and steps to broaden the focus beyond economic well-being, reflect the recommendations of the Future Generations Commissioner and take a more future focused approach.

## **7) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**

*Work with our partners to help to prevent and mitigate the impacts of ACEs and build resilience in families to prevent these experiences being passed through generations. ACEs include problems such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse, growing up in a home where there is drug abuse, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, parental separation, incarceration or mental illness.*

### Recommendations

- Create a joined up system focused on early intervention and prevention.
- Ensure all public service professionals are Adverse Childhood Experiences aware.
- Ensure communities are supported through an equal/reciprocal relationship with public services to provide the building blocks of resilience.
- Long-term, preventative spend.

### Progress & Next Steps

Work is already underway, working with our partners across Gwent on the Regional Area Plan and the Regional Partnership Board. Roll out of training has progressed well amongst frontline professionals. The Early Years Pathfinder project includes a focus on a more joined up approach to early intervention and prevention.

The Preventing & Remediating the Effects of Poverty & ACEs project is also in place as part of the council neighbourhood hubs. A key focus of the project is to improve engagement of individuals and families to break down barriers and address the ACEs. People who experience poor wellbeing and lower levels of confidence and resilience are more likely to expose their children to ACE's, creating a cycle of social and economic deprivation, which is difficult to break.

The hubs provide a 'one stop shop' that looks at the strengths and assets people have around them in order to seek ways of bringing about positive change in their situation through:

- Building a holistic picture of the lives of individuals and families in the context of their local communities
- Focusing on the assets and strengths within the household and the community, and on individuals' decisions and actions, to begin to address the challenges being faced by the family
- Identifying external opportunities and constraints that impact upon people's lives
- Identifying the family's own priority areas for action as a starting point for providing support
- Forming partnerships with professionals from voluntary and statutory service providers involved in the support of these families

Relevant council, health and third sector staff from the hubs and across the city attend weekly multi-agency forums with an aim to improve co-ordination and communication between agencies.

## **8) Health & Wellness System**

Support the development of a national wellness system to improve the nation’s health and wellness and reduce demand on services by shifting resources to supporting prevention within the context of the wider determinants of health.

### Recommendations

- Consider our role in a national wellness system.
- Support people to act with compassion.
- Play our part in enabling an active nation.
- Support place-making and designing-in community health and well-being.

### Progress & Next Steps

One aspect of health and wellness is access to green space for play, recreation and exercise is key to improving well-being and preventing ill health. The council is already working as part of the PSB on making Newport a greener, healthier and safer place where all communities have easy access to quality greenspace for health, play and recreation. Green spaces has proved to be a valuable resource for communities during the pandemic to exercise and improve well-being.

The PSB Annual Reports detail progress to date and next steps include gaining a better understanding of the value of different green spaces across Newport and providing more accessible information for the public to use.

### Conclusion

The Future Generations Commissioner acknowledges that embedding the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in to an organisation is a journey. As evidenced in this report the council has made steady progress towards implementing the Act over the last four years both internally and working with the PSB. However, there are still areas where progress is still necessary and the next steps have been set out under each of the areas of focus earlier in the report. To support this work the Policy, Partnership & Involvement Team will provide support, advice, guidance and training across service areas to embed the principles of the Act in all that we do.

### **Financial Summary**

This report sets out the strategic direction that the council needs to take to move to the next stage of implementing the Act. Any specific projects that are set up to deliver on the recommendations will be costed separately and funding identified through existing budgets and/or relevant grants.

### **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?
The council does not meet its duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to improve the well-being of current and future	High	Medium	Many examples of good practice can be seen in Newport currently however, the recommendations set out in this report will enable the council to move to the next stage of implementing the Act	Corporate Management Team / Heads of Service

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?
generations in a sustainable way.				

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

### One Newport Public Services Board Local Well-being Plan 2018-23

The Well-being Plan runs until 2023 and has four well-being objectives:

- 1) *People feel good about living, working, visiting and investing in Newport*
- 2) *People have skills and opportunities to find suitable work and contribute to sustainable economic growth*
- 3) *People and communities are friendly, confident and empowered to improve their well-being*
- 4) *Newport has healthy, safe and resilient environments*

The Local Well-being Plan has five cross cutting interventions that support the priorities and well-being objectives of the Public Services Board (PSB). Sustainable Travel and Right Skills are two of the five crosscutting interventions.

### Corporate Plan 2017-22 & the Strategic Recovery Aims

The Corporate Plan runs to 2022 and has a primary vision to 'Improving People's Lives'. It has four well-being objectives:

- 1) *To improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities*
- 2) *To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment*
- 3) *To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient*
- 4) *To build cohesive and sustainable communities.*

The Covid-19 health emergency has posed a significant and unprecedented challenge to delivery of services and to the way of life. Since March 2020, the Council's focus has been to preserve life, minimise the spread of the virus, and support our communities and the vulnerable.

Newport City Council strategic recovery aims have been drafted to reflect the work undertaken by the Council in response to the crisis while also considering the Council's long-term aims to 'build a better Newport' and support the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Each of the strategic aims links in to the Corporate Plan objectives as below:

Well-being Objective	Strategic Recovery Aim
1. To improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities.	1. Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid-19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.
2. To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	2. Understand and respond to the impact of Covid-19 on the city's economic and environmental goals to enable Newport to thrive again.
3. To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient.	3. Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities
4. To build cohesive and sustainable communities.	4. Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid-19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities

### [Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-26](#)

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is the development plan for Newport and is the basis for land use planning within the council's administrative area.

The Local Development plan supports the following areas of focus in this report:

- 2) Land Use, Planning and Place-making
- 4) Housing

### [Sustainable Travel Strategy](#)

The council's Sustainable Travel Strategy (Air, Noise & Sustainability Action Plan) was designed, to outline the various actions the council will progress to reduce the level of pollution from road traffic and provide a framework to develop local plans to target known areas of poor air pollution known as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). This supports the following areas of focus in this report:

- 3) Transport
- 5) Decarbonisation and Climate Change

### [Carbon Management Plan 2018-22](#)

The Carbon Reduction Plan has a vision to be net carbon neutral by 2030, which supports the following areas of focus in this report.

- 5) Decarbonisation & Climate Change

### [Greater Gwent Regional Area Plan 2018-19](#)

The Greater Gwent Area Plan supports the delivery of the following areas of focus in this report

- 7) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

## **Options Available and considered**

The options available to Cabinet:

- 1) To note the progress made as set out in the annual reports and endorse the Areas of Focus and Recommendations to enable the council to move to the next stage of implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 2) To note the progress made as set out in the annual reports and reject the Areas of Focus and Recommendations.

## **Preferred Option and Why**

Option 1 is preferred, as this will enable the council, working alongside its partner and communities to improve the overall well-being of current and future generations.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There will be no adverse impact in endorsing the Areas of Focus and Recommendation set out in this report. Funding for the Corporate Plan has been set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and any costs associated with implementing the recommendations will be met from existing budgets, use of specific grant or identified/prioritised for funding within the Council's MTFP which will, without increased funding, require savings elsewhere.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. The report updates Cabinet on the progress made in meeting the Council's well-being goals and objectives and identifies the strategic areas of focus for the next stage of delivery, in the light of the specific Areas of Focus and Recommendation set out in the Future Generations Report issued by the Future Generations Commissioner.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

From an HR perspective, there are no staffing implications.

This report gives a clear synopsis of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' Report and progress made by the council against the areas of focus set out in the report.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development**

As evidenced in this report the council has made steady progress towards implementing the Act over the last five years both internally and working with the PSB. However, there are still areas where progress is still necessary and the next steps have been set out under each of the areas of focus earlier in the report. As Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Well-Being of Future Generations agenda, I will be requesting progress updates on this to ensure that we are embedding the principles of the Act in all that we do.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better-informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on planning applications and appeals is open to all of our citizens regardless of their age. Depending on the scale of the proposed development, applications are publicised via letters to neighbouring occupiers, site notices, press notices and/or social media. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data, and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 seeks to improve the social, economic environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Public bodies should ensure that decisions take into account the impact they could have on people living in Wales, in the future.

This report is about using the advice from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to implement the Act further in to the way we work, using the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals to do this.

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

## **Consultation**

Consultation was undertaken when developing the current PSB Well-being Plan.

## **Background Papers**

[The Future Generations Report 2020](#)

[Future Generations Commissioner's Journey Checkers](#)

[Findings from the Auditor General's Sustainable Development Principle Examinations](#)

[Corporate Plan Annual Report 2020-21](#)

[Public Services Board Annual Report 2020-21](#)

Dated: 22 Oct 2020





# Report

## Cabinet Meeting

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### Part 1

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Subject** **Annual Report on Compliments, Comments and Complaints Management 2020**

**Purpose** The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet with an overview of all Corporate and Social Services compliments, comments and complaints received during 2019/2020. The report provides a summary of complaints received and recommendations for improvement. This report provides an update of statutory duties conducted in line with Public Services Ombudsman Act 2019, that received Royal Assent in July 2019. This report shares the Ombudsman's 2019/2020 Annual Letter to Newport City Council.

**Author** Complaint Resolution Manager

**Ward** All

**Summary** Newport City Council operates under a combined Corporate and Social Services Comments, Complaint and Compliments Policy. With regards to complaint management, 'corporate' in this instance means any service areas that are not part of Social Services. The Policy had been aligned with the Model Concerns outlined by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales following Welsh Government Guidance from 2011. However, since the now recently published; Guidance for Public Service Providers on Implementing the Concerns and Complaints Policy by the Complaints Standards Authority it is our statutory obligation to ensure our practice and that of our policies align with the new legislation.

Following the introduction of the Public Services Ombudsman Act 2019 the Ombudsman's aim is to bring practices back into broad alignment – providing basic standards, a common language and a set of principles to underpin how complaints are handled throughout public services. This has been the very focus of the Complaints Team to ensure this also applies to all services within Newport City Council.

Social Services statutory requirements remain in operation alongside the Corporate Policy to ensure they are aligning with; Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014, ("the Regulations").

Over the past 12 months the Complaints Team has worked closely with the Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) within the Ombudsman's Office, providing quarterly data regarding complaints received. The CSA has regularly shared positive feedback regarding the complaint model that the Council has implemented, and the CSA has referred other Local Authorities to make contact with NCC's Complaints Team to benefit from the best practice adopted here.

The positive feedback from the Ombudsman reflects the efforts NCC have made over the past 12 months, but in line with the Ombudsman's Principle of 'Continuous Improvement'

there is further progress to be made over the next 12 months. The Complaints Team continue to work closely with all Council Services to offer support and assistance to ensure our statutory duties are met, and that residents are provided with an experience that aligns to the policy.

All compliments and complaints received for Corporate and Social Services have been recorded since April 2011. Since November 2018 compliments, comments and complaints received for all service areas are recorded on the My Newport platform, which continuously has been developed over the past 12 months to provide a robust and efficient access point for the customers of Newport and to provide effective recordings.

This report provides an overview for the year 2019/2020, broken down by services area, complaint types and the time taken to respond where available. The report highlights key trends or themes drawn from the data for consideration.

Complaints about schools are reported separately as they are subject to a distinct statutory framework; however, there are some circumstances where complaints are recorded and treated as complaints about Education services. For example, where they concern administrative processes.

**Proposal** Cabinet to consider the volume, nature and themes regarding compliments and complaints received, and the Council's performance regarding complaint management in 2019/2020.  
Cabinet to note the content of the Ombudsman's letter.  
Cabinet to comment on any issues arising from the report or letter.  
Cabinet to endorse the recommendations for improvement set out within the report, which ensure that the Council comply with their obligations under the new Public Service Ombudsman for Wales Act 2019

**Feedback** We hope that the report has provided a detailed overview into Compliments, Comments and Complaints for the Council, however, we welcome your feedback to help improve or to implement a preferred way that the report is presented to include how information and data is preferred for Cabinet.

**Action by** Heads of Service  
Complaint Resolution Manager

**Timetable** Throughout 2020/2021.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of City Services
- Head of People and Business Change
- Head of Finance
- Head of Law and Regulation
- Service Manager – Customer Experience

**Signed**

## Background

The policies and procedures in place for Comments, Compliments and Complaints comply with the legislative requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and associated standards, specifically ensuring that the Council promote the 'Active Offer'. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the Ombudsman wrote to the Council to notify that a revised Statement of Principles, Model Complaint Handling Process, and Guidance had been published by the Ombudsman, and in compliance with Section 38 of the new Act, all public bodies are required to reflect on how their own practices and procedures comply with the stated guidance and consider how they will ensure that all complaints are captured appropriately. The Ombudsman requires a written update on this reflection within 6 months of receipt of the letter.

Initial assessment indicates that the Council's existing policy is largely in line with the newly publicised guidance, but the existing policy will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to reflect the latest guidance and legislation, within the timescales specified by the Ombudsman.

## Data collection (period April 2019- March 2020)

Data has been collected quarterly as follows;

Q1- April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2019

Q2- July 1<sup>st</sup> 2019- September 30<sup>th</sup> 2019

Q3- October 1<sup>st</sup> 2019- December 31<sup>st</sup> 2019

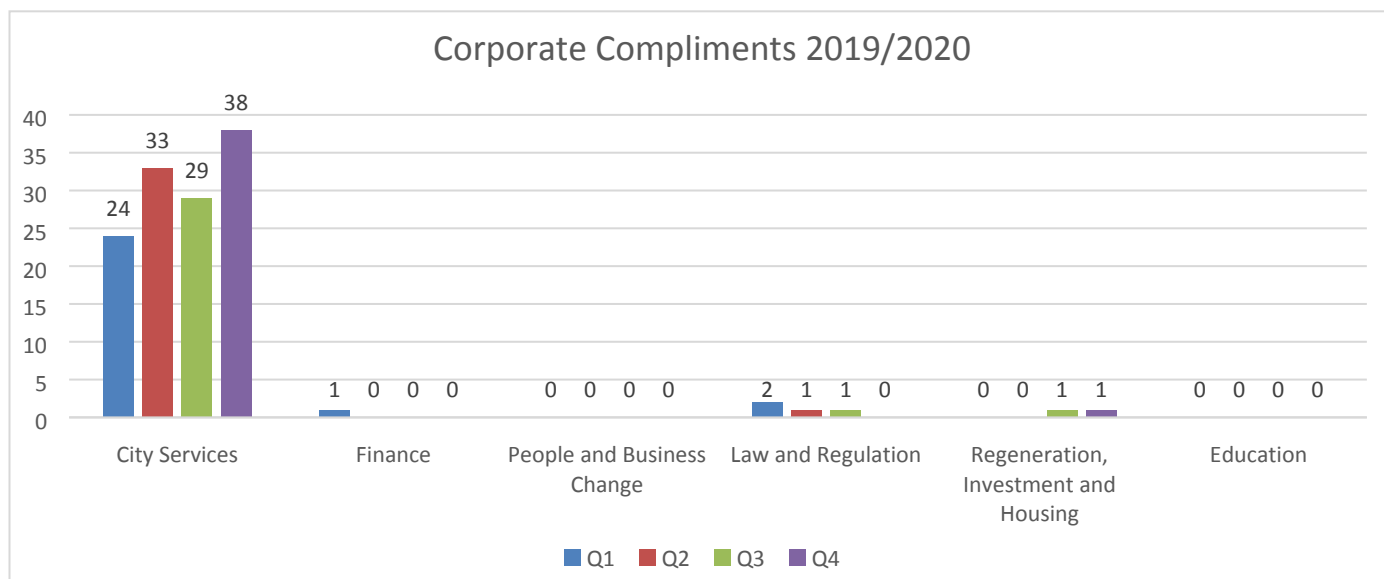
Q4- January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020- March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020

## COMPLIMENTS – Corporate Summary

A total of 131 compliments were recorded in 2019/2020. The opportunity to provide positive feedback is more accessible to residents using improved web forms, the Council app or customer accounts than in previous years. This was the first full year that these options were available to residents.

City Services continue to account for almost all compliments received – this is in largely due to the high visibility of these services to the public and high number of interactions with residents.

The graph below shows the number of compliments received by each corporate service area.



## COMMENTS

1,505 Comments were recorded during 2019/2020; the majority of these were for Corporate Services, with 15 comments recorded for Adult and Children’s Services.

