

Agenda



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Place and Corporate

Date: Monday, 17 April 2023

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 1 - Civic Centre / Microsoft Teams

To: Councillors J Cleverly (Chair), S Adan, J Harris, G Horton, M Howells, M Linton, B Perkins, C Reeks, J Reynolds and K Thomas

Item	Wards Affected
1	<u>Apologies</u>
2	<u>Declaration of Interest</u>
3	<u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2023 (Pages 3 - 22)</u>
4	<u>Recruitment and Retention (Pages 23 - 40)</u>
5	<u>Conclusion of Committee Reports</u> Following the completion of the Committee reports, the Committee will be asked to formalise its conclusions, recommendations and comments on previous items for actioning.
6	<u>Scrutiny Adviser Reports (Pages 41 - 46)</u> a) Actions Plan (Appendix 1)

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Date of Issue: Monday, 10 April 2023



Minutes

Performance Scrutiny Committee - Place and Corporate

Date: 23 January 2023

Time: 2.00 pm

Present: Councillors J Cleverly (Chair), S Adan, J Harris, G Horton, M Howells, B Perkins, C Reeks, J Reynolds and K Thomas

In Attendance: Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate Centre), Paul Jones (Strategic Director – Environment and Sustainability), Meirion Rushworth (Head of Finance), Tracy McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation), Tracey Brooks (Head of Regeneration and Economic Development), David Walton (Head of Housing and Communities), Silvia Gonzalez-Lopez (Head of Environment and Public Protection), Stephen Jarrett (Head of Infrastructure), Alastair Hopkins (Senior Finance Business Partner), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser), Pamela Tasker and Emily Mayger (Governance Officers)

Apologies: Councillor M Linton

1 Apologies

Councillor Linton.

2 Declaration of Interest

None.

3 2023-24 Draft Budget Proposals and Medium Term Financial Plan

Draft Budget Proposals 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Plan

Invitees:

- Meirion Rushworth – Head of Finance
- David Walton – Head of Housing and Communities
- Silvia Gonzalez-Lopez – Head of Environment and Public Protection
- Stephen Jarrett – Head of Infrastructure
- Elizabeth Bryant – Head of Law and Standards
- Tracey Brooks – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
- Tracy McKim – Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Alastair Hopkins – Senior Finance Business Partner

The Head of Finance introduced a brief overview of the budget process and advised that at the moment there had been a change to reflect the level of savings. There was a £2million budget gap last year. In February 2022 the MTFP showed a £2million budget gap, in Spring 2022 inflation increased as well as food and fuel cost increases along with emerging budget challenges around Housing and Homelessness with Social Care also a big issue which moved the position.

The Cabinet Member report showed the movements with pay being increased by £6 million. There was an £18 million increase in contract inflation where energy was a big part of that, with Gas prices rising as well as Social Care contract inflation. There were budget pressures in Social Care with £3.5 million needed for Housing Area and Homelessness. There were budget targets for each area and there was a £12million of budget savings presented here to Committee. The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) was confirmed in December 2022 and the budget gap was £16 million where the increase in RSG was about 9%. 50% of the budget proposals have been consulted and the other 50% was done under Delegated Authority.

HC2324/01 - Library and Adult Community Learning Services

The Head of Housing and Communities gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which included a change to services with a saving of £110,000 for the first financial year and £15,000 the following year. It is also proposing to reduce library opening hours, particularly a one-day closure at Rogerstone and Betts Libraries. A reduction in Malpas Library opening hours and to refashion Pill Library with a smaller library space and other areas of saving such as a reduction of staffing hours and a greater investment in digital borrowing.

Members asked the following:

- What will the function of Central Library be, and would other services be integrated?

It was confirmed that the Central Library would become a community hub and a coordination point, although those wider changes are former decisions to change services, not related to these proposals.

- What will happen to the staff affected, and would they be engaged with other services?

It was confirmed that this proposal was just about changing the way the building is used and using the staff in a more flexible way.

- A Member referred to Appendix 10 where there was a £110,000 saving in year 1 with £88,000 worth of costs in that saving. What is the net amount?

The Head of Housing and Communities advised that in all the budget proposals, there is a recurring saving, so the one off cost would be against the recurrent £110,000 saving each year.

HC2324/02 - Reduce financial support to the Shop Mobility scheme in 2023-24

The Head of Housing and Communities gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to reduce the financial support to the Shop Mobility scheme from £17,000 to £10,000.

Members asked the following:

- A Member asked the value of this scheme and the benefits of the city centre or in terms of the access allowing people being able to get out and how was this being looked at, as the saving was noted to be a very small amount.

It was explained the service was looked at as a whole with the non-statutory functions being where the savings were achievable.

- Will this mean the service will end, or is there a replacement that will take up the service provision?

The Committee were advised that we do need to recognise that in order to make the necessary savings, we must look to these non-statutory budgets. It is not the intention to cease the service, but this is a component of the funding that Shop Mobility currently receive.

- A Member asked whether there was any data of how the service was used with the fall in traffic in the city centre due to the pandemic.

The Strategic Director stated that this data could be provided at a later date for the Committee and there was a wider public consultation taking place also.

- Query was made regarding the investment of £3.5 million for Homelessness provision and was the revenue locked in for each year.

It was confirmed that this figure would be locked in for each year as the landscape was pre and post covid was totally different.

- A Member commented on households continuing in temporary accommodation and would the situation improve.

The Head of Housing and Communities explained that the Housing system needed to be looked at as a whole with more development in the city. There was a plan to engage with the private rental sector to increase supply, to look at people in temporary accommodation and other issues they faced. A project was being looked at to develop a rapid re-housing transition. This was all very challenging and would take time to galvanise all the resources.

- How much funding had increased since Covid?

The Committee were advised that the Social Housing grants have increased since Covid with an additional Welsh Government grant with other pots of capital funding also available. The funding pots were grants where distribution had not been agreed yet and this was a big challenge. A Member then asked whether the basic amount had increased and could it be supplemented. It was advised that this was a combination of things as in the Covid years the costs were picked up by Welsh Government and so this was a large re-adjustment.

- A Member commented that the £3.5million was the bottom line of what we have to find.

The Head of Housing and Communities explained that the extra money given allowed the Council to fulfil their statutory duties which have expanded and with the issues of supply in the city, more people had to be given temporary accommodation. The Committee requested a report on Housing's statutory duties to be presented to Committee which was agreed by the Strategic Director and the Head of Housing and Communities.

- The Committee queried the investment of £11,000 for a Homelessness Officer. Is this a new role?

The Committee were advised that this was for a new role, funded for 9 months which would take us through to the end of the year. The Strategic Director advised that this was an investment made last year, and is showing up now as a part investment this year.

EPP2324/02 - Community Safety Warden Service Restructure

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which included a saving of £169,000 saving a year.

Members asked the following:

- Is this a deletion of the service?

Members were advised that the service will remain, the proposal would be to reduce the service to half the number of staff the service area previously had. The service will still be 7 days a week, but with less hours and less face to face interaction.

- Do we know what the peak hours are? These would need to be covered.

The Strategic Director advised they do, reports have been conducted and the majority of the Warden service work is non statutory which is an area that can be reduced. Staff have been consulted with to discuss how the service can be made more efficient. The Head of Environment and Public Protection reiterated that at data is looked at and will focus on what is needed and based on what requests the service gets.

- Do we work with social landlords to mediate on issues that the Community Safety Wardens may get involved with? Have you spoken to them to see whether they would contribute to the service?

The Committee were advised that we do, and we are revisiting the conversations with Registered Social Landlords on the contributions made to this. This is a model that works well already with Waste Enforcement. To date, the service is funded by the Council, however speaking to social landlords about contributions is something they could perhaps look at in the future.

- Members voiced disappointment to see reduction in services, but commented that this could be an opportunity to work more effectively with partners. Comment was also made that Rent Smart Wales seem to be inactive with anti-social behaviour issues, and should have more involvement. The Strategic Director advised that although the service area is trying to make a budget saving with proposed reductions, it should not result in a reduction of quality of the service.

EPP2324/04 - Increased fees and charges within Environment and Leisure Services

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to introduce higher fees and charges for services provided within the Environment and Leisure services including Parks, Cemetery, Countryside and Grounds services, where the Authority has seen significant increases in the supply chain for either the purchase of goods or operational costs such as maintenance, energy or fuel and has to pass these onto the customer, and also increase charges where these have been benchmarked against service provision elsewhere within the authority and/or other neighbouring local authorities.

- The Committee had no comments or questions on this item.

EPP2324/05 - Introduce parking charges to four park and countryside car parks

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to install pay and display meters in Glebelands, Christchurch viewing point, Morgan's Pond (off Bettws Lane), and Bettws Lane (opposite Newport High School).

Members asked the following:

- Could a £50,000 saving be generated from people paying fees?

It was confirmed that this was included and repairing equipment had been considered.

- A Member commented on some of the parking machines being covered up previously due to them being broken or vandalised.

It was something the team were aware of and there was going to be a move towards card payments and a payment app being looked at to be used to pay for parking and models varied with a slight charge back to the Council, so these issues had to be considered. There was a provision for charges which was not to be passed on to residents.

- A Member commented on the proposed areas being locked in the evening, for example Bettws area, as the bigger parks were locked at night time.

Members were advised that the charges applied between 8am- 5pm in the evening and was not 24 hours.

- A Member stated that they did not support this proposal it as it was near green spaces, but they wanted to consider youth sports teams who used the parks, this was an issue at the Glebelands, and it would be great to see an exemption here.

Members were advised that the charges were £1 for two hours and £3 for up to 5 hours so the team were trying to keep charges down.

