

Agenda



Newport City Council

Date: Tuesday, 28 November 2023
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Council Chambers - Civic Centre
To: **All Members of the City Council**

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Item	Wards Affected
1. <u>Preliminaries</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. To receive any apologies for absence.ii. To receive any declarations of interest.iii. To receive any announcements by the Presiding Member.	
2. <u>Minutes (Pages 5 - 22)</u> To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting.	
3. <u>Appointments (Pages 23 - 26)</u> To consider any proposed appointments.	
4. <u>Police Issues</u> 30 minutes is allocated for questions to the Gwent Police representative.	
5. <u>Notice of Motion: The Westgate Hotel</u> The Westgate Hotel, Past, Present and Future: The Westgate hotel, a historic landmark in our city, holds significant importance as a turning point in history that advanced	

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Date of Issue: Tuesday, 21 November 2023

modern-day democracy, a reminder of our struggles for political beliefs.

We call upon this council to do everything in its power to ensure the future of this historic building.

With your support, we could be reclaiming this remarkable building, preserving our history while shaping a brighter future for the Westgate, the City, and our Citizens.

The Motion is to be proposed by Councillor Routley and seconded by Councillor Mogford.

6. Treasury Management Half Yearly Monitoring Report (Pages 27 - 44)
7. Gwent Regional Partnership Board Area Plan/Gwent Regional Partnership Board Annual Report (Pages 45 - 212)
8. Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 213 - 254)
9. Corporate Plan Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 255 - 336)
10. Amendment to Council Constitution - 'Budget Framework procedure rules' (Pages 337 - 346)
11. Standards Committee Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 347 - 362)
12. Democratic Services Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 363 - 374)
13. Questions to the Leader of the Council
To provide an opportunity for Councillors to ask questions to the Leader of the Council in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Process:

No more than 15 minutes will be allocated at the Council meeting for questions to the Leader of the Council.

The question must be addressed through the Presiding Member at the meeting and not directly to the person being questioned.

14. Questions to the Cabinet Members
To provide an opportunity to pose questions to Cabinet Members in line with Standing Orders.

Process:

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

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

The question must be addressed through the Presiding Member at the

meeting and not directly to the person being questioned.

Questions will be posed to Cabinet Members in the following order:

- i. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years
- ii. Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing
- iii. Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing
- iv. Cabinet Member for Social Services
- v. Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation
- vi. Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Bio-Diversity
- vii. Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Assets

15. Questions to the Chairs of Committees

To provide an opportunity to pose questions to the Chairs of the Committees in line with Standing Orders.

Process:

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

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

The question must be addressed through the Presiding Member at the meeting and not directly to the person being questioned.

Questions will be posed to Committee Chairs in the following order:

- i. Scrutiny Committees
 - a. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
 - b. Performance Scrutiny Committee – People
 - c. Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate
 - d. Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships
- ii. Planning Committee
- iii. Licensing Committee
- iv. Democratic Services Committee

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Minutes



Council

Date: 26 September 2023

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors C Reeks, S Cocks, E Stowell-Corten, J Harris, A Screen, T Harvey, M Howells, P Bright, J Peterson, A Pimm, D Batrouni, D Jenkins, P Drewett, B Davies, S Adan, M Pimm, J Reynolds, R Howells, A Sterry, J Jones, G Horton, J Cleverly, P Cockeram, D Davies, M Evans, D Harvey, M Kellaway, R Mogford, J Mudd, M Spencer, K Thomas, C Townsend, K Whitehead, J Clarke, Y Forsey, P Hourahine, J Jordan, L Lacey, S Marshall, W Routley, A Morris, F Hussain and B Perkins

Apologies: Councillors L James, D Fouweather, M Linton and J Hughes

1. Preliminaries

1.i Apologies

Councillors Linton, Jordan, James, Hughes and Fouweather.

1.ii Declarations of Interest

None received.

1.iii Presiding Member's Announcements

The Presiding Member reflected that some members had left the last Council meeting early. The Presiding Member noted that he had observed this also happening during other meetings too. The Presiding Member requested that members stay until the end of the meeting or convey their apologies to the organiser before the meeting if they must leave early.

The Presiding Member also noted that the item for Leader's Questions at the previous Council meeting had fallen slightly short of the allocated time and apologised for this. The Presiding Member noted that there was a new clock in place to monitor timed agenda items to prevent further errors.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting 18 July 2023 were accepted subject to the following.

Councillor Evans referred to Item 2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting and his previous request that minutes needed to be circulated in a timelier manner and not when the agenda was circulated. Councillor Evans also requested that the Presiding Member look into this, however this was not recorded. The Minutes from 18 July were again circulated on 20 September. The Presiding Member apologised and would look into Councillor Evans' request.

Councillor Evans referred to Item 11: Questions to the Leader of the Council, Welsh Government priorities, where it was recorded that he referred to the sum of £1.5m for street signs alone and Councillor Evans could not recall if he had said that the Council was given £600,000 or spent £32M on signs but this was inaccurate.

3. **Appointments**

To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report.

Councillor Clarke moved the appointments set out in the Report, as agreed by the Business Managers as set out below.

Councillor Reeks seconded the report.

Resolved: That the following appointments be agreed.

Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	Appointments/ Resignations	Name
Glan Lyn Primary School	Reappointment	Howard Mason
Glan Lyn Primary School	Reappointment	Martyn Kellaway
Glasllwch Primary School	Reappointment	Allan Hyland
Jubilee Park Primary School	Appointment	Jackie Littlejohns
Jubilee Park Primary School	Appointment	David Hopkins
Jubilee Park Primary School	Appointment	John Reynolds
Bassaleg School	Appointment	Chris Lacey
Llanwern High School	Appointment	Kath Bevan
Crindau Primary School	Appointment	Gill Lee
High Cross Primary School	Appointment	Chris Reeks
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	Appointment	Lona Jones-Campbell
Eveswell and Somerton Primary School	Appointment	Alex Pimm
Maes Ebbw School	Appointment	Dimitri Batrouni
Maes Ebbw School	Resignation	Stephen Marshall
Jubilee Park Primary School	Resignation	Elizabeth Thomas
Jubilee Park Primary School	Resignation	Chris Lacey
Jubilee Park Primary School	Resignation	Martin Bentley
Bassaleg School	Resignation	Gavin Horton
Llanwern High School	Resignation	Mandy Shide
Crindau Primary School	Resignation	Colin Seeney
High Cross Primary School	Resignation	John Reynolds
St Joseph's RC Primary School	Resignation	Alex Pimm

4. **Police Issues**

The Presiding Member introduced Superintendent J White of Gwent Police, who provided council members with an update on police issues within East, West, and Central Newport.

The Presiding Member invited the Leader to address Superintendent White.

The Leader welcomed Superintendent White and thanked the police on behalf of Newport City Council for their policing support made during the Pride Event. The Leader reflected that

this had been an outstanding example of community policing and commended the police and PCSOs who engaged with the public on the day.

The Leader mentioned a variance in police engagement with elected members meant that communication and correspondence received differed in the west of Newport by comparison to the east, where ward colleagues were well informed about recent changes to the police force. The Leader asked if the Superintendent would address this to ensure that all ward colleagues within Newport were informed and updated.

Superintendent White agreed that there were disparities. With regard to the recent changes to the west of Newport, Sergeant Merve Priest was stepping up as Inspector and there was a new Chief Inspector, Amanda Thomas, who was clear in her views around consistency of engagement to elected members and residents and this would be seen in all communication going forward.

The Leader referred to the police monitoring of 30mph and 20mph speed limits and requested that they look into speeding issues along Almond Drive, outside the primary school. Whilst the Council's enforcement officers could demonstrate some activity, a PCSO presence would also be welcomed, around school times.

Questions to the Police raised by Councillors:

- Cllr Evans asked a hypothetical question about his back garden and the Superintendent advised that such instances would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and could be deemed as criminal damage, but similar situations would be checked with other agencies such as Welsh Water before making a determination on this.

Councillor Evans asked what judicial powers the police had in relation to travellers and how difficult this was to enforce. Superintendent White stated that Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 2022 was introduced to give police more powers to deal with illegal encampments, however, three criteria under this legislation had to be met before this could be enforced: significant damage to land, significant disruption, and significant distress. Encampments had set up in Newport in the past with pockets of incidents of theft, damage, and disorder but it was not deemed to be significant. Whilst the Superintendent understood the frustration of residents, guidance from Welsh Government Policy advised that the determining factor of significance lies with the police.

- Councillor Jenkins was contacted by elderly residents and asked what could be done to tackle the anti-social behaviour at the back of Asda in Pillgwenlly. Superintendent White confirmed that dedicated patrols were carried out around the area. The police have powers and PSPOs in place that they can use. The Superintendent considered that links with the community was important, and more patrols would be carried out. Councillor Jenkins advised that the incidents are happening constantly, the youths would disperse when the police were called, but would return once police had left. Superintendent White confirmed that this would be raised with the new Sergeant in the area, Chris Johnson who would discuss concerns with the Councillor and put in place a plan of action.
- Councillor Howells referred to issues taking place around Pontfaen Shops and asked for an update on how issues would be taken forward. Councillor Howells reflected that the local Inspector had been proactive with issuing dispersal orders which helped on a short-term basis; however, ward councillors were looking for a long-term solution. The Superintendent confirmed that analytical work had been conducted to see where the damages were taking place and looking at intelligence to identify the suspects; this included trawling through CCTV footage and engaging with the community. There would be dedicated patrols in the areas to provide reassurance to Councillors and the community. At a recent operation, seven e-bikes were seized, within the Lliswerry and Pontfaen area. The Presiding Member asked what happened to the e-bikes after they

were seized. The Superintendent advised that most of the e-bikes would be crushed, and this would be filmed and shared through social media. The Superintendent confirmed that he is in discussion about using seized e-bikes as part of a police fleet, as the Metropolitan Police have done this, and have identified appropriate training and policies.

- Councillor Reeks referred to the increase in crime across Newport. At a recent ward meeting for Rogerstone North, residents questioned whether this was due to the lights being switched off by the Council at night. The Superintendent observed that the crimes of theft referenced by Councillor Reeks had occurred during the day, whilst nighttime offences such as residential burglaries had reduced in number.
- Councillor Al-Nuaimi referred to the recent change in speed limits in Wales and the that he felt signage was important to indicate where drivers should limit their speed to 20mph. The Superintendent advised that signage is the responsibility of Welsh Government and referred to the Highway Code; streetlamps 200 yards apart dictate a 30mph speed limit, however this would now be a 20mph limit unless there is signage that indicates otherwise.
- Councillor Drewett mentioned that it was Bonfire Night soon and asked for assurances of a police presence in Ridgeway. Superintendent White advised that police were preparing for Halloween and Bonfire Night and putting embargos on police officers requesting annual leave to provide maximum resources along with the Fire Services.
- Councillor Hourahine wanted to mention three PCSOs who carried out outstanding work in St Julians and wanted to pass on their first names to the Superintendent, Annabel, Caitlin, and Clare.
- Councillor Morris referred to CCTV footage involving a drug related incident on an e-bike, and asked if he could he pass the information on to Superintendent. The Superintendent confirmed he would make contact outside of the meeting.
- Councillor Batrouni thanked officers for fighting crime across the city. Councillor Batrouni referred to the comments made by the Superintendent about the rise in crime and asked if was this related to the cost-of-living crisis. Superintendent White mentioned that most acquisitive crime is due to prolific offenders. The Superintendent believed that the police needed to engage with offenders at probation much earlier to stop the cycle. The cost-of-living crisis did not help matters but from personal experience those committing offences were prolific offenders.

Councillor Hussain had attended the Police surgery in Victoria Ward with PCSOs where residents raised concerns about the Box Hotel in Llanwern Street. Councillor Hussain thanked police for the update and had passed the information on to residents. In addition, there had been many complaints regarding Cyril Street and Councillor Hussain asked was there any update relating to the property. Councillor Hussain also mentioned that the PCSOs Inspector Giles, kept ward colleagues updated and therefore wanted to pass on her thanks. Superintendent White was aware that the Box Hotel was causing significant issues to residents. Proceedings are ongoing and the police are working with partners including closures to stop this happening time and again. The Superintendent would ask Inspector Giles to speak with Councillor Hussain outside of the meeting about problematic premises with the area, as he was keen to get closure motions in place.

5. **Replacement Local Development Plan**

The Presiding Member invited the Leader to present the first report on the agenda, the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy and sought Council's

approval to endorse the Preferred Strategy and commence the formal community consultation in October.

This recommendation is in line with the timeline included in the Revised Delivery Agreement previously approved by Council and confirmed by the Welsh Government in January 2023.

Having an up to date and fit for purpose Local Development Plan is not only important for seeing the city grow and prosper up until 2036 but is also a statutory requirement.

The Preferred Strategy is a formal stage in the development of a new Local Development Plan and the purpose of the Preferred Strategy outlines a suggested approach to new development, future growth, and conservation.

Newport has been identified as a National Growth Area in Future Wales: The National Plan 2040. This was the top tier of the Development Plan for planning purposes and all local level plans; including our Local Development Plan, needed to be in accordance with the national plan.

A public consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options has been conducted and the responses received were used to inform the proposed Preferred Strategy. 68 consultation responses were received from a wide array of stakeholders. These consultation responses and the proposed responses were considered by Cabinet on 13 September and the recommendations were approved.

Alongside the consultation responses received, a considerable amount of background evidence and reports, were used to inform the Preferred Strategy.

To formally progress a Preferred Strategy, further formal consultation is required. The regulations state that this should be for a minimum of six weeks, however it was proposed that the consultation would begin in October and run for eight weeks. The consultation plan included various methods of engagement and exercises to reach as wide an audience as possible.

The Place and Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered the Preferred Strategy and the proposals on 11 September. There was a positive discussion on this matter and the Committee were content to endorse the public consultation exercise. The Leader welcomed the request from Committee members that careful consideration be given on how to promote and raise awareness of the consultation.

A target of facilitating the development of 570 new homes and the creation of 8,640 new jobs is set under the Preferred Strategy. With this level of growth, Newport will be a destination where people want to live, work and visit.

To deliver this growth, it was proposed that a hybrid spatial strategy is adopted. This would focus on Previously Developed Land as well as acknowledging that some greenfield land within and adjoining settlements, would be required along with some smaller developments in villages. Details of proposed key sites of 300+ dwellings are outlined in the strategy.

This strategy is for consultation, views and opinions of all stakeholders are welcomed. All responses will be considered in detail and used to inform the Deposit Plan which will be brought back to Council around this time next year.

The report was seconded by Councillor Clarke.

Comments from Councillors:

- Councillor Evans supported the proposal for consultation and noted that there were applications within the Allt-yr-Yn Ward to build on green belt land. Councillor Evans felt that building on green belt land should be a last resort and asked if members could receive information on their own ward.
- Councillor D Davies supported the proposal, adding that the 2021 census demonstrated that Newport is a maturing city and is becoming an attractive place to settle. More housing is needed to sustain the thriving economy.
- Councillor Clarke mentioned that as Cabinet Member, he was responsible for Planning and was happy to endorse the report. Adopting a new LDP is no different to the planning applications process and it is vital to gather people's views. Councillor Clarke considered the positive response levels with nearly 70 responses to the growth options consultation from the community. These responses had shaped the strategy presented to Council. Councillor Clarke attended the Performance Scrutiny Committee - Place and welcomed the positive feedback. Councillor Clarke thanked officers for their considerable work and was confident that the strategy was suitably ambitious whilst remaining achievable.

Resolved:

Council approved the Preferred Strategy consultation paper provided in Appendix A and commenced with formal community consultation.

6. Climate Change Annual Report

The Presiding Member advised that the next report to be presented by the Leader, was the Climate Change Plan Annual Report for 2022-2023.

The purpose of this report was to provide the organisational emissions for 2022-2023 and an update on the projects supporting the Council's decarbonisation efforts.

This is the first full annual report of the Climate Change Plan which was signed off in March 2022.

The Climate Change Plan sets out how the organisation would achieve Net Zero by 2030 in line with commitments.

Turning to the report itself, overall, Carbon emissions were down, excluding procurement, and operational emissions; this figure had reduced by 7.69% since 2021-2022. This figure is lower than previously reported due to changes in the reporting guidance and initiating engagement with our supply chain to start to build more detailed figures specific to Newport.

With a City-wide Local Area Energy Plan in place, actions in year 2 of the climate change plan have a much tighter focus on organisational emissions. The majority of actions for Year 2 of the plan have in-year completion dates.

An important detail to note is the recommendation for the separation of Action Plans from the main Organisational Plan. Action Plans would be publicly available but separating them from the body of the Plan itself meant that the Plan did not need to be amended and re-published on an annual basis in its entirety.

Climate Change projects of note in the past year included:

- The roll-out of Carbon Literacy training to members and senior managers and the achievement of Bronze Accreditation status.

- The establishment of the Climate Change Staff Network which had over 30 members who met monthly.
- The installation of further solar panels through Egni, the community solar co-operative.
- Installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at Caerleon Comprehensive.
- The achievement of Tree City of the World Status in recognition of the management of tree stocks.
- Completion of the Devon Place Bridge to support active travel across the city.
- Changes to procurement processes to support decarbonisation through the larger purchases made, soon every procurement over £75,000 would need endorsement from the climate change team.

In the coming year, the main areas of focus for the Climate Change Plan would be the ongoing decarbonisation of heat in Council buildings, removing the need to use fossil fuels where possible, delivery of widespread EV charging, evaluating the decarbonisation potential for Council owned land and the development of internal and external communications plans to ensure that there is effective communication and engagement with staff and the public.

The report was seconded by Councillor Forsey.

Comments from Councillors:

- Councillor Forsey considered the progress under the comprehensive report on retrofitting to buildings, replacing fleet vehicles, and being awarded Bronze Carbon Literacy Accreditation Status. Councillor Forsey referred to extreme weather events and the toll this has on lives and food production. It was therefore vital that we continued with this work. Councillor Forsey concluded that whilst good progress had been made it is vital that this must continue.
- Councillor Davies advised that the Council had a commitment to achieve net zero by 2030 and throughout the city by 2050. Councillor Davies was proud that the plan was already achieving results, such as reducing carbon emissions by 29%, and increasing energy efficiency in buildings.
- Councillor Corten felt proud of progress under the climate change plan and felt that all actions taken to address this as a city added up to a greater sum.
- Councillor Morris concluded that there had been many changes in expectation in terms of climate change response, and the Council needed to work together to address this.

Councillor Evans called for a pragmatic, proportionate and realistic approach to addressing climate change for those on all levels of income and felt that the Council needed to work together to address this.