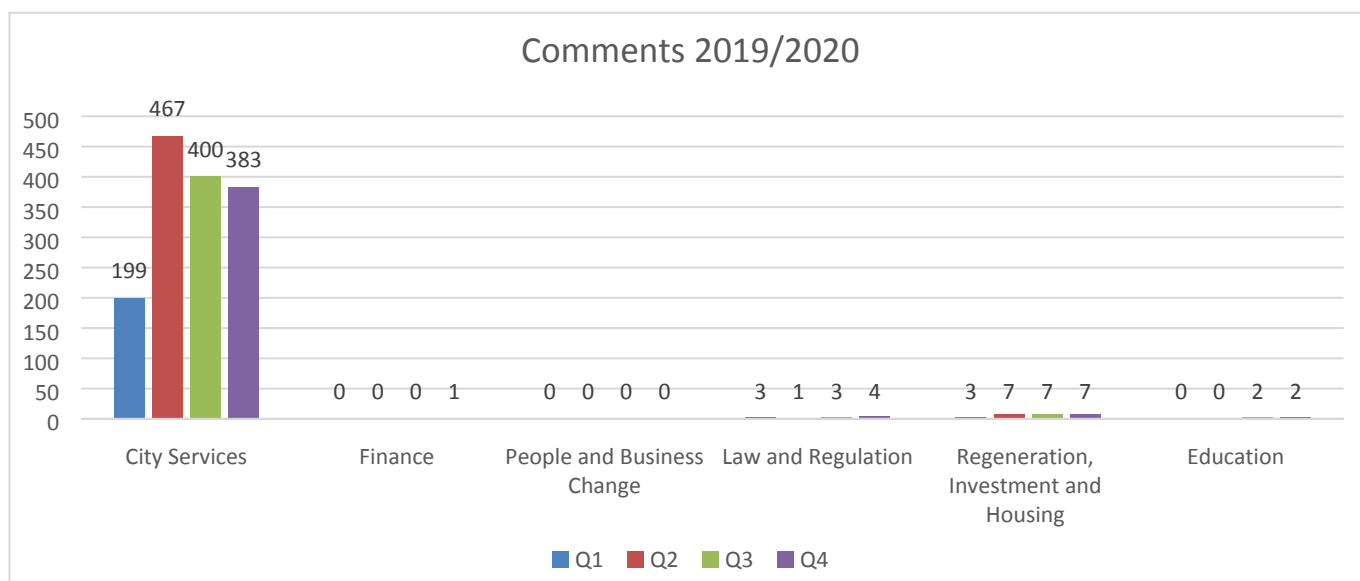
Comments are recorded when a resident is dissatisfied with a policy or decision made by the Council that has been implemented and applied correctly. For example, residents may be unhappy with the scheduled number of grass cuts in the City, or the times when streetlights are switched on. In line with the Ombudsman’s guidance this feedback is recorded and if appropriate, responded to, but is not recorded as a complaint.

This record is significantly higher than in previous years; however, since the ‘My Newport’ platform has provided improved accessibility for residents to share their feedback, this is expected.

Another contributing factor of the volume of customer feedback is due to the number of changes that were implemented from the beginning of the financial year and throughout summer. These changes included smaller bin sizes, hygiene waste collections and the transfer of Civil Parking Enforcement from the Police service to the Council. All of these changes were ‘properly made decisions’ that had effected on every household in Newport and resulted in more feedback than in usual years, combined with the ease of access to record feedback.

During the last 12 months the Council has been able to utilise this feedback to inform services and in some cases suggest recommendations for change. For example, amending the criteria for accessing hygiene bag collections to reflect households with medical needs.

Similarly, to compliments, the highest number of comments recorded are for City Services in line with the visibility of the services they provide, which is shown below. The increase fluctuations in the different quarters reflect the period where changes had the most impact.



## COMPLAINTS – Corporate Summary

Please see below data that has been taken from the My Newport platform to inform this report, along with the data collated as submitted for the Ombudsman’s quarterly data collection. Reporting categories has been altered for this report to reflect how the Ombudsman Office has requested the data.

Complaints accounted for 1.84% of the total customer contacts received by Customer Services in 2019/2020.

The table below shows the breakdown of complaints at Stage 1 and Stage 2 in accordance with the Ombudsman’s categorisation;

Complaints Stage 1	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Total	
Total Complaints Received	<b>631</b>		<b>349</b>		<b>201</b>		<b>236</b>		<b>1,417</b>	
Stage of Complaints	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2
Waste and Refuse	REPORTED AS PART OF ENVIRONMENT UNTIL Q4		REPORTED AS PART OF ENVIRONMENT UNTIL Q4		REPORTED AS PART OF ENVIRONMENT UNTIL Q4		75	0	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>
Finance and Council Tax	9	0	13	1	8	0	13	0	<b>43</b>	<b>1</b>
Benefits Administration	Not a category reported on until Q3		Not a category reported on until Q3		0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Community Facilities	21	0	30	1	11	0	27	0	<b>89</b>	<b>1</b>
Environment & Environmental Health	469	2	140	3	83	0	17	0	<b>709</b>	<b>5</b>
Housing	16	1	12	1	11	3	13	0	<b>52</b>	<b>5</b>
Roads and Transport	50	1	92	1	41	1	44	0	<b>227</b>	<b>3</b>
Planning & Building Control	6	0	5	0	2	1	2	0	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>
Education	2	0	15	5	4	0	13	1	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>
Other	53	1	28	2	33	3	29	2	<b>143</b>	<b>8</b>

The complaints have taken a significant drop as the year has progressed. You will notice Environment and Environmental Health presenting the most complaints, however, as the Ombudsman has considered Waste and Refuse as part of this category this is where the increase is compared to previous years' records. This is also reflective of the accessibility to customers and the changes within waste service provision.

The increase of complaints for Road and Transport reflect complaints received regarding Civil Parking Enforcement, following the transfer of duties to the Council in July 2019.

The information has been shown in the below table to reflect on previous years' data and the proportion of complaints that have been considered by the Ombudsman's Office, and that of the Stage 1 complaints that have progressed to Stage 2

Year	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints
2011/2012	375	18	4.8%
2012/2013	520	21	4.0%
2013/2014	475	30	6.3%

2014/2015	386	50	13.0%	8	2.1%
2015/2016	293	34	11.6%	9	3.1%
2016/2017	297	30	10.1%	28	9.4%
2017/2018	284	24	8.5%	37	13.0%
2018/2019	271	28	10.3%	38	14.0%
2019/2020	1,417	30	2.11%	38	2.68%

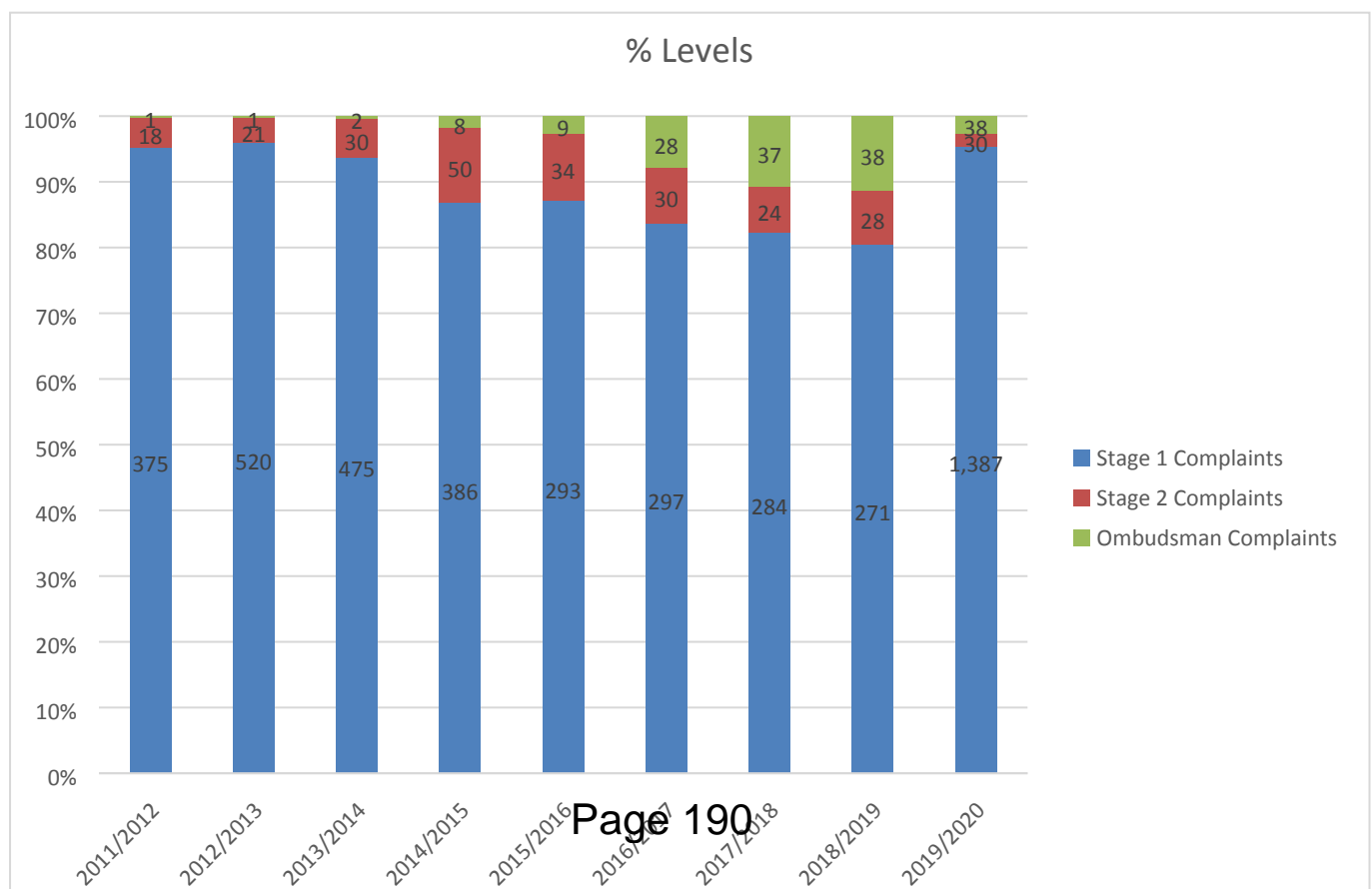
The proportion of complaints dealt with at Stage 1 that progress to a Stage 2 has increased year on year, however, the proportion of Stage 1 complaints has significantly increased during 2019/2020, meaning that the level of Stage 2 has decreased for 2019/2020.

Whilst Stage 1 is a significant increase, the increased accessibility has impacted the figures significantly. This can be reflected on as a positive step forward, as the Ombudsman’s guidance states that the complaint process must be ‘accessible to all’ and that residents should be made aware of how to make complaints.

As referred to earlier in this report, the changes implemented within City Services such as Civil Parking Enforcement and waste services, have generated an increase in customer interactions. 2019/2020 was the first year that all complaint data was collated on the My Newport platform, so next year will provide a more meaningful context when we will be able to compare ‘like with like’ in terms of volumes.

25.5% of complaints investigated were upheld in full or in part. This proportion has remained broadly the same for the last few years.

The graph below shows the percentage of complaints dealt with at each of the two stages since 2012/2013, including those considered by the Ombudsman. Whilst the number of complaints referred to the Ombudsman remains the same as in 2018/2019, these account for a much smaller proportion of the overall number of complaints received.



## Social Services Complaints

There were 146 complaints recorded for Social Services in 2019/2020. This being a slight increase this year compared to last, however, better accessibility for customer contact would account for this increase.

Social Services Complaints	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Total	
Total number of complaints received	34		24		51		37		146	
Stages of Complaint	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 1 total	Stage 2 total
Adult Services	17	0	12	0	30	1	23	0	82	1
Children Services	16	2	12	1	20	0	13	1	59	4

In Children and Families Services 4 of the 63 complaints progressed to Stage 2 investigation by an external investigator. Of the 4 at stage 2, 1 was part upheld, 1 was not upheld, 1 was resolved at stage 2, and 1 was on hold due to the impact of Covid-19

1 of the 83 complaints received in Adult and Community Services were progressed to a Stage 2 investigation by an independent investigator, with that one partially upheld.

Whilst the volume of complaints received at Stage 1 increased year on year, this is not considered a cause of concern, as the aim is to move towards a culture of learning from complaints and utilising this to inform service provision and quality. Fewer complaints received progressed to Stage demonstrating improved case handling and reaching an early resolution. No complaints were investigated by the Ombudsman.

## Complaints to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales/Annual Ombudsman Letter 2019/20

The information included in this section of the report is drawn from the Annual Letter produced by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales dated the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2020, which is included in **Appendix 1** and includes statistics for all Welsh Local Authorities.

It is positive to report that all actions provided by the Ombudsman in last year's annual letter have been achieved. The number of cases referred to the Ombudsman for residents in Newport was lower than the national average, and reduced by 2 cases year on year.

38 complaints were referred to the Ombudsman, 4 of these complaints received were recommended for an early resolution by the Ombudsman. The Council followed the Ombudsman's recommendations, which were to make apologies and in some instances to make small reimbursements for 'time and trouble' in making the complaint, which was the sum of £150 this year.

13 complaints received by the Ombudsman were closed after initial consideration. This action is taken when the Ombudsman are satisfied that actions taken by the Council is appropriate and cannot be taken forward any further.

5 complaints were outside of the Ombudsman jurisdiction and 16 out of time/Right to Appeal or premature.

Based on last year's annual letter report the Ombudsman had 2 less complaints whereby an early resolution or voluntary settlement was proposed to the Council demonstrating less intervention.

Complaints handling continues to be the main cause of complaints that have been received by the Ombudsman for the past year, however, they have seen a reduction in 2019/20 with a record of 7 compared to the recorded 10 in 2018/19. The Council continues to take positive steps to improve complaints handling, which over the past year included the ongoing development and use of My Council platform, the Complaints Team and increased collaboration with service areas. This area will continue to be the focus with planned training and the continued collaborative approach to complaint handling with all Service Areas.

## **Lessons Learnt**

Over the past year the Council have been utilising the My Newport platform to monitor and track complaints. This has provided an opportunity to collate lessons learnt. Some examples of the lessons learnt have been provided below, which have informed continuous improvements across the Council. Service areas have oversight of the complaint which are used to inform their own improvement plans, however further development of the monitoring of lessons learnt and how service areas implement and manage these will be part of the improvements over the next year.

- General communication issues – this will be addressed as part of training to be rolled out
- Communication – keeping customer informed of delays and/or advising why a service request may not be responded to yet.
- Customers are informed of terms and conditions by Disabled Facilities Grants at the onset of service, including updates to literature that is sent to customer for a better customer experience and increased transparency.
- Amendments to published timescale (Service Level Agreement) for assessment of dropped kerbs
- Council Tax notice system omitting Welsh translation during printing
- Errors with online access for uploading documents for resident parking permit
- Automated response for bus pass application supplying misleading information to customer
- Requirements for more structure and consistency for decision making concerning resident permit passes – this is currently out for public consultation prior to recommendation of changes
- Clarification for Civil Parking Enforcement records of complaints/comments
- Passenger Transport Unit complaints – a review of this service is now being carried out to identify and close any gaps in current customer provision
- Addresses not included at first request for a new bin or recycling box – not capturing all relevant data from self-service customers was causing delay in service which resulted in complaints.
- Minor amendments to be implemented to reporting service requests and receiving for street cleansing in system.
- Support provided to out-sourced recycling service to align complaints policy and improve management of customer contact, improving customer experience
- Communication between Passenger Transport Unit and Special Education Needs team has improved, providing a better end to end service provision and customer experience.
- Bereavement Services identified the opportunity to improve their policies.
- Kennel Services updated their administration practices, reflecting corporate policies.

In addition to the lessons learnt directly learnt from complaints, we have recognised that following reporting we could explore further the use of social media and complaints management, engaging further with our communications services on how we can capture and monitor the use of social media and how this captures complaints. Possibility to explore how the complaints team can have some further involvement with this source of customer contact.

## **Action Plan**



The Council is committed to developing the service provided to meet the revised legislation and to meet the expectations of residents who wish to submit their feedback.

Significant progress has been made in 2019/20 towards delivering this.