- A Member commented on the impact of parking on residents in adjacent streets and asked what was their financial projections for each car park and how many visitors were expected.

It was confirmed that there had been a lot of conversations around this and despite a worry there had been no displacement.

- A Member commented that there were reports of cars that had allegedly been hit on Waterloo Road while driving as there was now parking on both sides of the street.

Members were told that this was a difficult issue, but the park would be kept open as the other option was to shut the park which was not wanted. A breakdown of costs was looked at and there was a proposal per different side.

- A Member commented that there were more cars parked on the side than in the car park which was difficult, and it was important to ensure that we take neighbours views into account. It was also asked whether there was any return on investment and with the smaller car parks when would the charges return a profit.

It was noted that a breakdown provided to the Committee would help and that it was immediate in the first year of savings. In the first year after this it did vary from car park to car park such as an income per year of £50,000 excluding any yearly maintenance costs.

- A Member asked regarding subsidies with people using the leisure centre for 2 hours free, who provided this subsidy?

It was explained that Kingsway carpark was different as it was a long lease and there were some historic agreements with some businesses which did vary and elsewhere there were some parks which had business spaces so there were a number of concessions.

EPP2324/06 - Household Waste Recycling Centre - Charging for non household waste

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) need to accept household waste free of charge as the cost of collection and recycling / disposal is met through Council Tax charges. Although not required to, Newport City Council also accepts construction waste and DIY materials at the HWRC as these are commonly produced by residents. The Council

incurs additional charges to handle and recycle these types of wastes and a small fee is proposed to offset these charges. Fees would be in place from 1st April 2023, payable at the time of booking with an appointment to attend the HWRC through the current booking system.

Members asked the following:

- Could these items be recycled and sold on to builders for rubble.

It was confirmed that all this material was recycled and there was a process for how it was recycled. For each material- rubble etc there was a small income but there was a lot of mixed material which had a lot more cost. The equipment, skips etc net of all the income received and this was taken into consideration.

- A Member asked whether we had the systems to do this and whether the manpower was there to be checking what people brought in.

It was noted that residents did follow the rules and the site was monitored. People were asked to bring in waste and it was charged at the time of booking. A size of a bag was not imposed as an average weight was used.

- Was there an expectation that there would be an increase of trade waste cost and were the amount of trips people made being recorded to investigate this activity.

Before the system was introduced it was hard to anticipate who was coming to the site as there was an increase in people using it. There were no limits in the number of times that people could use the site. It was a free available service so as waste was segregated this was not considered but it could be done if necessary.

- Has an increased of fly tipping been thought about?

It was confirmed that there was no evidence of any fly tipping, and these were systems introduced across the country and most people comply.

- Would be a charge to be paid before entry into the site, and if an item could be recycled would you get a refund on this item? Also, if someone made mistake then how was this rectified.

It was commented that this would be taken on board and considered.

- What sort of volume of materials were anticipated and was there a sliding scale of cost?

Residents were asked to assess this at the time of booking and therefore there was a charge, for example for each car tyre given.

- Who currently collects fly tipping on public land, as there were a lot of resident enquiries about this? Was there a capacity to handle all requests and was it flexible?

It was confirmed that the Council removed waste on public roads and investigated and took enforcement action where required. Non-Council land was the challenge where private landowners were not clearing their own land.

EPP2324/08 - Charge for replacement (residual waste) bins

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to charge residents that request replacement of residual waste bins. Implementation of this would be in April 2023.

Members asked the following:

- Is the charge a flat fee or means tested?

It is a flat fee that reflects the administration costs associated with this activity.

- What if they've been stolen or damaged by youths such as being set on fire, is there any discretion?

There was a certain element e.g., a communal bin but in general it was up to the homeowner to look after the bin.

- A Member asked whether there was any consideration for stolen bins and was there any plans for these issues to be looked at.
It was noted that the challenge was who really needed a new bin or was it genuinely stolen.

- A Member asked about the charges and liability where 2 bins were stolen from outside the front door, and another resident complained that their bins had been broken by the operatives collecting the bins. Was there any sort of leeway for these residents?

It was explained that the lorries have cameras, and the operatives were encouraged to handle them with care although accidents did happen so in that case residents would not be expected to pay to replace them. In other cases, it would be for the residents to take care of the bin.

EPP2324/09 - Domestic Residual and Garden Waste Collection – 3 Weekly Collections

The Head of Environment and Public Protection gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to move from alternate week domestic residual and garden waste collections to 3 weekly collections, in order to reduce cost and increase the recycling rate to achieve 70% by 2025.

Members asked the following:

- A Member commented on helping residents to recycle more and asked for an explanation for the thinking behind this proposal.

Members were advised that it was very important to recycle as there were recycling targets to be met. Sometimes residents did not have all the information to recycle correctly and there have been studies undertaken as to what was inside resident's bins. Every 5 years the Council provided a report on the composition of wheelie bin contents and there was already a lot of Councils doing this. There was a significant increase in recycling. 20 years ago, the recycling rate was 6% and now the rate was 67%. When we picked up mixed up mixed recycling materials there was a large cost to dispose of this. The Statutory targets stated that by 2024/25 the Council must hit a recycling rate of 70%. If not, the Council would have to pay an additional £200 a tonne for the extra waste. Current recycling collections still contained material where residents had been reluctant to recycle them. It was the case of changing the way people do waste.

- Are there going to be educational supports in place to supplement this change?

We are proposing to start this in a small trial first to see what it looks like before rolling out wider.

- A Member asked whether the financial costs of fly tipping had been considered as Newport was the worst local authority for fly tipping clearance. There had been materials all in the bins recycled with not a lot of reduction. There was a need to increase recycling and a behaviour change.

Fly tipping the Council dealt with was usually not by residents and all fly tipping was recorded so the amount recorded was high. If someone was struggling with their waste, there was help available where the Council could meet with those residents and so awareness needed to be raised.

- Do we have a waste strategy in place?

It was confirmed there is waste strategy and policy in place, and has been in place for 3 years.

- A Member asked about households with a large amount of people, and would this be looked at in relation to communal bins where neighbours could fill it up with items that shouldn't be put in there.

The Council were willing to be fair on this and the Council worked with registered social landlords and private landlords to see how to improve bin collections from blocks of flats.

- The Head of Environment and Public Protection confirmed there would be no redundancies to the team. We are increasing recycling rounds as we are reducing waste collection rounds, and some of the reductions will be on posts that are currently vacant.
- A Member asked whether the Council could pay Wastesavers to do this and was this contract looked at to make sure it was providing a good service.

It was confirmed that this would be looked at as part of the Council's waste strategy.

- A Member commented on issues with communal bins and the charges got passed on to the residents. It was then noted that on the continent these bins were managed more successfully where there was a pay as you go service where waste was tagged but this was not used in the UK. A common approach was needed to solve the problem with a specific analysis needed for each location so there was a number of things that could be done.
- If you go to shops abroad, many of them have options to submit recycling for remuneration. Is UK Government looking to do anything similar and would that reduce our rates of recycling?

The Strategic Director confirmed this was a Welsh and English proposal and systems would collect this on a larger scale. The challenge would be that it would target more high value recyclables and local authorities needed to understand the detail of this proposal.

- A Member asked if the target was not reached it would be a 1% increase on council tax.

It was confirmed that there was environmental damage with this as consumers could not keep consuming and throwing away recyclables.

INF2324/02 - Changes to Operational Practice and Procedures

The Head of Infrastructure gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which included the reduction in the Levels of Water Management and Drainage Operational Service by 2 FTE operatives and one vehicle, and also the reduction of the gully emptying service by 2 FTE operatives and one vehicle.

Members asked the following:

- Where have other improvements been made elsewhere to have this reduction?

It was confirmed that the Council was fulfilling the function as we were with the changes to policy and procedures and a change to 12 monthly schedules.

- Would investment would be considered for flood alleviation as there was a concern about road flooding and drains being blocked. What was the impact of this on the proposal?

It was advised that in extreme weather events then we do have other operatives that we deploy to support on an ad-hoc basis, albeit other work capacity is reduced as a result during that time. However, there is a need to make savings and this is being offered as an option, with a reduced service being the impact.

- Are there any options to work with partners to mitigate this?

It was advised that as we are talking about adopted highways, then this is our responsibility.

- Comment was made about extreme weather conditions – recent floods at Malpas Road have occurred with current levels of maintenance, so surely these instances will increase in future? Has the cost of sending out a team to respond to this, in comparison to taking pro-active action as part of a schedule for clearing gullies?

It was advised that this is hard to quantify, some of the flooding is not caused by what the Council does or doesn't do, however we often have to deal with the impacts. In some instances we deploy external teams to support the response. Diverting our own teams result in an opportunity cost rather than a financial one.

- Have we explored collaborative working with our neighbouring local authorities to try to mitigate our costs?

It was advised that from knowledge of colleagues working in other local authorities, they do not necessarily have the capacity to support joint arrangements. This would be challenging to manage, particularly in weather events as the prioritisation would become more of an issue. However, this is something that we can explore further in future.

- Have we reviewed our contracts with external providers to assess any time boundaries in response times that would help us?

It was advised that we don't have any long-term contracts, it is a seller's market, which is a real challenge to manage. As councils responding to emergency events, we need to move quickly and deploy in difficult circumstances whilst competing with other LA's usually needing the same services at the same time.

INF2324/04 - Streetlighting Switch off 00:00 to 06:00 (excluding safety critical sites) and Reduction in Maintenance

The Head of Infrastructure gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was with the exception of safety critical sites identified by road safety audits, all streetlights citywide are switched off during the hours between midnight and 06:00 hours in the interests of achieving energy and carbon emissions savings. The Head of Infrastructure then gave an overview of the Reduction in Maintenance proposal, which was that the reactive maintenance budget (£365k in 2022/23) is reduced by £100k to secure a saving on the levels

of maintenance undertaken each year. This will require a comprehensive review of how we risk manage our assets to ensure that only low risk/ low impact maintenance is deferred.