- Councillor Routley referred to traffic emissions in Bishton and Langstone that are perceived as an air quality concern.
- Councillor Hourahine stated that he had attended a clean air zone meeting for Chepstow and Caerleon Road and the indication from the officers was that it had vastly improved and would be re-assessed as a clean air zone. Councillor Hourahine considered that this was largely due to the electric vehicles and electric busses that have been introduced.

The Leader summed up by thanking everyone for their contribution. The Leader concluded that the report set out great achievements and wanted to recognise the commitment of officers.

Resolved:

Council reviewed progress and approved the Annual Report.

7. **Market Arcade Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)**

The Presiding Member invited the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing, to present the report.

Council colleagues were asked to consider and agree the renewal of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the Market Arcade.

The arcade is an important area within the city centre and the subject of much improvement and regeneration over recent years.

In 2020, the Council considered a similar request as a response to antisocial behaviour in the arcade at night where vandalism and other anti-social behaviour occurred.

The 2020 order included a provision to place gates at either end during the evening and nighttime.

As the arcade was a right of way an alternative route was highlighted and consulted upon. Members of the public and businesses who responded to the consultation expressed strong support for this approach.

This single measure all but eliminated antisocial behaviour and allowed businesses to re-enter the area with increased confidence.

Councillor Mudd seconded the report.

Comments from Councillors:

- Councillor Thomas reflected that there was a huge commitment in the development of these areas of the city and it was important to protect them for the enjoyment of residents.
- The Leader seconded the proposal and remarked on the regeneration of the Market Arcade. The PSPO was intended to protect this space and hoped that colleagues would support the report.

Resolved:

Council approved the renewal of the Market Arcade Public Spaces Protection Order.

8. **Maesglas Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)**

The Presiding Member moved to the next item on the agenda, which was presented by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing

Council colleagues were asked to consider and agree the reinstatement of the Public Spaces Protection Order for an area within Maesglas.

In 2018 Council considered a similar request as a response to antisocial behaviour from residents and businesses within the area.

The order included restricting access to a public path behind Maesglas shops on Cardiff Road.

As that pathway is a right of way, an alternative route was highlighted and consulted upon.

There was a high level of response to the consultation, and the public and businesses who responded indicated that anti-social behavioural problems remained in the area and these additional controls would help tackle them.

It was noted that many responders to the consultation expressed a wish for the area of the PSPO to be extended. Officers planned to explore this option without delay and may consider an extension in the coming months.

Councillor Marshall seconded the report.

Comments from Councillors:

- Councillor Perkins supported the reinstatement of the Maesglas PSPO and referenced the positive response from the residents to the PSPO.
- Councillor Mark Howells considered this to be a pro-active step taken by the Council to deliver positive outcomes for the community and recommended that officers consider PSPOs in other areas experiencing similar issues.
- Councillor Batrouni thanked officers, councillors and J Bryant, MS for their involvement and whole heartedly supported the report.
- Councillor Marshall seconded the report to address the issues in Maesglas and remarked on the support from residents in the consultation feedback.
- Councillor Morris referred to the importance of engaging with young people and hoped that measures could be put in place to support engagement and activities in this area.

Resolved:

Council agreed to a Public Spaces Protection Order in the Maesglas area.

9. South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Scrutiny Arrangements

The Leader invited the Monitoring Officer to present the last report on the agenda, this was the proposal for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) to be appointed to discharge the authority's scrutiny functions in relation to the South-East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEWCJC).

The SEWCJC was formally established in April 2021, made up of the Leaders of the 10 Local Authorities in Southeast Wales including Newport.

The CJC has a responsibility for strategic development planning, regional transport planning and promoting the economic well-being of the Southeast Wales area.

The SEWCJC is currently in a transitional phase, building up governance structures in preparation for becoming fully operational in April 2024 when it is intended to take over the functions of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Joint Committee.

As a key part of the CJC's government structures, arrangements must be made to ensure that there are appropriate overview and scrutiny arrangements in place to provide effective scrutiny of the functions discharged by the CJC.

The report sets out the following proposals:

- Each of the 10 Local Authorities to agree to appoint the existing JOSOC, which currently scrutinises the CCR, to scrutinise the SEWCJC under separate terms of reference (Appendix 2).
- The existing JOSOC confirmed its agreement to take this on (as Appendix 1) and each of the 10 Local Authorities are now being asked to seek approval for the proposals from their Councils, with the proviso that the terms of reference be reviewed by the JOSOC themselves to ensure that the scrutiny arrangements are robust, transparent, and accountable.
- Any subsequent changes to the terms of reference would need to be referred back and approved by each of the 10 Local Authorities represented on the JOSOC.

The JOSOC met on 27 July 2023 and indicated their agreement in principle to the proposal.

Newport City Council was represented on the JOSOC by the Chair of Newport City Council's Overview, Scrutiny and Management Committee.

The report was seconded by Councillor Davies.

Resolved:

Council agreed to appoint the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for SEWCJC.

10. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Before Commencement with questions, the Leader made the following announcements to Council:

The Leader offered her condolences to those who had families in Libya who were victims of the recent flooding.

Pride in the Port

I'd like to start by saying how fantastic it was to see so many people supporting the second Pride in the Port weekend at the start of this month.

The whole weekend, from the parade and festival to the fringe events, was a wonderful celebration of our LGBTQIA+ community.

I spoke to many people who were so happy to be able to experience this event, and importantly felt they were able to be their authentic selves. Inclusivity and acceptance are vital aspects of our city's character where everyone feels welcomed and embraced for who they are. It shows why events like this matter, and I'm already looking forward to next year's celebrations.

Food Festival

There is just over two weeks to go until the Newport Food Festival returns to the city centre, and I'm delighted that this year's event will be bigger than ever, taking place over three days instead of one.

The festival has become established as one of the highlights of Newport's events calendar, and we're sure that this year's programme will prove popular with residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

The festival kicks off with a supper event on the evening of Friday 13 October at the Mercure Hotel's NP20 Bar and Kitchen.

The festival's patron chef, Hywel Jones, will be taking diners on a culinary exploration of fabulous Welsh, Georgian and German cuisine, to celebrate Newport's links with our twin cities of Kutaisi and Heidenheim.

Tickets for the supper are on sale and can be booked through the food festival website.

Saturday will see the traditional food market set up in the city centre, with street entertainment, chef demonstrations in Newport Market, a vegan and vegetarian village in John Frost Square, and the return of the final of the Teen Chef competition. Finally, on the Sunday there will be a new event for the festival, with live music and street food vendors taking over High Street.

We have worked closely with local bars Le Pub, McCanns, and Madame JoJo to put together a fabulous line-up of entertainment for the Sunday event, which we are sure is going to be a popular addition to the festival programme.

The Leader added that the impact on the local economy should not be underestimated and encouraged residents to attend the festival.

Market Arcade

I am pleased to confirm that the final set of restoration works at the historic Newport Market Arcade are now underway.

The restoration project, which began back in 2018, has seen the council transform the once declining arcade into a vibrant and viable commercial attraction within the city centre.

This phase of the work will see internal refurbishments to several of the units in the arcade, as well as the remaining external refurbishments.

The transformation of the Market Arcade would not have been possible without the generous support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, CADW and Welsh Government's Transforming Towns fund.

Plaques have been installed at either end of the arcade and the ongoing support allows us to run activities and events in our pop-up heritage centre in Unit 14 and to manage and maintain the site in future years.

Business Grants

We have also just announced further good news for our businesses and economy with a new business grant scheme.

For several years, the council has given grants to small and medium-sized businesses in the city to help with start-up and other costs and this is continuing.

Thanks to funding from the UK government's Shared Prosperity Fund, as part of its levelling up agenda, we are now able to offer grants of between £25,000 and £75,000 towards capital investment.

We know businesses have faced many challenges in recent years and so we want to continue to offer support whenever and however we can. The accelerated growth programme is aimed at well-established or new companies to set up premises, or for existing city businesses to accelerate their plans for growth.

Potential applicants are invited to get in touch with the Council's business services team who can talk them through the process and assess their eligibility.

Dogs Home

I am delighted to report that Newport City Dogs Home won gold in two categories at the 2023 RSPCA Cymru PawPrint Awards for their work with stray dogs.

This is the twelfth year that the team has been recognised with a gold award in the stray dog category for their hard work looking after the dogs in their care. They also won a second gold award for their work with kennelling stray dogs.

I'm sure you will join me in congratulating the team on the wonderful work they are doing.

Graffiti Wall

I was pleased to be part of the recent unveiling of a new graffiti wall in Glebelands Park.

The dedicated space gives artists a place to display their works, whilst bringing a splash of colour to the area, and is already proving popular.

The designation of a legal graffiti space aims to encourage innovation and creativity in a safe environment, while reducing the level of graffiti in unauthorised areas.

Thank you to the ward councillors in St Julian's and Councillor Yvonne Forsey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity, who have worked in partnership with Welsh Government and the South Wales Trunk Road Agency who helped to bring this project to life.

Digital Strategy

The council has recently published its new digital strategy that defines the digital aspirations for the city over the next five years and sets out how the council will use technology to transform the delivery of its services.

It will support and improve the wellbeing of residents and employees, as well as enabling businesses to thrive in the city based on four key themes: digital transformation, digital skills and inclusion, data and collaboration, and digital infrastructure and connectivity.

Over the last few years, we have seen some of the biggest changes in society and how people interact with public services. It has also highlighted inequalities in our communities regarding access to digital technology and the skills to use it effectively.

The new digital strategy aims to address these issues and support the delivery of our objectives set out in the corporate plan.

One of the initiatives is a new city centre hub which showcases the latest in assistive technology.

Recently opened in Newport Market, the hub is a place where people can speak to members of the Council's occupational therapy team and get advice about using the latest in assistive technology, helping residents to live independently and safely at home.

Tigers Jump

A reminder that The Tigers, one of the British Army's leading parachute display teams, will be making a spectacular landing in Newport this Saturday.

They will be dropping into Rodney Parade just before kick-off for the Dragons v Ospreys match.

They were due to descend on Newport as part of the Wales National Armed Forces Day celebrations, but unfortunately the conditions were not in our favour, so fingers crossed for this weekend.

The team always puts on an impressive show, and it promises to be a real spectacle. It's also a great opportunity to find out more about a career with the Army. Make sure you've got your match tickets!

Questions to the Leader

Councillor Evans:

Regarding the recent WG 20mph enforcement, there was a Senedd Parliament e-Petition which had received over 40,000 signatures submitted, requesting to rescind the 20mph speed limit. The figures are growing, and a conservative estimate showed that over 40,000 signatures were from Newport residents. Would the Leader listen to the residents of Newport and review this policy and ensure consistent signage.

Response:

The Leader mentioned that 120 countries signed a declaration acknowledging that speed reduction improved road safety in 2020. This speed limit is therefore not unique to Wales. In the UK, 28 million people already live in local authorities where 20mph was accepted as the speed limit. Scotland will follow by 2025. In England, many communities including Norwich, Tunbridge, and Chichester already have 20mph limits. In Europe, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Finland, and Sweden all used 30kmph extensively in urban and built-up areas. The Leader will continue to review on a regular basis and will consider any requests for amendments and exceptions to the 20mph speed limit.

Councillor Morris:

Considering the recent appointment of the City Centre Manager did the Leader consider that all procedures were followed.

Response:

The Leader advised that there was no councillor involvement in recruitment of officers below the Head of Service level and asked that Councillor Mogford direct his question to the Head of Paid Service or Monitoring Officer who would be happy to respond.

The Chief Executive advised that staffing queries were not appropriate for discussion in Full Council and councillors could direct their questions to officers in private. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that officers could not be discussed in public meetings due to data protection legislation.

Councillor Whitehead:

Councillor Whitehead referred to reports from residents in his Ward concerning lack of response from Home Options and other services such as City Services. Councillor Whitehead asked that officers provide residents with a response to keep them updated or issue a standard reply to confirm responses would be delayed in busier periods.

Response:

The Leader said that Councillor Whitehead had raised an important issue that affected residents. The Leader recognised the importance of effective communication across the Council and that it was important that residents required a prompt response. It was noted that members had experienced frustration when using web-based systems. The Leader was pleased to announce that investment to improve the Newport City Council's website and access was underway, which would help residents and Councillors too. Home Options are in particular demand, putting extreme pressure on the service, which could mean a delay in responses. The Leader was pleased to say that under the guidance of the Cabinet Member, the Home Options system was being reviewed and there is an excellent Head of Service in place who is leading on delivering improvements for applicants. The Leader welcomes feedback on specific issues in relation to untimely responses and commended the Heads of Service within Newport City Council for their hard work.

Councillor Bright:

Councillor Bright asked if the Leader could provide an overview of the work on the CCR, City Deal and planned progress following the report considered by Council this evening.

Response:

The Leader thanked Councillor Bright for his question and considered there would be elected members unfamiliar with the structure and the important role it played to Newport City Council. The Leader gave an overview of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deals which includes the 10 Local Authorities in Southeast Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Torfaen, and Vale of Glamorgan. Across the area, there is a population of around 1.5m, which equates to about half the population of Wales.

This is a diverse region with two cities: Cardiff and Newport, a range of market towns, rural communities, and a coastal belt. In 2016, the £13bn Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal, which was funded by UK Government, Welsh Government and the 10 Southeast Wales Local Authorities, was established. CCR had several priority cluster areas to invest in and develop. These areas are the compound semiconductor cluster, Fintech, cyber security and analytics, the creative economy, MedTech, sport, energy, and environment. Within this group are several key areas of focus, including skills, digital, property, and innovation. £735m of the fund delivered tangible developments within the Southeast Wales metro. £495m wider investment funds sits with CCR and is being invested across the region in a whole range of projects and is on track to add £179m Gross Value Added (GVA) to the region's economy every year. £44m of this was through the Compound Semiconductors (CS) Foundry Project in Newport. New funds have been established, including a strategic premises fund, housing viability gap fund, local wealth building challenge fund and an innovation fund. CCR owns two companies limited by shares, alongside a ranging portfolio of investments. CCR recently invested in a 500-acre former coalfired power station, which is in the early stages of comprehensive redevelopment for domestic clean energy generation. This has been successful in securing two UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Strengthening Places Fund Awards.

Today the Council had considered the CJC, and it is important to note that Wales does not have primary legislative powers to create combined authorities, however through a piece of work undertaken by WG, the framework for regional investment in Wales had resulted in legislation for CJC's. These new corporate entities have been built around four regions in Wales and mirror the city and growth deal. The CCR is a voluntary undertaking, whilst the CJC is a statutory requirement. This arrangement provides a range of powers to regional bodies, putting them on par with other public bodies. The transition from CCR to the CJC will see the CCR become a corporate legal entity public body with a number of corporate duties, alongside the statutory requirement for regional land use, transport planning and economic wellbeing duty.

The Leader was proud to say that emerging findings from the UK Competitiveness Index indicated an increase in competitiveness in the region as a whole and within this there was emerging evidence of an increase in competitiveness for Newport. This is the impact of 10 local authorities coming together for the benefit of the region.

11. **Questions to the Cabinet Members**

Question 1 - Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing

Councillor Debbie Jenkins:

The Corporate plan aims to make Newport a fairer, safer, and thriving City. As Regulation is part of your portfolio, can you update Council on what the Public Protection team is doing to achieve these strategic goals?

Response from Councillor James Clarke:

Our Public Protection teams carry out a wide range of activities on different regimes, so I would like to provide some detail on recent activities on each of these areas to illustrate the splendid work delivered by Council officers.

Regarding Trading Standards:

Investigations relating to counterfeit goods and illegal dog breeding are ongoing. The combined fraud value is more than £5million.

During a recent illegal tobacco enforcement operation in Commercial Street, officers carried out surveillance on illegal tobacco shops leading to seizures and four arrests. Officers closed five shops using ASB Closure Orders.

Illegal disposable vaping devices are prevalent; 3,370 illegal disposable vapes have been seized and several prosecutions are under way in relation to illegal vapes and vapes sold to underage persons.

Several investigations into the activities of rogue/itinerant traders are at various stages of completion.

Officers carry out a risk assessed inspection programmed at food businesses across the city and a project is underway to tackle residential rental and commercial premises that fall beneath acceptable energy performance standards.

Regarding Environmental Health

The Section continues to support safe events, deliver food controls etc. The service is targeting businesses where there are inappropriate practices such as using unsafe equipment. For example, using illegally converted kitchen gas appliances to LPG, causing risk of explosion. More prohibition notices have been served in the last year, than the last four years.

Several food hygiene improvement notices, prohibition notices and food seizure, detention and destruction actions have been taken. Two prosecutions have taken place.

Regarding Licensing:

This Section continues to monitor licensed businesses. Action has been taken relating to pubs and nightclubs breaching their conditions. Checks with the taxi trade continue. Examples of incidents that have happened would be that one taxi driver was investigated by the team and found to be lying about a speeding offence. That driver subsequently received a suspended sentence and a fine. Two taxi drivers had refused to allow guide dogs into their cars. These drivers had their licences suspended pending retraining.

Regarding Community Safety:

The Community Safety Team are active in the City Centre and deal with noise nuisance, health and safety issues, there have also been incidents of fly tipping where in some incidents a Community Protection Warning has been issued.

A Community Protection Warning was issued in relation to a large-scale fly tipping problem in Maesglas followed by an Environmental Protection Act Notice which resulted in the accumulation of 2 tonnes of rubbish being cleared.

139 Section 115 Crime and Disorder Act meetings have been attended.
I would like to finish by acknowledging all the hard work and dedication of the Team.

Question 2 – Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation

Councillor Emma Stowell-Corten:

Could the Cabinet Member outline how the new digital strategy supports our goal in becoming a data city?

Response from Councillor Dimitri Batrouni:

The Council's goal in becoming a Data City recognises the value of data and supports the need to harness the vast repositories of data held by Newport City Council, our public partners, and existing and future business investors; ensuring that as a city we are data driven and decisions are based on sound evidence.

Developments such as the National Technology Institute are keystones to delivering our Data City aspirations with both public and private partners. The new Digital Strategy 2022-2027 is complimentary to delivery and achieving this goal through its Data and Collaboration theme to support decision-making, service delivery and planning through better and more effective use of data; ensuring that appropriate data protection, information security and sharing protocols are in place to facilitate access to readily available, up-to-date, and meaningful data which is available to citizens, business, and visitors.

Question 3 – Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity

Councillor Farzina Hussain:

As the implementation of three weekly refuse collections continues, can the Cabinet Member give an update on phase 1 of the move to three weekly residual waste collections and outline progress towards phase 2 of the move to three weekly collections?