Actions completed include;

- An Unacceptable Actions group has been established to provide additional support to the service areas to manage customer expectations and inappropriate or difficult customer contact. This has helped service areas to manage the effects that spurious or unreasonable complaints have on provision of services to other residents, and the costs involved.
- Development of the recording system further to increase accountability and transparency regarding complaint management.
- Kennel Services developed a plan of action to work based on lessons learnt from complaints and feedback that improved operational practice
- Feedback received from residents was reflected in policies developed by Bereavement Services.
- Disability Facilities Grants update their terms and conditions, and developed their practice to ensure that expectations and limitations are clear from the onset of engagement with the team
- Quarterly data provided to the Ombudman in line with the new requirements following the implementation of the Act.
- Feedback from residents captured by the Complaints Team was considered as part of consultation regarding a review of Resident Parking Permits.
- Support has been provided to Service Areas regarding the response and handling of complaints.
- The Complaints Team have attended virtual training provided by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

These actions are part of a development plan with further actions to be delivered in the next 12 months;

- Guidance for staff to provide step by step complaints handling.
- Formalise a process and guidance for staff on handling complaints of discrimination.
- Improve how we monitor and track performance following the identification of lessons learnt, so that the feedback and lessons learnt from complaints can be tracked through to service improvements.
- Development of training modules concerning complaint management and customer service that all Officers can access.
- Inviting complainants to tell us more about themselves when they make complaints so that we can understand if the demographics of complainants are representative of all Newport residents.
- Review of policies and procedures to align with the revised Guidance, Principles and Model Policy recently published by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

## Financial Summary

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

## 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 comply with the requirements of the Public	H	L	The Council has; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented a new system of recording and monitoring complaints</li> </ul>	Service Manager – Customer Experience

<p>Services Ombudsman for Wales in dealing with complaints</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocated adequate resource to support Officers throughout the Council in dealing with complaints appropriately</li> <li>• Policies in place for dealing with complaints</li> <li>• Developed a 2020/21 plan for improving complaint handling across the Council</li> <li>• A full year of reporting to the Ombudsman has taken place</li> <li>• Improved monitoring of complaints records</li> <li>• Lessons learnt have been utilised for the previous year to inform service improvements</li> <li>• Complaints team has attended PSOW training</li> <li>• The Council has developed a positive relationship with the Ombudsman's office that includes regular interaction and feedback.</li> </ul> <p>The Council will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a set of training modules to support Officers who interact with the public and deal with complaints</li> <li>• Continue to refine the end to end case management of complaints in the monitoring and recording system</li> <li>• Formalise the process for reflecting on and embedding lessons learnt</li> <li>• Review policies to make sure they reflect the latest guidance.</li> </ul>	
<p>Failure to meet the public's expectation for dealing with complaints</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>The Council has;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulted with the public to find out what is important to them relating to complaints and complaint handling</li> <li>• Consulted with Officers to find out what support is needed to help them</li> </ul>	<p>Service Manager – Customer Experience</p>

			<p>respond to complaints effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access for customers to provide feedback or raise their complaint</li> <li>• Used lessons learnt to improve practices and implemented measures for a better customer experience.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>The Council will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate the feedback gathered during the consultations into the development of policy, process, guidance and training for responding to complaints effectively</li> <li>• Introduce an option for complainants to provide feedback on their experience of making a complaint</li> <li>• Consider a campaign to ensure customers are aware of how they can share their feedback and promote the access to making a complaint</li> <li>• Carry out an impact assessment prior to review of the policy and procedures to consider the impact on customers and ensure consideration</li> </ul>	
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\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

### Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The visions set out for Newport 2020 in the following service areas all highlight the importance of managing demand by improving customer service at first enquiry, and supporting the move towards self-service;

- Law and Standards
- Finance
- Adult and Community Services
- Children and Family Services
- Education
- Regeneration, Investment and Housing
- City Services

### Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications associated with the proposals contained within this report. All improvement actions will be delivered using existing budgets.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report, which sets out information regarding the compliments and complaints received regarding Council services during 19/20, both in relation to corporate complaints and those dealt with under the statutory social services complaints procedure. The report also contains details of the numbers of complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during this period, which were either not accepted for investigation or resolved locally by way of settlement. The number of stage 1 complaints dealt with internally by the Council has risen significantly since last year, but the numbers that have progressed to stage 2 have reduced. Also, the numbers of Ombudsman complaints was exactly the same as the previous year and were average compared to other Welsh councils, having regard to population figures. It is pleasing to note that, once again, there were no formal findings of maladministration against the Council during this period and no public interest reports were issued. The Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 has increased the investigatory powers of the Ombudsman, particularly in relation to accepting informal complaints and undertaking public interest investigations on his own initiative, without any complaint. The Council will need to review its own internal procedures to ensure that they meet the new Statement of Principles, Model Complaint Handling Process, and Guidance published by the Ombudsman in accordance with his new statutory powers under the legislation.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

Analysis of compliments, comments and complaints supports the Council in achieving continuous improvement in the delivery of its services and ultimately in its mission to improve people's lives. The report notes significant progress in 2019-20 including the introduction of a continuous improvement approach so that the feedback and lessons learnt from complaints can be tracked through to service improvements. It is noted that as the report covers the first year where the 'My Newport' platform was used to track complaints the data does not allow for year on year comparisons, but this will provide a more complete picture in subsequent years.

The report also notes how analysing compliments, comments and complaints supports the Council in embedding the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 'sustainable development principle' within its operations for instance in acting in a more preventative way and promoting citizen involvement in service improvement.

There is further potential for compliments, comments and complaints data to be reviewed against public perception survey data (perception of the Council) and this will be explored going forward.

There are no HR implications relating directly to this report. The action plan for 2020/21 will include the development of training modules concerning complaint management and customer service that all Officers can access; guidance for staff on step by step complaints handling and a formalised process and guidance for staff on handling complaints of discrimination.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member for Community and Resources**

It is positive to see the results of technology used to support residents. It provides meaningful and timely feedback to the Council. The lessons learnt help the Council to improve the way it provides services. This will continue to be our focus over the next 12 months. The Council's performance is strong in comparison to the rest of Wales, and I am pleased that we continue to improve thanks to our positive engagement with the Ombudsman's office

## **Cabinet Member for Social Services**

Feedback from residents continues to play a vital role in informing service delivery and decisions made, and it is now much easier for residents to do that online or through the Council app. It is positive to see the number of compliments recorded during this period. Increasing communication to promote the different ways to provide feedback, to both residents and staff, will support greater engagement over the next 12 months.

## **Local issues**

This report is relevant to all Wards.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership.

The report notes that the Council records all complaints where the customer believes they have experienced unlawful discrimination, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act. This information is reported in more detail in the Equalities Annual Report.

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation regarding complaints was open to all of our citizens regardless of their age via public access Wi-Fi, and the Council's website. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data, and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This report enables Members to monitor the current position of the council's performance, this helps to drive improvement over the short and long-term and prevent poor performance.

Performance measures are also reported through the service plans and the improvement plan, which take into account the sustainable development principle promoted in the Act and the five ways of working; long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement.

Any changes to service provision as a result of feedback received would consider the five ways of working and the sustainable development principle as part of the decision making process.

- Long term: the actions being put into place will ensure that the Council is able to respond to feedback and complaints now and in the future.
- Prevention: Understanding what is important to residents and why we have received complaints will help the Council to make improvements that prevent similar complaints from occurring again.
- Integration: Reviewing the Council's policies regarding feedback from residents will help to ensure that the principles of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 are embedded in service provision.
- Collaboration: the approach to responding to feedback from complainants requires collaboration across the Council. All service areas receive and deal with complaints and their feedback as part of consultation will inform the development of training, guidance and support.
- Involvement: Public consultation has provided valuable insight into what is important for customers when they are unhappy with a service provided by the Council. This will be used to inform the development of training, guidance and support.

## **Consultation**

### **Background Papers**

[Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy](#)  
[Unacceptable Actions by Complainants](#)

### **Appendix 1 – 2019/2020 Annual PSOW letter**



PSOW Annual  
Letter 2019.2020 New

**Link to the Public Service Ombudsman Act 2019 and Guidance documents**  
<https://www.ombudsman.wales/complaints-standards-authority/>

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020

# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Subject** Local Toilet Strategy

**Purpose** To recommend to Cabinet the adoption of a Local Toilet Strategy

**Author** Regulatory Services Manager (Environment & Community)

**Ward** City Wide

**Summary** Each Local Authority in Wales is required to adopt and implement a Local Toilet Strategy as required by the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017. The duty to prepare a Strategy does not require local authorities to provide and maintain public toilets directly.

The Council must take a strategic view on how toilet facilities can be provided and accessed by their local population. The Strategy aims to facilitate ongoing toilet facility provision, through direct and indirect methods and commits the Council and our partners to a sustainable long term decision making in this public health area. The Strategy places a requirement on Newport City Council and its partners across the public and private sectors to assess and consider the needs of the public in the decisions they make on toilet provision, now and in the future.

**Proposal** That Cabinet formally approves and adopts the Local Toilet Strategy and Action Plan.

**Action by** Head of Law & Regulation

**Timetable** Immediate

**This report was prepared after consultation with:**

- Head of Law & Regulation
- Head of Finance
- Head of People & Business Change

**Signed:**

## **Background**

### **1.1 Legislative Background**

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 (*“the Act”*) places a duty on each Local Authority (LA) in Wales to prepare and publish a local toilets strategy for its area. The Act does not place a requirement on a LA to run and operate toilets. It requires each LA to identify the needs of their public, both local residents and visitors for work or recreation and ensure their need is met. The Act does not stipulate delivery methods but endorses a collaborative approach to Service provision.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 places a duty on all LA’s and public bodies to ensure that their actions are sustainable. Decisions taken by a LA must be bound by 5 guiding principles.

Statutory guidance on the application and interpretation of the Act provides further direction to LA’s and is available at Appendix 2.

### **1.2 Operational Background**

Councils have historically operated traditional standalone toilet blocks or facilities within buildings, but over the years they have been reduced in number due to budget pressures and difficulties with managing anti-social behaviour associated with them. The last of these ‘traditional’ toilets in Newport were closed to make budget savings for 2018/19. One Toilet facility has been transferred to a third party organisation for operation.

The needs of the public for access to suitable toilet facilities has not diminished. 30% of consultation respondents identified they would use Public Toilets, 19% said they were unaware of Public Toilet locations in Newport.

### **1.3 Progress to date**

Development of Newport’s Local Toilet Strategy commenced in 2018. Through 2019, a public needs assessment and consultation was undertaken based on the draft report. That report was presented to Newport City Council Scrutiny and Oversight Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 and the draft strategy has been amended, where necessary, to reflect the comments from Scrutiny Committee

## **2 The next stage**

**2.1** Approval and Adoption of the Strategy.

**2.2** Implementation of the 14 point action plan at Section 9 of the Strategy. The Action plan places duties on individual Council service areas.

**2.3** Section 10 of the strategy requires the Council to report on progress at defined stages. These are stipulated in the Act and associated guidance and include:

**2.3.1** A published progress statement within 2 years of each review of the Strategy

**2.3.2** Review and re-publication of the strategy within one year of each Local Election

**2.4** Service areas identified within the action plan are to report performance against their actions on a quarterly basis to The Strategic Director for Place who is responsible for the implementation of the Strategy.

## **3 Conclusion**

The Strategy sets out actions for implementation of the strategy, ensuring regulatory compliance, and protecting and improving the public health. The Strategy confirms the central role that the



Council holds in assessing, co-ordinating and supporting the long term provision of Local Toilet Facilities through engagement, considered decision making and collaboration with partners.

#### 4 Financial Summary

There are no specific financial implications arising from the adoption of the Local Toilet Strategy. The implementation of individual actions within the action Plan will be matters for individual service areas and will be delivered within existing resources

#### 5 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 implement a Toilet Strategy as required by the Public Health Act.	M	L	Strategy has been developed.  Delays to adoption and implementation have been experienced and exacerbated by Covid-19	Strategic Director for Place
Financial Risk	M	L	Strategy recognises that facilitation of other partners providing access to toilet facilities is an option, not just Council operated or run provision.	Strategic Director for Place  Finance
Reputational Risk	L	M	Regular updates to Cabinet members on progress of the Strategy	Head of Law and Regulation
Failure to adequately assess and provide suitable local Toilet provision resulting in deterioration of health to those who rely on public provision	M	M	Clear list of existing toilet facility provision published.	Strategic Director for Place
Crime and disorder associated with street urination.	L	M	ASB Officers and Street wardens Liaison with Police	Head of Law and Regulation

#### 6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Newport City Council Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022 outlines 4 key objectives in support of the Council’s Mission to “improving people’s lives” in everything we do. Wellbeing objective 4 aims to ensure the public are “healthy, independent and resilient”. This Strategy directly supports this objective by ensuring long access to a facilities while people are away from their home or workplace. The Strategy focuses on toilet provision, but recognises in both the needs assessment

and the consultation responses the ancillary benefits of baby changing facilities and enhanced access for people with reduced mobility or the need for a carer to support them.

The Strategy outlines one toilet facility that has been transferred to a community provider. Asset Transfer is endorsed in the Corporate Plan and aids resilience, increases societal ownership and can instil sense of pride in community facilities.

## **7 Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There will be no adverse financial impact in the approval of the Local Toilet Strategy and Action Plan. All actions contained within the strategy will be funded through existing budgets.

## **8 Comments of Monitoring Officer**

The Council is required to adopt a Local Toilet Strategy, in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, based on an assessment of need for public toilets within the local area. The draft Strategy has been prepared in accordance with statutory guidance issued by Welsh Government. There has been an extensive public consultation exercise to determine the needs for and extent of accessible toilet facilities and, in particular there has been engagement with key stakeholder and disability groups in relation to access to disabled toilets, in accordance with the Council's public sector equality duty under the Equality Act. A full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, to help inform the development of this strategy. In accordance with the guidance, the draft strategy has also been the subject of consultation with Scrutiny committee. The comments of the Overview & Management Scrutiny Committee have been reflected in the final draft of the strategy but subject to minor changes, the committee were content to recommend the Local Toilet Strategy to Cabinet for adoption. Neither the Toilet Strategy nor the legislation places a duty on the local authority to provide and maintain public toilets but the strategy would need to be taken into account as part of any future decision-making process. The strategy should also inform other decision-making, such as the approval of planning applications and any leases of Council property. The Strategy will need to be reviewed periodically, specifically after each local election, and its implementation will need to be monitored in accordance with the Council's service-planning and performance management framework.

## **9 Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The Local Toilet Strategy sets out the Council's approach for ensuring that toilet facilities are provided and can be accessed by the local population. The strategy aims to sustain public access to toilets, through direct and indirect provision and recognises their significance in terms of public health, equality and amenity. In line with the statutory requirement a needs assessment has been undertaken which has been informed by extensive public consultation, including engagement with disabilities and equalities groups. This in turn, has informed a detailed Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment which is included with the strategy.

In terms of wellbeing, access to appropriate toilet provision is known to be of particular importance to families with young children, people with restricted mobility and access needs; and helps them to participate in everyday social and economic activities.

## 10 Scrutiny Committees

The draft Local Toilets Strategy was presented to the Overview & Management Scrutiny Committee on 1 November 2019. There were no significant outcomes or findings of that Scrutiny Committee.

## 11 Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed on 21 October 2019 by the Head of Law and Regulation. The full Fairness and Equalities Impact assessment is at Annex A of the Strategy.

Notable outcomes from the consultation response identify that

*24% of respondents identified as themselves as Disabled*

*60% would require toilets with room for a carer,*

*54% of respondents would require wheelchair accessible facilities.*

## 12 Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The council is bound by the Future Generations (Wales) Act to ensure its activities and decisions are undertaken in a Sustainable way. It requires an LA to consider each of five pillars while making decisions. These have been incorporated into the Strategy.

- a) **Long term:** Historic actions have reduced available Toilet facilities across the City. The Strategy places a duty on public bodies and their partners to ensure facilities remain available in the long term through a variety of delivery options.
- b) **Prevention:** The provision of and communication of accessible toilet facilities may reduce anti-social behaviour.
- c) **Integration:** The strategy will have a benefit on our Well-being Objectives and the Well-being Goals. Respondents to consultation highlighted improvements are needed to facilities for those with young children, restricted mobility and enhanced access needs.
- d) **Collaboration:** The strategy requires Newport City Council to work with partners now, and in the future, to ensure access to suitable facilities is maintained or where needed enhanced across the City.
- e) **Involvement:** The provision of facilities will require liaison with other Public Sector organisations, Numerous Council Departments and the Private Sector.

## 13 Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The Local Toilet Strategy has some impact on Crime and Disorder. On consultation, Gwent Police highlight urination in the street as a common form of public disorder and anti-social behaviour. They requested this be considered during the development of the strategy and a specific action is identified in the Action Plan.

## 14 Consultation

- 14.1 **Phase 1.** This phase consisted of electronic consultation with users of the bus network Wi-Fi. A small number of questions were asked of the service users before they were granted

access to the internet. This Phase generated 3,714 responses. Over half of respondents identified that the City Centre was an area where toilet provision was not available.

**14.2Phase 2.** A more detailed public consultation was undertaken between 11 June and 9 July 2019. This comprised of a more detailed set of questions available as an online questionnaire on the Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage. The consultation was also publicised directly to the One Newport Public Services Board and the wider partnership through the One Newport Bulletin. This more detailed questionnaire was completed by only 53 respondents but this still provided some useful data.

**14.3Phase 3.** Phases 1 and 2 informed the initial draft of the Local Toilet Strategy. The draft was publically consulted on, as required by the legislation. Only 19 responses were received in response to the consultation and no changes are necessary to the draft strategy as a result of the points raised. Disability Wales and Age Cymru were informed of the consultation but did not respond to it. Gwent Police and the Newport Access Group responded to the consultation and their views incorporated.

## **15 Background Papers**

## Appendix 1

Draft Local Toilet Strategy – Newport City Council



TRA111624 Local  
Toilets Strategy draf

## Appendix 2

Statutory guidance on Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 – Part 8. Available: [Here](#).

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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** Newport City Council Covid 19 Response and Recovery Update

**Purpose** To present to Cabinet an update on the Council's progress being made towards recovering services and supporting Newport's communities as part of its Strategic Recovery Aims.

**Author** Chief Executive of Newport City Council  
Head of People and Business Change

**Ward** All

**Summary** The Covid-19 health emergency has been ongoing since March 2020 and has impacted all communities and businesses across Newport as the City has continued to adapt and respond to the necessary restrictions to minimise the spread of the virus. Newport Council's response has been to ensure continuity of services with our strategic partners, support vulnerable residents across communities, support businesses and ensure the safety of staff. This report provides an overview of what action the Council has taken to date and the progress against the Strategic Recovery Aims.

Following the previous Cabinet Report in October 2020, the number of positive cases in Newport has remained steady across the community since going into a localised lockdown. In other parts of South East Wales, cases in some areas continue to increase. In response, the Welsh Government has enacted a 'circuit break' from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, for the whole of Wales to go into a two to three week lockdown resulting in tighter restrictions for households and businesses. The Council's Civil Contingencies 'Gold Team' alongside Strategic Coordination Group and Incident Response Teams have taken necessary actions and shared communications supporting communities and businesses to adapt to the changes. Despite these measures, the Council has continued to operate normally providing necessary support.