Members asked the following:

- A Member stated that this was the biggest area of contention with a lot of concern being expressed by residents. There was concern from people regarding safety and crime and disorder which might have a significant quality impact on residents. The Member recommended that this proposal be reviewed due to the real impact on residents.
- What considerations have been given to areas of safety, resulting in the saving of £300,000.

It was confirmed that an assumption had been made of what was there due to knowledge of the network and that the top-level estimate could be moved as percentages of the network was considered with a detailed assessment to be done on areas. It was also based on other LA's assessments inclusive of bands of safety. A more detailed assessment is planned to arrive at a final position.

- A Member commented on the 50% of lights to be switched off and how we improve the safety of residents?

The proposal mainly looked at the other half and in terms of the balance of safety this was mixed but other Councils have done this. This was not a statutory function so the Council did have discretion and lights would be on until midnight. A Member then asked was there only a legal obligation to light junctions? It was confirmed that the Council lit junctions and roundabouts as they were busy.

- A Member stated that this proposal was disappointing in the fact that funding for Improving Safety for Women and Girls in high-risk areas that had been implemented, now they will be switched off again under these measures. Was this now a waste of money? The Member also hoped that the Council worked with partners to identify any safety concerns as the perception of safety was also important.
- Will the street lights switch off at midnight every night, or could weekends be later?

The Strategic Director advised that that they will be set for midnight as a non-variable. The switch functions do not permit daily variations, however this can be verified for the Committee. Members then made comment that many workforces start at 6am, so they will be likely travelling to work in the dark, perhaps they need to be switched back on earlier.

- Members commented on seasonal differences which maybe needed to be considered as well as licensed premises which also have a late time of closing so this needed to be considered, as there could be an increase of crime.

INF2324/05 - Fees and Charges – Fees increased by 10% rather than the standard 4%

The Head of Infrastructure gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to increase the fees and charges made by the Infrastructure service area in carrying out its statutory duties above the standard annual 4% by a rate of 10% to meet inflation. This was to ensure the authority continues to deliver a sustainable service by recovering all its incurred costs for statutory and discretionary functions.

Members asked the following:

- A Member asked would these charges be fair against other authorities and would it take fines into account.

It was confirmed for Committee that Newport Council compared broadly compared to other local authorities. It was also confirmed that the cameras on M4 that have been switched back on were controlled by Welsh Government and the fees were paid directly to them.

LS2324/03 - Reduce Staffing levels in the Registration Service

The Head of Law and Standards gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which included which was to reduce staffing levels from 5 members of staff to 4 members. The provision was delivered through a scheme which had to be agreed with the General Registration Office (GRO) which required the service to have 5 members of staff. An application was to be made to approve the reduction of registrars. The impact of this proposal would be a reduction of appointments that would be made available. The service had a statutory duty to register births withing 42 days and 5 days for deaths. The Manager of the Registrar service was happy that we could meet these targets. A diary service would make the booking of appointments a smoother process and people could cancel quicker to open up more appointments.

Members asked the following:

- A Member asked how the service was monitored currently.

The Head of Law and Standards stated that key indicators were monitored on a quarterly basis, and this was reported to the GRO to make sure levels were satisfactory. The manager regularly checked this, with current targets being 98% which was a required time scale.

- A Member asked about the capacity in the building including the civic centre and was it an unnecessary expense delivering it from one place.

The revenue savings had been looked at and these were minimal. The specific proposal included the new IT system being implemented and the service would be in target. Use of the Councils Assets would be commented on later in the meeting.

FIN2324/01 - Reducing opening times in Customer Services with move to more selfservice

The Head of Finance gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which included a move to a 3-day week for appointments. The Civic Centre reception to be reduced shouldn't have any impact because a later opening was still being maintained. The reduction did have a staffing impact.

Members asked the following:

- A Member commented on the impact of people who rely on the face-to-face service which was worrying.

The Head of Finance confirmed that the reduced face to face period was 3 days but the offer would still be there for those people, but the service would keep an open mind on the opening hours so would look at this and the staff rota and would be happy to be flexible.

- A Member asked how many were using the general number as a contact number and could this initially increase the flow of calls.

The proposal included the development in the team of the My Council service to facilitate those people who want to interact digitally with 2 years funding for this service.

- A Member asked about Digitisation where more people go online and how would we guide them long-term. Would we be digitally ready long term and could the system cope with new changes?

There was no knowledge of any issues with this and the service was keeping the contact centre and phone calls and developing the system.

FIN2324/02 - Switching off phone and face to face channels for some transactions

The Head of Finance gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to switch off phone and face to face channels for some transactions and reduce the resource in the Customer Services team. The proposal also includes a joint saving with Digital to end the contract for call recording within the Contact Centre. Transactions such as bulky waste and fly tipping have been excluded from this list. A post will also be taken out of the team.

Members asked the following:

- Will the reduction in post be a person or a vacancy?
This will be a reduction in a vacant post, with no-one at risk of redundancy. There was a high turnover in the team. It was fully staffed and 2 people in the team had gotten new jobs in the Council and were moving teams which happened regularly.

- Transactions via phone – which services will be impacted, and how are you improving those digital services?

It was confirmed that to improve the service there would be 2 posts funded for 2 years in the My Council Services team, which will focus on improving the current offer and extending into offering more digital transactions.

- A Member queried about the cancellation of the call recording contract, do we know how many calls are recorded and listened to as part of coaching and training, as well as being replayed back for legal purposes? Also, are there any legal implications to this?

The Head of Finance stated that they would provide this data at a future date as they were not aware of any legal implication of not recording calls. The service would work with IT partners and there were challenges in this budget, but we wanted to allow time for residents to get used to the new service.

- A Member commented on Cabinet reports and the RSG supplement announced in meeting itself as it was confirmed that there were 2 elements of savings £5million of Cabinet savings and £5million delegated savings. Comment was made that if we have an additional £11m then in theory cabinet could delegate savings without having to make further savings and increases to council tax to make up the difference.

Members were advised that schools savings were based on 50% pressures in schools – we do need to look at some of our key assumptions in light of new information, it needs to be refined at each stage. For example, pay assumptions will need to be reviewed again and is likely to be bigger than allowed for. Teacher's pay is still very uncertain and NJC staff may need to increase. So whilst there appears to be less of a gap, we will need to account for other budget pressures before coming to our final budget.

- A Member commented that in the report, it mentions earmarked reserves increased by £8m last year. As a last resort the reserves mitigate against the deficit, but means we cannot use them for the intended purpose and find the reserve again. In theory, could Cabinet pull a planned project and use that to offset other savings or increases in Council Tax?

The Members were told yes, but as Head of Finance he would not advise this approach as this fills a gap for a single year and the problem is the same the following financial year. You then have to find the saving and replace the reserve, essentially doubling up.

N/A - Increase council tax increase from 4% base assumption by 5.5% to 9.5%

The Head of Finance gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to increase Council Tax from 4% base assumption by 5.5% to 9.5%. The Committee were advised that it was well documented that Newport's council tax was low compared to others in Wales, generating approximately 23% of our income. Newport continues to be one of the lowest council tax levels in Wales.

Members asked the following:

- A Member commented that they appreciate the fact that Newport was below average, but that this percentage increase at the time was unfortunate due to cost of living and rise in energy bills.
The Head of Finance confirmed that for Band A the increase was £2 a week which was not a lot.
- A Member commented on the extra RSG from Welsh Government and whether this could be used to reduce this council tax.

It was advised that this was for Cabinet to decide where they spend the money and make the recommendation to Council.

- Can anyone make additional contribution through Council Tax if they can afford it?

It was confirmed by the Head of Finance that this is not possible under current Council Tax regulations.

RED2324/01 - Newport Live Management Fee

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development gave a brief overview of the proposal to the Committee, which was to reduce the annual management fee paid to Newport Live for the operation of leisure services across the city. In 2014 the agreement was to reduce subsidy to zero by 2020. A 10% reduction was felt to be a reasonable start at this stage.

Members asked the following:

- How do Newport Live feel this will impact their service?

Members were advised that we have been in full consultation, and this has been part of the business plan since 2014. They have not formally told us of any direct impact, but with the closure of Newport Centre there may be some efficiencies through that.

- A Member questioned the years extra funding and could any be claimed back.
It was confirmed that there had been 3 years of extra funding and there had been robust reasons for not reducing it before now.
- Is 10% enough and should we ask for more?
It was noted that more would be ideal but it was mindful of it being a business that provided a service. There would be planning with Newport Live with a need to look at not being able to provide a subsidy at some point.
- A Member questioned the percentage of 10% and had any analysis completed.

It was confirmed that a copy of the accounts had been received and that 10% was considered to be reasonable looking at the picture and was manageable for the business.

- A Member stated that we need to recognise what some of the partners do for us. There is value to citizens in this service and we are saving in vast amount of other ways for our citizens.

People, Policy and Transformation – Assets information

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation advised the Committee that although her service area does not have any savings proposals out for consultation, they do have delegated savings, as well as fees and charges out for consultation. These charges included increasing in street naming and numbering and for room hire in the Civic Centre. The Head of People, Policy and Transformation also commented on the Council use of assets as there was a large capital receipt. It was important to take public views on asset rationalisation, such as could buildings across the city be used more effectively and should there be less assets? A project had been started to pull all this together.

Members asked the following:

- A Member asked for a list of the assets that the Council possess.