Response from Councillor Forsey:

Phase 1 of the three weekly collections roll out started in June this year and included approximately 11,500 properties. The waste team have been monitoring collections over the last few months, so far results show the following:

- A decrease of 15% in the amount of residual waste collected from these properties. If this is repeated across Newport as part of the wider roll out, NCC will meet the 70% recycling target, which is the main aim of this change.
- Our waste engagement team are available to assist residents who may struggle with managing their waste. Since the roll out started, they have received 84 enquiries and completed another 91 proactive visits/contacts.
- In terms of compliance with the 'no excess waste' policy, to date the waste team have only issued a total of 166 warning letters due to additional waste presented by residents, with only seven getting to the next stage due to repeated behaviour. Considering that over the same period more than 35,000 3 weekly collections have taken place, this represents compliance levels over 99%.

Overall, these are excellent results that show the new system is delivering the expected results and that residents are coping well with the changes.

The waste team are getting ready for the second phase of the roll out, that will bring three weekly collections to many Newport residents. Further details will be available soon on the Council's website and social media channels, but three weekly collections of non-recyclable waste are scheduled to start between the second part of October and the beginning of November. Garden waste collections stop during the winter months at the end of November, but they will continue with the current frequency until then. Collections will take place every three weeks once they resume in March next year. All residents will receive a letter and leaflet by post confirming the changes, in October.

Question 4 - Cabinet Member for Social Services (Adult Services)

As the Cabinet Member was not present the response would be provided in writing to Councillor T Harvey and included in the Minutes.

Councillor Timothy Harvey:

Within the context of considerable media coverage of health and social care, can the Cabinet Member provide an update on what the council is doing to support our Newport based residents for longer within their communities?

Response from Councillor Jason Hughes:

Newport adult services preparedness for social care needs of the city is a whole year activity due to the workforce pressures across all service areas and increase in complex referrals. We work across the Gwent region to maximise resources and facilities for our residents with care and support needs. 92% of adult services is focussed on supporting individuals to remain in the community/at home and avoid hospital admissions.

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Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Appointments

Purpose To agree the appointment of Council nominees to committees and outside bodies.

Author Governance Team Leader

Ward General

Summary In accordance with its terms of reference within the Constitution, Council is responsible for appointing the members of Council Committees, and the Council's representatives on outside bodies. The current vacancies and nominations received are set out in the attached report.

Proposal Council is asked to receive and approve the nominations for representatives, as listed in the report

Action by Governance Team Leader

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Council Business Managers
- Head of Law and Standards

Signed

Background

In accordance with its terms of reference within the Constitution, Council is responsible for appointing the members of Council Committees, and the Council's representatives on outside bodies. The current vacancies and nominations received are set out below.

Any vacant appointments / nominations received after the publication of this report, will be announced at the Council meeting by the appropriate Business Manager or Group Leader.

Governing Body Appointments

Governing Body	Appointments/ Resignations	Name
Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership	Reappointment	Alan Speight
Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership	Disqualification	Geraldine French
Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership	Appointment	Deiniol Parselle
Gaer and Maesglas Primary School Partnership	Resignation	Jackie Littlejohns
Gaer and Maesglas Primary School Partnership	Appointment	Rob Gregory
*Marshfield Primary School	Appointment	Sean Powell
Alway Primary School	Resignation	Michelle Miles
Alway Primary School	Appointment	Kaite Blair

*Suzanne Evans transferred to another governor type

School Admissions:

Councillor J Clarke

Proposal

Council is asked to receive and approve the nominations for representatives, as listed in the report.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The appointment of individuals to serve on outside bodies is a Local Choice function under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007. The Council has determined that responsibility for this function shall rest with Full Council unless delegated by the Council.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

Local issues

There are no local issues as this report relates to the Council's processes.

Scrutiny Committees

Monthly update reports allow the Scrutiny and Cabinet work programmes to be better coordinated. The Scrutiny team and Members are currently developing new ways of working through the new Committees, and continually reviewing the work programmes to focus more on risk and ensure all scrutiny activity has a defined purpose and constructive outcome.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

This does not apply to this procedural report.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

This procedural report does not impact on Children and Young People although certain reports contained in the programme may do and will need appropriate consultation and comment when they are presented to cabinet.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This is a procedural report but reports contained within the programme will need to show how consideration has been given to the five things public bodies need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle put into place by the Act.

Consultation

As set out above

Background Papers

Newport City Council Constitution

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007

Dated: 21 November 2023

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Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Half Yearly Report on Treasury Management for the period 2023/24

Purpose This report is to inform Council of treasury activities undertaken within the financial year 2023/24 and confirms that all treasury and prudential indicators have been adhered to. The report has been considered by Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet who provided no reservations or adverse feedback.

Author Assistant Head of Finance / Chief Accountant

Ward All

Summary In line with the agreed Treasury Management Strategy, the Council continues to be both a short-term investor of cash and borrower to manage day-to-day cash flows. Current forecasts indicate that, in the future, temporary borrowing may be required to fund normal day-to-day cash flow activities and longer-term borrowing will increase to fund commitments in the current capital programme, as well as the impact of reduced capacity for 'internal borrowing'.

Up to the end of September 2023, the Council's net borrowing is £80.8m, a decrease of £10.6m on 31 March 2023 levels.

Governance & Audit Committee considered the report on 26th October 2023 and Cabinet on 15th November 2023. The feedback provided during the meetings did not result in any subsequent changes to the report.

Proposal To note the report on treasury management activities during the first half year period of 2023-24.

Action by Head of Finance / Assistant Head of Finance

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Treasury Advisors
- Head of Finance
- Governance & Audit Committee

Signed

Background

1. Treasury risk management within Newport City Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code). The revised edition had a number of key changes which the Authority has adopted in the 2023/24 financial year. The key changes are;
 - It particularly highlights the requirement that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return.
 - The forward-looking prudential indicators must be monitored and reported to members at least quarterly (currently half-yearly) as part of the normal budget monitoring reports.
 - The Authority will also have to explicitly document a formal and comprehensive knowledge and skills schedule to ensure the effective acquisition and retention of treasury management skills for those responsible for the management, delivery, governance, decision-making and compliance with legislative requirements.

2. CIPFA defines Treasury Management as

The management of the organisation's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

3. The 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by the Council as part of the Capital Strategy in February 2023 and can be viewed at the following location.

<https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s25059/05%20Council%20Report%20-%20Capital%20Strategy%20Treasury%20Strategy%202023-24.pdf?LLL=0>

4. This report presents the following information:

- details of capital financing, borrowing, any debt rescheduling and investment transactions
- reports on the risk implications of treasury decisions and transactions
- details the monitoring position on treasury management transactions
- compliance with treasury limits set and Prudential Code

BORROWING STRATEGY / ACTIVITY

Short and Long Term Borrowing

5. Whilst the Council has significant long-term borrowing requirements, the Council's current strategy of funding capital expenditure is through the concept of 'internal borrowing', where the Council seeks to use its existing cash balances to afford its capital expenditure prior to taking out external borrowing i.e. deferring taking out new long term borrowing and funding capital expenditure from the Council's own cash resources for as long as is possible, which it has because of its 'cash-backed' reserves and, to a lesser extent, day to day positive cash-flows. The Council may undertake borrowing early if there is a clear underlying need for future borrowing and it feels it can minimise the risk of future interest rate rises while providing value for money. Any such action will be in line with advice from our treasury advisors.
6. There has been a substantial rise in the cost of both short- and long-term borrowing over the last 18 months. Bank Rate rose by 1% from 4.25% at the beginning of April to 5.25% at the end of September. Bank Rate was 2% higher than at the end of September 2022. Following the September Monetary Policy Committee, the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose, modestly

revised its interest forecast to reflect the central view that 5.25% will now be the peak in Bank Rate. In the short term the risks are to the upside if inflation increases again, but over the remaining part of the time horizon the risks are to the downside from economic activity weakening more than expected.

7. By using an internal borrowing strategy, the Council can also minimise cash holding at a time when counterparty risk remains relatively high, especially within the current economic climate. The interest rates achievable on the Council's investments are also lower than the current rates payable on long-term borrowing so this remains a sensible consideration in operating an 'internal borrowing' arrangement – i.e., it would cost more to borrow than it would to utilise existing investment balances and forego interest receivable. Whilst the strategy minimises investment counterparty risk, the risk of interest rate exposure is increased.
8. Given current investment levels, and whilst a couple of longstanding loans fall due for redemption between now and the financial year end, it is anticipated that the year-end position will still be a net investment balance. This also prudently assumes that capital spending is in line with the capital programme, when instead commonly service managers will identify an increasing need to slip capital budgets into following year as the year progresses, which in turn defers the need to borrow still further.
9. The following table compares the borrowing levels at the end of September with the equivalent from March 2023. A minimal amount of new long-term borrowing was required to be taken out in the first half of the financial year totalling £300k. This borrowing was from Salix which was interest free and was linked to a specific energy efficiency project. However, despite this there was still a net reduction in borrowing of £3.1m during 2023-24. This was due to the redemption of two small PWLB loans at the end of September, which have not been refinanced, plus there are a number of loans which are Equal Instalments of Principal (EIP) loans, which pays back principal over the life of the loan, so the borrowing levels decline naturally over the life of the loan as an alternative to maturity based loans where the amount borrowed is only repaid when the loan period expires.

Comparison	2023-24	2022-23
Public Works Loan Board	90,552,301	93,089,897
Interest Free Borrowing	9,947,012	9,905,757
LOBOs	30,000,000	30,000,000
Ex LOBO	5,000,000	5,000,000
Accrued Interest		606,212
	135,499,313	138,601,866

10. As well as traditional external borrowing via the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB), the Council had, as at 30th September 2023 LOBO (Lender Option / Borrower Option) borrowing totalling £30m. One of the features of a LOBO is that the lender can apply a change in rate at certain intervals, and this is more probable in an environment of rising interest rates, as currently being experienced. Therefore, all LOBOs outstanding are subject to potential change of interest rates by the lender (which would automatically trigger a right to the Council to repay these loans).
11. In late October, the Council received notification that the lender of a £5m LOBO had elected to increase the interest rate, and in November, the Council received notification that two other lenders, each with a £5m LOBO, had also elected to increase the interest rate. Following advice from the Council's treasury advisors, under delegated authority, the Head of Finance determined to redeem all three loans, rather than accept the increased interest rates. This was because the revised interest rates were higher than the current rates and no better than the current borrowing rates via the PWLB. In addition, by exiting from a LOBO arrangement, it allows the Council to de-risk an element of its borrowing portfolio, by taking away the risk of further interest rate rises on this specific loan. Whilst the Council had sufficient investment balances available to be able to afford the

repayment of two of the LOBOs, without a need to refinance them, the Council have applied to PWLB for a new £5m loan to replace the loan most recently repaid.

INVESTMENTS ACTIVITY / POSITION

12. The Council's strategies in this area of Treasury Management are:

- to be a short term and relatively low value investor, consistent with the pursuit of an 'internal borrowing strategy' and
- investment priorities should follow the priorities of security, liquidity and yield, in that order.

13. The following table compares the investment levels at the end of September 2023 with the equivalent from the end March 2023 and the previous year. This indicates a net increase in investment activity of £7.4m since March 2023, although it is anticipated that investment balances will naturally reduce as the year progresses.

Comparison	2023-24	2022-23
Investment	- 54,680,000	- 47,231,574
	- 54,680,000	- 47,231,574

14. The January 2018 saw the implementation in the UK of the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II), where treasury consulting firms were obliged to treat all local authorities as retail clients unless they opted up to professional client status and met certain criteria. Those criteria included holding a minimum of £10m investment balance and employing knowledgeable and experienced staff to carry out investment transactions. In February 2023, the Council invested in three covered bonds to satisfy this requirement; Santander (£3.5m), Lloyds (£4m) and Cie de Financement Foncier (£2.5m). These are longer term investments which helps diversify our investment portfolio and provide a high level of investment security.

NON-TREASURY INVESTMENTS

15. The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in the Investment Guidance issued by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) and Welsh Government, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

16. The Authority held such investments in:

- directly owned property such as office and commercial units of £10.6m
- loans to developers £10.3m
- shareholding in subsidiaries £0.3m (Newport Transport)

17. Directly held property is subject to annual valuation review which can change the value of the holding.

18. The developer loans activity reflects those regenerative partnership projects that are included within the capital programme to assist developers with cash flow loans on particular projects and which are required to be repaid plus interest.

OTHER TREASURY CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2023-24

Economic background and Counter Party Update

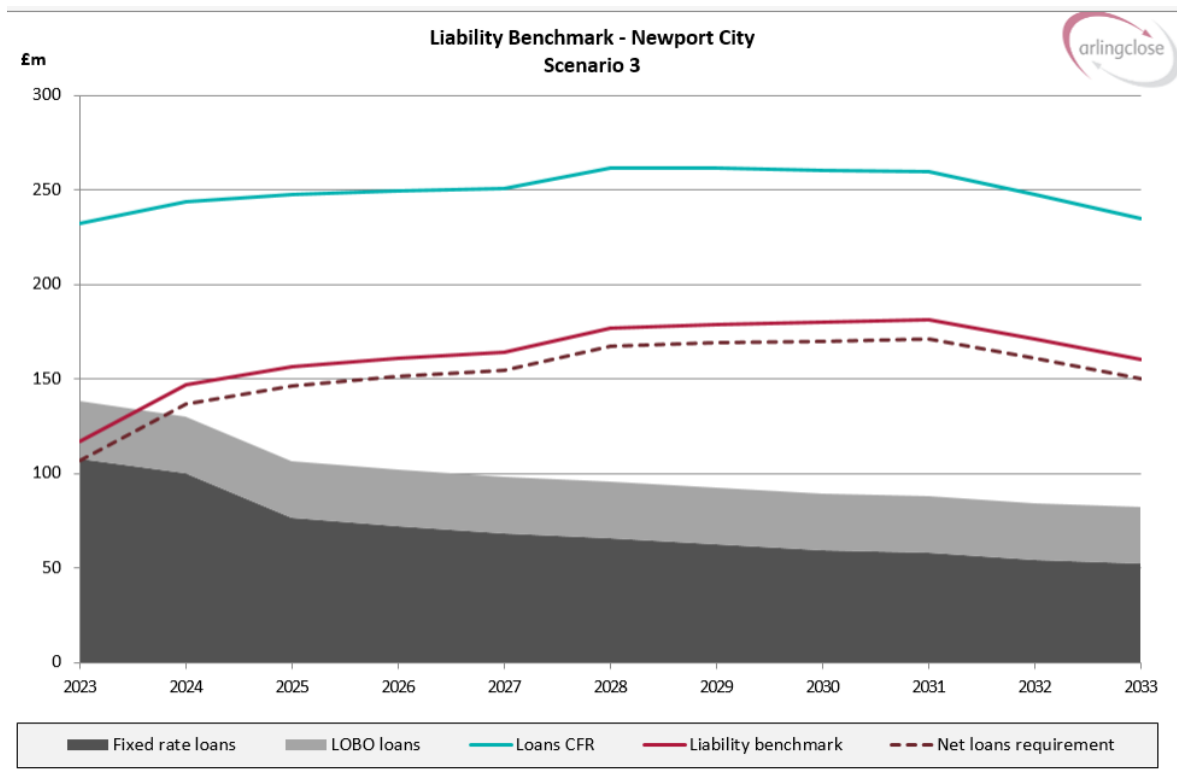
19. Appendix A outlines the underlying economic environment as provided by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, Arlingclose. This is very useful context in informing annual strategy and assisting in effective treasury decisions.
20. Having completed a review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits at UK and non-UK banks following concerns of a wider financial crisis after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank purchase of Credit Suisse by UBS, as well as other well-publicised banking sector issues, in March Arlingclose reduced the advised maximum duration limit for all banks on its recommended counterparty list to 35 days. This stance continued to be maintained at the end of the period.
21. Following the issue of a Section 114 notice, in September Arlingclose advised against undertaking new lending to Birmingham City Council, and later in the month cut its recommended duration on Warrington Borough Council to a maximum of 100 days.

Compliance with Prudential Indicators approved by Council

22. The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using various indicators which can be found in Appendix B. The Authority has complied with the Prudential Indicators for the first half of 2023/24, set in February 2023 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

Liability Benchmark Indicator

23. CIPFA recommends that the optimum position for external borrowing should be at the level of the Liability Benchmark (i.e. all balance sheet resources should be used to maximise internal borrowing). If the outputs show future periods where external loans are less than the Liability Benchmark, then this indicates a borrowing requirement thus identifying where the authority is exposed to interest rate, liquidity and refinancing risks. Conversely, where external loans exceed the Liability Benchmark then this will highlight an over borrowed position which will result in excess cash in the organisation requiring investment thus exposing the authority to credit and reinvestment risks and a potential cost of carry. The treasury strategy should explain how the treasury risks identified by the Liability Benchmark are to be managed over the coming years.
24. The Liability Benchmark is effectively the Net Borrowing Requirement of a local authority plus a liquidity allowance. In its simplest form, it is calculated by deducting the amount of investable resources available on the balance sheet (reserves, cash flow balances) from the amount of outstanding external debt and then adding the minimum level of investments required to manage day-to-day cash flow. It is often denoted in pictorial form using the following graph:



25. In the chart above, the blue line reflects the accumulated value of historic, and future, unfunded capital expenditure – i.e. expenditure initially funded by borrowing and then funded via the revenue budget, over time, in the form of MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision). In effect, this line represents the gross amount of borrowing required.

The solid red line is the calculated actual/real level of borrowing required, taking into account the Council’s internal borrowing capacity (i.e. the value of balance sheet resources at any point in time). The gap between the blue and red lines represents the internal borrowing capacity.

The grey shaded areas represent the actual borrowing undertaken by the Council as of 30 September 2023 and shows how these loans reduce as they are scheduled for repayment.

The white gap between the solid red line and the grey shaded areas represents the estimated amount of new borrowing required over the next ten years. A large proportion of this new borrowing would be to replenish existing maturing borrowing, with the remainder being required as a result of the Council’s capital expenditure plans.

Outlook for short to medium term

26. As outlined in the Liability Benchmark graph, and elsewhere in the report, the Council has a longer term underlying need to borrow. This is driven by the increasing expenditure on the Capital Programme, with a significant peak expected during 2023/24 and 2024/25, as well as the need to refinance existing borrowing. It is anticipated that the need to borrow will crystallise towards the first half of the 2024/25 financial year. In the intervening period, the Council should be able to manage its cashflow requirements through its internal borrowing strategy and gradually reducing the level of investments held. If there are any short term cashflow needs, these can be addressed via short term borrowing.