**Proposal** Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of the report and note the progress being made to date, the risks that are still faced by the Council.

**Action by** Corporate Management Team

**Timetable** Immediate

**Signed**

## Background

Since the last Cabinet Report on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020, Newport Council and its partners have continued to monitor vigilantly the Covid-19 cases in the City through its role at the multi-agency Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG), the Council's Emergency Response Team (Covid Gold) and liaison with Welsh Government (WG) and Public Health Wales partners.

### Covid-19 Response (15<sup>th</sup> October to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020)

Since the last Report, Wales has continued to see an increasing number of positive cases despite the WG and local authorities putting in place localised lockdowns and hyper-local lockdowns. This is a picture that is being encountered across all nations in the UK with each nation taking its own actions to respond to the crisis. In Wales, WG implemented a 'fire break' across the whole of Wales commencing from 23<sup>rd</sup> October and ended on the 9<sup>th</sup> November. The resulting restrictions put in place were:

- All non-essential retail, pubs and restaurants closed. WG provided economic support for those businesses that had to close and employees were able to access UK Government support.
- All households were advised to stay at home and no indoor or outdoor gatherings were permitted. Where those who can work from home were advised to do so. Those in single person or a single parent households were allowed to form a 'bubble' with one other household.
- Community centres, libraries and places of worship were closed and only childcare settings were permitted to stay open in the period.
- Primary / Special schools, Years 7 and 8 and those taking exams were allowed to go into school for the week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> November. All other secondary pupils stayed at home and received home based teaching.
- Students living in households had to stay at home and receive blended learning.

For Newport Council, the restrictions have meant that some buildings / sites have had to close. But key services such as Flying Start continue to operate, continuing education and parks, open spaces and playgrounds remain open. The overall effectiveness of these measures will not be known for another two to three weeks. But it is hoped that these will reduce the spread of the virus across communities. Throughout this period the Council alongside Public Health Wales, WG and other organisations have been communicating to all residents and businesses the importance of adhering to the restrictions, best practice relating to hygiene, social distancing and contacting the Track, Trace and Protect (TTP) service. In addition to these messages, local and Gwent wide Incident Management Teams have been instigated to review the current rate of infections and incidents and make recommendations on measures required to the rising incidents of infections.

This winter period will be a challenging time as we will have to live alongside the virus, managing seasonal winter flu, adapt to the changes required leaving the EU Single Market and potentially respond to winter events such as snow and flooding. This will require the Council and all of its key stakeholders to work together and support communities and businesses and ensure the vulnerable are cared for and services continue to be delivered.

Despite all of these challenges, the Council is continuing progress in delivering against its Well-being Objectives and Strategic Recovery Aims. In November, Council's Scrutiny Committees will be reviewing the progress being made by the Council's service areas against their service plans and in December a summary of the Council's progress will be provided to Cabinet.

### Progress of Delivery against Strategic Recovery Aims

Outlined in Appendix 1 of the report is a detailed update on the progress of delivery being made against the Strategic Recovery Aims. A summary of the progress to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 as follows:

<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 1</b> – Supporting Education & Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schools have been providing either face to face or distance learning to pupils in line with guidance for the National 'fire-break' lockdown from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> November.</li><li>• A hot school meal service reinstated on all primary school sites from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.</li><li>• The average attendance rate across all schools in September 2020 was 80%.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to improve the IT infrastructure is continuing. 14 schools have migrated to the SRS Schools Edu network to date.</li> <li>• Plans are in place to create new delivery locations in the city centre to offer employability support.</li> <li>• The Reach/Restart project is sourcing tablets and WIFI dongles to offer support to refugees in Newport. Working closely with partner organisations, offering integration and employability advice and guidance. This also includes equipment that is used to attend ESOL classes and accredited work related qualifications.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has received a number of applications into its Property Enhancement Scheme.</li> <li>• Refreshed Empty Property Group set up to include problematic long-term vacant commercial property.</li> <li>• Bids have also been submitted to the Innovative Housing Programme (phase 4) which supports developments that use modern methods of construction to meet identified housing need.</li> <li>• Solar Installation - All phase 1 &amp; 2 sites are now complete. Further sites are being scoped for suitability for solar PV. The long term aim to install solar PV on 100% of our suitable sites.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health &amp; Wellbeing of Citizens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The First Contact teams works in a flexible way and provides face to face assessment when necessary and social distancing requirements and when required use of PPE is strictly adhered to.</li> <li>• The OT service is experiencing some staffing challenges and recruitment is underway. They continue to provide urgent assessments and provide an Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) service with First Contact. DFG work continues but only for the most urgent adaptations.</li> <li>• The in-house care homes have a small number of vacancies and are able to take admissions.</li> <li>• We are looking at the availability of emergency respite.</li> <li>• The Contracts &amp; Commissioning Team work closely with colleagues in Environmental Health, PHW and ABUHB to support the Care Homes in Newport to manage the stringent requirements on infection control and PPE to keep their residents safe.</li> <li>• Additional training provided via Human Resource team has been sourced to provide longer term support for remote working. The objective is to provide support on keeping connected with others and maximising productivity whilst remote working.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Impact Assessment (CIA) finalised following the stakeholder engagement work completed with the Fairness Commission.</li> <li>• Participatory Budgeting Steering Group has been formed and included nearly 30 people, including representatives of the most affected groups (Covid19).</li> <li>• During Halloween/Bonfire Night the usual outreach work and diversionary activities will be curtailed due to Covid 19. Large organised gatherings are also restricted. The police and fire service are taking a “zero tolerance” approach to this period.</li> <li>• The Council Community Safety Wardens are working with SWF&amp;R to identify bonfire sites to take preventative action. Positive Futures will provide some targeted outreach activities.</li> </ul>

## Financial Summary

The Council's financial (revenue and capital) update is reported separately as part of the Council's budget management. The Covid-19 impact is reported to Cabinet and as highlighted in previous finance reports, the Council's financial position continues to be closely monitored in light of significant reductions in income and increase in costs to deliver services during the crisis.

## Risks

Through the Council's Risk Management process, the Covid-19 risk is reported every quarter to the Council's Cabinet and Audit Committee. Below is the latest update taken from the Quarter 2 2020/21 risk report update.

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (1-5)	Probability of risk occurring (1-5)	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?
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Covid 19 Pandemic Risk (Corporate Risk)	5	5	Mitigation measures outlined in the report.	Corporate Management Team
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### Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2017-22  
Strategic Recovery Aims

### Options Available and considered

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of the report

### Preferred Option and Why

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

### Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Welsh Government have been supporting local authorities through the pandemic with a Hardship Fund intended to reimburse for all Covid related spend over and above existing budgets and within a set criteria. The fund also includes loss of income compensation; again, within a set criteria. The fund excludes 'Council Tax loss of income' which is currently under significant strain and 'Council Tax Reduction Scheme costs reimbursement' – both of which are monitored carefully. The fund will run to the end of the current financial year. It is continually developing and evolving to support specific initiatives as and when required.

In essence, Covid related, eligible expenditure are predominantly funded by the WG. A revenue budget monitor to end of September will be reported to the Cabinet in November and include the latest position. Financial forecasts are slowly improving as the Council continues to incur vacancy cost savings and other savings linked to the new ways of working currently in place e.g. less travel costs. These are required to mitigate against delayed delivery of savings and loss of Council Tax income which together are significant.

All costs which are not eligible for WG funding will need to be funded from services own budgets and will be reported as and when they develop over the year. Service areas have been asked to minimise these, wherever possible where they create overspending.

### Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report, which provides an update on the actions taken to deliver the Council's Strategic Recovery Aims and progress since the September report. Any legal issues will be picked up at the appropriate time as part of the operational delivery of the individual actions, within service areas. The main developments since the last report are in relation to the local lock-down restrictions, the escalation in compliance and enforcement work and the significant increase in the Test, Trace Protect contact tracing work.

### Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The recovery of the Council's services is important to ensure that we are able to build on the strong collaborative work that the Council has delivered in the last 6 months to manage this crisis. The role of Civil Contingencies, emergency planning and preparation is vital to ensure that the Council is able to

continue to deliver services but also minimise the risks posed on Newport's communities as new restrictions are implemented.

The Council's supporting services and our partners are building on the advancements made to ensure we are able to operate safely and maintain the necessary social distance guidelines. The progress detailed in this report highlights the continuous work that is being made and build up resilience in the long term.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Leader of the Council is briefed on all aspects of the Council's strategic recovery.

### **Local issues**

Members to be aware of the impacts that Covid is having on our Local Communities and business.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

NA

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The findings outlined in the Council's Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment have informed the development of the Strategic Recovery Aims as well as future strategic and operational decision making.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Not applicable.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The areas covered in this report demonstrate the progress being made against the Strategic Recovery Aims which also support the Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22. In consideration of the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working:

**Long Term** – The progress reported against the Strategic Aims support the long term aims of the Council to improve people's lives.

**Preventative** – The preventative work outlined in the report support the Council's approach to minimising future covid 19 outbreaks and as necessary provide targeted support to those that need it. Re-establishing services in line with necessary legislation and regulation enables the Council to operate in the new normal.

**Integration** – The Strategic Recovery Aims have been integrated with the Council's Wellbeing Objectives set in the Corporate Plan as well as Service Plans. Recommendations from the Community Impact Assessment will also shape how the Council can improve the delivery of services across communities.

**Involvement** – Included in this report are actions to involve Newport's communities to provide assurance and shape the way in which services are being delivered by the Council. Their feedback and involvement in the process will enable the Council to consider how services are delivered in the long term.

**Collaboration** - The actions in the report are being undertaken in collaboration with partners from the Council's Public Services Board but also strategic partners within each service area. The collaborative work enables the Council to share resources and build expertise and knowledge.

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Not applicable.

### **Consultation**

Senior Leadership Team

Corporate Management Team

Officer leads across the Authority

## **Background Papers**

Cabinet Report (Strategic Recovery Aims) – July 2020

Corporate Plan 2017-22

Strategic Recovery Aims

Dated: November 2020

## Appendix 1 – Progress of Delivery against Strategic Recovery Aims (as at end of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020)

<p><b>Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education &amp; Employment.</b> Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.</p>		
<p><b>Supports Wellbeing Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities.</b></p>		
<p><b>Strategic Aim Step</b></p>	<p><b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b></p>
<p>Support schools and other educational establishments to safely reopen for staff and pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 12 primary schools have had positive cases and 15 contact groups have been required to self-isolate. Additionally, 4 secondary schools have had positive cases and 10 contact groups have been required to self-isolate. There have been no recorded cases of children attending NCC special schools or nursery schools.</li> <li>Face coverings are now required to be used by all pupils over the age of 11 who are accessing home to school transport. This requirement has been in place since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.</li> <li>A hot school meal service was reinstated at two primary schools from 14<sup>th</sup> September. Further information will be shared with Head teachers across Newport shortly with a view to the hot meal service being reinstated on all sites as soon as possible.</li> <li>Breakfast Club provision is variable across the city. A large proportion of schools have chosen to postpone the re-establishment of breakfast clubs whilst arrangements for statutory schooling are allowed to embed and stabilise. Further information is due to be shared with Head teachers shortly for consideration when determining future provision. Some schools have however already implemented Breakfast Club provisions, albeit that these differ to pre-Covid operations. In some schools, numbers have reduced, in others a grab-bag facility enables children to be provided with a free breakfast in the classroom environment.</li> <li>The Council has a statutory duty to provide free school meals for eligible pupils, and this requirement still stands in cases where a pupil is required to self-isolate. Given the documented prevalence of Coronavirus across Newport, this position is likely to change significantly as time progresses. A solution is therefore required to ensure that appropriate provision is established to ensure that the Council's statutory duties around Free School Meal provision can be fulfilled. As at 11<sup>th</sup> September 129 pupils entitled to free school meals were required to self-isolate. We are awaiting further guidance from Welsh Government on this matter.</li> <li>Newport Norse is reporting high levels of sickness amongst staff employed to support the 24 schools who are within the Cleaning SLA. At present, requirements continue to be met, but this is being monitored closely.</li> </ul> <p>Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) held with all schools hosted by NCC Health and Safety and Environmental Health in collaboration with Education Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of 19<sup>th</sup> October, 18 primary schools have had positive cases and 24 contact groups have been required to self-isolate. Seven secondary schools have had positive cases and 13 contact groups have been required to self-isolate. One special school has reported a case and one contact group has been required to self-isolate. There have been no recorded cases of children attending NCC nursery schools.</li> <li>Schools have been providing either face to face or distance learning to pupils in line with guidance for the National 'fire-break' lockdown from Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>A hot school meal service reinstated on all primary school sites from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.</li> <li>Arrangements to support free school meal entitlement for pupils unable to attend school due to self-isolation have now been implemented via a £19.50 per week supermarket voucher scheme, similar to that used to support eligible families during the summer term.</li> <li>There continues to be a variable position regarding Breakfast Clubs. Head teachers are aware that Welsh Government's view is that there should be a return to pre-Covid arrangements however individual decisions regarding the reinstatement of this provision have been taken by Head teachers and Governing Bodies following completion of risk assessments and, where appropriate, fairness and equality impact assessments. Where provision has been reinstated, this also varies with some schools offering a traditional but reduced service, with others implementing a classroom-based approach.</li> <li>There continues to be a variable position regarding Breakfast Clubs. Head teachers are aware that Welsh Government's view is that there should be a return to pre-Covid arrangements however individual decisions regarding the reinstatement of this provision have been taken by Head teachers and Governing Bodies following completion of risk assessments and, where appropriate, fairness and equality impact assessments. Where provision has been reinstated, this also varies with some schools offering a traditional but reduced service, with others implementing a classroom-based approach. As at 19<sup>th</sup> October, 26 schools across the primary and special school estate have reinstated breakfast club provision in some capacity.</li> <li>Home to School transport arrangements are operating successfully and thus enabling learners to access school. Concessionary seats will be made available from November 2020.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education & Employment.**

Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities.**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newport Norse is continuing to meet the Cleaning SLA requirements in relation to the 24 schools that purchase this provision.</li> <li>• Head teachers are now able to submit priority test requests for symptomatic pupils who are unable to secure tests in the usual way. These requests are sent to the central Education Service who act as the conduit in submitting this information to ABUHB. Details of missed tests are shared with Head teachers who will then ensure that appropriate welfare checks are carried out.</li> </ul>
<p>Work to prevent and reduce inequality of progress and outcomes in education for mainstream and vulnerable learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WG £1.018m grant for the Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards: Accelerating Learning Programme (ALP) allocations have been issued to schools. Schools are submitting plans via EAS grant monitoring portal</li> <li>• WG £20K (ALP) for NCC will be ported from Education Services to Children’s Services to expand catch-up support for Looked After Children and re-engagement of learners known to Children’s Services who are at risk from Criminal Exploitation</li> <li>• Guidance circulated to Head teachers and governing bodies on the recording of registers and following up on absence</li> <li>• Destinations meetings have been held with schools and Coleg Gwent to identify young people who are at risk of becoming NEET and allow follow up by staff from the Education Services and Regeneration Investment &amp; Housing teams.</li> <li>• WG £58k grant to commission the ABUHB Whole School Approach team to support all Newport schools, with a specific focus on Wellbeing and Covid recovery.</li> <li>• WG £26k grant to expand the Counselling service to support children and young people below the Year 6 threshold.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings are ongoing with schools, college and Careers Wales to identify school leavers who are not currently in education, employment or training and are at risk of becoming NEET. Follow up with the young people identified is completed by staff from the Education Services and Regeneration Investment &amp; Housing teams.</li> <li>• The average attendance rate across all schools in September 2020 was 80%. All learners, including those that were previously shielding were expected to return to their school from 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020. However, in most schools, a minority of pupils have not returned as a result of parental concerns about transmission of the Covid-19 virus. These concerns are initially being followed up by the school. Concerns are then escalated to the Education Welfare Service after the school has made every attempt to engage the family. The use of Fixed Penalty Notices or proceedings for non-attendance is not currently available for local authorities / schools</li> <li>• An increasing number of families are notifying schools and the local authority of their intention to home educate their children. As of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020, 130 children were recorded as being home educated in Newport. This increased to 156 by the end of September 2020. Education Welfare Officers are contacting all families within 10 days of this notification to provide reassurances about the mitigations schools are putting into place to help reduce the transmission of the Covid-19 virus and to ensure that families understand the requirements related to home education.</li> </ul>
<p>Support schools to enhance and develop digital skills; digital teaching and learning platforms; and enhanced support for digitally excluded learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to improve the IT infrastructure in schools is ongoing with the programme running to plan</li> <li>• £700k of WG EdTech grant funding has been used to order additional digital devices for schools</li> <li>• Links have been established with Maindee Unlimited who are seeking to provide digital devices to primary pupils in Maindee Primary School and Lliswerry Primary School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to improve the IT infrastructure is continuing. 14 schools have migrated to the SRS Schools Edu network to date.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education & Employment.**

Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities.**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
Support and enable people that are digitally excluded to access community IT programmes, Council services and other public services.	<p>No further updates since September 2020.</p> <p><i>September 2020 Update:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newport City Council’s Adult Community learning courses will be recommencing from September where people can access IT and digital courses.</li> <li>• The next iteration of the Council’s Digital Strategy will be developed this financial year and taking into consideration the findings of the Community Impact Assessment, Covid 19 recovery as areas of strategic focus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Community Learning courses have recommenced but will be paused during the firebreak period.</li> </ul>
Support people who have been affected by unemployment to access new opportunities through training and re-employment required for post Covid 19 businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celtic Manor made over 400 redundancies in the last couple of months. The employability teams have been supporting those affected residents with a Newport post code to update CV’s, job search, access training etc., Those outside Newport have been signposted to out counterparts in the appropriate LA for the support required. . 800 postcodes were received from Celtic Manor 55% of which were Newport, this number will include part time seasonal staff also.</li> <li>• The Work &amp; Skills teams are proactively looking at ways to increase capacity (both staffing &amp; premises) across the City to allow for support of those affected due to the end of Furlough.</li> <li>• Reach/Restart – tablets and dongles have been purchased via the ‘Barrier Fund’ to distribute to those individuals who do not have the resource at home, this has enabled us to offer support virtually to those most in need.</li> <li>• £280k grant fund for freelance workers in cultural and arts sector has launched on 5th October.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCC continue to offer redundancy support to employers and their staff whose jobs are under threat. NCC Employer liaison officers are in regular contact with them to arrange appointments with employment mentors so they can help them to secure subsequent employment.</li> <li>• Plans are in place to create new delivery locations in the city centre to offer employability support. We have existing locations across the city to offer assistance with additional locations ready for any surges in referrals.</li> <li>• The Reach/Restart project continues to source tablets and WIFI dongles so we can continue to offer support to refugees in Newport. We’re working closely with partner organisations, offering integration and employability advice and guidance. This includes equipment that is used to attend ESOL classes and accredited work related qualifications.</li> <li>• CfW+ Programme - Additional £142k funding secured from WG to support with the increased numbers of unemployed when Furlough Ends. Four x Employment Mentors and One Employment Liaison officer to be employed on a 6 month contract.</li> <li>• I.T. Loan scheme to be launched in October – 10 Laptops with internet for each hub to support CfW and CfW+ customers who are seen to be job ready.</li> </ul>
Ensure our diverse communities are appropriately supported through tailored interventions specific to their needs, including consideration of language, culture and points of access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work reported in September is still ongoing.</li> <li>• Business Support and Connected Communities Team are developing a BAME specific business support programme for local business owners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Reach/Restart project continues to source tablets and WIFI dongles so we can continue to offer support to refugees in Newport. We’re working closely with partner organisations, offering integration and employability advice and guidance. This includes equipment that is used to attend ESOL classes and accredited work related qualifications.</li> <li>• BAME specific business support proposal currently being considered by Business Support/Connected Communities Team</li> <li>• Representative Workforce group established and scheduled to meet in November</li> <li>• Leader’s BAME forum continues and members engaged with work across the council</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy**

Understand and respond to the impact of Covid19 on the city’s economic and environmental goals to enable Newport to thrive again.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment.**

Strategic Aim Step	Update (October Cabinet 2020)	Update (November Cabinet 2020)
<p>Maintain our focus on regenerating Newport to deliver existing and new investment projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has secured £1.4m funding to proceed with redevelopment of Information Station and Museum and Library buildings.</li> <li>Engaged with Specialist Welsh Government Support to target long-term vacant and derelict properties across the city.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses are submitting their applications for approval for the Transforming Towns funding which seeks to make the City Centre Covid-safe. This involves funding for canopies, awnings and outdoor heaters to increase outdoor customer space over the winter period.</li> </ul>
<p>Enable and support the construction industry to re-establish the supply of new and affordable housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The planned development programme has been reviewed to consider schemes that may be revised to consider the specific demands connected to wider WG legislation towards homelessness duties, is progressing, notable achievements this month have included the demolition of part of the Tredegar Court sheltered housing scheme in order to allow for the replacement of bedsits with flats and the creation of a dementia friendly garden.</li> <li>We have also been working with RSL partners to access other Welsh Government Covid19 funding streams relating to affordable housing construction and redevelopment. These include the Innovative Housing Programme (phase 4) and the Optimised Retrofit Programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continue to deliver the planned development programme and have been working with RSL partners to identify schemes that could be brought forward at short notice to meet current demand should additional funding become available.</li> <li>We have been engaging with a number of national house builders to offer support in bringing developments forward.</li> </ul>
<p>Enable and support businesses to re-establish normal operations whilst maintaining the health and safety of their workers and customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newport fully allocated its Welsh Government ‘Start-Up Grants’ in August 2020 – a fund to assist those who started a business prior to lockdown and could not therefore access any support.</li> <li>The Council has received over 150 expressions of interest for Business Development Grants</li> <li>£280k grant fund for freelance workers in cultural and arts sector has launched on 5<sup>th</sup> October.</li> <li>Transforming Towns has £100k small grant scheme ‘repurposed’ to allow businesses to carry out winter resilience works (e.g. awnings, bubbles, outdoor heating) to be rolled out to city centre initially in October.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses are submitting their applications for approval for the Transforming Towns funding which seeks to make the City Centre Covid-safe. This involves funding for canopies, awnings and outdoor heaters to increase outdoor customer space over the winter period.</li> <li>The Business Support Team continue to process Welsh Government support grants, including the Freelancer grant and the pending third phase of the Economic Resilience Fund.</li> </ul>
<p>Enable and support businesses to prepare for future trade arrangements resulting from Brexit negotiations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council’s Brexit Task and Finish Group convened on 21<sup>st</sup> September.</li> <li>The Council is reviewing the outcomes of ongoing Brexit Trade negotiations and as necessary assessing the impact(s) on the Council services, communities and economy.</li> <li>Latest update on the Council’s preparation is provided in the Brexit Cabinet Report for October.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the previous Brexit update provided to Cabinet in October 2020, the UK Government and the EU have continued to negotiate a future trade agreement. However, it is now likely that the UK will leave the EU Single Market on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 without an agreement in place.</li> <li>The Council’s Brexit Task &amp; Finish group is awaiting the outcomes of the negotiations and are already increasing communication to businesses to prepare for new arrangements and to continue to encourage EU Citizens living in UK before 31<sup>st</sup> December to apply for EU Settled Status.</li> <li>A separate Brexit report is being presented to Cabinet in November with an update on the Council’s preparations.</li> </ul>
<p>Protect and improve the environment, including air</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gwent Sustainable Travel Charter has been developed to support and encourage staff to travel in a more sustainable way. The travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Discussions and site visits have taken place to plan for the installation of the infrastructure.</li> </ul>



<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy</b>		
Understand and respond to the impact of Covid19 on the city's economic and environmental goals to enable Newport to thrive again.		
<b>Supports Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment.</b>		
<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
quality and decarbonisation of the city for its residents, businesses and visitors.	<p>charter was presented to cabinet in September as part of the Sustainable Travel Cabinet Report. A number of public services board member organisations will be signing up to the charter across Gwent. A launch will take place as part of Wales Climate Week in November and the commitments in the charter will be implemented over the next three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCC was the first Welsh local authority to place an order to supply a new all electric Refuse Collection Vehicle which is planned to be operational by April 2021.</li> <li>• This is in addition to the 5 x all electric cars and 12 x all electric vans which have been introduced into the fleet over the past 12 months as older vehicles have been replaced.</li> <li>• Electric vehicle charging points have been installed at Telford Depot and the Waste Disposal Site in support of these vehicles to compliment other charging points at various locations in the city, at a time when access to facilities and assets are under less demand/occupation; therefore, logistics and displacement are less of a constraint.</li> <li>• Community Solar installation across multiple sites will be complete by October 2020. Further sites will be identified to increase the council's local renewable energy supply.</li> <li>• A widespread building energy efficiency programme is being developed to tackle carbon emissions, in the short-term to realise savings associated with using Council building is a less intensive form of occupation.</li> <li>• Public electric vehicle charge points will be operational in council car parks this autumn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar Installation - All phase 1 &amp; 2 sites are now complete. Further sites are being scoped for suitability for solar PV. The long term aim to install solar PV on 100% of our suitable sites.</li> <li>• Building efficiency programme - A soft market test for an energy efficiency partner has been completed, internal approvals / consultation ongoing.</li> <li>• Public Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Commissioning will be complete and charge points will be in operation in November. Three further sites developed by the Carbon Reduction Team – Installation to be managed by City Services.</li> </ul>
Continuing support and safe delivery of the Council's City services including waste, cleansing and highways.	<p>October Cabinet – No further update <i>September Cabinet 2020</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>City services continue to operate normally and within the requirements of Covid-19 guidance for social distancing and cleaning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Waste services continue to operate the appointments system at the Household Waste Recycling Site and have recently reopened the Tip shop for reusable items.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Council purchased a camera car to support Civil Parking Enforcement Officers to prevent and deter unlawful parking across the city.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results from the Covid-19 perception survey with Citizen's Panel that communities have valued refuse and recycling services during this period, and also the maintenance of cleansing services.</li> <li>• City Services continue to operate normally, though response times may be longer than normal.</li> <li>• HWRC has reopened via a booking system only to manage social distancing requirements (though will close for 2 weeks during firebreak)</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health &amp; Wellbeing of Citizens</b>		
Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities		
<b>Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient</b>		
<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens**

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
<p>Support people to remain living independently in their homes and communities.</p>	<p>October 2020 – No further updates were provided.</p> <p><i>September 2020 Update:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Brynglas Day centre remains closed but a new temporary outreach service has been developed that will support people in their own homes and community. The centre has been cleaned and prepped in readiness for opening.</i></li> <li>• <i>The virtual First Contact hub continues to operate and is managing all Social Service contacts, offering information, advice and assistance and escalating appropriate cases for further assessment.</i></li> <li>• <i>NOW assessments continue and preparation for the introduction of LPS (Liberty Protection Safeguards) continues for the new implementation date of 01.04.2022</i></li> <li>• <i>The Hospital Team and Reablement are operating to deliver Home First and maintain hospital discharge processes, PPE is used and social distancing maintained where possible.</i></li> <li>• <i>Domiciliary care services have been operational throughout and are now at full capacity. New packages are being brokered without delay and in June and July of 2020 the Brokers successfully commissioned 1000 new hours of service</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home First continue to support people to return home if they do not need to be admitted to hospital at RGH and NHH. The Grange Hospital is anticipated to open in November and Home First will be expanded to provide a service from the new A&amp;E based there.</li> <li>• The First Contact teams works in a flexible way and provides face to face assessment when necessary and social distancing requirements and when required use of PPE is strictly adhered to.</li> <li>• The OT service is experiencing some staffing challenges and recruitment is underway. They continue to provide urgent assessments and provide an IAA service with First Contact. DFG work continues but only for the most urgent adaptations.</li> <li>• There has been a significant increase in the number of people need assessment under the Mental Health Act which is statutory requirement. We are monitoring this situation carefully and working closely with colleagues in ABUHB.</li> <li>• A range of support for people with difficulties with their mental wellbeing in the context of the pandemic has been developed in partnership with ABUHB and the voluntary sector and through Housing Support.</li> <li>• Carer breakdown is a concern as the pandemic continue into the winter. Social Workers are in contact with the people we support and their Carers and are closely monitoring the situation.</li> <li>• The Day Opportunities based in Bryn Glas continues to support people in the community rather than providing a building based service.</li> <li>• We are able to access domiciliary care and support and are able to broker new packages.</li> </ul>
<p>Fully restore Children and Adult Services, supporting partners that have been impacted by Covid 19 and ensuring service users and staff are supported and protected.</p>	<p>October 2020 – No further updates were provided.</p> <p><i>September 2020 update:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Staffing levels are good with little agency usage</i></li> <li>• <i>Circa 5 vacancies in each of the Councils 3 homes, with continued interest for new admissions; Spring Gardens and Blaen y Pant are planning to take up to 5 new admissions from a home in Torfaen that is closing</i></li> <li>• <i>A system for residents families has been set to facilitate socially distanced visits</i></li> <li>• <i>Homes have been utilising technology such as iPads in order to communicate with families and other professions such as GP surgeries</i></li> <li>• <i>Adults training team have been providing a blended approach to training through online and some face to face courses (where essential)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The in-house care homes have a small number of vacancies and are able to take admissions.</li> <li>• We are looking at the availability of emergency respite as a number of care homes are reluctant to accept short term placements unless the person has tested negative for COVID19.</li> <li>• The Social Services Training Team continues to support the teams and services including new starters to access any essential training through on-line courses and in-person training when necessary e.g. moving and handling.</li> <li>• Community Support for those people who have been shielding remains in place and we have extended the contract with Volunteering Matters who can provide support for people who for example, live some distance from their family and need help with shopping etc.</li> <li>• Community Connectors are also active in the communities and in particular the hard to reach groups who may need additional support to access TTP for example.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens**

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient**

Strategic Aim Step	Update (October Cabinet 2020)	Update (November Cabinet 2020)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular contact with operational teams has continued to ensure that staffing fulfil their regulatory training requirements</li> <li>• Training rooms in Brynglas have been prepped and are ready to deliver training in line with Covid 19 requirements</li> <li>• Commissioning have been working with residential and domiciliary care providers throughout. The team have administered the WG Hardship funding, co-ordinated requests for PPE and testing, distributed guidance and worked closely with Environmental Health, ABUHB and Public Health Wales who have monitored homes and supported them in the implementation and ongoing maintenance of risk management systems.</li> <li>• Commissioning are also currently administering the £500 payment to care workers in adult and children provider services</li> <li>• The Commissioning team are working with regional colleagues to share intelligence and to ensure funding is being allocated in a way that is consistent and equitable.</li> <li>• Community services such as MIND, Citizens Advice Bureau, and the Pobl carer respite service are now beginning to open up move into the next phase of transition.</li> <li>• The Appointeeship service has been operational throughout but modified to reduce the need for face-to-face contact. Some of these changes have worked well and will be retained for efficiency.</li> </ul>	
<p>Assess the impact and the long-term sustainability of the social care sector in Newport informing future service requirements.</p>	<p><b><u>October 2020 Update – No further updates</u></b></p> <p>September 2020 update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older persons residential and nursing care providers have been disproportionately affected by Coronavirus and ongoing discussions with providers are addressing issues of long term financial sustainability and the requirement to change the way the service is delivered to ensure the safety of residents and staff.</li> <li>• Discussions are being held with providers across all commissioned service areas about their recovery plans; this includes how they can adapt and modify their services to adhere to social distancing and infection control requirements and how this will affect capacity and deliverability. i.e. some providers have been using technology to run online groups and offer support. This has been very effective in some areas and will continue to form part of the future service offer. We are starting to have discussions with respite and day service providers about how and when they can restore provision.</li> <li>• Social Workers remain in contact with people we support and are monitoring the situation in relation to carer breakdown or changes to circumstances because of the pandemic. This engagement is critical in the determination of how services re-open, to measure demand, offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Contracts &amp; Commissioning Team work closely with colleagues in Environmental Health, PHW and ABUHB to support the Care Homes in Newport to manage the stringent requirements on infection control and PPE to keep their residents safe.</li> <li>• The £500 payment to frontline social care staff had been distributed to all those who meet the Welsh Government criteria. We have also gathered the names of staff across the sector who will be a high priority group to receive the vaccination when it becomes available. Access to the flu vaccine are restricted as supplies are limited but it is hoped this will change in the coming weeks and we can support frontline staff to access the vaccine via their community pharmacy.</li> <li>• Newport is working collaboratively with the other Local Authorities in Gwent to support the sector mitigate the impact through the distribution of the COVID Hardship Fund.</li> <li>• Visiting to Care Homes has been limited to essential only visits such as end of life since Newport was placed under further restrictions by WG. We have supported the homes to use technology.</li> </ul>