The Scrutiny Adviser confirmed that this request had already been on the list from a previous meeting. When the project has been completed, information will be provided to the Committee.

- A Member asked about budget investment in relation to the Norse JV- increased contract payment of £89,000 for this service this year.

It was confirmed that this was the NJC payrise uplift which is part of the contract agreement, and this sum represents the sum set aside for this previously.

- A Member queried the Health and Safety investment, and asked whether these were new posts.

It was explained that this was part of a long standing commitment to strengthen health and safety arrangements in the Council and as a result the service has been restructured. In answer to the question about whether staff could be redeployed, this is always a consideration for recruitment. It was confirmed that this investment was more than one post.

- Will these represent opportunities for staff at risk of redundancy?

It was advised that under our job security policy we would always look to reduce vacancies first and offer support for staff who may be at risk of redundancy. We will provide the structure for the committee as follow up information.

The Chair thanked the Officers for attending.

Conclusions:

Comments to the Cabinet on the following proposals:

- a) The Committee noted the budget proposals relevant to the Place and Corporate Directorates and agreed to forward the minutes to the Cabinet as a summary of the issues raised.
- b) The Committee wished to make the following comments to the Cabinet on the Proposals within the Place and Corporate Directorate:

HC2324/01 - Library and Adult Community Learning Services

- Although this sits outside of the consultation as it relates to previously made decisions, the Committee requested information regarding where co-located services will be sited in the Central Library when it re-opens.

HC2324/02 - Reduce financial support to the Shop Mobility scheme in 2023-24

- The Committee requested the available data regarding the individual impact on service users and the expected impact on business in the city centre. Members recommended that a review of the demand for the service be conducted before going ahead with the proposal.

EPP2324/02 - Community Safety Warden Service Restructure

- The Committee commented that whilst it is disappointing to see a potential reduction in the Warden Service, they do see an opportunity to work more effectively with partners, including statutory partners. However, Members recommended that reductions should not be made prior to discussion with partners about contributing towards funding the service so that it could continue at current levels. The Committee considered that alternative options could be explored with partners, including RSL's, to maintain provision.

EPP2324/04 - Increased fees and charges within Environment and Leisure Services

- The Committee accepted the proposal for the Increased fees and charges within Environment and Leisure Services, however Members feel that the increase should go up in line with the same amount of the Council Tax increase instead of inflation.

EPP2324/05 - Introduce parking charges to four park and countryside car parks

- The Committee commented that they would like the Service Area to consider the local youth sport teams that use the parks, which would especially be an issue with the Glebelands. Members commented that it was good to see exemptions, in cases such as these through engagement with local football clubs, as there are a lot of families suffering from cost of living.
- Members requested financial projections produced for each car park if charges are introduced, based on historical data on useage against each car park in the proposal.
- Members requested a breakdown of the net cost and the timescales for returns on investment.
- The Committee spoke of concern about parking pressures in adjacent streets, especially if people try to park nearby to avoid paying fees and would like these pressures to be considered, especially in areas where there are parking restrictions in place such as residents parking.

EPP2324/06 - Household Waste Recycling Centre - Charging for non household waste

- The Committee requested that the service area consider what the process may be to issue refunds for exceptional circumstances when residents make a mistake on the online booking forms.
- The Committee requested clarification about the disposal of sanitary ware, for example when households wish to disposal of entire bathrooms; would these items carry this proposed charge.

EPP2324/08 - Charge for replacement (residual waste) bins

- The Committee queried whether there was any room for discretion in the proposed policy, as some residential areas in Newport have to store their residual waste bins on the street, which could cause an ongoing issue with them being damaged or stolen.

EPP2324/09 - Domestic Residual and Garden Waste Collection – 3 Weekly Collections

- The majority of the Committee felt that this proposal should not go ahead, and considered that this proposal was more supportive of achieving recycling targets than being a budget saving proposal. The Committee found that much of the information in the proposal itself related to increasing the recycling rates and encouraging to recycle more; however, it was noted that failing to meet these targets could have a further financial implications associated with performance related fines in future years. Members commented that the saving this currently offered was a small amount, but the wider financial implications were greater than the saving offered, as it would promote fly tipping across the city and the Council would have to use more resource to clean up areas
- Comment was made that if this proposal was to go ahead, then it was extremely important for residents to know that the recycling service would be able to cope with the extra amount of recycling being presented, as this could potentially make the proposal more acceptable to residents. Members also remarked that the current recycling service provision would benefit from reviewed and improvement. Further education to residents about what can be recycled would be also essential.
- The Committee requested that the provision for households of 5 people be reviewed, as they currently fall short of the threshold to get a large bin; with less frequent collections it would be difficult for these families to manage.
- The Committee recognised the difficulties that residents of flats sharing communal bins face, as they have no control over neighbours presenting waste. The Committee also raised some issues they are aware of with bin collections being missed for communal blocks. Members agree that a review with Registered Social Landlords and Rent Smart Wales is needed to manage communal bin collections and recycling spaces more effectively.

INF2324/02 - Changes to Operational Practice and Procedures

- The Committee commented that the Council should explore collaboration with neighbouring local authorities to try to mitigate our costs. Members also enquired whether there could be possible partnership work with Welsh Water and the Environment Agency to see if they are able to help facilitate more aspects of keeping drainage facilities running smoothly.
- Concern was raised that the team already have a difficult task dealing with flooding and blocked drains with the current provision, so the reduction of vehicles and staff would make this even more difficult. If conditions are escalating with the ongoing adverse weather, it could become a risk to resident's livelihood and safety. Crucial routes in the City Centre that shouldn't be blocked are getting blocked quite often, and these routes are needed to be clear to enable resident to get to work for the economic functioning of the city. Members commented that it is important to avoid putting residents at risk.
- Concern was raised about insurance risks. If the Council were to go ahead with this proposal, and damage was caused to resident's properties due to the reduced service, would the Council be liable for the damage? Concern was also raised about

the Council potentially spending more money on external contractors, which would cancel out any proposed saving.

INF2324/04 - Streetlighting Switch off 00:00 to 06:00 (excluding safety critical sites) and Reduction in Maintenance

- Whilst the longer term savings were appreciated, the Committee recommend that this proposal should not go ahead, as the impact the reduced lighting will have on people would be too great. Concerns were raised about safety of residents travelling to work in the early mornings, road safety issues especially for taxi drivers, and that rates of crime, including burglaries could rise.
- If the decision to accept the proposal were to go ahead, the Committee hoped that the Council would work with partners to assess the impacts that could be caused, including the public's perception of safety. Members spoke of the importance of working with partners to identify potential and existing issues, especially in areas that contain licenced premises, as this could increase crime and disorder.
- Comment was made that the Council previously secured funding to support the safety of women and girls in the city, particularly in areas like parks, following consultation with residents, and now these lights will be switched off again under these measures.
- Members queried whether the street lighting hardware can be reprogrammed to turn off at a later time on Saturday and Sunday mornings, for example 2am instead of 12am, which could help accommodate the safety of the late night economy. Members also wished to note the seasonal differences in terms of when to switch on and off the street lights.

INF2324/05 - Fees and Charges – Fees increased by 10% rather than the standard 4%

- The Committee recommend that the fees and charges should go up in line with the agreed Council Tax rise.

LS2324/03 - Reduce Staffing levels in the Registration Service

- The Committee were happy with this proposal on the provision that targets can still be met.

FIN2324/01 - Reducing opening times in Customer Services with move to more self-service

- The Committee felt that at this time they did not have the full information they required to make a decision on this proposal. Whilst the redevelopment of the Central Library and re-location of services there is not in scope as part of the budget consultation, and is a decision that has previously been agreed, the Committee felt that it would be necessary to see what the new services in the Central Library look like first before any decisions on opening times are made.
- Committee considered that whilst the staggered opening hours take consideration of residents with different requirements accessing the face to face service, they could cause confusion for some residents.

FIN2324/02 - Switching off phone and face to face channels for some transactions

- The Committee spoke of the importance of residents being able to communicate with the Council. Members requested information about how many calls received in the Contact Centre are recorded and listened to as part of coaching and training. Members also queried whether there are any legal implications of cancelling the call recording contract. Concern was raised about the protection of staff against abuse without calls being recorded.

N/A - Increase council tax increase from 4% base assumption by 5.5% to 9.5%

- The Committee recommend that this proposal should be reviewed to be lower, in view of the draft settlement figure, albeit with the understanding that the final figure has yet to be confirmed.

RED2324/01 - Newport Live Management Fee

- The Committee were happy with this savings proposal, and stated the service area were clear in its recommendation that further work be undertaken to support Newport Live to implement a more formalised Business Planning process.

People, Policy and Transformation – Assets information

The Committee wished to thank the officers for the information provided. Members requested if they could receive information on the revised structure for Health and Safety and also when finalised the list of assets that the Council currently holds.

4 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser)

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the forward work programme, and informed the Committee of the topics due to be discussed at the meeting:

Monday 20th March 2023

- Retention and Recruitment Report

5 **Minutes of the previous meetings held on 28th November 2022 and 5th December 2022**

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 28th November 2022 and 5th December 2022 were **accepted** as a true and accurate record, with the following amendments and comments:

28th November 2022

- Page 116 of the agenda - • Query was made about the pavement parking regulation and whether this would be City wide. It was also noted that in some cases pavement parking had been done to allow space for emergency vehicles.
- The Strategic Director stated that this had come from Welsh Government which they will be enforcing to prioritise pedestrians. A committee member noted that there is an issue with pavement parking during school pick up and drop off times which would block the access of emergency vehicles. The Strategic Director stated that they had some powers of enforcement with this however as it happens over such a large area at specific times it is hard. The Head of Service added that they were waiting on guidance on how it will be implemented.