27. Aside from LOBOs, which could potentially see interest rate rises, all of the external borrowing is on a fixed rate basis. Therefore, and in line with advice from the treasury advisors, the intention is to hold off undertaking any borrowing until absolutely necessary, in anticipation that rates will reduce,

even if not to the levels available in recent years. This position will be reviewed on a regular basis in conjunction with the treasury advisors, especially in light of the volatile economic context and the regularly changing borrowing rates.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Investment counterparty not repaying investments	High, but depending on investment value.	Low	The Council only invests with institutions with very high credit scores. It employs advisors to monitor money market movements and changes to credit scores and acts immediately should things change adversely. The lower levels of funds available for investment will also alleviate the risk. Colleagues also monitor financial circulars and Treasury consultants advice to be able to respond in a timely fashion, and withdrew its investment from one local authority recently.	Members, Head of Finance, Treasury staff, based on advice from treasury advisors
Interest Rates moving adversely against expectations	Medium	Medium	Interest rates are currently volatile, however the Council's external borrowing is based on fixed interest rates, although there is a degree of risk in relation to LOBOs. The Council will continue to monitor interest rates in anticipation of a medium term need to borrow and will work with its treasury advisors to identify the optimum time to undertake any new borrowing.	Head of Finance, Treasury staff, treasury advisors

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

It is the Council's policy to ensure that the security of the capital sums invested is fully recognised and has absolute priority. The Council follows the advice of the Welsh Government that any investment decisions take account of security, liquidity and yield in that order.

Options Available and considered

The Prudential Code and statute requires that, during and at the end of each financial year, reports on these matters are presented to Council for approval.

Preferred Option and Why

The approach required by statute is quite prescriptive, such that there are not many choices/options. This report is a regular half yearly event. The Governance and Audit Committee acts as the main scrutiny mechanism before a similar report is received by Cabinet/Council. Cabinet has considered the report and full Council is required to note the contents of the report.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Decisions made on treasury matters will be made with a view to complying with the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators, taking advice, where needed, from our treasury advisors.

The report reflects a relatively stable period from a treasury management perspective. Borrowing levels have reduced slightly, as expected and investment balances have actually increased, although it is expected that this trend will reverse during the second half of the year, as would traditionally be the case. As highlighted in previous reports, and confirmed by the Liability Benchmark indicator, there remains an underlying, medium-term, need to borrow, which is currently anticipated to crystallise during the first part of 2024/25.

The indications are that interest rate volatility has now calmed, with our treasury advisors forecasting that rates will remain broadly in line with current levels, before starting to steadily reduce. Because of this, and the fact that there is not an imminent need to borrow, there is not an intention to undertake new long-term external borrowing until absolutely necessary, unless there are financial advantages of doing so or because it is required in order to replace any further repayment of LOBOs. Rates will continue to be closely monitored on a regular basis, to identify any change in circumstances.

It may be necessary to undertake some short-term borrowing to assist with managing day to day cashflow requirements and, if that is required, I have the necessary delegated authority to undertake this. The same also applies should any further existing LOBOs be repaid and require refinancing. Should that eventuality arise, the Council would liaise with its treasury advisors and carefully consider the best option for refinancing those loans, unless they could be afforded from within existing investment balances.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications. The in year and annual treasury management report is consistent with relevant Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Guidance, Treasury Management principles and the Council's investment Strategy.

Comments of Head of People, Policy & Transformation

There are no direct HR implications associated with the report.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to balance short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs as outlined in the approach taken.

Comments of Cabinet Member

N/A

Local issues

N/A

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**

- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

For this report, a full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken. This is because this report is not seeking any strategic decisions or policy changes, with its purpose being to update on the treasury management activities for the year retrospectively. However, fairness and equality are considered as part of service delivery and will feature in annual finance reports, such as the Treasury and Capital Strategy.

In terms of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, and the five ways of working contained within it, this report highlights examples of these being supported. This report is a backwards looking report of the treasury management activities of the Council. It shows that we followed the treasury management strategy and the compliance with prudential code and treasury management indicators. This links into the long-term objectives of the authorities and ensures that the Councils' activities are carried out in an affordable, prudent and sustainable manner.

In the case of the Welsh Language, the service will continue to ensure that, wherever possible, services or information is available in the medium of Welsh.

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better-informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. Nothing in this report is considered to have a direct equality impact.

Consultation

N/A

Background Papers

Report to Council February 2023: Capital Strategy and Treasury Strategy.

Dated: 20th November 2023

APPENDIX A

Introduction

The Authority's treasury management strategy for 2023/24 was approved at a meeting on 28th February 2023. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

External Context (Provided by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors)

Economic background: UK inflation remained stubbornly high over much the period compared to the US and euro zone, keeping expectations elevated of how much further the Bank of England (BoE) would hike rates compared to the regions. However, inflation data published in the latter part of the period undershot expectations, causing financial markets to reassess the peak in BoE Bank Rate. This was followed very soon after by the BoE deciding to keep Bank Rate on hold at 5.25% in September, against expectation for another 0.25% rise.

Economic growth in the UK remained relatively weak over the period. In calendar Q2 2023, the economy expanded by 0.2%. However, monthly GDP data showed a 0.5% contraction in July, the largest fall to date in 2023 and worse than the 0.2% decline predicted which could be an indication the monetary tightening cycle is starting to cause recessionary or at the very least stagnating economic conditions.

July data showed the unemployment rate increased to 4.3% (3mth/year) while the employment rate rose to 75.5%. Pay growth was 8.5% for total pay (including bonuses) and 7.8% for regular pay, which for the latter was the highest recorded annual growth rate. Adjusting for inflation, pay growth in real terms were positive at 1.2% and 0.6% for total pay and regular pay respectively.

Inflation continued to fall from its peak as annual headline CPI declined to 6.7% in July 2023 from 6.8% in the previous month against expectations for a tick back up to 7.0%. The largest downward contribution came from food prices. The core rate also surprised on the downside, falling to 6.2% from 6.9% compared to predictions for it to only edge down to 6.8%.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee continued tightening monetary policy over most of the period, taking Bank Rate to 5.25% in August. Against expectations of a further hike in September, the Committee voted 5-4 to maintain Bank Rate at 5.25%. Each of the four dissenters were in favour of another 0.25% increase.

Financial market Bank Rate expectations moderated over the period as falling inflation and weakening data gave some indication that higher interest rates were working. Expectations fell from predicting a peak of over 6% in June to 5.5% just ahead of the September MPC meeting, and to then expecting 5.25% to be the peak by the end of the period.

Following the September MPC meeting, Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, modestly revised its interest forecast to reflect the central view that 5.25% will now be the peak in Bank Rate. In the short term the risks are to the upside if inflation increases again, but over the remaining part of the time horizon the risks are to the downside from economic activity weakening more than expected.

The lagged effect of monetary policy together with the staggered fixed term mortgage maturities over the next 12-24 months means the full impact from Bank Rate rises are still yet to be felt by households. As such, while consumer confidence continued to improve over the period, the GfK measure hit -21 in September, it is likely this will reverse at some point. Higher rates will also impact business and according to S&P/CIPS survey data, the UK manufacturing and services sector contracted during the quarter with all measures scoring under 50, indicating contraction in the sectors.

The US Federal Reserve increased its key interest rate to 5.25-5.50% over the period, pausing in September following a 0.25% rise the month before, and indicating that it may have not quite completed its monetary tightening cycle.

Having fallen throughout 2023, annual US inflation started to pick up again in July 2023, rising from 3% in June, which represented the lowest level since March 2021, to 3.2% in July and then jumping again to 3.7% in August, beating expectations for a rise to 3.6%. Rising oil prices were the main cause of the increase. US GDP growth registered 2.1% annualised in the second calendar quarter of 2023, down from the initial estimate of 2.4% but above the 2% expansion seen in the first quarter.

The European Central Bank increased its key deposit, main refinancing, and marginal lending interest rates to 4.00%, 4.50% and 4.75% respectively in September, and hinted these levels may represent the peak in rates but also emphasising rates would stay high for as long as required to bring inflation down to target.

Although continuing to decline steadily, inflation has been sticky, Eurozone annual headline CPI fell to 5.2% in August while annual core inflation eased to 5.3% having stuck at 5.5% in the previous two months. GDP growth remains weak, with recent data showing the region expanded by only 0.1% in the three months to June 2023, the rate as the previous quarter.

Financial markets: Financial market sentiment and bond yields remained volatile, with the latter generally trending downwards as there were signs inflation, while still high, was moderating and interest rates were at a peak.

Gilt yields fell towards the end of the period. The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 3.30% to peak at 4.91% in July before trending downwards to 4.29%, the 10-year gilt yield rose from 3.43% to 4.75% in August before declining to 4.45%, and the 20-year yield from 3.75% to 4.97% in August and then fell back to 4.84%. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.73% over the period.

Credit review: Having completed a review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits at UK and non-UK banks following concerns of a wider financial crisis after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank purchase of Credit Suisse by UBS, as well as other well-publicised banking sector issues, in March Arlingclose reduced the advised maximum duration limit for all banks on its recommended counterparty list to 35 days. This stance continued to be maintained at the end of the period.

During the second quarter of the period, Moody's revised the outlook on Svenska Handelsbanken to negative from stable, citing concerns around the Swedish real estate sector.

Having put the US sovereign rating on Rating Watch Negative earlier in the period, Fitch took further action in August, downgrading the long-term rating to AA+, partly around ongoing debt ceiling concerns but also an expected fiscal deterioration over the next couple of years.

Following the issue of a Section 114 notice, in September Arlingclose advised against undertaking new lending to Birmingham City Council, and later in the month cut its recommended duration on Warrington Borough Council to a maximum of 100 days.

Arlingclose continued to monitor and assess credit default swap levels for signs of ongoing credit stress and although no changes were made to recommended durations over the period, Northern Trust Corporation was added to the counterparty list.

Heightened market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, as ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.

APPENDIX B

Local Context

On 30th September 2023, the Authority had net borrowing of £80.8m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.03.23 Actual £m	31.03.24 Forecast £m
General Fund CFR	270.9	280.0
Less: *Other debt liabilities	38.5	36.1
Borrowing CFR	232.4	243.9
Less: Usable reserves	-139	-104
Less: Working capital	-2	-4
Net borrowing	91.4	136.2

* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

The treasury management position on 30th September 2023 and the change over the six months is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.23 Balance £m	Movement £m	30.9.23 Balance £m	30.9.23 Rate %
Long-term borrowing	128.7	(3.1)	125.6	3.6
Long term interest free borrowing	9.9	0.0	9.9	-
Short-term borrowing	0.0	-	-	-
Total borrowing	138.6	(3.1)	135.5	3.6
Long-term investments	(10.0)	0.0	(10.0)	4.3
Short-term investments	(30.2)	(11.3)	(41.5)	-
Cash and cash equivalents	(7.0)	3.8	(3.2)	0.3
Total investments	(47.2)	(7.4)	(54.7)	4.6
Net borrowing	91.4	(10.6)	80.8	8.2

A minimal amount of new long-term borrowing was taken out in the first half of the financial year totalling £300k. This borrowing was from Salix which was interest free and was linked to a specific energy efficiency project. However, the Council also have a number of other loans with Salix which are EIPs which is why long term interest free borrowing has not increased. The Council have also redeemed two small PWLB loans at the end of September, which have not been refinanced, plus we have a number of loans with PWLB which are Equal Instalments of Principal (EIP) loans as well.

Short term investments have increased during the period but this is part of the normal day to day treasury management activity of managing cashflows.

Borrowing

CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes.

The Authority has not invested in assets primarily for financial return or that are not primarily related to the functions of the Authority. It has no plans to do so in the future.

Borrowing strategy and activity

As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.

There was a substantial rise in the cost of both short- and long-term borrowing over the last 18 months. Bank Rate rose by 1% from 4.25% at the beginning of April to 5.25% at the end of September. Bank Rate was 2% higher than at the end of September 2022.

UK gilt yields were volatile, mainly facing upward pressure since early April following signs that UK growth had been more resilient, inflation stickier than expected, and that the Bank of England saw persistently higher rates through 2023/24 as key to dampening domestic demand. Gilt yields, and consequently PWLB borrowing rates, rose and broadly remained at elevated levels. On 30th September, the PWLB certainty rates for maturity loans were 5.26% for 10-year loans, 5.64% for 20-year loans and 5.43% for 50-year loans. Their equivalents on 31st March 2023 were 4.33%, 4.70% and 4.41% respectively.

At 30th September the Authority held £135.5m of loans, a decrease of £3.1m to 31st March 2023, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 30th September are summarised in Table 3A below.

Table 3A: Borrowing Position

	31.3.23	Net Movement	30.9.23	30.9.23	30.9.23
	Balance		Balance	Weighted Average	Weighted Average
	£m	£m	£m	Rate %	Maturity (years)
Public Works Loan Board	93.1	(2.5)	90.6	3.6	18.0
Banks (LOBO)	30.0	-	30.0	4.4	31.0
Banks (fixed-term)	5.0	-	5.0	3.8	54.7
Local authorities (long-term)	-	-	-	-	-
Local authorities (short-term)	-	-	-	-	-
Other inc. WG loans	9.9	0.0	9.9	-	0.4
Accrued interest	0.6	(0.6)	-	-	-
Total borrowing	138.6	(3.1)	135.5	3.6	21.3

The Authority's borrowing decisions are not predicated on any one outcome for interest rates

LOBO loans: On 1st April 2023, the Authority held £30m of LOBO (Lender’s Option Borrower’s Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate and terms or to repay the loan at no additional cost.

As market interest rates rose, there was increased probability of call options on the LOBOs being exercised by lenders. £30m of LOBO loans had annual/semi-annual call option dates during the six-month period to September 2023, no LOBO loans were called

The Authority has £30m LOBO loans with call dates within the next 12 months, some of which will occur during the remainder of the financial year. The Authority has liaised with treasury management advisors Arlingclose over the likelihood of the options being exercised. If the option is exercised and an increased rate proposed, the authority will consider its options at that particular point, in conjunction with advice from Arlingclose. It may choose to repay the loan from existing short term investment balances and, in doing so, mitigate the risk of future interest rate rises on that particular loan. Alternatively, depending upon the availability of cash and the new rate being proposed, the Authority may decide to accept the new interest rate.

Other Debt Activity

Although not classed as borrowing, the Authority previously raised capital finance to afford Glan Usk School and the Southern Distributor Road. The Accounts for 2022-23 an outstanding liability of £39m to pay to the operator.

Treasury Investment Activity

The CIPFA Treasury Management Code now defines treasury management investments as those investments which arise from the Authority’s cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the half year, the Authority’s investment balances ranged between £47.2 and £80.9 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.23		30.09.23	30.09.23	30.09.23
	Balance	Movement	Balance	Income Return	Weighted average maturity
	£m	£m	£m	%	Years
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	-	(0.9)	(0.9)	1.5	On Call
Government (incl. local authorities)	(30.2)	(11.3)	(41.5)	5.2	0.3
Money Market Funds	(7.0)	4.8	(2.3)	3.7	On Call
Covered Bonds	(10.0)	0.0	(10.0)	4.3	4.3
Total investments	(47.2)	(7.4)	(54.7)	5.0	1.0

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority’s objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments are therefore primarily made to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments.

Bank Rate increased by 1%, from 4.25% at the beginning of April to 5.25% by the end of September. Short-dated cash rates rose commensurately, with 3-month rates rising to around 5.25% and 12-month rates to nearly 6%. The rates on DMADF deposits also rose, ranging between 4.8% and 5.4% by the end of June and Money Market Rates between 4.1 and 5.2%.

The £10m that is available for longer-term investment is invested in covered bonds, which has been maintained since the last report and no change is expected in the medium term.

The progression of risk and return metrics are shown in the extracts from Arlingclose's quarterly investment benchmarking in Table 5 below.

Statutory override: In April 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published the full outcome of the consultation on the extension of the statutory override on accounting for gains and losses on pooled investment funds. The override has been extended for two years until 31st March 2025, but no other changes have been made; whether the override will be extended beyond the new date is unknown but commentary to the consultation outcome suggests not. The Authority will discuss with Arlingclose the implications for the investment strategy and what action may need to be taken, although it should be noted that the Council currently has no long-term pooled fund investments.

Non-Treasury Investments

The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

The Authority also held investments in

- directly owned property such as office and commercial units of £10.6m
- loans to developers £10.3m
- shareholding in subsidiaries £0.3m

These investments generated £0.45m in 2022/23 of investment income for the Authority after taking account of direct costs.

Compliance

The Head of Finance reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Investment Limits

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit	30.09.23 Actual	Complied? Yes / No
The UK Government	50 years	Unlimited	n/a		✓
Local authorities & other government entities	25 years	£10m	Unlimited	41.5	✓
Secured investments *	25 years	£10m	Unlimited	10.0	✓
Banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£10m	Unlimited	0.9	✓
Building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£10m	£10m		✓
Registered providers (unsecured) *	5 years	£10m	£25m		✓
Money market funds *	n/a	£10m	Unlimited	2.3	✓
Strategic pooled funds	n/a	£10m	£25m		✓
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£10m	£25m		✓
Other investments *	5 years	£10m	£5m		✓

Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 8 below.