<b>Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health &amp; Wellbeing of Citizens</b>		
Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities		
<b>Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient</b>		
<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
	<i>confidence and support the role of informal carers at a time when those shielding are considering how to return to services.</i>	
Safeguard and support children and young people to remain safely with their families.	<p>October 2020 – No further updates since September 2020</p> <p><i>September 2020 update:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children Services are now conducting their work with families and young people applying necessary social distancing measures.</li> <li>• Children’s homes / settings have remained open and the team continues manage caseload accordingly.</li> <li>• Development of Windmill Farm and Rosedale developments are still proceeding.</li> </ul>	Awaiting further update
Improve opportunities for Active Travel and work towards improved air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further to last month’s update, the Council is undertaking a review of its Active Travel Network Map collaborating with partners from the PSB</li> <li>• Work has commenced across a number of Active Travel schemes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Active Travel schemes being delivered this financial year are ongoing and the review of the Active Travel network map is also continuing.</li> <li>• The Council is also awaiting the report from SEWTC which will be released in November.</li> </ul>
Regulate businesses and support consumers / residents to protect and improve their health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Test, Trace and Protect Service has been supporting public services with the current outbreak in Newport.</li> <li>• Regulatory services continue to support businesses on their Covid-19 secure environments and continue to ensure necessary compliance arrangements are being adhered to for both workers and customers.</li> </ul>	Awaiting further update
Work with key partners to safely re-open cultural and leisure facilities including the promotion of the city’s parks, open spaces and coastal paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum and Art Gallery are open on alternate days via a booking system</li> <li>• Newport Live sites such as the Theatre and Newport Centre remain closed to the public.</li> <li>• Newport Live is applying the new restrictions to its centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Riverfront theatre remains closed during this period.</li> <li>• Newport Centre has remained partially open until the firebreak announced by the Welsh Government. The centre will close for the 2 weeks.</li> <li>• The Museum and Art Gallery have remained open for visits via an appointment system but will close on 23rd October as required by Welsh Government.</li> <li>• The Transporter Bridge is a seasonal attraction and has now closed.</li> </ul>
Sustain a safe, healthy and productive workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of buildings remain closed to the public and following Welsh Government guidance the Council’s advice to staff is that they continue to work from home and to avoid any unnecessary visits to the Council buildings where possible.</li> <li>• Recent guidance has been shared with Council staff about ongoing arrangements based upon Welsh Government guidance.</li> <li>• The Council continues to staff working from home by co-ordinating the distribution of home working kit with further distribution continuing into October.</li> <li>• Internally, the organisation has supported staff in different ways to continue to provide services to residents – signposting to mental health support from our occupational health department, counselling provision and regular advice and guidance in staff communications on a range of wellbeing topics. Each piece of communications that goes out has a wellbeing focus to support the resilience of staff working during this challenging period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further to the progress reported in October, additional training has been sourced to provide longer term support for remote working. The objective is to provide support on keeping connected with others and maximising productivity whilst remote working.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens**

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient**

Strategic Aim Step	Update (October Cabinet 2020)	Update (November Cabinet 2020)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual Scrutiny and other Council governance meetings have recommenced from September 2020.</li> </ul>	

**Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19**

Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities**

Strategic Aim Step	Update (October Cabinet 2020)	Update (November Cabinet 2020)
<p>Work together with our partners to reduce poverty, address homelessness and support our most vulnerable people as a priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress has been made on the actions arising from Strategic Housing Forum (SHF), including the formation of sub- groups set up to address specific issues relating to housing in Newport including rough sleeping, Covid19 WG homelessness legislation, housing supply and community support.</li> <li>Additional units of emergency temporary accommodation sourced and utilised to meet on-going and sustained demand.</li> <li>Sub- groups of the SHF developed to ensure longevity to partnership working throughout and post- Covid</li> <li>Homelessness phase 2 (Covid19) revenue and capital funding confirmed with WG</li> <li>Proposals for phase 2 revenue funding, to deliver mental health and substance misuse services agreed and progressed with partners</li> <li>In accordance with WG guidance, phase 2 strategic actions agreed to ensure cohorts at risk of homelessness are accommodated and supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional units of emergency temporary accommodation are being sourced and allocated to meet continuing demand.</li> <li>Resources made available to project manage homelessness phase 2 capital projects.</li> <li>Proposals for phase 2 revenue funding, to deliver mental health and substance misuse services agreed being progressed with partners</li> <li>Working with private sector accommodation providers to ensure the supply and use of accommodation during fire breaker,</li> <li>We continue to work with our third sector support partners to support the ongoing provision of temporary accommodation at Mission Court.</li> </ul>
<p>Assess and address the inequalities that Covid 19 has highlighted or contributed to within our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Impact Assessment (CIA) finalised following the work completed with the Fairness Commission.</li> <li>People &amp; Business Change are also supporting the Council's commitment to ensure the City's BAME and marginalised communities have access to services, employment and economic opportunities across the city and in the Council.</li> <li>Black History Wales 365 campaign supported by NCC – launching start of Black History Month. Monthly engagement and communications activities planned throughout the year</li> <li>BAME specific business support is being commissioned,(seminars and workshops) to support existing and start-up businesses across the city</li> <li>Positive action plan being developed to further develop the council's offer in terms of employment opportunities to under-represented/disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAME specific business support proposal currently being considered by Business Support/Connected Communities Team</li> <li>Representative Workforce group established and scheduled to meet in November</li> <li>Leader's BAME forum continues and members engaged with work across the council</li> <li>People &amp; Business Change finalising the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) following the stakeholder engagement work completed with the Fairness Commission. A Participatory Budgeting Steering Group has been formed and included nearly 30 people, most of who are representatives of the most affected groups (Covid19).</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19**

Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
Identify, develop and seek to sustain any positive developments emerging during the crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader has established and chairs a BAME community forum in order to progress Black Lives Matter areas of focus.</li> </ul> <p>October 2020 – No further updates from September 2020</p> <p>September 2020 update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Throughout the Covid crisis and continuing into the easing of lockdown measures, the Council's communication team have been utilising social media (Twitter / Facebook) and website to promote the work of the Council, delivery and reopening of services and the community efforts across Newport.</li> <li>• One Newport (Public Services Board) newsletter has been highlighting the positive work of the Council and its partners in supporting the city to recover and various initiatives across communities.</li> <li>• Audit Wales have revised their work programme for the year to provide assurance and share best practice on the work that the Council and other public sector bodies have undertaken in during and after lockdown.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Newport (Public Services Board) bulletin has been highlighting the positive work of the Council and its partners in supporting the city to recover and various initiatives across communities. This has been re-enforced by ongoing promotion of partners' work through the One Newport Twitter and Instagram accounts.</li> </ul>
Developing opportunities for people to access suitable and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The planned development programme is progressing, notable achievements this month have included the demolition of part of the Tredegar Court sheltered housing scheme in order to allow for the replacement of bedsits with flats and the creation of a dementia friendly garden.</li> <li>• We have also been working with RSL partners to access other Welsh Government funding streams relating to affordable housing construction and redevelopment. These include the Innovative Housing Programme and the Optimised Retrofit Programme.</li> <li>• Work has continued on the private rented sector research. The focus of the research has been agreed with the funders and an initial steering group meeting has been held.</li> <li>• Progress has been made on the actions arising from Strategic Housing Forum, including the formation of sub groups set up to address specific issues relating to housing in Newport including rough sleeping, housing supply and community support.</li> <li>• SHF sub groups developed and membership determined to address issues relating to housing supply and homelessness.</li> <li>• Phase 2 WG capital funding proposals developed further to provide additional units of supported housing. This will support move on from temporary accommodation and mitigate the effects of COVID on homelessness and rough sleeping.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newport has been accepted onto Welsh Governments Private Rented Sector pathfinder project and have obtained grant funding to acquire units of accommodation to facilitate move on from temporary accommodation.</li> <li>• We continue to deliver the planned development programme and have been working with RSL partners to identify schemes that could be brought forward at short notice to meet current demand should additional funding become available.</li> <li>• Bids have also been submitted to the Innovative Housing Programme (phase 4) which supports developments that use modern methods of construction to meet identified housing need. No further updates since October 2020.</li> <li>• Additional Phase 2 funding received and will allow the Team to progress schemes submitted as part of the Phase 2 bid.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19**

Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
<p>Deliver a community cohesion programme that effectively responds to community tensions and creates a shared sense of identity across the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translation and dissemination of key messages in community languages ongoing, particularly in response to developments around local lockdown</li> <li>• Gypsy and Traveller Group now well established, engaging appropriate partners</li> <li>• Disability Access Group meeting every 2 weeks and has advised on city centre re-opening and potential improvements to pedestrian access</li> <li>• Capital radio advert promoting EUSS has been commissioned, alongside a series of short information videos in community languages. Schools are also being proactively engaged in outreach work</li> <li>• Activities in place for Hate Crime Awareness Week (October) including targeted work with schools</li> <li>• Foodbank working group established to develop a co-ordinated approach across the city</li> </ul> <p>Hate crime awareness week – planned communication campaign, targeted work in schools and community training sessions are planned. Community tensions are monitored and reported on a weekly basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black History Wales supported during October with the launch of a yearlong programme of activities, anti-racism resources developed and shared with schools, Q&amp;A sessions with BLM and Dragons Rugby and themed internal staff news</li> <li>• Hate Crime Charter signed and publicised, with training planned for staff in November</li> <li>• Collaboration with Hope not Hate and Centre for Countering Online Hate to deliver a seminar for communities and professionals focussing on addressing online hate speech and the hostile environment</li> <li>• Ongoing messaging and support is being provided to BAME communities, including the development of multilingual voice notes</li> <li>• Foodbank working group, Disability Group and EU Citizens meeting continue to meet virtually</li> <li>• Community training sessions and school workshops scheduled for November.</li> </ul>
<p>Prevent and address instances of antisocial behaviour impacting upon the residents and the business community of Newport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Pill (sub group of Safer Newport) has now met on two occasions and has an action plan in place, based on the police’s most recent problem profile. Work is ongoing to ensure this reflects positive (and negative) lessons learned from previous work in Pill, and other areas of the city.</li> <li>• The Safer Pill Steering Group has also been established, bringing local community members together to consult on planned activities and shape priorities.</li> <li>• An additional sub-group of Safer Pill has been established to address issues associated with Gypsy and Traveller sites across the city.</li> </ul> <p><b>Anti-social Behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October is traditionally the most challenging time in relation to Anti-social behaviour with Halloween and Bonfire night being so close together.</li> <li>• Each year, the ASB Group/ASB Ops Group work closely with partners to establish a plan of work to mitigate the incidents of Anti-social behaviour as much as possible. This would include Diversionary activities with the Community Hubs, Housing and also Newport Live. This has resulted in reduction of incidents year on year for the last few years. 2020 is likely to be different.</li> <li>• Outreach work and diversionary activities may be curtailed due to Covid 19. Due to government guidelines, large organised gatherings are also restricted. The concern is for some communities to proceed regardless.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Safer Pill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Pill (sub group of Safer Newport) has now met on two occasions and has an action plan in place, based on the police’s most recent problem profile. Work is ongoing to ensure this reflects positive (and negative) lessons learned from previous work in Pill, and other areas of the city.</li> <li>• The Safer Pill Steering Group has also been established, bringing local community members together to consult on planned activities and shape priorities. Initial focus will be adult exploitation, ASB, violent crime, fly-tipping and waste.</li> <li>• An additional sub-group of Safer Pill has been established to address issues associated with Gypsy and Traveller sites across the city.</li> </ul> <p><b>Anti-social Behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year during Halloween/Bonfire Night the usual outreach work and diversionary activities will be curtailed due to Covid 19. Due to government guidelines, large organised gatherings are also restricted. The concern is some communities will proceed regardless. The police and fire service are taking a “zero tolerance” approach to this period. The Council Community Safety Wardens are working with SWF&amp;R to identify bonfire sites to take preventative action. Positive Futures will provide some targeted outreach activities.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19**

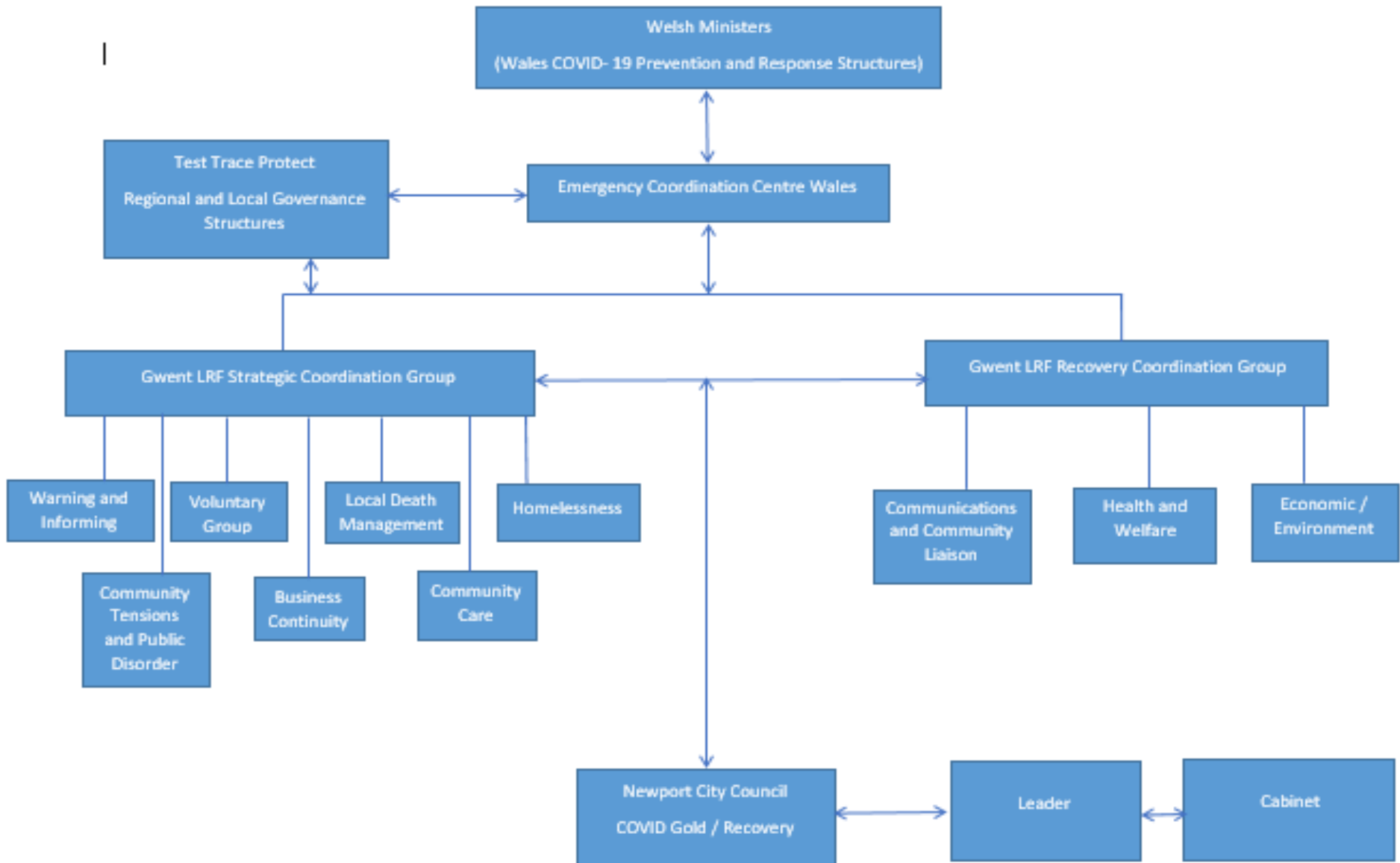
Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

**Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities**

<b>Strategic Aim Step</b>	<b>Update (October Cabinet 2020)</b>	<b>Update (November Cabinet 2020)</b>
	<p>The police and fire service are taking a “zero tolerance” approach to this period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urgent work needs to be carried out via the Corporate Communications team to ensure that the message encourages a safe Halloween and Bonfire night period. We are likely to see a rise in ASB complaints.</li> <li>Pillgwenlly – Safer Pill has been established with Partners, co-chaired by the police and Newport City Council. Safer Pill will report directly to Safer Newport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urgent work will be carried out via the Corporate Communications team to ensure that the message encourages a safe Halloween and Bonfire night period. We are likely to see a rise in ASB complaints.</li> <li>Youth Justice Service is picking up all ASB referrals and are working with the police to offer this as a diversionary intervention on a preventative basis.</li> </ul>
<p>Re-establish Community Regeneration facilities and services where it is safe to do so for staff and its service users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions surrounding Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) offering services from the Hubs are underway planned for the near future</li> <li>Play services will be offered in October half term</li> <li>Low level engagement for parenting / early language programmes ‘outdoors’ are planned in the near future</li> <li>Welfare visits will restart in Hubs in the near future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Regeneration services have restarted in a limited and safe way. Face to face services have been provided for employment support and the Aspire and Youth Academy work.</li> <li>Play scheme for Flying start age and 5-12yrs will be offered to identified groups for October half term.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop opportunities for community involvement participation and engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perception survey was undertaken during July-Aug. Results are being analysed. Initial findings are positive in terms of the support provided to households, the wider community and how well the Council maintained essential services. Final results will be available in October.</li> <li>A bus wi-fi survey will be scheduled for November to increase the demographic and number of responses.</li> <li>The Fairness Commission has collaborated with NCC to run eight engagement sessions in August with the most affected groups identified in the Community Impact Assessment. A report of the findings is currently being drafted and will inform the CIA the Strategic Recovery work and the participatory budgeting programme.</li> <li>The participatory budgeting programme will commence in October and will be jointly run with the Fairness Commission as ‘trusted intermediaries’ and to ensure strong community representation and participation. The actual PB event is planned for January given the challenges in running inclusive engagement activities in the current climate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The survey suggests that public perception of the Council’s pandemic response was in the main positive, particularly in terms of support for households, the wider community and in maintaining service provision. Responses were particularly favourable in terms of refuse and recycling services, support for people shielding and key workers and maintaining/cleansing the public realm. The more negative responses focussed on the closure of parks, cemeteries, libraries and public toilets. There was a mixed response towards the information provided on services and public health messages.</li> <li>The survey is currently being extended using bus Wi-Fi technology which should greatly increase the responses received to date</li> <li>The participatory budgeting programme commenced in October with the formation of a Steering Group mostly made up of representatives of the most affected communities, who will oversee the running of the PB process in terms of eligibility, funding decisions, fairness and participation.</li> <li>This process now follows a strategic path from the Community Impact Assessment, to community engagement, participation of stakeholder and ultimately involvement in decision making and funding new projects to tackle Covid19.</li> </ul>



## Appendix 2 – Covid 19 Prevention and Response Structure



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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** Newport City Council Brexit / Trade Negotiations Preparations Update

**Purpose** To present an update to Cabinet on the Brexit Trade Negotiations preparations that Newport City Council has taken since the last Cabinet Report in October 2020.