Members queried if the guidance has come through yet for this to implemented? The Scrutiny Adviser advised the Committee this will be chased up.

Page 116 of the agenda - • A committee member asked about digital timetables at bus stops and noted that the target date had already passed.

The Head of Service stated that they were working with Newport Transport to provide digital information in shelters.

Members queried if there were any updates on this query yet? The Scrutiny Adviser advised this will be chased up.

- Page 118 – Conclusions for Environment and Public Protection Service Plan 2022-24. Committee made comment that there should be a target when clearing through the backlog in HMO inspections that was caused by the pandemic.

Members queried if there are any updates with this comment yet. The Scrutiny Adviser advised this will be chased up.

5th December 2022

- Page 123 – Reference was made in the minutes about Newport looking to become a “Marmot” city. Members wished to receive information on this. The Scrutiny Adviser advised the Committee that this was referenced also in a recent PSC – Partnerships meeting and a document had been sent to that Committee explaining the Marmot principles. This would also be sent to the Place Committee for reference.
- Page 125 – Members requested an update on the management situation with the Coroners and the Police. The Scrutiny Adviser advised this will be chased up.
- Page 127 – Members requested information on the call wait times in the City Contact Centre. The Scrutiny Adviser advised this will be chased up.
- Page 127 - Points 4 and 5 have a duplicate answer. The Scrutiny Adviser advised the minutes would be amended.
- Page 129 – The Action Plan needs to be updated with the Law and Standards request for updates on the Coroners management situation. The Scrutiny Adviser advised the action sheet would be updated to show this.

The meeting terminated at 6.00 pm

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Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate

Part 1

Date: 17th April 2023

Subject Recruitment and Retention

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Kevin Howells	HR and OD Manager

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and assess the Recruitment and Retention report.
2. Establish whether there is any additional information needed.
3. Decide if the Committee wishes to make any comments or recommendations in relation to the report.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 At the committee meeting held on Monday 25th July 2022, Committee Members requested a report on staff recruitment and retention to brought to the committee in addition to what the Council offer to staff.
- 2.2 Recruiting and retaining a suitable workforce is one of the most significant current challenges facing local government with vacancy rates in some public sector areas being reported as rising sharply. The ability to attract and retain staff is critical to maintaining a skilled workforce capable of delivering quality services to our communities.
- 2.3 Newport City Council employs a workforce of around 5,900 employees, to a fulltime equivalent workforce of around 4,600 employees. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the

recruitment and retention issues facing local government, as well as work being undertaken to support the ongoing challenges.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Appendix 1 – Recruitment and Retention report

Appendix A – National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Workers Salary Rates

3.2 The Recruitment and Retention report highlights the following key points:

- Background

- o Recruitment Issues: This section discusses the challenges faced by the Council when it comes to recruiting new staff. This includes a shortage of candidates with the necessary skills, difficulties attracting candidates to the area, and an increasingly competitive labour market.

- o Retention Issues: This section discusses the challenges faced by the Council when it comes to retaining existing staff. This includes factors such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, career development opportunities, and overall job security.

- Options and Considerations

- o 1. Pay: This section explores the Council's pay and reward strategy and considers whether it remains competitive and attractive to potential candidates.

- o 2. Recruitment and Onboarding: This section looks at ways to improve the recruitment and onboarding processes to make them more efficient and effective, ensuring that new hires feel supported from the outset.

- o 3. Organisational Development Activity: This section looks at ways to support the ongoing development and engagement of the Council's existing workforce through organisational development activities such as training, mentoring, and coaching.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Receive the report for information and take the opportunity to comment on its contents;
- Consider the main strengths and areas for development within the current workforce recruitment and retention matters.
- Conclusions:
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the reports?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the recruitment and retention matters?
 - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
 - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations?

Suggested Lines of Enquiry

4.1 In evaluating the Recruitment and Retention report, the Committee may wish to consider:

- What is your assessment of the current recruitment market that we are operating in and how well are we meeting the needs of that market?
- Are there any particular service areas that are a priority to recruit for, and what is being done to solve this?
- Have there been any feedback or complaints from employees or job applicants regarding the recruitment and retention process, and how were they addressed?
- What is the current turnover rate for council staff and how does it compare to previous years?
- Are there any best practices or innovative strategies from other local authorities or industries that the Council could implement to improve its recruitment and retention outcomes?
- How does the council plan to address the challenges identified in the report and improve recruitment and retention in the future?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

5.1 The report links with the four Wellbeing-being Objectives and Aims of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027;

Well-being Objective	1 – Economy, Education and Skills	2 – Newport’s Environment and Infrastructure	3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care	4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council
Aims:	Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.	A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.	Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.	Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

Well-being Objective 1 - Economy, Education, and Skills: The Recruitment and Retention report emphasises the importance of providing professional development opportunities and career advancement pathways to employees, which aligns with the objective of offering excellent education and opportunities for all.

Well-being Objective 2 - Newport's Environment and Infrastructure: The report highlights the significance of creating a positive work culture that promotes inclusivity and collaboration. This aligns with the objective of protecting and enhancing the environment while reducing the carbon footprint.

Well-being Objective 3 - Quality Social Care and Community Services: The report underlines the significance of developing clear and transparent recruitment processes that promote fairness and equality. This aligns with the objective of placing communities and care at the heart of what the city does.

Well-being Objective 4 - An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council: The report highlights enhancing the onboarding and training process to improve employee engagement and retention, which aligns with the objective of being an inclusive and fair organisation that places social value, fairness, and sustainability at its core.

6 Impact Assessment:

- Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act
- Equality Act 2010
- Socio-economic Duty
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

The council has a number of legislative responsibilities to assess the impact of any strategic decision, proposal or policy on people that may experience disadvantage or inequality.

6.1 Summary of impact – Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

The Recruitment and Retention report has several impacts on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, including promoting sustainable recruitment and retention practices, promoting social justice and equality, fostering collaboration and engagement, and promoting education and lifelong learning. By implementing the recommendations in the report, local government authorities can ensure continuity in service delivery and contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of future generations, aligning with the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

6.2 Summary of impact – Equality Act 2010

The Recruitment and Retention report has positive impacts on the Equality Act 2010 by promoting equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion, and training and development opportunities for all employees. By aligning with the objectives of the Equality Act 2010, the Council can create a fair and inclusive workplace that prevents discrimination and promotes equal opportunities for all.

6.3 Summary of impact – Socio-economic Duty

The Recruitment and Retention report has positive impacts on the Socio-economic Duty by promoting equal access to employment, providing training and development opportunities, and improving working conditions. The Council's efforts to attract and retain a diverse workforce and support staff development can help to promote social, economic, and cultural well-being

7. Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)
- [Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- [Welsh Language Measure 2015](#)
- [Minutes of Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate Monday 25th July 2022](#)

Report Completed: 17th April 2023

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Report

Scrutiny

Date: 17th April 2023

Subject Recruitment & Retention

Purpose The purpose of the report is to update Scrutiny on current workforce recruitment and retention matters.

Author HR & OD Manager – Kevin Howells

This report was prepared after consultation with:

Head of People, Policy & Transformation
Corporate Director for Transformation & Corporate Services
Head of Finance
Senior HR & OD Business Partners

Background

Recruiting and retaining a suitable workforce is one of the most significant challenges facing local government with vacancy rates in some public sector areas being reported as rising sharply. The ability to attract and retain talent is critical to maintaining a skilled workforce capable of delivering quality services to our communities. The Council employs a workforce of around 5,900 employees, to a fulltime equivalent workforce of around 4,600 employees, largely female based at approximately 78 percent. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recruitment and retention issues facing local government, as well as work being undertaken to support the ongoing challenges.

Recruitment Issues

One of the main recruitment issues faced by local government is competition from the private sector. Private sector firms often offer higher salaries and better benefits packages, making it challenging for local government to attract and compete with qualified candidates. Often private sector companies will specialise in one specific area of business or have high levels of resources committed to one discipline, whereas local government discipline can be far smaller, with that discipline also being required to balance several other areas. This can perpetuate limited pools of qualified candidates. In some areas, there may be a shortage of candidates with the necessary skills or qualifications for specific roles, such as engineers or care workers. This can make it challenging for local government to fill these positions and can result in longer recruitment periods, with some recruitment processes being undertaken a number of times before applicants are appointed.

Retention Issues

Retention is equally as important as recruitment, and local government faces several challenges in retaining their employees. One of the most significant challenges is salary and benefits. Local government often have limited budgets, with pay being set nationally, making it difficult to offer more competitive salaries and benefits packages in specific role. This can lead to high turnover rates as employees seek better-paying positions elsewhere, often in the private sector. The Council's turnover rates for the last few

years, in relation to a slight increase in the workforce in the last few years to support Covid measures, has not overall significantly changed discounting the effect of the pandemic

Period	Avg. Headcount	Total Leavers	Turnover Rate (%)
2019/20	5689	781	13.73
2020/21	5736	524	9.14
2021/22	5840	814	13.94
2022/23	5924	850	14.35

Another retention issue can be the lack of career development opportunities. This can lead to frustration among employees, particularly those who are ambitious and seeking to advance their careers. Combine this with a situational shift in that millennials only tend to stay with one employer for an average of 2 years 9 months (compared to 8 years 3 months baby boomers) (source [Forbes](#)), Local Government has seen a shift in recruitment activity because of national environmental factors. It is also important not to underestimate the toll that reducing resources in certain areas of the Council, because of budget constraints, has on staff morale and wellbeing, potentially prompting the employee to consider their employment choices more than in the past. Budget cutting and having to find efficiencies often leads to more pressure on those that are left behind.

Options and Considerations

There are a number of key contributors to recruitment and retention in local government with several proactive approaches being supported.