Table 8: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	2023/24 Maximum	30.09.23 Actual	2023/24 Operational Boundary	2023/24 Authorised Limit	Complied? Yes / No
Borrowing	138	135.5	150	246	✓
PFI and Finance Leases	38	36.2	39	39	✓
Total debt	176	171.7	189	285	✓

Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

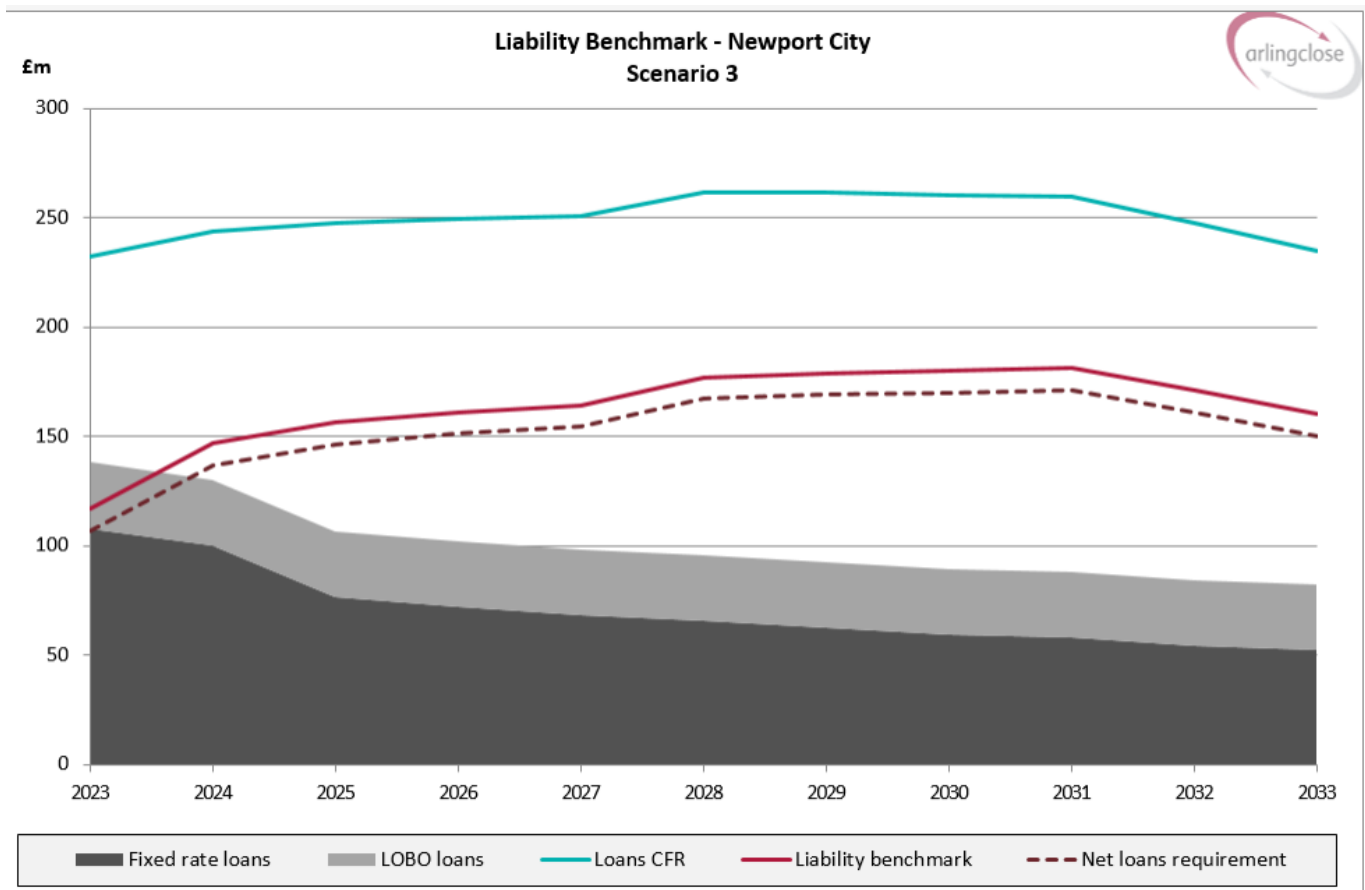
As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

1. Liability Benchmark:

This indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £10m required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

	31.3.23 Actual	31.3.24 Forecast	31.3.25 Forecast	31.3.26 Forecast
Loans CFR	232.2	243.9	247.6	249.7
Less: Balance sheet resources	-125.3	-107.2	-101.1	-98.6
Net loans requirement	106.9	136.7	146.5	151.1
Plus: Liquidity allowance	10	10	10	10
Liability benchmark	116.9	146.7	156.5	161.1
Existing borrowing	-137.2	-159.3	-135.4	-130.9

Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes no new capital expenditure funded by borrowing until 2028/29 (other than that already approved as part of the Capital Programme), minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 25 year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.5% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing.



Whilst borrowing may be above the liability benchmark, strategies involving borrowing which is significantly above the liability benchmark carry higher risk.

2. Maturity Structure of Borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	30.09.23 Actual	Upper limit	Lower limit	Complied

Under 12 months	27%	60%	0%	✓
12 months and within 24 months	17%	40%	0%	✓
24 months and within 5 years	8%	40%	0%	✓
5 years and within 10 years	9%	40%	0%	✓
10 years and within 20 years	17%	30%	0%	✓
20 years and within 30 years	3%	20%	0%	✓
30 years and within 40 years	15%	20%	0%	✓
40 years and within 50 years	0%	20%	0%	✓
50 years and above	4%	20%	0%	✓

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

3. Long-term Treasury Management Investments: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	No fixed date
Actual principal invested beyond year end	10	10	10	10
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£10m	£10m	£10m	£10m
Complied	✓	✓	✓	✓

Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

Interest Rate Exposures: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. Bank Rate rose by 1.25% from 4.25% on 1st April to 5.25% by 30th September.

Interest rate risk indicator	Limit	30.09.23 Actual	Complied
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	£200,000	13,714	✓
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	£100,000	31,800	✓

For context, the changes in interest rates during the first half of the year were:

	<u>31/3/23</u>	<u>30/9/23</u>
Bank Rate	4.25%	5.25%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.78%	5.69%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.31%	5.22%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.33%	5.26%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.70%	5.64%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.41%	5.43%

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Regional Partnership Board Area Plan and Annual Report

Purpose Presentation of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) Area Plan 2023 – 2027 and RPB Annual Report 2022/23

Author Head of Regional Partnership team
Strategic Director Social Services

Ward All Wards

Summary The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 lays out the statutory framework for the presentation of the area plan and an annual report on the work of the Regional Partnership Board. The format and nature of the report is determined by Welsh Government with a requirement for submission to the statutory partners and Welsh Government.

There are thus two elements within this item the Area Plan and the Annual Report. While the Area Plan is a forward-looking document the Annual Report is a reflection of the work of the past year.

Proposal

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to consider the joint regional commitments within the Area Plan.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to review the RPB Annual Report and progress made against the objectives; and provide any feedback/comments.

Action by Strategic Director Social Services

Timetable Immediate

Signed

1. Background

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) places a statutory duty on local authorities and health boards to prepare a regional Area Plan, following the publication of the region's population needs assessment (PNA) and Market Stability Report (MSR). The Gwent PNA was previously signed off by NCC during Autumn 2022 and a commitment was made to share the Gwent Area Plan with Newport Council members, to set out how regional priorities are to be delivered in partnership.

The **Gwent Area Plan 2023-2027** has been completed and signed off by Gwent RPB. The plan has been developed in partnership with Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Torfaen local authorities, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Third Sector partners and the Regional Partnership Team. The Area Plan sets out the actions required to achieve the priorities identified in the PNA, by our partners and citizens, and closely aligns and share similar principles of working to the Public Service Board (PSB) and Well-being Plan. The Area Plan is reviewed annually and can be updated to ensure we are meeting the needs of our communities.

The progress against delivery of key objectives in the Area Plan, is monitored through the **RPB Annual Report** which considers specifically the priority groups set out in the PNA and cross cutting themes.

2. Previous Consideration of this item

This is the first time the Area Plan 2023 - 2027 has been presented. The last Gwent Regional Area Plan was brought in 2019 for comment and feedback.

The Annual Report for 2021 – 22 was presented to Cabinet in November 2022.

3. Information Submitted to Cabinet

Following the publication of the regional Population Needs Assessment (PNA) report each local authority and health board are required to prepare and publish an Area Plan setting out the range and level of services they propose to provide in response to the PNA core themes, which are:

- Children & Young People
- Older People, including People with Dementia
- Health & Physical Disabilities including Sensory Loss & Impairment
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Learning Disabilities
- Autism and Neurodevelopmental Conditions
- Unpaid Carers
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence

Core themes are not addressed in isolation and there is an element of cross cutting working, in addition to the above including:

- A resilient skilled and integrated health and social care workforce
- Housing needs
- Rebalancing health and social care including social value
- Substance misuse
- Adult protection, child protection and safeguarding
- Transforming children's services and removing profit from the care of looked after children
- Tackling loneliness and isolation

Area plans must include the specific services planned in response to each core theme identified in the population assessment. As part of this, area plans must include:

- The actions partners will take in relation to the priority areas of integration for Regional Partnership Board
- Administer and monitor Welsh Government grant funding e.g. Regional Integrated Fund (RIF)
- The instances and details of pooled funds to be established in response to the population assessment.
- How services will be procured or arranged to be delivered, including by alternative delivery models.
- Details of the preventative services that will be provided or arranged.
- Actions being taken in relation to the provision of information, advice, and assistance services.
- Actions required to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

The Area Plan highlights our commitment to work in partnership to improve the health and wellbeing across the population of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Torfaen. Given current challenges and financial pressures, it is paramount to work in partnership to deliver joint solutions to shared priorities and avoid duplication.

There are several statutory duties placed on all local authorities under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and further details are included in the underpinning codes of practice. In total, there are 299 'Must Dos' and 236 'Should Dos' included and facilitated through RPT and RPB on behalf of NCC. Both development of Area Plan and RPB Annual Report are duties placed on NCC.

	<i>Must DOs</i>	<i>Should DOs</i>
Local Authorities	75	25
Health boards	18	9
Local authorities and health boards	14 + (18)	6 + (22)
RPB	20	20
TOTAL	240 + (77)	130 + (115)
	317	245

The regional Area Plan has been developed with ABUHB and Integrated Service Partnership Board (ISPB) colleagues to ensure alignment with the Newport ISPB Plan. The RPB will work closely with the 5 ISPBs across the region to ensure plans are delivered in collaboration, resources maximised, and duplication is avoided. A copy of the Newport ISPB plan is published alongside the Area Plan <https://www.gwentrpb.wales/area-plan>

A section of the Area Plan is monitored at each Strategic Partnership that sits within the RPB governance structure, to evaluate progress; with an annual review report by the RPB via an Annual Report which is submitted to Welsh Government.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

1. To consider the joint commitments within the Area Plan.

The Area Plan 2023-2028 is a continuation of the previous joint 5-year area plan and is informed by the Population Needs Assessment (PNA) completed in 2022. The effectiveness of delivering the plan and making a difference to people's lives in our communities, is dependent on a commitment to partnerships and integrated working.

2. To review the RPB Annual Report and progress made against the objectives; and provide any feedback/comments.

The Annual report is presented to all the Strategic partnerships that sit within the governance structure of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) including the RPB. The report highlights progress being made against the commitments in the area plan.

5. Suggested Lines of Enquiry

In evaluating the delivery of the Regional Partnership Board's Strategic Priorities in Annual Report 2022/2023, Cabinet may wish to provide further feedback or comment. Cabinet may wish to provide comment on national grant funding overseen by RPB.

6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Area Plan links to Newport City Council's Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives. It looks to improve the wellbeing of people who need care and support through integration and partnership working, to transform health and social care in Gwent. People are at the heart of the Area Plan and all the work we do, as we work in coproduction with citizens so they can share their expertise and experiences, to help shape services and support across the region.

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.

7. Impact Assessment

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

The Regional Partnership Team (RPT) worked closely with LA officers developing the regional Public Service Board Wellbeing Assessment for Gwent to ensure close alignment with the RPB's Population Needs Assessment. Population data and future trends were shared to avoid duplication of effort, and this also included equality impact assessments across statutory groups. The summary of impact for the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Equality Act 2010, the Socio-economic Duty, and the Welsh Language are all included in the PSB Wellbeing Assessment and the Population Needs Assessment.




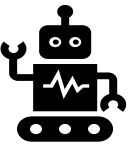

8. Links to Background Papers and Summary information





- A) Regional Area Plan 2023-2027 <https://www.gwentrbp.wales/area-plan>
- B) Area Plan Summary

Welsh Government Core Theme	Outcome Priority
Children and Young People	<p>To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community-based support, and placements closer to home.</p> <p>To ensure good mental health and emotional wellbeing for children and young people through effective partnership working especially mitigating long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
Older People including Dementia	<p>To improve emotional wellbeing for older people by reducing loneliness and social isolation with earlier intervention and community resilience.</p> <p>To improve outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.</p> <p>To support older people to live, or return following a period of hospitalisation, to their own homes and communities through early intervention, integrated care models and a whole system approach.</p> <p>To mitigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic through, especially reducing waiting lists and times to access support, appointments, and medical procedures</p>
Health and Physical Disabilities including people with sensory impairment	<p>To support disabled people, including sensory impairment, through an all-age approach to live independently in appropriate accommodation and access community-based services, including transport.</p> <p>Ensure people are supported through access to accurate information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required.</p> <p>Improve transition across all age groups and support services.</p> <p>Ensure people are supported through access to accurate accessible information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required.</p>
People with a Learning Disability	<p>To support people with learning disabilities to live independently with access to early intervention services in the community; and greater public awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities needs.</p>
Mental Health	<p>Increase understanding and awareness of mental health amongst the public, to reduce stigma and help people to seek support earlier.</p> <p>We need to improve emotional well-being and mental health for adults and children through timely early intervention and community support.</p>
Carers	<p>Support unpaid carers to care through flexible respite, access to accurate information, peer to peer support, effective care planning and through increased public understanding.</p> <p>Improve well-being of young carers and young adult carers and mitigate against long-term impacts</p>
Autism	<p>To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information.</p>
Housing	<p>A multi-agency partnership approach to ensure appropriate housing and accommodation for older people and vulnerable citizens.</p> <p>To ensure effective use of Disabled Facilities Grants and appropriate partnership support and available resources.</p> <p>Homelessness requiring a collaborative response from public services and partners, especially the non-use of B&B accommodation for young people, and through prevention and early intervention.</p>

C) RPB Annual Report 2022/23 link: [RPB Annual reports - Gwentrpb](#)

D) Key Developments over the last Year

	<p>Carers Annual Report: Carers team supports implementation of various programmes across the region 415 successful applicants provided with £415,000 to support Young Carers in School: 599 members of staff have taken part in 17 face-to-face ‘Young Carers: Identifying Us’ training sessions and 19 virtual sessions Over 100 Young Carers supported through schools. Training and awareness: a broad range of Gwent services have been represented at training sessions where 8 Community Awareness sessions were held attended by 120 people, 39 workshops were held attended by 332 people and 52 people completed the on-line training</p>
	<p>Dewis figures The total number of published resources in Gwent over the past year has increased by 400 resources. Detailed views of resources have increased by 9,568. This is the number of times someone has searched for something on Dewis and then clicked to find more information. In March 2022 there was 31,227 clicks and in March 2023 there was 40,795. Registered users have increased by 365. Expired resources have reduced from 158 to 65 showing that currency of the directory is improving.</p>
	<p>Dementia Conference There were over 130 partners who attended the Gwent Dementia Friendly Communities conference at The Christchurch Centre, in September 2022 and 35 partners who attended the Gwent Dementia Friendly Webinar and 87% respondents wanted to become more involved in the dementia agenda across Gwent. Dementia Friends Dementia Friends sessions and supporting online connections with communities. 1,468 Dementia Friends have been made across 98 sessions during 2022 – 2023.</p>
	<p>Assistive Technology (AT) Over 650 AT devices have been distributed to all sectors across Gwent including the Happiness Programme, HUG and RITA to support well-being and positive stimulation.</p>
	<p>Workforce & College Consortium Social Care Work Placements - regional work placement process was launched in September 2022 to support students to apply for LA work placements and for LA social care teams to adequately prepare to accept these placements. 13 work placement applications have been received and facilitated by LA social care teams. Coleg Gwent campuses, the ‘Placement to Progression’ events. Held in Oct/Nov across 4 Coleg Gwent campuses, events have supported students with securing work placements while providing local providers the opportunity to promote part-time vacancies to the current student cohort. 52 work placement applications have been received by providers and 24 commissioned providers attended the events, all were from the adult care sector or 3rd sector.</p>

	ABUHB Work Placements. 25 students have been cleared and are ready to start placements with ABUHB. As of the 14 th of November, these students will be placed on wards
	Micro carers MCC pilot: There are currently 7 micro carers on the directory, providing around 70 hours of carer each week as of Dec 22. There are 3 more micro carers going through training. Updated figures will be available following the project evaluation. Costings of Recruitment agencies costing a total of £1575 for 70 hours, whereas Micro carers costings a total of £1155 for 70 hours. Micro carers provide a saving of £420 per week.
	Launch of Autism Code of Practice and Autism Conference. 240 people attended, day long awareness and training event 100% delegates felt better informed of autism after the event.
	Communications and Engagement Regional Partnership page views have increased from 7,470 (2021-2022) to 22,502 (2022-2023) – See Annex: 4.
	AskSARA As of February, all metrics (users, new users, sessions, reports, bounce rate) have increased. The user/report percentage and bounce rate remain at very positive levels, indicating users are interacting well with the site. Good variety of referral sources. 90% of users would recommend AskSARA, 71% were helped to find a solution or equipment.

E) Use of Grant Funding

In 2022-23 the Regional Partnership Board utilised Welsh Government grant funding and the following has been achieved across the region:

- 19,310 unpaid carers have accessed services, with 2083 feeling less isolated and 2479 achieving personal outcomes.
- 2,597 children at risk of entering care have been supported, to date 600 have achieved personal outcomes.
- We have provided intensive support to 267 care leavers to develop coping strategies and achieve personal outcomes.
- 611 neurodivergent children and their families have been supported, with 515 reporting good experiences.
- Additional capacity within Memory Assessment Services has enabled a total of 3644 people with cognitive impairment, living with dementia and young onset dementia to be supported and assessed.
- 12,462 contacts have been provided to support people to live well with Dementia, and an additional in-year referral acceptance of 2,577 people.
- The connected communities programme has assisted 25,276 adults via a range of prevention and wellbeing services to remain well within the community. Of which, 4968 report maintaining or improving their emotional health and wellbeing and 4396 are more aware of the support available to them.
- 12,498 individuals have received intermediate care in the community via the Place Based Graduated Care programme. 45% of stroke survivors have been supported to rehabilitate within the community, and 53% of individuals receiving intermediate care were prevented from hospital admission/crisis.

- Improving System Flow programme capacity supported 8824 individuals to leave hospital, with 1689 of these individuals receiving aids and adaptations to return home as independent as possible, and 2007 individuals achieved personal outcomes.
- 2505 people with learning disabilities achieved personal outcomes via the LD independence and wellbeing programme, with 1195 new individuals identified during 2022-23.
- 25,000 individuals have accessed information and advice via the Enhanced Foundation Tier programme, along with 169 training sessions provided across the partnership to support awareness and recognition of emotional wellbeing in self and others.
- The CVC led Third Sector Grants fund has supported 3107 individuals within the community, with 2511 reporting maintaining or improving their emotional health and wellbeing.

9. Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

This report has no financial implications. However, services within NCC are delivered using RIF which is administered via the RPB.

10. Risks

This plan and report reflect the work of the Regional Partnership Board. There are risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register for Social Services for 2022/23 with Pressure on Services, Risks to providers and Safeguarding being the key risks. While this plan and report references the challenges, they do not require decisions which would impact on these risks.

11. Options Available:

Cabinet is asked to consider and accept the report of the Regional Partnership Board. Cabinet is asked to consider the joint regional commitments within the Area Plan.

Cabinet is asked to review the RPB Annual Report and progress made against the objectives; and provide any feedback/comments.