**Author** Chief Executive  
Head of People and Business Change

**Ward** All

**Summary** The trade negotiations between the UK Government and European Union have reached a critical point in the process where it is now looking likely that the UK will be leaving the European Union (EU) including its Customs Union and Single Market without a trade agreement in place on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. For Wales and Newport, this will mean that businesses that import and export to the EU will have to comply with new trade requirements and may include tariffs on certain goods and services. For consumers (residents) living in Newport this could impact on prices and supplies of goods and services including certain products of food and medicines. New arrangements for travelling into and out of Europe will also be in place including passports, insurance, driving documents etc. For EU Citizens already living in Wales before the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 they will need to ensure that they apply for Settled Status by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Current right to work eligibility remains in place until 30th June 2021 and employers cannot require evidence of settled status during this period. EU citizens not already resident in the UK who wish to relocate to Wales after 1st January 2021 will need to apply for a Visa.

Since the last Cabinet Meeting, the Council has been awaiting the outcome(s) of the negotiations and release of guidance documents from the UK Government departments to apply the necessary changes and understand the necessary requirements from the 1<sup>st</sup> January.

**Proposal** Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of the report and note the Council's Brexit preparations.

**Action by** Corporate Management Team

**Timetable** Immediate

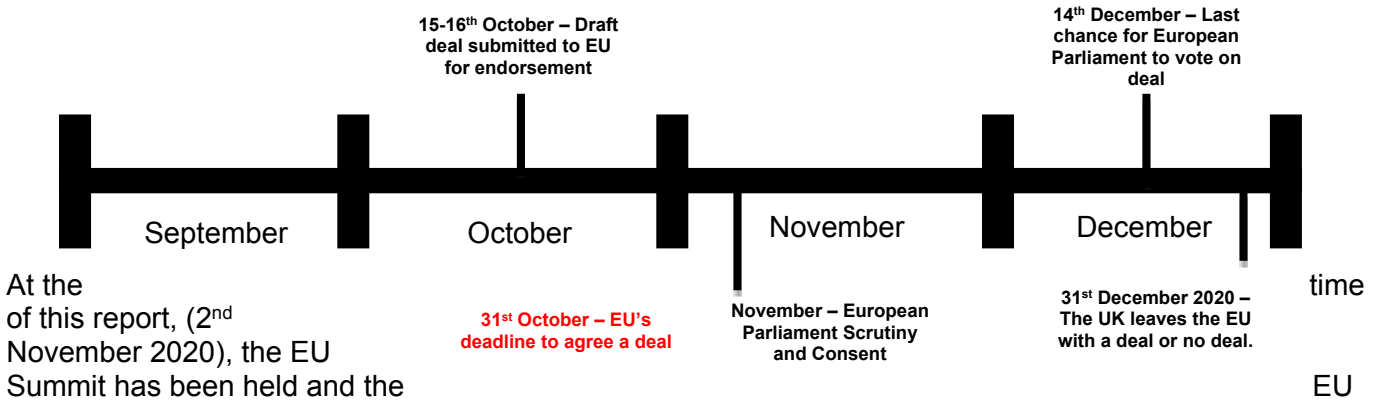
This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Heads of Service and officer Brexit 'Task and Finish' officer group

**Signed**

## Background

Following the UK public vote to leave the EU in 2016, the UK Government (UKG) and European Union (EU) spent over 3 years negotiating and agreeing a withdrawal agreement that was formally ratified on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. From this point the UKG and EU formally entered into a transition period to negotiate a trade deal and a future trade relationship by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. At the point of this Cabinet Report and Cabinet meeting in November 2020, there is less than one month. The timeline for the ongoing negotiations are:



At the of this report, (2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020), the EU Summit has been held and the acknowledged the gap between the UKG and the EU to agree a deal. The UKG is aiming to agree a similar arrangement to Canada but both sides of the negotiation have cited issues relating to fisheries, governance and state aid to businesses that require further discussions. Additionally the UKG has warned businesses and consumers to expect the UK to have an Australian trade arrangement that effectively falls back onto World Trade Organisation arrangements. The UK has signed a trade deal with Japan and is also negotiating trade agreements with the US, Australia, and New Zealand. However, the EU trade negotiations are still continuing past the 31<sup>st</sup> October deadline.

For Wales and the other devolved nations, UKG has introduced the Internal Market Bill which sets out rules for the operation of the UK internal market. As reported in October's Cabinet meeting, the Bill allows greater freedom for the Welsh Government to setting policy but there are also concerns raised by Welsh Government for the UKG to have the power deliver large infrastructure projects in Wales without the agreement of the Welsh Government. The [MS Counsel General and Minister for European Transition, Jeremy Miles](#) has also written to the Lord Speaker outlining the concerns of Welsh Government in relation to the UK Internal Market Bill.

In the Audit Wales assessment of progress against the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) it has identified four challenges that public bodies will face over the next five years: the impact of Covid-19; climate change and biodiversity loss; tackling inequality; and the UK's departure from the EU. The report acknowledges that all public bodies including Newport Council will need to carefully manage immediate, medium and longer-term effects that will pose a wide range of new challenges, risks and opportunities.

As cited in last month's Cabinet Report, the Council's primary focus has been on the Covid-19 crisis and adapting to the fluid changes in legislation that the Council, businesses and residents have to adhere to, to manage the outbreak in the City and across the region. For businesses, it is particularly challenging to implement Covid secure arrangements and it is widely acknowledged that there are many businesses that are not fully prepared for the changes beyond 1<sup>st</sup> January whether this is the meeting new trade arrangements, supply chain management and workforce planning. The Welsh Government continue to update their websites '[Preparing Wales](#)' and '[Business Wales](#)' to get the necessary advice and guidance to businesses and residents living in Wales. The Council's own Economic Development team continue to inform and signpost businesses to these websites for further support and are engaging with key businesses to understand their ongoing risks, issues and concerns.

For EU Citizens living in Wales and Newport, there is ongoing promotional work being undertaken by the Council and its partners to encourage uptake of the EU Settlement Scheme and assure EU Citizens that

they are welcome to live and work in Wales. This work will be ongoing right up to the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and EU Citizens have to be living in the UK by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 to be eligible to apply. From the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, the new Immigration system will be implemented and EU Citizens have to meet the requirements of this new system. All final details of this new system will be subject to the final agreements made by UKG and EU.

The Council's Brexit Task & Finish group continues to monitor the ongoing situation and notifications in changes to regulatory requirements. Since the last report in October, there has not been significant developments across all of the areas covered in appendix A as we await for finalisation of the guidance and information to be released from Welsh Government and UK Government departments. The Brexit Task & Finish Group will be meeting at the start of November to assess the position of the Council and understand the final outcomes of the trade negotiations and their impact(s) on the three core areas of the Organisation; supplies and services; communities; and the economy. The focus of these areas are also taking into consideration the impacts of Covid-19 measures. To date the Council has been focusing on the following areas:

**Economy / Business Sector** – The Council's Economic Development are exploring the delivery of virtual Brexit awareness event across the business sector in Newport (possibly surrounding region) to provide advice, guidance and information about preparing for trade 2021 and beyond. Throughout Covid, the team has been sending out regular newsletters to the business community on accessing funding and to signpost them to necessary government websites on Covid-19 / Brexit preparations. The team is also considering other avenues to raise awareness and support the local economy through joint Covid/Brexit work.

**Procurement / Suppliers** – The Procurement team and Service areas have been asked to review their supplier lists and to risk assess / contact any suppliers to identify any potential risks and/or issues that could be emerging. Many suppliers that the Council uses are UK based although the wider supply chain that many of these organisations use could be impacted. The Council's Procurement team and Finance are already aware of potential price increases and supply chain issues should the UK fall back onto World Trade Organisation Tariffs. As soon as the position is known the Council will be able to consider the potential impact (if any) on the Council's supply chain.

The Council's Procurement team, Regeneration team and Public Services Board partnership are exploring how the Council can support progressive procurement and use local supply chains to purchase goods and services.

**Regulatory Services** - The Council's Regulatory service including Environmental Health is awaiting updates from Central and Welsh Governments on what the future arrangements will be and what the requirements will be for Regulatory services. Regulatory Services have received funding from Welsh Government to support the training of staff to manage the new requirements and will be conducting training as soon as the arrangements are known.

**Social Services / Care Homes / Food and Medical Supplies** – Prior to Covid-19 the stability of small to medium sized care providers and homes was vulnerable. Since the crisis these vulnerabilities have been further compounded, raising concerns around the long term stability of the social care sector. As part of ongoing recovery, work is being undertaken by the Council's Adult Services, to understand the future capacity and capability of providers and other third sector organisations to deliver services. There are no immediate risks raised in relation to the availability of food and medical supplies at homes, providers and school based settings. Additionally, there are no immediate issues in relation to the workforce in the Newport area.

**European Settled Status Scheme (EUSS)** – Home Office data from August 2018 to June 2020 reports 6,630 applications being made, with 3,760 Settled Outcomes and 2,150 Pre-settled Outcomes. With an estimated population of 8,000 EU residents this equates to 82.9% of the population. The Council leads an EU Citizens group alongside partners in Citizens Advice Bureau, Pobl, Newfields Law and others. Concerns remain about ensuring we engage more effectively with our most vulnerable EU citizens and others who might have postponed applying due to Covid-19. Work has recently included the launch of a radio campaign on Capital Radio, running until the deadline, positive communications via the council's social media platforms, and targeted work with children who are looked after, to ensure their immigration rights are protected.

Current right to work eligibility remains in place until 30th June 2021 and employers cannot require evidence of settled status during this period. EU citizens not already resident in the UK who wish to relocate to Wales after 1st January 2021 will need to apply for a Visa.

**Food Poverty / WLGA Food Poverty Grant** – In 2019/20 the Council received £80,315 in grant funding to support local food banks, charities and groups that deliver food poverty related activities. Due to Covid-19 and the increase in the number of residents accessing food banks and charities and the loss of income / donations, this funding was used to support these organisations. The remainder of the funding is being retained at present in case of a further emergency response. To ensure that good practice established during Covid-19 is continued, the council is leading a Foodbank Working Group, engaging all foodbanks across Newport to better provide vulnerable residents with joined up, targeted support.

The full list of areas being monitored by the Task & Finish group are included in Appendix 1 of this report. The areas covered above and in Appendix 1 are being undertaken within existing resources.

### Financial Summary

As part of the Council's financial monitoring, the Council's Finance team are monitoring any impacts on budgets due to Covid-19 and Brexit. The Council's Finance team are aware of the situation relating to the potential VAT and tariff implications on goods and services should the UK fall back to WTO conditions.

### Risks

The Council's Brexit risk is recorded on the Council's Corporate Risk Register which is presented to Cabinet and Audit Committee every quarter. At the end of quarter 2 of 2020/21 the Brexit risk score has increased to 16 to reflect the increased probability of the UK leaving without a deal. This will be reported to Cabinet in December 2020.

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (1-5)	Probability of risk occurring (1-5)	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?
Brexit	4	4	See Report.	Corporate Management Team and Brexit Task & Finish Group

### Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan  
Strategic Recovery Aims  
Risk Management Strategy

### Options Available and considered

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of the report

### Preferred Option and Why

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

### **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

The financial impact of Brexit is uncertain, however, there are indications that there could be an impact on prices and supply of goods that may further impact on both capital and revenue budgets. Budget / Service managers, with finance team colleagues, will continue to monitor these on a regular basis and any issues arising will be highlighted through the regular monitoring and budget setting processes.

Any negative financial impact arising from Brexit, whether it be through price increases or funding reductions could present a significant challenge to the Council. There are no specific reserves or contingencies that deal exclusively with Brexit but the Council's budget includes a 'general budget contingency' of £1.5m to deal with short term / in-year budget pressures.

### **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report, which provides an update for Cabinet regarding the Council's Brexit preparations. The risks associated with a "no deal" Brexit have increased with the possibility of the UK leaving the European Union, and its Customs Union and Single Market, on 31st December 2020 without any trade agreement in place. However, the specific risks associated with the withdrawal cannot be identified until the ongoing negotiations have been concluded and there is clarity about the future trading arrangements. Any legal implications for existing contracts for supplies, services and care provision, data security matters and any regulatory enforcement issues, particularly in relation to port health, will be addressed once the consequences of the withdrawal become clearer.

### **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The outcomes from the Brexit Trade Negotiations could have an impacts on the City of Newport and the Council's services. With Covid-19 still prevalent there is a risk that the economy and communities could be impacted by the UK falling back to World Trade Organisation tariffs. It is encouraging to see a large uptake in the number of residents applying for EUSS and the Council is making every effort alongside its partners to encourage those that have yet to apply, to do so by the deadline. The Council's Brexit Task and Finish group will continue to monitor and report on the progress being made by the Council and to raise any further risks and issues as they arise.

There is no impact on the existing workforce as Home Office guidance confirms that retrospective checks on settled status are not required. The employment of new starters after 1st January 2021 will be subject to the Council being an approved sponsor for the level of visa tier required and a decision will need to be made on whether the Council wishes to apply for approved sponsorship with the Home Office. However it should also be noted that during the grace period of 1st January to 30th June 2021 existing right to work checks are permitted.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Leader of the Council is briefed on all aspects of risk management within the Council and related Brexit issues and work.

### **Local issues**

Members to be aware the impacts that Brexit can have on our Local Communities and business.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

The Council's Audit Committee receives regular risk register updates on the Council's Risk Register which includes the Brexit Risk.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Not applicable.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

Not applicable.

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

There are potential long term impacts of Brexit Trade Negotiations which could affect the future demand on our services to provide the necessary support, advice and guidance. There may also be opportunities that could arise and the Council will need to make preparations to accordingly. In preparation we have been working collaboratively across the Council and with our partners to make sure that our services to prevent any scenario where services are disrupted and to provide resilience across the City and to our local partners.

We have also been involving our stakeholders and where necessary providing the necessary advice and guidance to those that need our support. Going forward we will continue to monitor and report where necessary any impacts which Brexit could have on the delivery of our services.

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Not applicable.

## **Consultation**

Corporate Management Team

Brexit Task & Finish Group

## **Background Papers**

Welsh Government website '[Preparing Wales to leave the EU](#)'

Welsh Local Government Association '[Brexit Website](#)'

Newport City Council's '[Brexit Webpage](#)'

Dated: November 2020



## Appendix 1 – Summary actions taken through the Task & Finish Group

Theme	Progress of Activity completed by Newport Council to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020
<b>Your Organisation (Communications)</b>	Staff news communications from senior leadership provided an update on the current Covid-19 position and also to remind staff that Brexit trade negotiations need to be considered moving forward for the remainder of the year. Further communications are planned for the Council in 2019/20.
<b>Your Organisation (Finance and Funding)</b>	<p>Due to Covid-19 the Council's Finance team have been focusing on the 2020/21 financial position for the Council and are considering the potential implications should the UK revert back to World Trade Organisation (WTO) tariffs. There are VAT and tariff implications to be considered and will have to be factored into the financial profile as they become known.</p> <p>Further clarification will also need to be sought in relation to EU funded schemes and the proposals of an Internal Market Bill and the Welsh Government's position as to the long term position.</p>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>	<p>The Procurement team and Service areas have been asked to review their supplier lists and to risk assess / contact any suppliers to identify any potential risks and/or issues that could be emerging. Many suppliers that the Council uses are UK based although the wider supply chain that many of these organisations use could be impacted. The Council's Procurement team and Finance are already aware of potential price increases and supply chain issues should the UK fall back onto World Trade Organisation Tariffs. As soon as the position is known the Council will be able to consider the potential impact (if any) on the Council's supply chain.</p> <p>The Council's Procurement team, Regeneration team and Public Services Board are exploring the Council can support progressive procurement and use local supply chains to purchase goods and services.</p>
<b>Supplies and Services (Social Services)</b>	<p><b>Stability of social care providers and homes</b> – Prior to the impact of Covid-19 small to medium sized social care providers and homes were already at risk and vulnerable to significant changes to the cost of running the service. As part of the Council's overall response to Covid-19 and general delivery of services, Social Services Commissioning team are already in contact with providers to ensure that they have the necessary contingencies to be able to operate sustainably. The Council is also represented on the Welsh Government's Brexit Group. Additionally, there are no immediate issues in relation to the workforce in the Newport area.</p> <p><b>Food and medical supplies</b> – there are no immediate risks in relation to the supply of food and medicines</p>
<b>Supplies and Services (ICT) Security / Data Protection arrangements</b>	<p>The Council's ICT provider Shared Resource Service (SRS) have been undertaking a review of the Council's ICT systems and critical applications used. The SRS have indicated that it is unlikely that there will be any initial issues with availability of equipment but this will be monitored closely in 2020.</p> <p>All the council's cloud data storage is stored in the UK which removes the concern over international data transfers following the transition period. Cyber Security threats remain the same and the Council has the necessary Firewalls, security and disaster recovery in place. To mitigate the threat of ransomware, a solution has been procured to provide added</p>