1. Pay & Labour

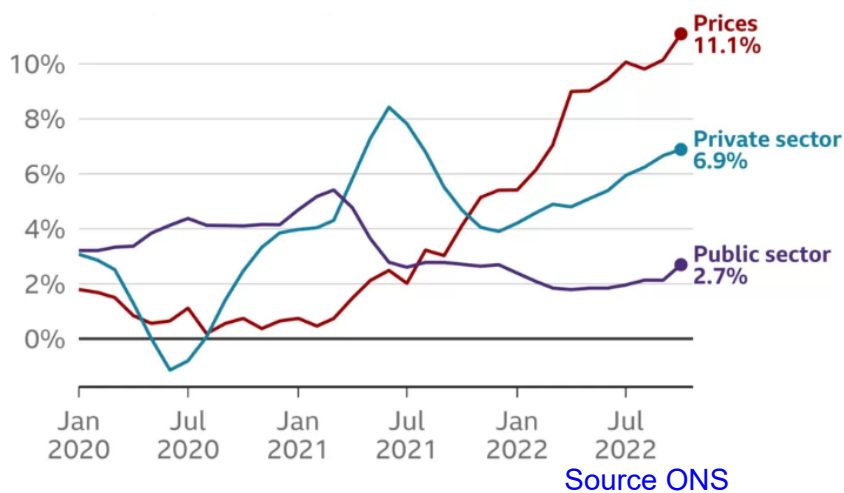
In a complicated, legislative and fairly rigid world of job evaluation and pay and grading, offering a higher salary is not as easily done as it is in the private sector. All Council job roles, approximately 600, are evaluated using the Council's job evaluation scheme. This scheme awards points for different elements of the role. The job evaluation scheme places all our jobs into a 'rank order' of jobs based on their point score. The nationally agreed pay structure then sits alongside the rank order of jobs, and pay values attributed to each job evaluation using scoring bands (appendix A). The need to have an equality proof and analytical job evaluation scheme means it is not, therefore, possible to easily amend pay values of jobs, once they are set, to meet external factors or demands.

Legislation required the Council to complete a full job evaluation exercise as part of a Single Status review. This was prompted by a national influx of significant amounts of equal pay claims from predominately low paid female workers. The Council set out in 2010 to complete its single status exercise, implementing the outcomes in 2015 after reaching agreement with our Trade Unions who were also involved in the review. Significant investment of several million pounds was invested into the pay structure alignment at that time. This has protected the Council from further equal pay risk. The job evaluation scheme and pay structure form the foundations of our pay and grading arrangements ever since and over the last 5-6 years, the Councils pay costs have increased by £65 million.

Year	Pay Costs
2018-19	£159m
2020-21	£176.1m
2023-24	£224.7m

Council pay is negotiated and agreed on a national basis by various negotiating bodies. The Council implements these pay awards into its own pay structure as and when agreed. It is widely reported that public sector pay has not kept pace with national pay or inflation. [Unison trade union](#) reports that on average, over the last 12 years, Council staff have lost an average 25% from the value of their pay when

measured against the Retail Price Index measure of inflation since 2010. Whilst the [BBC reported](#) that “Fifteen years of wage stagnation has left British workers £11,000 worse off a year.” The ONS reported that public sector pay grew by just 2.7% in 2022, whereas private sector pay increased by 6.9%.



The percentage pay loss varies depending on which publication you read, however, there is consensus that pay has not kept up because of a number of economic factors. The pay award for 2022/23 was the largest pay award that local government has seen for well over 10 years, with an initial 5 percent for teachers, subsequently increased to 6.5 percent with a further consolidated payment of 1.5 percent, and a cash amount of £1,925 flat award for other staff, which is an average of around 6.4 percent. This pay award, sizable in comparison to previous years, has a significant impact on Local Government funding and the Council budgets have not kept pace with the national trends or inflationary pressures.

What can be done to support pay issues?

Nationally there is recognition of a squeeze on public sector pay with consensus that the national pay structure needs reviewing to ensure it can keep up with important legislative requirements around the national living wage increases and professional discipline expectations. The Council, like all 22 Welsh Councils, is involved in these pay negotiations nationally and will support these discussions as best it can. The Council is also committed to paying our staff the Foundation Living Wage rate. The Foundation sets what it believes the real living wage should be based on the cost of living. The real living wage in early 2022 was £9.90 per hour, which was 99p more than the national living wage. The Council is still committed to paying the Foundation Living Wage rates but recognises the additional pressure this places on the Council’s resources.

As outlined, locally the Council has very limited ability to increase its pay structure as pay is set nationally. Any review of the job evaluation outcomes for our roles and redrawing our pay bandings, would add several, if not tens, of millions of pounds to our pay bill, based on previous exercises. Redrawing our pay structure also has the potential of causing regional issues - if Newport increased its pay structure, it may perpetuate pay issues for the region and create an even more competitive environment within the public sector and not just private sector. Currently the Council have a mix of paying slightly more or less for jobs across our region.

The Council will continue to review job roles as and when opportunities present to ensure they best capture the roles’ profile and ensure appropriate job evaluation scores are attributed and ultimately pay.

Labour Market

The UK’s decision to leave the European Union in 2020 (Brexit), has had an impact on employment in the UK, although the full extent of the impact is still somewhat unclear. Brexit has led to a decrease in being able to rely on immigration for important roles in the UK. Ultimately this has resulted in a smaller pool of employees for UK employers to draw from and has led to shortages of staff in some areas. Since Brexit

the public sector has seen an impact on its workforce, with labour shortages nationally and at the Council for roles such as Care workers, HGV drivers and others. With labour shortages, comes further competitive demand and this ultimately is making recruitment more challenging because there are many more options available for prospective employees. Nationally there has been the emergence of higher salaries being offered, signing up bonuses and other incentives to beat competitors. Offering incentives is particularly easy to do in the private sector but more challenging for the public sector whilst maintaining robust pay structures and ensuring appropriate use of public funds.

In an attempt to boost the Council's pool of applicants, the Council has recently been granted a permit to support visa sponsorships for employees joining from outside the UK. It has been unnecessary to actively seek a workforce from abroad to date. The main focus of the Council operating this scheme has been to support current and temporary visa holders already in the UK, into our employment rather than actively seeking workers from abroad. Supporting workers with their visa does have a financial cost to the Council which will need careful consideration. The Council will further consider the necessity of this programme and whether access to global talent is required for our roles.

Traditionally the Council would have plugged gaps in recruitment processes with agency workers, and largely still do, however our agency providers have noted difficulty over the past months in providing appropriate resource to the Council as they experience their own challenges in securing temporary workers. The Council's current approach to agency use is under review, with our current main agency contract due for renewal this financial year. The review will aim to limit the use of agency workers, but where required, ensure best value and the best possible service.

2. Recruitment & Onboarding

The Council's recruitment process is aimed at identifying, attracting, and hiring suitable candidates for available jobs. Ensuring the Council have effective recruitment is critical to the success of the Council. Recruitment is directly linked to the quality of the workforce and overall Council performance.

The majority, if not all of recruitment advertising is undertaken through online channels using various external press, directly relevant to roles advertised and appropriate social media platforms. All Council jobs are always put on the Council's recruitment website as well. As part of our Workforce Plan and [Strategic Equality Plan](#) our aspiration is to become a more diverse employer. Our Corporate Plan has also recently been agreed. We are committed to developing our People Plan alongside our Corporate Plan and recruitment and retention will be a key feature of our plan to ensure the Council best meets the needs of the workforce and the communities we serve.

The Council recognises that it needs to be more representative of the population it serves, and recruitment strategies have already begun to diversify and target specific communities and demographics. The Council is now actively engaged in a number of face-to-face recruitment activities across the City to meet hard to reach communities and to bring in new talent from those communities. Over the last few months, the Council has attended city wide recruitment events, showcasing the Council's offering and encouraging diverse applicants to register their interest in joining our organisation. Our People Plan, which is in development for agreement later in this year, will build on this opportunity, and aim to increase our workforce diversity.

A number of other activities have taken place, and will continue, to understand our new starters' journey with the Council and learn from those experiences. The Council has reviewed its exit interview strategy to ensure we are better aligned to be able to analyse job and organisational issues, but also reflect on positives and harness these. This will launch shortly and give greater management information to better inform our employee strategies. Our job descriptions are reviewed by managers prior to advert to ensure they are fit for purpose and promote the Council as an employer of choice. More and more we are utilising professional, internally produced, recruitment marketing materials to attract applicants.

Recruiting staff is far less one sided towards the employer, and it is far more important than ever that a prospective employee sees the Council as an employer of choice and is able to see how they can fit into

the organisation and carry out a role to the best of their ability. The Council will need to work on its employer brand and ensure this is as best it can be. In selecting employees, a number of our services now recruit on a values-based approach as opposed to traditional interview questions and techniques. As our new People plan is formed, so will the Council's expected values and behaviours. It is anticipated that these will also become part of the selection process for recruitment to ensure the Council is bringing the right people into the organisation. Our Council jobs landing page is currently being refreshed, with ease of accessibility and bringing a more modern and purposeful experience.

Once an applicant is selected for a role, their journey from successful interview to start date has been enhanced using our online on-boarding process, which is manager led. The manager has full control of their recruitment process and has the ability to progress their recruitment in a timely and efficient manner through our digital platform. Employees receive job offers through the online portal, as well details of onboarding and information about our pay, benefits and employee packages. Further work will take place to enhance this experience and collect valuable on-boarding feedback from employees to help us develop this area. As we move further out of the pandemic there is a review of our Corporate Induction arrangements with a view to moving some activity back in person, returning to a more personable approach.