12. Preferred Option and Why

For Cabinet to accept the Area Plan and the Annual Report.

13. Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The RPB Area Plan has the potential to result in financial implications for the Council not only in changing and developing services to meet the stated needs of the population but also in collaboration working, developing alternative delivery models and pooled funds. However, the plan aims to collaborate and reduce duplication and offer a partnership environment to tackle these challenges.

Any financial pressures or efficiencies arising from the developments within the plan will need to be reported as they emerge for formal approval and factored into the Council's MTFP as needed. Some services within NCC are delivered using RIF which is administered via the RPB and pressures relating to the tapering of this grant have been considered in the budget setting process.

14. Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. The Council has a statutory duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Act to carry out a joint Population Needs assessment with the local health board in relation to care and support within the Gwent region. A joint Area Plan must then be prepared to set out the services which are planned to be delivered locally to meet the social care needs identified in PNA. The Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with the legislation and statutory guidance and has been the subject of extensive engagement and consultation. The objectives and priorities identified in the Area Plan are also consistent with the Council's well-being objectives. Cabinet is now required to formally approve the Area Plan on behalf of the Council. In addition, the progress

against delivery of key objectives in the Area Plan is monitored through the RPB Annual Report which considers specifically the priority groups set out in the PNA and cross cutting themes. Cabinet is required to review the content of the Annual Report and may provide comments and feedback as necessary.

15. Comments of Head of People, Policy, and Transformation

The report seeks Cabinet consideration and review of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) Area Plan and RPB Annual Report 22/23. This report seeks comments and feedback on the progress outlined within the RPB Annual Report 22/23 and the objectives outlined within Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) Area Plan. The attached report and plan are focused on meeting the requirements of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB) and by addressing 'must dos and should dos' within this act. The regional ways of working outlined in this report are consistent with established regional partnership arrangements, with strategic governance established via the RPB.

An FEIA has not been completed for this report and plan submission, this has not been needed due to its previous completion and approval. The proposal supports the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the 5 Ways of Working ensuring that decisions by public bodies consider the impact they could have on people living in Gwent, both now and in the future.

The proposal also works towards the vision of the Corporate Plan 2022-27 to ensure that, 'People are at the heart of the Area Plan and all the work we do' by supporting its four well-being objectives. There are no direct HR implications associated with the proposal.

16. Scrutiny Committees

Scrutiny considered the Area Plan and the Annual Report on 10.10.2023. The collated comments are below:

Gwent Regional Partnership Board Area Plan

- Members expressed their gratitude to the officers for their presentation and commended the partnership board for their ongoing efforts. They noted that the document was quite intricate and repetitive, and felt that important information could get lost in the document as a result. While they understood the statutory need to present the report in this format, they suggested future reports could benefit from less repetition and jargon, or even be more concise. This would aid members in better understanding the presented information.
- Members requested that the report explicitly detail how the Regional Partnership Board collaborated with Leisure Trusts and local sporting governing bodies to improve recreation accessibility. They also enquired about any ongoing or completed projects in this regard, seeking information on their start dates, locations, success rates, and potential areas for improvement.
- Members commented regarding the Rapid Rehousing programme and the commitment to not use bed and breakfast accommodation to temporarily house young people and would like to request information on the Regional Partnership Board element of this commitment.
- The Committee expressed its intention to write to the Welsh Government, requesting a reconsideration of the planned tapering in the Regional Integration Fund, given the current financial circumstances.
- Members enquired whether the partnership had developed a strategy or engaged in cross-partnership collaboration with the health team to address the rising levels of obesity in the region.

Gwent Regional Partnership Board Annual Report

- Members wished to again commend the partnership for their ongoing efforts and commented on the excellent work by unpaid and young carers in particular, with the burden and pressure they face, whilst also dealing with their own complex needs. It was noted Welsh Government

grant funding is being used to provide services for over 19,000 unpaid carers, but only just over 2,000 of those reported feeling less isolated. Members were interested in exploring how we can improve uptake from unpaid carers and get more positive feedback.

- Members wanted to reiterate that the document was lengthy and recommended that future reports could be improved by reducing repetition and jargon, or by making them more concise.
- Members praised the case study of the Crick Road Dementia Project and spoke of it being innovative. Members would like to know whether this is going to be modelled elsewhere in the region.

17. Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment

As there is no decision required for this report a FEIA has not been completed.

18. Consultation

The Regional Partnership Board has representation on the Board itself from a range of citizen groups. The Board is supported by a Citizen's Panel. In addition, each of the subgroups is working in different ways to support co production and the engagement of all who use the services.

19. Background Papers

There are no additional background papers.

Dated: 21st November 2023.



Regional Area Plan 2023 – 2028

“Working together for a Healthier Gwent for the right care and support, in the right place, at the right time”

Foreword



The Regional Partnership Board have developed this Area Plan during the backdrop of extreme challenges and unprecedented demands. Public and Third Sector Services are still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic and its huge impact on the health and social care workforce which has been exacerbated by the recent cost of living increases and cuts to budgets. We are moving on from one of the toughest winter periods with 27th Dec 2022 the busiest day the NHS has experienced in its 70-year history; and this also indicates the challenges across social care and community.

The challenges highlight the need for partners to come together to collaborate more than ever, to create synergy across services and reduce duplication. The RPB will be central to creating the partnership environment to tackle these challenges and the Area Plan will set out how we intend to work together, pool resources and transform services. It is important to adopt all the principles of working, but integration of services and increasing community capacity, given the afore mentioned challenges will be a key priority and requires significant focus in supporting the Minister for Health and Social Services '*Further, Faster*' agenda.

We are passionate about improving and creating the best health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Gwent and put people at the heart of everything we do. We work closely with our communities to co-produce care and support services and making people and their families feel supported and listened to. We know that finding the right services and support is important and we want people in Gwent to be able to access the right services, at the right time and to feel empowered and supported.

Through the Area Plan we will also align actions to other strategic drivers such as Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan, ABUHB's IMTP and supporting ISPB plans. We will avoid duplication and maximise resources to also deliver national policies.

The RPB is a partnership of consensus and does not have executive powers, so it is crucial that priorities, actions, and delivery of services are agreed by all partners, resources combined, and organisational boundaries reduced to share risk and ensure effective partnership governance.

As RPB Chair I will ensure all partners focus on delivery of the Area Plan and the underpinning action plans to accelerate transformation of services that work, and regularly monitor progress of the plans to ensure we identify good practice and create synergy across partnerships.

Ann Lloyd, CBE – Gwent Regional Partnership Board Chair



It is excellent to see our consultations and conversations with members and attendees at our meetings reflected in the new Area Plan again for the Gwent region. We have had a very busy year, mainly online since the pandemic, but we have been engaging and listening to representatives on many of the key issues that our populations face. It has been an extremely difficult few years for many of our population and for those staff from our organisations who have been through exhausting experiences trying to keep us all well and safe. We would like to thank them all for their dedication and commitment which will never be forgotten.

We are always trying hard to be inclusive of all voices and welcome any new citizens who wish to join us and contribute their experiences and thoughts. The opportunity to ask questions of senior members of our public services who are on the pathway to integrating services is unique to Wales and in our area of Gwent, and we see the results of much closer working between those local authorities and the health board to provide us with clearer and more integrated services each year. We look forward to working with the members of the RPB and monitoring the activities and service provision that affects us all.

On behalf of the Gwent Citizen Panel thank you to all the contributors in this Plan and we look forward to seeing the strategies and objectives in the plan transform into good outcomes for us all.

Lorraine Morgan – Citizens Panel Chair

Both TVA and GAVO are members of the Regional Partnership Board. Our joint roles are to reflect the views of our member organisations and the wider Third Sector we represent.

We have been included and involved in the development of the Regional Area Plan. A huge amount of time and commitment has been invested in the Regional Area Plan and getting to the point of consultation. It is vital to success to receive responses to the consultation and to be able to collate and recognise a broad range of views.

**Stephen Tiley – Chief Executive Officer, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) &
Anne Evans – Strategic Executive Officer, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA)**

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INTRODUCTION

The Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB)

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the requirement for local authorities and local health boards to establish Regional Partnership Boards (RPB), to manage and develop services to secure strategic planning and partnership working. RPBs need to work with wider partners such as the third sector and providers to ensure care and support services are in place to best meet the needs of their respective populations.

The Gwent RPB includes Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local authorities and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). Under section 14A of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, RPBs are required to produce and implement plans (Area Plan) for each local authority area covered by the Board.

Principles of Working

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 shares similar principles with several national strategies and legislation, including the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The main difference between the acts being the time frame with which they are produced: the Area Plan under the Act reflects the Population Needs Assessment (PNA) and covers a 3–5-year period based on the electoral cycle and the Well-being Assessment under the Well-being of Future Generations Act covers a longer period.

Social Services and Wellbeing Act Principles	Sustainable Principles: Well-being of Future Generations
Services will promote the prevention of escalating need and the right help is available at the right time	Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse
Partnership and co-operation drives service delivery	<p>Collaboration: How acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of an organisation could help meet wellbeing objectives</p> <p>Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on wellbeing objectives, wellbeing goals, other objectives, or those of other public bodies</p>
People are at the heart of the new system by giving them an equal say in the support they receive.	Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of local communities.

The Act supports people who have care and support needs to achieve well-being

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs

The principle of wellbeing is at the heart of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and refers to the emotional, physical, and social wellbeing of a person who needs care and support. We are working in partnership to identify and apply significant changes in the way we plan, commission, and deliver care to ensure we are building on innovative models of work already taking place and strengthening asset-based approaches to strengthen our work around:

- **Citizen engagement** – to ensure we are hearing the voice of citizens, as they are experts in their own care and support needs.
- **Carers who need support** – to work together as equal partners.
- **Prevention and early intervention.**
- The **promotion of well-being** to delay and prevent escalating need for care and support provision.
- **Co-production of services and activities** – supporting experts by experience to share power and working together as equal partners.
- Strengthen and build on our **multi agency and partnership working** to ensure the principles of voice and control are achieved through the design and operation of services.

Marmot Principles

A recent Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) review: [Building a Fairer Gwent](#), has revealed that the lives of people in some areas of Gwent are being cut short, due to lifestyle inequalities. The RPB are working in collaboration to support the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) to help reduce inequalities and make Gwent the first Marmot Region in Wales.

Marmot Principles

1. Give every child the best start in life
2. Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. Create fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensure healthy standard of living for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.
7. Tackle discrimination, racism, and their outcomes.
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together.

A recent Marmot launch event identified the inequity of service provision and the 18-year gap in healthy life expectancy between the wealthiest and poorest areas of



Gwent. In the least well-off neighbourhoods in the region, women are living just 48 years of their life in good health. We are committed to supporting our partners and communities to work together to improve equity across Gwent and to improve the lives of local communities as a result. The RPB will clearly set out where the work of strategic partnerships is contributing to the development of a Marmot region as well as where work also contributes to the new National Outcomes Framework for Health and Social Care (see Appendix 7).

Regional Challenges to Partnership Working

The RPB have developed this Area Plan during the backdrop of extreme challenges and unprecedented demands. Public Services are still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic and its huge impact on the health and social care workforce which has been exacerbated by the recent cost of living increases and cuts to budgets. The challenges highlight the need for partners to come together to collaborate more than ever, to create synergy across services and reduce duplication. The RPB will be central to creating the partnership environment to tackle these challenges and the Area Plan will set out how we intend to work together, pool resources and transform services. It is important to adopt all the principles of working, but integration of services and increasing community capacity, given the afore mentioned challenges will be a key priority and requires significant transformation, supporting the Minister for Health and Social Services *'Further, Faster'* agenda.

Our Vision

'Working together for a Healthier Gwent for the right care and support, in the right place, at the right time'

We are passionate about improving and creating the best health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Gwent and put people at the heart of everything we do. We work closely with our communities to co-produce care and support services and making people and their families feel supported and listened to. We know that finding the right services and support is important and we want people in Gwent to be able to access the right services, at the right time and to feel empowered and supported as they do.

Area Plan Guidance Requirements

Section 14A of the Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act sets out the Area Plan requirements:

- The actions partners will take in relation to the priority areas for integration for RPBs.
- The instances and details of pooled funds to be established in response to the population needs assessment.
- How services will be procured or delivered, including by alternative delivery models.
- Details of the preventative services to be provided or arranged.
- Actions being taken in relation to the provision of information, advice, and assistance services.
- Actions required to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

This Area Plan sets out the response of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to the findings of the regional Population Needs Assessment (PNA) report and has been prepared to meet the requirements of the statutory guidance in relation to Area Plans under section 14A of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act requires a description of the range and level of integrated services proposed to be provided or arranged to deliver the priorities identified under each of the core themes and must include:

- Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia.
- People with learning disabilities.
- Children with complex needs; carers, including young carers.
- And Integrated Family Support Services.

The RPB will undertake a full impact analysis and ensure the Area Plan meets requirements as set out in the Welsh Language strategic framework 'More than Just Words' and that a full Equality Impact Assessment is published alongside this plan.

Area Plan Expectations

The Area Plan will not be able to tackle all health and social care issues affecting people across the region and will focus on several joint priorities that require partnership working.

The Area Plan will:

- **Set out the high-level outcomes and priorities for regional working across health, social care, providers and the third sector.**
- **Focus on priorities that have been highlighted by citizens.**
- **Set out the success measures that will ensure collective accountability and effectiveness of partnership working.**



- **Set a common agenda for regional planning, design, and delivery of integrated services for those with a care and support need.**
- **Focus on areas of work across each of the priority themes areas that require partnership working.**
- **Sets out how the principles of working under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, will continue to be delivered, especially in relation to integration, preventative working, and transformational change.**
- **‘Signpost’ to other statutory and formalised actions plans where necessary.**

How the RPB and Area Plan Aligns to Other Strategic Partnerships, Plans and National Policies

The RPB recognises that there are other established partnerships working across the Gwent region and it is paramount that we do not duplicate efforts but maximise resources to create synergy across partners. There are identified priorities that the RPB are required to lead planning, and there are other priorities where established partnerships are better placed, and some priorities where there is a shared agenda. The Area Plan will highlight key actions but also signpost to established partnerships better placed to deliver. The established partnerships and the RPB will align the following work programmes:

1. Regional Public Service Board and implementation of the Well-being Plan
2. Regional Safeguarding Board
3. Area Planning Board
4. Violence Against Women and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Group
5. Gwent Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group (RHSCG)

The Area Plan will align and complement other strategic plans to avoid duplication and ensure national cross cutting priorities can be delivered.

Strategic Planning Framework	How the RPB and Area Plan will align:
National Programme for Government: Eliminating Profit from Children Services and Reducing Loneliness and Isolation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan will set out how partners are working together to eliminate profit from Children Services through Children and Young People Area Plan section. • Area Plan will set out how partners are working together to reduce loneliness and isolation across a range of Area Plan sections and contributing to National Outcome Framework.

Public Service Board Regional Well-being Plan (Well-being of Future Generations Act)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Needs Assessment and Wellbeing Assessment developed in partnership. Area Plan will align to Well-being Plan, cross reference priorities and where RPB and PSB lead and where there is joint ownership.
Marmot Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan will set out where actions are contributing to Marmot principles .
National Outcome Framework for Health and Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area plan sections will highlight contributions to national outcomes and indicators.
Integrated Medium Term Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan will align and set out delivery of IMTP priorities where they relate to partnership working.
NHS Wales Six National Urgent Care Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan will align and set out delivery of Urgent Care Goals and where they relate to partnership working.
Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan will align to the local authority priorities where they relate to improving wellbeing and social care.
National Models of Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each core theme Area Plan section will set out delivery of related Models of Care. RPB Strategic Partnerships will over deliver of Models of Care.
Value Based Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic partnerships will align and adopt the principles of VBHC (prevention, early accurate diagnosis, optimising intervention, supportive treatment and end of life care). Area plan sections to set out where VBHC goals are being delivered (person-centred care, digital health, communication/engagement/education and delivering value).

Engagement and Co-Production (How We Have Developed This Plan)

“ A way of working whereby citizens and decision makers, or people who use services, family carers and service providers work together to create a decision or service which works for them all.

The approach is value-driven and built on the principle that those who use a service are best placed to help design it.

”

[Co-production: what it is and how to do it | SCIE](#)

The Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act 2014 Act requires local authorities to promote the involvement of persons for whom care, and support or preventative services are to be provided in the design and operation of that provision. Welsh Government have also produced additional guidance to help local authorities



understand the experiences and outcomes of those who use social services with links to Care Inspectorate Wales and Health Inspectorate Wales key.

The SSWB Act sets out the need for engagement and the Area Plan builds on the extensive engagement with citizens (service users and unpaid carers) in the development of the Population Needs Assessment published in April 2022. The RPB has continued to engage with citizens in the development of the Area Plan and working alongside Public Service Board (PSB) colleagues through a joint engagement group to ensure citizen voices are central to the development of the underpinning actions plans.

“Lots of residents highlighted the importance of care and support for those who need it across Gwent and the importance of being able to provide the right care for older people in the region” – Gwent Public Services Board

How the RPB Will Respond

The RPB will respond to citizen comments and deliver in partnership effective Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) and effective ‘signposting’ care and support for older people across the region, including increasing wellbeing through access to the right support at the right time, in respect to Mental Health support and services across the region.

“Mental health and the importance of the right type of services for adults and children was highlighted throughout the feedback we received. Residents also commented on the importance of exercise and the ability to maintain a healthy lifestyle, access to sports centres and green spaces were felt to be key to this”
– Gwent Public Services Board

The RPB has undertaken a wide range of engagement across the region using a variety of mechanisms such as online surveys, regional conferences, and small group work, as well as linking to established forums below. The Area Plan consultation was available to the public through an online survey and in addition, over 700 people have been directly contacted using citizen groups and over 200 responses received. The emerging RPB priorities were also included in the Gwent PSB’s recent wellbeing plan consultation, which reached 1,200 citizens, with over 750 citizens directly engaging and informing themselves of the draft plans online and 275 providing comment and feedback.

Engagement forums included:

- RPB Website – Survey Monkey
- Newport One consultation questionnaire.
- Gwent Citizen Network
- Dementia Friendly Communities
- Gwent Autism Steering Group



- Shared with IWBN networks across Gwent
- Gwent Suicide and Self harm Prevention Steering Group shared with attendees

“It does seem to have a better focus and linkage than the first such Area Plan, and acknowledges the importance of organisations working together with those needing and receiving care and support” – Citizen Feedback

Codes of practice that underpin the Act set out the need to engage with:

- People in the area, including children who have or may have needs for care and support.
- People in the area with parental responsibility for children who have or may have needs for care and support; and
- Carers who have or may have needs for support.