Theme	Progress of Activity completed by Newport Council to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020
	protection for such threats. Legislation and regulation will continue to be monitored in 2020 as the UK negotiates future trade relationships.
<b>Supplies and Services (Regulatory Services)</b>	The Council's Regulatory service is awaiting updates from Central and Welsh Governments on what the future arrangements will be and what the requirements will be for Regulatory services. Regulatory Services have received funding from Welsh Government to support the training of staff to manage the new requirements and will be conducting training as soon as the arrangements are known.
<b>Local Community (Newport Business Community)</b>	The Council's Economic Development are exploring the delivery of virtual Brexit awareness event across the business sector in Newport (possibly surrounding region) to provide advice, guidance and information about preparing for 2021 and beyond. The team is also considering other avenues to raise awareness and support the local economy through joint Covid/Brexit work. Regular newsletters are sent out with advice on available funding and also signposting to the government website for further guidance and updated information.
<b>Local Community (Civil Contingencies)</b>	As a member of the Gwent Local Resilience Forum (LRF) we have established mechanisms to monitor and report on any civil contingencies impacts. The Gwent LRF are considering all of the significant risks such as Covid-19, Brexit and winter weather disruptions that could emerge during this period.
<b>Local Community (Community Cohesion)</b>	During Covid-19 the Council's Community Cohesion Officer has been in contact virtually with EU Communities, supporting residents with Covid-19 issues, hate crime and Brexit related issues. A dedicated padlet site has been established to share messages in community languages and signpost to appropriate services. There has been an amplification of community tensions blaming some communities for the spread of Covid and this continues to be monitored closely.
<b>Local Community (EU Settled Status)</b>	Home Office data (August 2018 to June 2020) shows Newport had 6,630 applications being made with 3,760 Settled Outcomes and 2,150 Pre-settled Outcomes. With an estimated population of 8,000 EU residents this equates to 82.9% of the population. The Council leads EU Citizens group alongside its partners in Citizens Advice Bureau, Pobl, Newfields Law and others. Concerns remain about ensuring we engage more with hard to reach groups and others who might have postponed applying due to Covid-19. Monmouthshire and Newport's funding has been combined to a total of £22k (provided as part of a shared service). Plans to spend on face to face engagement have not been possible due to COVID-19. Projects in development include a Gwent-wide radio campaign (Capital Radio) and development of several information/promotion videos in community languages. Discussions ongoing in both LAs regarding how funding can be utilised appropriately.
<b>Local Community – (Food Poverty)</b>	In 2019/20 the Council received £80,315 in grant funding to support local food banks, charities and groups that deliver food poverty related activities. Due to Covid-19 and the increase in the number of residents accessing food banks and charities and the loss of income / donations, this funding was used to support these organisations. The remainder of the funding is being considered for any additional demand on food banks in light of any further Covid-19 outbreaks.
<b>Local Community (Homelessness)</b>	In 2019/20, Newport Council has claimed £27k out of the £45k offered by the WLGA to tackle homelessness amongst migrant communities in Wales. The remainder of the funding has been allocated back to Welsh Government to support the homeless that were impacted by Covid-19.

Theme	Progress of Activity completed by Newport Council to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020
	This funding has been committed to the development of a Welcome to Newport App, a project delivered in partnership with Newport's Software Academy and Cardiff University.

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# Report

## Cabinet

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### Part 1

Date: 11 November 2020

**Subject** Cabinet Work Programme

**Purpose** To report and agree the details of the Cabinet's Work Programme.

**Author** Cabinet Office Manager

**Ward** All Wards

**Summary** The purpose of a work programme is to enable Cabinet to organise and prioritise the reports and decisions that are brought to each meeting. Effective forward planning by Cabinet also impacts positively upon the Council's other Committees, in particular Scrutiny, because work needs to be coordinated on certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken.

The current work programme runs to May 2021, but it is a working document. It is important that the work programme is owned and prioritised by Cabinet Members directly, so each month the Cabinet Office Manager brings a report updating Cabinet on any changes, so that the revised programme can be formally approved.

The updated work programme is attached at Appendix 1.

**Proposal** To agree the updated work programme.

**Action by** Cabinet Office Manager

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Officers
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance
- Head of People and Business Change

## Background

The purpose of a work programme is to enable Cabinet to organise and prioritise the reports and decisions that are brought to each meeting. Effective forward planning by Cabinet also impacts positively upon the Council's other Committees, in particular Scrutiny, because work needs to be coordinated on certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken.

The Wales Audit Office's Corporate Assessment of Newport City Council, published in September 2013, highlighted the need to "strengthen committee work programming arrangements to ensure they are timely, meaningful, informative, transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up". Since that report was published, these monthly reports have been introduced to provide Cabinet with regular updates on its work programme, and the opportunity to comment upon and shape its priorities as an executive group. The Democratic Services team have also been working to improve the links between this and other work programmes under its management (e.g. Council, Scrutiny, Audit) to ensure the various programmes are properly coordinated.

The current work programme runs to May 2021, but it is a working document. It is important that the work programme is owned and prioritised by Cabinet Members directly, so each month the Cabinet Office Manager brings a report updating Cabinet on any changes, so that the revised programme can be formally approved.

The updated work programme is attached at Appendix 1.

## Financial Summary

There is no direct cost to adopting a programme of work.

## 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?
No action taken	M	L	Work programming arrangements are in place to ensure they are timely, meaningful, informative, and transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up.	Head of Democratic Services
The process is not embraced by report authors and members	M	M	If there is proliferation of unplanned or late items, the opportunity to ensure work programming is timely, meaningful, informative, and transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up will diminish	Head of Democratic Services

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

These proposals will help the Council provide the best possible service to members and will provide information to the public and elected members.

### **Options Available and considered**

- To adopt the process and adopt or amend the work programme
- To consider any alternative proposals raised by Cabinet members
- To take no action

### **Preferred Option and Why**

To adopt the proposals which should help to ensure work programming arrangements are timely, meaningful, informative, and transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up.

### **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There are no financial implications in adopting a programme of work.

### **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no legal implications in adopting a programme of work.

### **Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

There are no specific staffing implications in adopting a programme of work.

### **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Chair has approved the report for consideration by cabinet.

### **Local issues**

There are no local issues as this report relates to the Council's processes

### **Scrutiny Committees**

Monthly update reports allow the Scrutiny and Cabinet work programmes to be better coordinated. The Scrutiny team and Members are currently developing new ways of working through the new Committees, and continually reviewing the work programmes to focus more on risk, and ensure all scrutiny activity has a defined purpose and constructive outcome.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

This does not apply to this procedural report.

### **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

This procedural report does not impact on Children and Young People although certain reports contained in the programme may do and will need appropriate consultation and comment when they are presented to cabinet.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This is a procedural report but reports contained within the programme will need to show how consideration has been given to the five things public bodies need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle put into place by the Act.

### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

This does not apply to this procedural report

### **Consultation**

As set out above

### **Background Papers**

[Newport City Council Corporate Assessment](#), Wales Audit Office (September 2013)

[Newport City Council – Corporate Assessment Follow Up 2015](#), Wales Audit Office (May 2015)

Dated: 3 November 2020

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**NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL: CABINET/COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME JUNE 2020 – MAY 2021**

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
<b>CABINET 03-JUN-20</b>	Treasury Management Year End Report (moved to July Cabinet)	HoF
	Corporate Risk Register Update (Q4) (moved to September Cabinet)	HP&BC
	Risk Management Strategy (Leader signed off as a CM report during COVID 19)	HP&BC
	Forecast Numbers of LAC (moved to September Cabinet)	SD People
	Work Programme	COM
<b>COUNCIL 21-JUL-20</b>	NNDR Relief Scheme (moved to September Council) Treasury Management Year End Report (moved to September Council)	
<b>CABINET 29-JUL-20</b>	29 July Cabinet rearranged to take place on 22 July 2020	
<b>22 JUL 20</b>	2019/20 Revenue Budget Outturn	HoF
	Capital Outturn and Additions	HoF
	Treasury Management Outturn	HoF
	Revenue Monitor 2020/21	HoF
	Schools' Recovery	CEO
	Western Gateway	Acting HRIH
	Remote Meetings	HL&R
	Strategic Equalities Plan 2020/2024	HP&BC
	Welsh Language Annual Report (moved to September Cabinet)	HP&BC
	Performance Update – Early Year End PI Analysis (moved to September Cabinet)	HP&BC
	Work Programme	COM
<b>COUNCIL 28-JUL-20</b>	AGM	
<b>SPECIAL CABINET 19-AUG-20</b>	Business case for the Test, Trace Protect Service	HL&R
	Work Programme	COM
<b>CABINET 16-SEP-20</b>	Capital Programme Monitoring July 2020	HoF
	Revenue Budget Monitor July 2020	HoF
	Welsh Language Annual Report	HP&BC
	Risk Report Q4 (2019/20)	HP&BC
	End of Year Performance Review 2019/20	HP&BC
	Transport Update	HCS
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	PSB Summary Document (for information/awareness)	HP&BC

	Work Programme	COM
<b>COUNCIL</b> 29-SEP-20	NNDR Relief Scheme (moved from April Council) Treasury Management Year End Report (moved from April Council) Strategic Equalities Plan 2020-24 (moved from April Council)	HL&R HoF HoF HP&BC
<b>CABINET</b> 14-OCT-20	Corporate Plan Annual Report	HP&BC
	Risk Report Q1 (2020/21)	HP&BC
	Pay and Reward Policy (moved from April Cabinet)	HP&BC
	SRS Data Centre	HP&BC
	Forecast Numbers of LAC (moved from June Cabinet)	HC&YPS
	LDP Annual Monitoring Report and LDP Review	HRIH
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Brexit Update Report	HP&BC
	Work Programme	COM
<b>CABINET</b> 11-NOV-20	Revenue Budget Monitor	HoF
	Capital Budget Monitor	HoF
	Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Report	HoF
	Audit Wales Certificate of Compliance 1	HP&BC
	Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report	HP&BC
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Well-Being of Future Generations: Commissioner's Report and progress	HP&BC
	Annual Report on Compliments, Comments and Complaints Management 2020	Customer Services Mgr
	Local Toilet Strategy (moved from April Cabinet)	HL&R
	Brexit Update	HP&BC
	Work Programme	COM
	PSB Summary Document (for information/awareness)	HP&BC
<b>COUNCIL</b> 24-NOV-20	Scrutiny Annual Report Democratic Services Annual Report Standards Committee Annual Report Revised Statement of Licensing Policy Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report Pay and Reward Policy (moved from April Council)	
<b>CABINET</b> 16-DEC-20	Revenue Budget and MTFP: Draft Proposals	HoF
	Treasury Management 6 monthly Report	HoF
	Corporate Risk Register Update and Performance Review (Quarter 2)	HP&BC
	Audit Wales Annual Improvement Report 2019/20 (not confirmed for this cycle – awaiting date for WAO sign off)	HP&BC
	Audit Wales Certificate of Compliance 2	HP&BC
	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report (moved from April Cabinet - t.b.c.)	HC&YPS

	Director of Social Services Annual Report	SD - People
	WESP – 2021/2025	SD - People
	LDP Review Report & Draft Delivery Agreement (and seeking approval for public consultation)	HRIH
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Brexit Update	HP&BC
	Work Programme	COM
<b>CABINET 13-JAN-21</b>	Revenue Budget Monitor	HoF
	Capital Budget Monitor	HoF
	Mid-Year Performance Analysis 2020/21	HP&BC
	Verified Key Stage 4 and 5 Pupil Outcomes (Or February Cabinet??)	
	New Normal	HP&BC
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	PSB Summary Document (for information/awareness)	HP&BC
	Work Programme	COM
<b>COUNCIL 26-JAN-21</b>	Mayoral Nomination 2021/22 Council Schedule of Meetings Treasury Management 6 monthly report Council Tax Reduction Scheme Director of Social Services Annual Report	
<b>CABINET 10-FEB-21</b>	Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy	HoF
	Revenue Budget and MTFP: Final Proposals	HoF
	Key Stage 4 Outcomes (Or January Cabinet??)	CEdO
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Work Programme	COM
<b>COUNCIL 23-FEB-21</b>	Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy National Non-Domestic Rates: Discretionary Relief: High Street Relief Scheme 2021-22	
<b>CABINET 10-MAR-21</b>	Pay and Reward Statement 2021/22	HP&BC
	2020- 2024 Strategic Equalities Plan Approval	HP&BC
	EAS Business Plan 2020/21	CEdO
	National Categorisation of Schools	CEdO
	Band B: Capital Investment of Schools	CEdO
	LDP Review, Delivery Agreement and Review Report	HRIH
	Corporate Risk Register Update (Quarter 3)	HP&BC
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Work Programme	COM
<b>CABINET 07-APR-21</b>	Risk Management Strategy (or May Cabinet??)	HP&BC
	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report	HC&YPS

	Provide feedback on Review Report & Delivery Agreement and seek permission to formally send to WG (formal commencement of an LDP Review) – t.b.c.	HRIH
	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Work Programme	COM
	PSB Summary Document (for information/awareness)	HP&BC
COUNCIL 27-APR-21	IRP Annual Report NNDR Rate Relief Pay and Reward Statement 21/22 Provide Feedback on Review Report and Delivery LDP Review, Delivery Agreement and Review Report	
CABINET 05-MAY-21	COVID-19 Recovery - Update	CX
	Work Programme	COM
COUNCIL 11-MAY-21	AGM	

## One Newport Public Services Board (PSB)

### Summary of Business: 8 September 2020

*This is the summary of the work of the One Newport PSB for the June 2020 meeting. All meetings of the partnership can be found [here](#).*

*The summary of business is now published using Sway software, see the link to access: [here](#)*

*The PSB met online using Teams.*

### Local Well-being Plan Annual Report

The PSB has agreed its annual report for the year 2019/20. Links to the annual report are below:

- [Annual Report 2019-20 - English \(Microsoft Sway\)](#)
- [Adroddiad Blynyddol 2019-20 - Cymraeg](#) (Microsoft Sway)
- [Annual Report 2019-20 - English \(pdf\)](#)
- [Adroddiad Blynyddol 2019-20 - Cymraeg \(pdf\)](#)

### Well-being Plan Review

Areas of work in the [Well-being Plan](#). are currently being reviewed in the light of Covid-19 impacts and recommendations contained in the Future Generations Commissioner's Annual Report. The PSB has agreed new actions within the [Sustainable Travel](#) intervention.

### Regional developments

The Board discussed options which have been developed by partners in the region for further regional working and collaboration. Members agreed that there are advantages to regional working but there are also clear benefits to Newport of local partnership work which addresses needs identified in the city's Well-being Assessment, as well as the importance of local accountability and ongoing engagement with local people.

### Safer Newport

The Board received an update on Safer Newport work. [Safer Newport](#) is the city's community safety partnership, which focuses on creating a safer city centre, reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB), tackling serious and organised crime (SOC) and addressing local neighbourhood issues. In the last six months, work has focused on the changing needs of the community during lockdown. This included a coordinated response to support rough sleepers and the re-opening of non-essential retail and hospitality businesses in the city during the summer.

The Home Office is using Operation Solar - an undercover police operation focusing on drug dealers in the city - and other SOC work in Newport as examples of best practice to share with police forces across the UK.

Partners are working together with additional focus to tackle neighbourhood issues in Pillgwenlly.

### **Homelessness**

The Board was updated on the partnership's work to address homelessness during Covid-19.

Emergency/temporary accommodation increased by 67% during the pandemic, with almost 400 households accommodated. One hundred rough sleepers were offered accommodation.

A bid has been submitted to Welsh Government bid for funding to increase available supported housing and support for homeless people with complex needs.

### **Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Strategic Funding Grant**

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is allocating strategic grant funding of £25k to each PSB. The Board is putting projects forward for funding that align with the One Newport Well Being Plan work programme.

### **Gwent VAWDASV Partnership Board Annual Report 2019-20**

The Board received the [Gwent VAWDASV Partnership Board](#) Annual Report 2019-20, outlining work across Gwent to prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and to improve outcomes for affected individuals and their families.

### **PSB Membership – Newport Youth Council**

Newport Youth Council will be represented at future meetings of the PSB by Chair, Maisy Evans, and Vice-Chair, Poppy Stowell-Evans.

### **PSB Meetings and Papers**

One Newport PSB publishes its meeting papers and minutes online. Papers [here](#).

### **Latest News - One Newport Bulletin**

One Newport issues a regular [bulletin](#) containing a host of activities and events organised by partners across the city. Editions of the bulletin have increased during the coronavirus pandemic to update on the local response by partners and signpost to support available.

**Twitter:** Follow us [@onewport](#) **Instagram:** onewportpsb **Website:** Visit us at <http://onewportlsb.newport.gov.uk/>

### **Get Involved – Newport Citizen's Panel**

The PSB welcomes the views of local people. One way to get involved is to join our Citizen's panel and give us your opinions through quarterly questionnaires on issues, services and projects in the city. Find out more [here](#)

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