For those workers in appropriate roles the Council has developed home and remote working policies and developed a 'New Normal' approach with more flexible arrangements for employees as outlined below:

Homeworking - The Homeworking policy is a new policy for the Council. The Council has a commitment to enable flexibility of working arrangements with the aim of meeting both organisational and individual needs. The Homeworking policy covers whether the employee's home or the Council's premises will be the main place of work. The Council recognises that there are a range of benefits associated with homeworking. These can include:-

- Increased productivity as output from employees working from home often improves due to fewer interruptions than in the office.
- Greater engagement, commitment and loyalty from employees who value being able to work from home.
- Wider choice when hiring due to being able to recruit from a larger pool of talent because of where potential employees currently live may be less of a factor in whether they apply.
- Attract a more diverse
- Potential for a wider range of talent and innovation.
- A homeworking policy helps the carbon and green agendas, by cutting down on commuting.

Ultimately alongside providing our current workforce with the opportunity to work flexibly this policy also helps us become an employer of choice, flexible in our approach, which can help attract and keep talented staff.

Travel & Subsistence - The policy aims to ensure reimbursement of staff whilst undertaking duties which take them from their normal place of work as long as the expenses incurred are reasonable and necessary to perform their duties and are allowable under Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) regulations. The new normal approach to the Travel & Subsistence Policy are:

- Claiming mileage from permanent work location, which could be the employee home address
- Reference to consideration of audio / video conferencing meetings to reduce the need to travel
- An updated link to the HMRC approved mileage claim rates for fuel and electric cars
- Insertion of HMRC 'out of pocket' allowance claim rates

Flexible Working - The Council recognises that employees may require flexibility around their working patterns to suit their own personal circumstances. The flexible working policy has been updated to include the option of employees requesting a change in work location, arrangements or homeworking. The policy is supported by the new Homeworking policy. As an existing policy with

amendments around homeworking, the normal process for agreeing requests for flexible working will continue.

Flexi Time - It should be noted that since the start of the pandemic, this policy had been temporarily suspended to support the workforce in their work life balance commitments whilst also ensuring services continued to be delivered. The main changes to the flexi time scheme as a result of the new normal approach were

- Amendment to the flexi time carry over allowance which has been amended to 8 hours. *(In amending the flexi time carry over a commitment has been given to our trade unions to review the 8 hours limit in 6 months from its implementation).*
- Removal of bandwidths, with services defining their core operational bandwidths for flexi purposes.
- Move to using Employee Self Service (ESS) to manage the process.

In addition, the WLGA is currently commissioning an area of work to look at a condensed or 4 day working week arrangement. This is an area the Council is keen to actively consider and understand the impact on our workforce further. As and when more information is known on the work being undertaken by the WLGA the Council will consider accordingly.

3. Organisational Development Activity

To ensure employees are retained and performing to the best of their ability, it is important that they are engaged within the Council.

Employee Benefits

The Council has a number of employee benefit schemes in place including car purchase schemes, cycle to work schemes, high street discount card, technology schemes, discounted leisure facilities and the ability to purchase additional annual leave alongside an already attractive leave arrangement. As part of a review in 2022 the Council introduced a new pension additional contribution scheme. The shared cost additional voluntary contribution scheme is a supplementary pension scheme to that of the Local Government Pension Scheme and allows additional savings to be made for retirement. A number of staff have attended webinars to find out more about the service and sign up to the scheme continues. To support our employee demographics and in line with building our new People Plan, a review of our employee benefits offering is underway and has identified some initial areas for further scoping. A review will take place of our offering around family friendly policies and enhancing and developing in these areas. To support our family friendly approach, last year, our new normal review introduced the option for all eligible staff to formally request to work from home on a regular basis alongside other flexible arrangements. Many of our staff continue to benefit from flexible working arrangements.

Career Development

The Council offers a number of learning and development opportunities to all its employees through a centralised learning and development directory. Areas of this learning are mandatory, whilst other areas are optional and intended to develop and nurture our workforce. The central learning opportunities focus on organisational need and learning, whereas employees and managers will discuss more service specific learning and development needs and agree what training or development is required to support this. The organisational development team will also support services with service specific learning and development activity.

The Council has invested in a number of strategies to support its talent management approach over the last few years with programmes such as:

- Stepping up to management – for those developing and aspirational staff who want to get a taste of what it's like to work at that next level and receive some management support to help with the aspiration.
- Emerging leaders programme – for the last few years the Council have identified and retained a number of identified critical leaders and developed these into roles for the future. This is supported through working with our partners at the University of South Wales. Those who have successfully completed the programme have applied and been successfully appointed to senior roles with the Council.
- Shadowing schemes – encouraging team members to request an opportunity to shadow to support their development needs and get a taste of other areas they may be interested in.
- Coaching & Mentoring – staff are developed and trained to ILM level 5 coaching standard to be able to support other colleagues in their roles and provide mentorship. Establishment of a coaching network to lead and direct the Councils approach to coaching.
- Inclusive Leadership – with a more and more diverse city, staff have attended training to understand inclusive leadership and build their understanding and approach. Training includes awareness of unconscious bias in recruitment and recognising different needs.
- IOSH Managing safely – to support our staff in their management responsibility for health and safety – whether staffing, buildings or service led, the Council has committed to delivering mandatory health and safety training to all our managers. This important health and safety training role out is ongoing.

Outside of the centralised corporate learning and development activities there are a number of service specific activities that support workforce needs. For instance, Social Services have a continuing student social worker placement programme with a view to supporting university study alongside working in our Social Services workplace environment. The Council successfully appoint individuals from the scheme each year of newly qualified social workers. Individually our service areas will identify staff development needs through holding regular check-ins with staff, where they discuss organisational and personal development needs.

As the Council develops its People Plan, it will be necessary to continually review the learning and development programme and career opportunities for our employees to ensure that the Council is providing as much as it can within the resources it has available. One of our priorities, supported by the Local Government Associations tools, will be to develop a portfolio offering a career development roadmap for our workforce so that they can understand the variety of opportunities on offer and the options they might have to diversifying their careers into other areas.

Staff Engagement & Wellbeing

As the Council continues to navigate through challenging times, it's more important than ever to keep our workforce engaged and motivated. Line manager activity is critical in supporting staff engagement. The type of general day to day management activity required to support engagement includes:

- Regular Feedback: Providing regular feedback to staff is a really effective way to improve engagement. Regular feedback can include constructive feedback, praise and recognition, and opportunities for growth and development. It is helpful to formally capture this through the iTrent check-in process. All employees have regular check ins, and these are extended quarterly for managers.
- Employee Wellness: Continuing to make use of our newly embedding wellness opportunities can help to improve engagement and productivity. It is recommended that support is sought from the Health & Safety team to support employee wellbeing.
- Flexible Work Arrangements/New Normal: Providing flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid working, can help staff achieve better work-life balance, reduce stress, and improve engagement.

- **Recognition Programs:** Our recognition and benefits program is an effective way to show our employees that their hard work is valued. Recognition programs can also be internal to teams. Our previously named values awards will support this later in the year.
- **Career Development Opportunities:** Providing employees with career development opportunities such as mentorship, training, and education opportunities, can help to increase engagement and retention.
- **Team meetings/ office days:** Having invested in hybrid activities with meeting rooms available in most areas, every team should expect to have team meetings with an opportunity to catch up with colleagues regularly. The regularity and arrangements may vary to suit service needs but staff feedback because of New Normal remote working make these more important than ever. Desk booking arrangements and similar within the civic centre can be used to ensure that staff know when others are in work. Staff break out areas are also important in the new normal developments, vending facilities are now available in main reception and will be reviewed for usage and considered in other areas. The staff canteen area is now available as a breakout space for rest and relaxation.
- **Team Building Activities:** Team building activities can help to encourage a sense of unity and belonging within the team. Activities can be as simple as team lunches or more elaborate events such as team development workshops. These are for services to develop as and when appropriate.

It's important to note that not all engagement options will be suitable for every team, and it will be necessary to assess what will work best for teams. It is recommended that service areas review employee engagement activity in their management teams and determine which options will be most effective for their team's needs.

At the most senior levels engagement activity includes the Chief Executive holding regular staff focus groups and engaging with staff directly, with feedback and actions being supported wherever possible. Senior engagement is cyclical and is summarised as below:

Annual Cycle to senior engagement 2023

Date	Activity	Detail	Leads
January/February	Directorate Roadshows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole Directorate meeting to discuss Council wide development 	Director & Heads of Service
April/May	Service Area Roadshows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service area business/ Council wide developments • Lead into Staff Conference 	Head of Service
May (prior to staff conference)	Staff Survey - Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead into staff conference and discussion about values 	Chief Executive/OD
June-Aug	Staff Conference/Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate Corporate Plan • Develop our Values • Celebrate success 	Chief Executive/ Directors
November/December	Service Area Roadshows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service area business • Lead into Staff Conference 	Head of Service

Staff surveys throughout the year as necessary

In addition to the above activity the Council holds quarterly 'Newport Manager Network' meetings where the Chief Executive chairs a network of senior Council staff from Service Managers, Heads of Service and Directors. This is an opportunity for the Chief Executive or Directors to update on Council priorities whilst also inviting guest contributors to the meeting on important and relevant topics.

Employee Voice Groups

Employee voice groups allow our workforce the opportunity and channels to share their opinions, ideas, concerns, and suggestions about workplace issues that affect their daily work and overall job satisfaction. Over the past few years, the Council's employee groups have grown in number and in influence. Our groups include; Pride staff network, Diversity Network, In-NCC (disability group) and Climate change network. These groups form part of the Council's strategic equality plan and climate change plan in ensuring employees voices are heard and considered in developing strategic and operational activities.