The regional Children and Families Strategic Partnership have coordinated engagement with children and young people across the region with a specific focus on children, young people, and parents and linked to existing forums such as the Gwent Youth Forum and Youth Parliament.

The Gwent **RPB Citizen Panel** has continued to lead and ensure engagement in the development of the Area Plan. The panel will choose three key Area Plan priorities to focus on in the coming year, regularly reviewing the progress of the actions plans and providing feedback. The **Citizen Panel Chair** updates RPB members through a standing item at RPB meetings. The RPB has also advocated and supported citizen engagement at strategic partnership level such as unpaid carers, people with lived experience of dementia and members of respective partnerships. The Chair has also sat on the national group developing the new **Citizen Charter** and the RPB are fully committed to adopting once completed.

The RPB have an established a **Provider Forum** which includes a wide range of partners from the third sector and private providers. The Provider Forum Chair is also a member of the RPB and provides updates at every meeting through a standing item on the agenda. The Provider Forum is not mutually exclusive to third sector and private providers and includes membership from across health and social care to lead, develop and promote **Social Enterprises, Co-operatives, and User Led Services** in partnership. The Provider Forum takes a lead on Social Value discussions especially with respect to rebalancing the social care market.

The Market Stability Report was developed with providers of care from across health, social care, third sector and independent providers, especially those partners with an interest in preventative services. Engagement with providers of care was important during the Covid-19 pandemic, with a need to understand pressures and challenges. Weekly webinars with care homes and domiciliary care providers were established and continue but less frequently.

The **Third Sector Leads** from the two umbrella organisations (Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance) also sit on the RPB and provide feedback through standing items on the RPB agenda to ensure key messages following engagement with third sector partners is highlighted at each meeting.

Area Plan Outcomes

This is our second Area Plan for Gwent (following our initial plan in 2017) where we can continue with work already underway and plan to address and support the ever-changing needs in our communities. The plan reflects the national direction of travel established within ‘*A Healthier Wales: Our plan for Health and Social Care*’ and translates the requirements of the Social Services and the Well-being (Wales) Act, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the national plan for health and social care into measurable and substantive action.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 provides a legal framework, to support and improve our statutory partnerships and integrated landscape, in terms of planning, designing, funding, and commissioning services for those people with a care and support need in Gwent. It enables a stronger emphasis to be placed on the development of early intervention and prevention services, co-production with those in need of care and support, and improved wellbeing as the driver of all activity. It also underpins the principles of working established in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to ensure that in the planning and delivery of services, we are actively considering how the wellbeing of future generations can be improved.

The full list of Area Plan outcomes and measures are set out below under the core themes identified in the PNA (as detailed above) and agreed by the RPB. An action plan has been developed for each of the core themes and includes actions in relation to PNA priority outcomes as well as actions in relation to:

- **The range and level of services** – an assessment of the range and level of services required to meet those needs, and the actions required to provide those services.
- **Market stability** – an assessment of the stability of the market for regulated services providing care and support including commissioning priorities.
- **Workforce development.**

The outcomes are the start point for the RPB performance management framework and are included to provide a clear range of success measures that will be monitored by the RPB and its strategic partnerships. A more robust list of performance measures and qualitative data will be developed within the first year of the Area Plan. The Area Plan outcomes are also the citizen outcomes we want to achieve with high level success measures in place to monitor progress.

Welsh Government Core Theme	Outcome Priority	<u>DRAFT</u> Success Measures
Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community-based support, and placements closer to home. • To ensure good mental health and emotional well-being for children and young people through effective partnership working especially mitigating long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the support available to children and families with complex needs to reduce the number of out of county placements and increase number of young people provided skills for living. • Increase number of partners adopting and delivering NEST principles. • Increase awareness, number of referrals and support through SPACE Wellbeing panels.
Older People including Dementia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve emotional well-being for older people by reducing loneliness and social isolation with earlier intervention and community resilience. • To improve outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers. • To support older people to live, or return following a period of hospitalisation, to their own homes and communities through early intervention, integrated care models and a whole system approach. • To mitigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic through, especially reducing waiting lists and times to access support, appointments, and medical procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase early intervention support and inclusion opportunities to reduce loneliness and isolation. • Increase early intervention and prevention IAA, to support cognitive wellbeing and inform of risk factors of dementia. • Increase of the proportion of people with dementia, receiving a formal diagnosis. • Increase number of Dementia Friends, Dementia Ambassadors and Dementia Friendly Organisations through integrated working with the regional DFC partnerships and Dementia Board. • Increase support for people living with dementia at point of diagnosis. • Reduce Delayed Transfers of Care through integrated working. • Increase wellbeing through access to the right support at the right time.

<p>Health and physical disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support disabled people, including sensory impairment, through an all-age approach to live independently in appropriate accommodation and access community-based services, including transport. • Ensure people are supported through access to accurate information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required. • Improve transition across all age groups and support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease duplication of services for children with complex health needs and disabilities through integrated services for children with additional needs (ISCAN).
<p>People with a Learning Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support people with learning disabilities to live independently with access to early intervention services in the community; and greater public awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase early intervention and practical support to help people live independently. • Increase awareness and understanding of the individual needs of people with a learning disability. • Increase the number of social opportunities for people with a learning disability. • Increase the number of bespoke and individual support packages for people with a learning disability which will involve more one to one support in the community and will require the recruitment of a greater number of volunteers. • Increase learning, training, volunteering, and paid work opportunities for people with a learning disability. • Increase number of social opportunities through 'My Mates'. • Those with learning disabilities would like more opportunities

		for learning, training, and employment to live independently.
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding and awareness of mental health amongst the public, to reduce stigma and help people to seek support earlier. • We need to improve emotional well-being and mental health for adults and children through timely early intervention and community support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers of service users accessing IAA services, including Melo and Dewis Cymru and being signposted onto the most effective interventions. • Increase IAA in accessible formats to provide people with informed choices to support their wellbeing. • Increase emotional well-being support in schools and the communities through identified best practice models. • Increase support to the workforce to ensure they have the skills and training to effectively support their role. • Ensure that the workforce is supported, to be able to provide people with the support they need, at the right time. • Increase workforce emotional wellbeing support. • Maintain the 12% of people in employment through Growing Space and the Gwent Mental Health Consortium.
Sensory Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure people are supported through access to accurate accessible information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required. • Many people felt lonely and isolated during the pandemic and highlighted a need for increased opportunities for more accessible social interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase accessible IAA to allow people to make informed choices around their care and support needs. • Increase opportunities to improve social interaction, mental health, and well-being.
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support unpaid carers to care through flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness and need for flexible respite opportunities.

	<p>respite, access to accurate information, peer to peer support, effective care planning and through increased public understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve well-being of young carers and young adult carers and mitigate against long-term impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase peer to peer support opportunities. • Increase accessible access to IAA. • Increase awareness of public understanding of carers and the support available. • Increase the number of schools involved in the Young Carers awards scheme. • Link young carers awareness to the Dementia Ambassador sessions within schools. • Increase number of GP surgeries that are 'Carers aware'. • Increase opportunities for peer-to-peer support provision and respite. • Increase number of befriending opportunities through working in partnership with key stakeholders.
Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce waiting times for diagnostic assessments. • Increase access to accessible IAA for pre and post diagnosis. • Deliver further autism and neurodiversity awareness training to health, social care and wider RPB partners as well as the wider public. • Increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders through bespoke training offers. • Increase opportunities for people to find learning, training, and paid employment to support independent living. • Individuals with autism and their families have increased direct access to specialist support through a self-referral model.

Governance, Assurance and Monitoring the Area Plan

The aspirations encapsulated within this plan are ambitious, and for a step change in the pace of collaboration, of partnership working and service transformation. It is therefore crucial that there is effective governance and assurance mechanisms in place through the Regional Partnership structure.

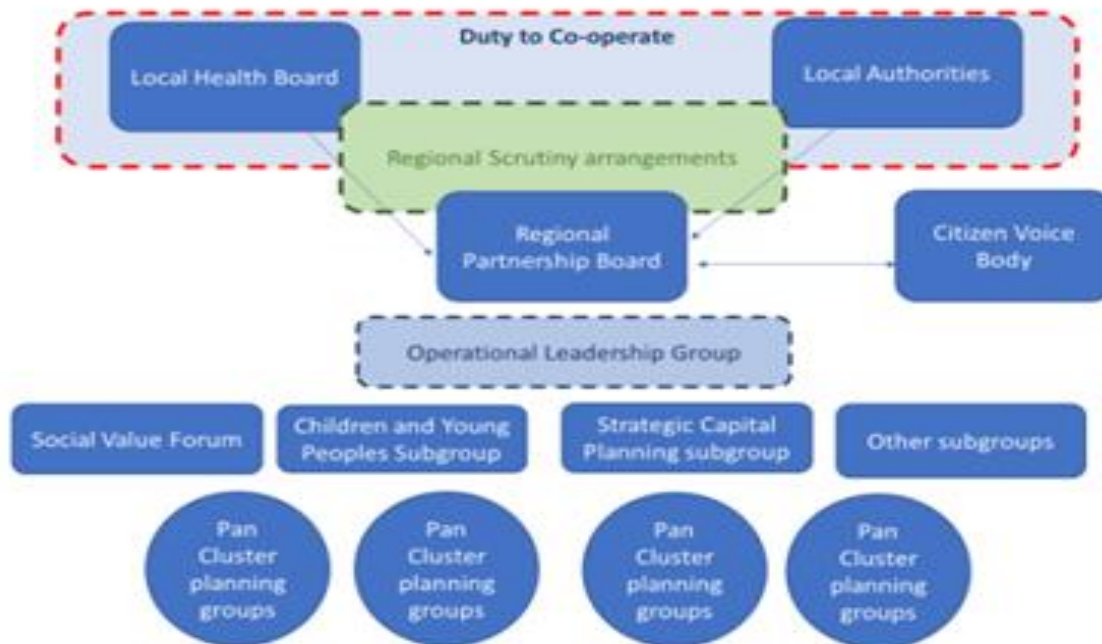


Fig 1: Welsh Government guide for the development of effective RPB structures

A regional Governance framework has been set out in the RPB terms of reference and strategic partnerships to support the work of the Board, and to provide assurance on the delivery of the activity committed to within the report. This framework will ensure all individual partner agencies are able to partake effectively in decision making, alongside their oversight and scrutiny roles.

The RPB supported the Welsh Government development of a self-assessment toolkit and completed an exercise during 2022. The RPB will complete on a regular basis and develop a business plan to be reviewed as a standing item at RPB meetings to support and strengthen governance and performance monitoring.

The Regional Partnership Board is supported by a strategic 'Leadership Group' comprised of senior offices providing a strong emphasis on collective leadership and ensuring the aims of the RPB are translated into core business back in partner organisations.

Thematic strategic partnerships are established to direct and deliver the activity committed to in this plan for those specific population groups identified in the needs assessment. Each partnership is co-chaired by senior leaders from Health and Social Care, who are on the Leadership Group and have led on the development of the core



theme action plans. Each of the strategic partnerships have a common set of terms of reference agreed and supported by a common set of terms of reference for the integrated partnership boards.

The governance framework will be reviewed following the publication of the refreshed codes practice to provide a clear process and line of sight between the Gwent Public Services Board (previously there were 5 separate public service boards, one per LA) and the Regional Partnership Board, and to the Integrated Partnership Boards at a local authority level. The RPB and PSB will ensure they are aligned and coordinate work.

How We Will Monitor the Area Plan

It is crucial that the RPB monitor and evaluate the core theme action plan sections to ensure effective governance and scrutiny. Each core theme section will set out success measures to be reported to the RPB and a performance management framework and reporting structure will accompany the Area Plan and set out:

- **Position statement** – where we are and the curves we have turned.
- **Progress factors** – story behind the curves.
- **Successes** – good practice identified.
- **Challenges** – barriers to progress.
- **Next steps** – what the RPB are being asked to support or unblock.

The success measures identified in the core theme sections reflect performance measures in the National Outcomes Framework, Public Health Outcome Framework, and the NHS Outcomes Framework. The RPB will also reference and align to the performance measures in local Well-being Plans and Local Authority Improvement Plans; and consider data development through the implementation of the Area Plan as some success measures may not be currently measured.

- The RPB will produce an annual report on activity and outcomes and quarterly progress updates.
- The RPB will develop a programme of self-assessment and organisational development to ensure its effectiveness in leadership and oversight.
- The RPB will ensure reports are issued by the RPB to the appropriate health and local government assurance process especially where this relates to planning and finance and where a commitment is required from statutory partners.
- The strategic partnerships will be required to report quarterly to the Regional Partnership Board on activity, and effectiveness.

The performance management reporting process is set out in Appendix 3.

Research Innovation Coordination (RIC) Hub and Identifying Good Practice

In May 2021 the First Minister set out a clear position that innovation in health and care is central to ensuring that we do not lose momentum, and the culture of ‘getting things done quickly’ to deliver the best possible outcomes for the public and Wales. Research, Innovation, and Improvement Coordination (RIIC) Hubs were rebranded as Regional Innovation Coordination (RIC) Hubs.

For an innovative-led health and social care system to succeed, a facilitated engagement and collaboration between the NHS, Regional Partnership Boards, Local Authorities, Housing Associations, Third Sector, Academic and Industry are vital. The principle of the RIC hubs is an opportunity to take forward this activity at a regional level, fundamentally bringing people, resources, and organisations together quickly, in order to deliver benefit and high value across the health and care system.

The RPB has considered the opportunity for a RIC Hub to support the monitoring and review of the Area Plan through a Community of Practice to:

- Create a repository of current good practice, raising awareness of existing opportunities and increase adoption across the partnership.
- Coordinate support and resources to enable innovation through challenges, ideas, and solutions across the partnerships, with closer engagement with citizens.
- Facilitate events and workshops to share good practice, case studies and citizen stories, with a greater emphasis on awareness and adoption.
- Support awareness campaigns with a clear pipeline of focussed work, to highlight to identified good practice and opportunities to mainstream across the region.
- Identification of new ideas and the ability to support small concepts of change that have the potential to spread and scale into mainstream adoption.

Each strategic partnership will link with the RIC Hub to monitor delivery of the Area Plan and identify areas of good practice.

STRATEGIC BACKGROUND

Population Needs Assessment

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced a duty on local authorities and local health boards to prepare and publish a Population Needs Assessment (PNA) in 2018, highlighting the needs of people requiring care and support, including carers who need support. The 8 core themes for the population assessment are:

- **Children & Young People**
- **Older People, including People with Dementia**
- **Health & Physical Disabilities**
- **Mental Health**
- **Learning Disability & Autism**
- **Sensory Loss & Impairment**
- **Carers**
- **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence**

Core themes are not addressed in isolation and there is an element of cross cutting working. In addition to the above, the Regional Partnership Board identified other priority themes as cross cutting and include:

- **A resilient skilled and integrated health and social care workforce**
- **Substance misuse**
- **Adult protection, child protection and safeguarding**
- **Housing needs**
- **Autism**
- **Rebalancing health and social care including social value**
- **Transforming children's services and removing profit from the care of looked after children**
- **Tackling loneliness and isolation**

The PNA report was developed by the Regional Partnership Board and was published 1st April 2022. The full report is included here: [Gwent RPB Population Needs Assessment](#) and includes further detail in relation to the above points.

The actions described in this plan are based on what communities have told us from our Population Needs Assessment (PNA) which assessed the 'care and support needs' of our local population in Gwent. To do this we worked with our citizens groups, professional groups and linked in with Gwent Public Service Board colleagues to engage with our communities.

The Gwent Area Plan will set out the services planned by local authorities and the health board in response to the core themes identified in the PNA, and also builds on the service mapping undertaken as part of the PNA. Additional services are being developed as part of the transformation and development agenda under the Regional Integration Funding plan.

Market Stability Report & Commissioning Strategy

Section 144B Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act 2014 places duties upon local authorities to prepare and publish a market stability report to help local authorities and local health boards to better understand the social care market within each locality, particularly with respect to regulated services such as care home accommodation, domiciliary care and fostering.

The Partnership Arrangements (Amendment) and Regulated Services (Market Stability Reports) (Wales) Regulations 2021, includes a requirement for local authorities and the local health board to carry out these functions in partnership across the area covered by an RPB. The latest MSR is on included on Gwent RPB website and can be found [here](#).

The MSR identifies key commissioning priorities and Area Plans need to include a review of current pooled fund arrangements and joint commissioning across the region, especially in relation to the Rebalancing Care and Support Programme (currently there is a pooled budget arrangement for care homes). The 2015 partnership regulations also require partnership bodies within each RPB to set out how their exercise of their family support functions, consideration of alternative delivery models, such as social enterprises and details of the types of services to be arranged or procured and be delivered by private sector providers, third sector providers or alternative delivery models will be enabled.

The White Paper 'Rebalancing Care and Support' sets out Ministerial ambitions to rebalance the social care sector away from cost to quality, from outputs to outcomes and from profit towards social value. The regional Provider (Social Value) Forum will continue to support the RPB to engage with providers of care and third sector partners to ensure engagement and co-production with partners.

The Gwent RPB has established a Regional Commissioning Group to oversee commissioning across the region and an action plan section sets out the key priorities and actions to progress.

Market Position Report Priorities:

1. Adult Services – the stability of the market in adult services as increasing cost pressures mount, allied to long running and entrenched recruitment and retention difficulties especially so in the adult domiciliary, residential care markets.
2. Mental health and learning disability services – mental health provision and learning disability services including day services.
3. Childrens – fostering and services for children looked after need to be commissioned close to home and to reduce reliance on high profit organisations often far away from people's homes in line with Welsh Government's Eliminating Profit from Childrens Services.



4. Continued promotion of social enterprises through the Gwent Provider (and Social Value) Forum.

Strategic Capital Plan

Each RPB is required to develop a 10-year Strategic Capital Plan (SCP) that brings together health, social care, housing, third sector, education, and regeneration partners to develop integrated service delivery facilities and integrated accommodation-based solutions. The Gwent SCP will align with this Area plan and supporting national agendas such as Welsh Government's Eliminating Profit from Childrens Services and the development of accommodation-based solutions across the region.

The Programme for Government includes a commitment to create 50 integrated health and social care hubs and centres across Wales. Development of these hubs will be funded through the Regional Integration Fund (revenue) and the Health and Social Care Integration and Rebalancing Fund (capital). There is a need to take a strategic approach to identifying existing hub arrangements, and opportunities for additional or further enhancement of existing hubs that will enable integrated service to be offered closer to the community.

The Health Housing and Social Care Strategic Partnership will oversee and support partnership arrangements to develop and deliver a SCP; and this will be set out in the Area Plan Housing Section.