Improved employee voice helps to foster a sense of ownership, involvement, and engagement among employees, as they feel valued and recognised for their contributions. This, in turn, leads to higher job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment to the Council. By giving employees a voice, the Council aims to support and reduce turnover and absenteeism, by creating a positive work environment where employees feel respected, supported, and included in decision making

The Council also fully commits to working in partnership with our Trade Unions and recognises that partnership working is critical to the successful delivery of a number of our workforce strategies. Our Trade Unions meet with members of our Cabinet at our Employee Partnership Forum (EPF) on a quarterly basis for strategic matters. EPF brings together all our Trade Union colleagues in a consultative forum with officers from HR to engage in, and help, steer the direction for workforce matters and will regularly focus on recruitment and retention matters.

Employee Wellbeing

Employee wellbeing refers to the physical, mental, and emotional health and happiness of employees. Ensuring good wellbeing is an essential aspect of the Council's success and can lead to several benefits, including: - increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, improved mental health, improved employee engagement and job satisfaction and create a positive workplace culture. The ultimate outcome from ensuring employee wellbeing is increased productivity and retention, whilst also boosting our employee brand/employer of choice and attracting new talent.

The Council changed its approach to managing staff absence from a traditional management of attendance approach, based on sanctions, to a more holistic, supportive approach with the aim to promote and support employee wellbeing, to ensure a positive work environment that enables our employees to flourish and reach their full potential rather than issuing sanctions based on the number of days or instances of absence.

The Wellness at Work Policy has been in place since January 2022 and focuses on aiming to keep employees well in work. This is done in a number of ways: -

- **Wellbeing check-ins** – an opportunity for an employee and their manager to discuss health or wellbeing concerns in an informal or formal environment, utilising our employee and manager self service portal iTrent to capture discussions and outcomes.
- **Wellbeing support plans** – these can be accessed by an employee who feels they need more support to keep them in work, or through a wellbeing case discussion to identify the employee's needs and any reasonable support that can be provided by the Council.
- **Wellbeing referrals** – managers or employees can request for further support in managing an employee's health and wellbeing which could include health and safety interventions (stress/work role assessment), HR&OD support, occupational health appointments or support from external agencies.

- **Wellbeing case discussions/support meetings** – these are a meeting where the employee and manager will be joined by relevant parties including HR, H&S, unions, occupational health and any support agency to identify further support and agree a support plan if necessary

Our Wellness at Work approach has seen positive benefits in a number of areas. Further work is continuing to ensure all our managers and schools are engaged in the approach to supportively managing employees to be in work.

4. Conclusion

As the report outlines there are a number of contributing factors that impact the Councils ability to recruitment and retain suitable employees. The Council will continue to make best use of the resources it has available and the pay arrangements in place to support service delivery. Outside of pay, there are a number of important workplace interventions that can be implemented or developed further to ensure we are promoting the Council as best we possibly can as an employer of choice and bring in and retain exceptional talent.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Recruitment Policy
Strategic Equality Plan
Workforce Plan
Corporate Plan
Employee Handbook
People Plan (in development)

Appendix A:

**NJC FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKERS SALARY RATES
1 APRIL 2022**

Spinal Column Point	Annual Salary £	Monthly Salary £	Weekly Salary £	Hourly Rate (37) £	Job Evaluation Score and Grade	
1	20,258	1,688.17	388.51	10.5002	To be removed April 23	
2	20,441	1,703.42	392.02	10.5951	(210-253)	
3	20,812	1,734.30	399.13	10.7872		Grade 2
4	21,189	1,765.75	406.36	10.9828		(254-297)
5	21,575	1,797.90	413.76	11.1828	Grade 3	
6	21,968	1,830.66	421.30	11.3865	(298-341)	
7	22,369	1,864.08	428.99	11.5944		
8	22,777	1,898.09	436.82	11.8060		Grade 4
9	23,194	1,932.86	444.82	12.0222		(342-397)
10	23,620	1,968.32	452.98	12.2427		
11	24,054	2,004.47	461.30	12.4676		
12	24,496	2,041.32	469.78	12.6968		
13	24,948	2,078.96	478.44	12.9309		
14	25,409	2,117.38	487.29	13.1699	Grade 5	
15	25,878	2,156.50	496.29	13.4132	(398-453)	
16	26,357	2,196.40	505.47	13.6614		
17	26,845	2,237.09	514.84	13.9145		
18	27,344	2,278.65	524.40	14.1730		
19	27,852	2,320.99	534.14	14.4363		
20	28,371	2,364.25	544.10	14.7054		Grade 6
21	28,900	2,408.33	554.25	14.9796		(454-509)
22	29,439	2,453.24	564.58	15.2589		
23	30,151	2,512.58	578.24	15.6280		
24	31,099	2,591.60	596.42	16.1195	Grade 7	
25	32,020	2,668.33	614.08	16.5968	(510-565)	
26	32,909	2,742.41	631.13	17.0575		
27	33,820	2,818.33	648.60	17.5298		
28	34,723	2,893.57	665.91	17.9977		Grade 8
29	35,411	2,950.89	679.11	18.3543		(566-621)
30	36,298	3,024.86	696.13	18.8143		
31	37,261	3,105.10	714.60	19.3134		
32	38,296	3,191.33	734.44	19.8498	Grade 9	
33	39,493	3,291.11	757.40	20.4704	(622-677)	
34	40,478	3,373.18	776.29	20.9809		
35	41,496	3,458.00	795.81	21.5084		
36	42,503	3,541.94	815.13	22.0305		Grade 10
37	43,516	3,626.36	834.56	22.5556		(678-743)
38	44,539	3,711.57	854.17	23.0856		
39	45,495	3,791.29	872.51	23.5814	Grade 11	
40	46,549	3,879.11	892.72	24.1277	(744-809)	
41	47,573	3,964.42	912.36	24.6583		
42	48,587	4,048.92	931.80	25.1839		Grade 12
43	49,590	4,132.50	951.04	25.7037		(810-875)
44	50,780	4,231.67	973.86	26.3205		

45	52,007	4,333.92	997.39	26.9565	Grade 13	
46	53,261	4,438.42	1,021.44	27.6065	(876-941)	
47	54,539	4,544.92	1,045.95	28.2689		
48	55,855	4,654.58	1,071.19	28.9510		Grade 14
49	57,199	4,766.58	1,096.96	29.6477		(942-1007)
50	58,585	4,882.08	1,123.54	30.3661		
51	60,003	5,000.25	1,150.74	31.1011	Grade 15	
52	61,453	5,121.08	1,178.55	31.8526	(1008+)	
53	62,936	5,244.67	1,206.99	32.6213		

Further details can be found in the Council's annual Pay Policy statement



Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Part 1

Date: 17th April 2023

Subject Scrutiny Adviser Report

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role
Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser)	Present the Committee with the Scrutiny Adviser Report for discussion and update the Committee on any changes.

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Action Plan:

Consider the Actions from previous meetings (**Appendix 1**):

- Note the responses for the actions;
- Determine if any further information / action is required;
- Agree to receive an update on outstanding issues at the next meeting.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The purpose of a forward work programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
- 2.2 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages (www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny).
- 2.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and

evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

Forward Work Programme Update

- 2.4 The Committee's work programme was set in July 2022, including estimated timescales for when the reports will be considered by the Committee. This programme is then managed and implemented by the designated Scrutiny Adviser for this Committee under the direction of the Committee Chairperson.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The following information is attached:

Appendix 1: Action Sheet from Previous Meetings.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- **Action Sheet from Previous Meetings - Appendix 1**
 - o Consider the responses to the actions from the meeting;
 - o Are you satisfied that you have received the necessary information?
 - o Are there any further issues arising from the responses that you would like to raise?
 - o For the actions that do not have responses – these actions will be rolled over to the next meeting and reported back to the Committee.

Section B – Supporting Information

5. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 5.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 5.2 This report relates to the Committee's Work Programme, Actions from Committee's and Information Reports that support the achievement of the Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Law and Regulation Service Plan, Objectives, Actions and Measures and the Wellbeing objectives:

6. Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

6.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services.

6.2 General questions

- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?
- How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
- What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
- Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
- Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?

6.3 Wellbeing Goals

- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the policy / proposal / action?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

6.4 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the report / proposal demonstrate how as an authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **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.

7 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#)

Report Completed: 17th April 2023

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Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate

ACTION SHEET – 28 November 2022

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1	Council Service Plans 2022-2025	Infrastructure – Members requested further clarification about the Council investment in the Bike Scheme and Salary Sacrifice Scheme.	Head of People, Policy and Transformation	COMPLETE – Information sent to Committee on 2 nd December 2022.
1	Council Service Plans 2022-2025	Housing and Communities – Members requested Members a further look into the lack of temporary accommodation and reducing the spend to Bed and Breakfasts, as well as reducing time spent in inappropriate accommodation.	Head of Housing and Communities	ONGOING – Request sent to Housing and Communities on 30 th November 2022. Information report on Registered Social Landlords that was discussed at the March 2023 PSC – People meeting forwarded onto Committee on 6 th April 2023.

ACTION SHEET – 23 January 2023

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
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APPENDIX 1

1	2023-24 Draft Budget Proposals and Medium Term Financial Plan	Conclusions and comments for Budget proposals	Scrutiny Team / Finance	ACTIONED – Scrutiny Committee’s comments reported to Cabinet and Heads of Service
1	2023-24 Draft Budget Proposals and Medium Term Financial Plan	<i>FIN2324/02 - Switching off phone and face to face channels for some transactions</i> Members requested information about how many calls received in the Contact Centre are recorded and listened to as part of coaching and training.	Head of Finance	ONGOING – When information received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward onto the Committee.