The Equality Act and Focused Work with Minority Groups

We have engaged the views of those who are seldom heard and marginalised, including those of minority groups such as homeless people and travellers. We are continuing to strengthen our relationships with community groups, service leads and organisations such as Diverse Cymru, to help us shape and coproduce future health and social care provision that is diverse, inclusive and meets individual needs. We have used existing mechanisms to engage with vulnerable groups such as those set out below:

- Children Looked After (CLA) and young carers
- People in secure estates and their families
- Homeless people
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) community
- Black Minority Ethnic groups
- Military veterans
- Asylum seekers and refugees



We work closely with the Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) to prevent duplication of engagement and planning with our communities, and the recent PSB Wellbeing Assessment shows that there are some aspects of well-being that are real strengths for our communities such as strong connections and supportive neighbourhood connections.

The wellbeing plan also highlights inequalities across our communities, impacting on many aspects of wellbeing. People living in more disadvantaged communities can have considerably shorter life expectancy and are more likely to be living with life limiting health conditions. Also, although the employment rate across Gwent is around the Welsh average, many families are struggling to meet their basic needs, made worse by the rises in fuel and food prices. Even in areas which appear to be more affluent there are pockets of hidden poverty. Further detail on the assessments can be found [here](#).

The Covid-19 pandemic also highlighted new challenges for the people of Wales. Health and wellbeing of individuals and communities has been poorly affected but these impacts have not been felt equally. Those who are already living in poor health, poverty or in marginalised communities have been the hardest hit. It has highlighted the inequalities we know have existed in our society long before the pandemic and these have been further compounded as a result of both the direct and indirect harms from the pandemic. A full Public Health Wales report. ***Inequality in a Future Wales*** can be found [here](#).

The Area Plan themed sections will set out actions to support and focus partnership working to support minority groups. For example, the Children and Young People section will set out key actions to support children looked after, the Housing section will set out actions to address homelessness, the Carers section will set out actions to support young carers. The RPB, working with statutory partners and the regional PSB will undertake a full impact analysis and ensure the Area Plan meets requirements as set out in the Welsh Language strategic framework 'More than Just Words'.

Regional Principles Adopted to Deliver the Area Plan Sections

'By working in collaboration, with a focus on long term sustainability we will transform services, to provide more care closer to home, improving well-being, and citizen outcomes.'

Health and Social Care legislation and guidance is continually reviewed across Wales and sets out a need for a step change in the pace of integration, partnership working and collaboration - *Further, Faster*. Whilst many challenges will remain in overcoming organisational boundaries and cultures, a set of shared working principles in addition to the principles in the Act have been adopted by the Gwent Regional Partnership



Board, to provide consistency and quicken the pace by which we can work collaboratively to transform and re model services. We will adopt:

- An integrated approach to planning and service development
- A shared approach to workforce development and sustainability
- Development of shared financial arrangements
- Enabling those with a care and support need to be informed and able to self-manage their care
- A seamless service pathway of care which is truly citizen centred

Partnership Working - RPB Strategic Partnerships

RPBs will determine the most appropriate structures for ensuring effective strategic planning and the provision of integrated services and delivering key functions, including implementation of the Area Plan. As a guide, RPB structures should:

- Position the RPB as an effective collaborative vehicle through which Local Authorities and Local Health Boards exercise their duty to co-operate.
- Consider arrangements that will allow for more rapid operational decision making without undermining the strategic role of the RPB.
- Establish thematic subgroups to support plan and programme delivery.
- Make clear connections with Pan cluster Planning Groups.

As a minimum, RPBs must establish subgroup arrangements in relation to:

- **Children and young people** with a focus on early help and prevention in relation to
 - Children and young people who are disabled and/or experience illness.
 - Children and young people who are care experienced, including care leavers.
 - Children and young people who are in need of care and support.
 - Children and young people who are at risk of becoming looked after.
 - Children and young people with emotional and behavioural needs.
 - Young carers and young adult carers.
- **Strategic capital planning**
- **A Regional Social Value Forum**

Subgroup arrangements should also include groups to focus on housing and accommodation-led solutions to health and social care. The Gwent RPB have developed a strategic partnership sub structure to deliver related Area Plan sections. The individual core themes sections have been developed by the Gwent strategic partnerships and supported by the Regional Leadership Group. The following strategic groups have coordinated related core themed sections:

Strategic Partnership	Area Plan Core Theme Section
Children and Families Board	Children and Young People
Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership (GASP)	Older People, Health and Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairment
Carers Board	Carers
Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Partnership	Mental Health, Learning Disabilities
Health Housing and Social Care	Housing and Strategic Capital Planning
Regional Autism Partnership	Autism
Dementia Board	Dementia and National Dementia Action Plan
Workforce Board	Workforce
Regional Commissioning Group	Joint commissioning, Market Stability, and Pooled Budgets

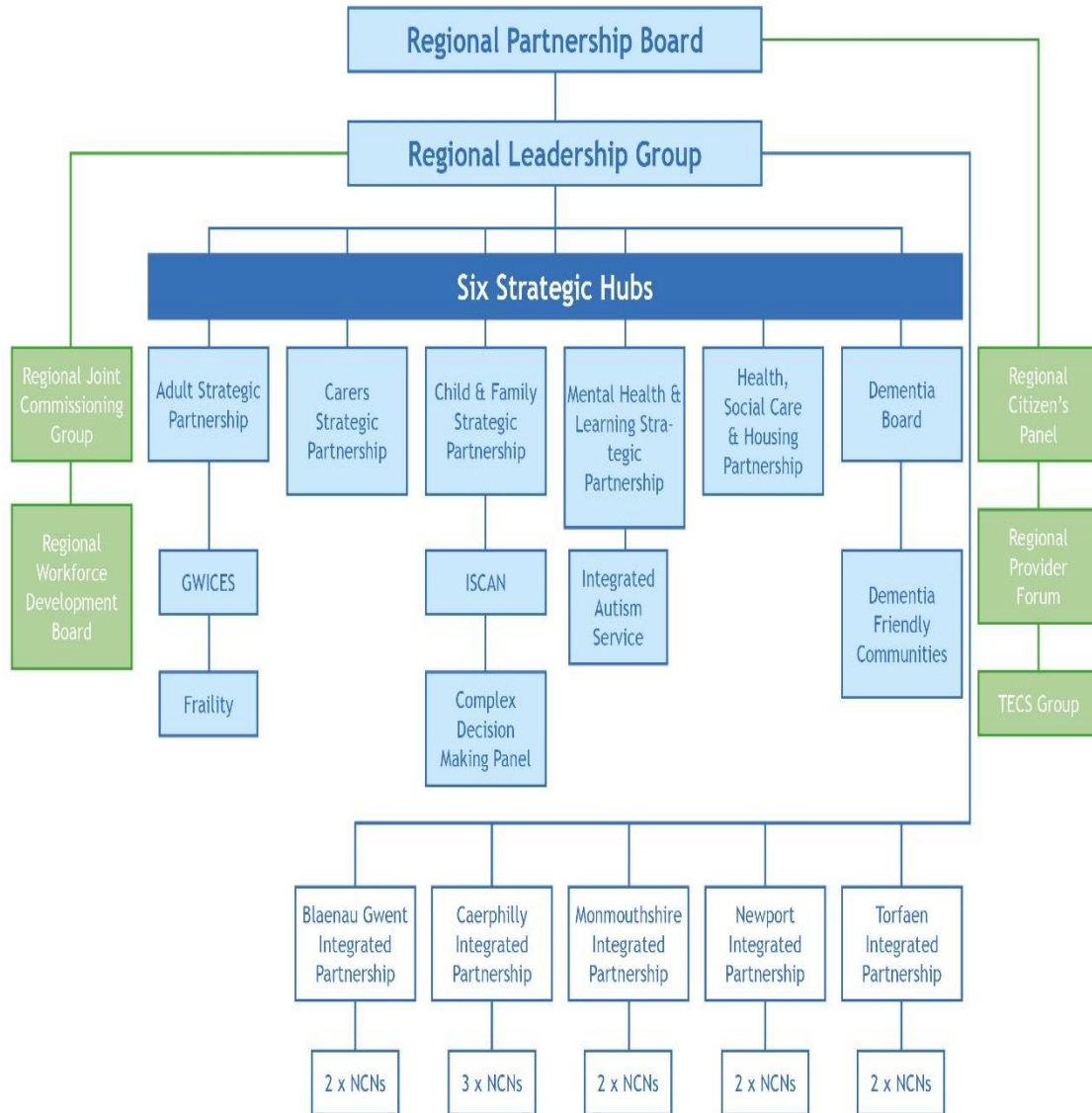


Fig 2: RPB structure

Other strategic partnerships such as the Substance Misuse Area Planning Board, Safeguarding Boards will also play a lead role in ensuring cross cutting themes such as substance misuse and safeguarding are aligned in this Area Plan. The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) will set the partnership framework for the above partnerships to link, align priorities and avoid duplication.

Prevention and Preventative Services

Section 15 of the Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act 2014 requires local authorities and health boards to have regard to the need to provide or arrange preventative services. Also, the RPB must set out through this Area Plan, preventative services proposed to be provided or arranged in response to the population assessment, including those existing services which will be maintained. Each core theme section has been developed using principles of early intervention and prevention.

The RPB are considering how early intervention and preventative services can be as part of community capacity building, in line with Minister's 'Further, Faster' agenda; and will consider a prevention strategy to focus and redirect funding, especially in relation to winter planning.

INTEGRATED WORKING

Integration of Services – Part 9 Social Services and Well-being Act

Under Part 9 of the Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act, Regional Partnership Boards are required to prioritise the integration of services in relation to:

- Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia.
- People with learning disabilities.
- Carers, including young carers.
- Integrated Family Support Services.
- Children with complex needs due to disability or illness.

Additional guidance from Welsh Government have identified key enablers for integration.





For this Area Plan the Regional Partnership Board will adopt a principle of integration based on the following areas of working:

- Joint commissioning of services and pooled budgets.
- Joint workforce development and training.
- Consistent and portable assessment processes including outcome and distance travelled toolkits.
- Co-located teams.
- Sharing of resources.
- Similar understanding of information provision and consistent key messages to citizens.

The above definition of integration will be adopted when implementing the Area Plan and there is an expectation that the strategic partnerships charged with implementing the Area Plan will consider the above areas of work when delivering actions to achieve the identified outcomes.

Developing An Integrated System of Care and Well-being for Gwent

The Parliamentary Review into Health and Social Care in Wales states that the:

“Growing demand for care in the face of modest economic growth means that health and care services must change and adapt to best meet need and help people achieve the outcomes they desire. As we will show, the health and care system are not sustainable into the future in its current form; change which delivers major improvement to services is urgently required much faster than in the past”.

The shared ambition of partners across Gwent is to create a system of integrated services for those with a care and support need, where more care is provided closer to home in a seamless integrated pathway. We will do this by developing new health and wellbeing hubs, implementing, and growing our network of neighbourhood community networks (NCNs), developing regional integrated services for people with complex needs, and designing new more sustainable models of care for children, older adults and those with mental health or learning disabilities.

Our intention through the Gwent Area Plan is to re-model services to reduce unnecessary complexity and deliver a more consistent integrated, inter-professional way of working across health and social care. We have developed a new ‘transformational’ model focused on ‘place-based care’, with services operating on a local population basis, supported by more specialist expertise at a wider level. The delivery mechanism is the Neighbourhood Care Network Model (NCN), unique to Gwent, with local integrated partnership boards providing leadership, governance, and accountability at a local authority level.



The system is predicated on the shared agreement by both Health and Local Government to provide more care closer to home, to reduce a reliance on primary care services, and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions. The system will build on the existing innovation across Gwent, and use the NCN footprint, as the basis from which services will be planned and delivered, around a model of community well-being.

The establishment of strategic thematic partnerships provides an engine room for delivery, with dedicated programmes of work, and specific outcome measures in place across each. Delivery will be through the local 'Integrated Partnership Boards', and NCN model, ensuring a collaborative approach to planning and delivery from a regional level to localities.

The RPB and strategic partnerships will provide the regional expectation for delivery of services and the IPSBs and NCNs are well placed to ensure the services are delivered consistently regardless of demography. The plan articulates how we intend to do this, and deliver integrated services, which improve the well-being of the population of Gwent over the next three years; it establishes a set of outcomes, measures and milestones and appropriate governance arrangements, to provide assurance to the Regional Partnership Board.

Regional Integrated Funding and Models of Care

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out statutory duties for regional partnership boards which bring together health, social services, the third sector and other partners to take forward the effective delivery of integrated services in Wales. Welsh Government have provided the Regional Integration Fund (RIF) to support Regional Partnership Boards to work together to support frail and older people, people with a learning disability, children with complex needs due to disability or illness and carers, including young carers. The fund helps support older people to maintain their independence and remain at home, avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital or residential care and delays when someone is due to be discharged from care. It is also being used to support the Integrated Autism Service for Wales, and the roll out of the Welsh Community Care Information System across Wales.

Our Population Needs Assessment and Market Stability Report completed in 2022 will help to develop strategic planning and revenue investment proposals for the Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (RIF) 2022 - 2027. We will also ensure that we have a focus on the six new national models of integrated care, so that citizens can be assured of an effective and seamless service experience in relation to the models of care:

- Community based care – prevention and community coordination.
- Community based care – complex care closer to home.
- Promoting good emotional health and well-being.



- Supporting families to stay together safely, and therapeutic support for care experienced children.
- Home from hospital services.
- Accommodation based solutions.

Locality Integrated Service Partnership Boards and Neighbourhood Care Networks – ‘Vehicle for Delivery, Drivers for Change’

At a local authority level, integrated partnership boards have been established to act as the local drivers of change, translating the regional commitments into appropriate locality-based activity. For example, the Newport Integrated Board will provide oversight on the development of the proposed Ringland Health and Wellbeing Hub. Each of the ISPBs will oversee and support the Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) delivering planned priorities.

Clearly, integrated working needs to be considered at a regional level in terms of strategic direction, oversight, and impact. However, implementation must be taken forward at a locality (local authority) level, being mindful of those services, structures and demands. These bodies do have some oversight of Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCN's) which are specific to ABUHB, having a management structure within that organisation, but needing to have strong partner connection at local level.

The 5 locality Integrated Service Planning Board plans have been aligned to the PNA priorities and this Area Plan. The planning relationship has been discussed by the regional Leadership Group and each of the Strategic Partnerships will consider how the ISPB enablers will deliver the regional priorities in collaboration and avoid duplication. During 2023/24 the RPB will work closely with ISPBs to identify a small number of key areas to progress joint working and how this will work long term e.g. workforce development features in all ISPB plans and an opportunity to work more closely with the regional Workforce Board on areas of collaboration and how NCNs can deliver regional priorities locally.

Accelerated Cluster Development

The Strategic Primary Care Programme in Wales promotes seamless working in Health Boards and with partners, including:

- Shifting the focus to a 'social model of care'.
- Ensuring timely access to primary care services across Wales.
- Working closely with partners to strengthen services and achieve seamless working across the whole system.
- Working on a 'once for Wales' basis, including championing and 'scaling up' of local initiatives across Wales identifying solutions and enabling functions at a national level.



Pan Cluster Planning Groups are seen as the mechanisms by which representatives of clusters come together at a county population level to collaborate with representatives of health boards and local authority decision makers, public health experts, planners, and representatives of citizens. It is important that Clusters and Pan Cluster Planning Groups are enabled to work closely and coherently with Regional Partnership Boards ensuring that they offer greater value as a whole than just the sum of their parts. Pan Cluster Planning Groups (PCPGs) should operate across a Local Authority area to deliver RPB priorities contained within the Area Plan and PCPG assessment of needs and plans must inform and be informed by regional level assessments of need (which are a statutory function of RPBs).

Given that ISPBs have been established across Gwent, the RPB recognised that the regional ISPB is well placed to pick up the functions of a PCPG for Gwent. The RPB will continue to work closely with partners during the first year of this Area Plan to ensure joint working and planning are realised.




CORE THEME ACTION PLANS

AUTISM AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DIAGNOSIS

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
<p>Page 87</p> <p>Increase more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information and advice pre and post diagnosis.</p>	<p>Increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity across the region and recognise the varying individual support needs; via training to health, social care and wider RPB partners, as well as the wider public.</p>	<p>Increase opportunities and practical support for learning, training, volunteering, and paid employment, to support independent living.</p>

The regional **Gwent Strategic Autism Group** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Mental Health and Learning Disability Strategic Partnership and Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

- To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information and advice pre and post diagnosis.
- Improve awareness, understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity across the region to health, social care and wider RPB partners, including Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) as well as communities.
- Increase understanding and awareness of the varying support needs of people on the Autistic Spectrum, their families, and carers (Some people may require full time and care support, some may be non-verbal and have complex needs, some may need support with day-to-day activities, whilst other people live fully independent lives).
- Support more opportunities and practical support for learning, training, volunteering, and paid employment, to support independent living.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Deliver the Autism Strategy for Wales at a regional level</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 88</p>	<p>Gwent Autism Strategic Group RPB Autism Champion IAS RSLs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy will be delivered and monitored through the bimonthly meetings of the Gwent Autism Strategic Group. Their action plan is currently being reviewed as a response to public engagement in Gwent around the Code of Practice. • RPB Autism Champion reports back to the RPB after each Autism Strategic meeting, to update on developments. • Regular reports and updates from IAS to highlight good practice and identify challenges. 	<p>Bimonthly</p>	<p>An increase in the number of people receiving a timely diagnosis.</p> <p>Individuals with autism and their families have increased direct access to specialist support through a self-referral model</p>
<p>Implement Autism Code of Practice</p>	<p>Gwent Autism Strategic Group IAS RSLs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an audit and self-assessment against Code of Practice (CoP) requirements. • Identify gaps, good practice, and areas of joint working across the region with an implementation plan. • Autism Champion for the RPB is included in governance structure of the Gwent Autism Strategic Group and reports back to the RPB on developments. • Experts by experience (people with a diagnosis of autism, ADHD, and other neuro developmental conditions) form a key part of 	<p>Bimonthly</p>	<p>Increase in the number of people receiving a timely diagnosis.</p> <p>Increasing in the number of people being offered pre and post diagnostic support.</p> <p>Increased access to accessible Information Advice and Assistance (IAA)</p> <p>Increased uptake of awareness, understanding and acceptance training on autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions.</p>

		<p>the group to share their knowledge and expertise. (Chair/Vice Chair)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how RSLs can support and increase awareness for staff 		Increased number of people in training and paid employment opportunities.
Page 89	Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 	Standing item, each meeting	Support delivery of national Models of Care and monitor effectiveness of projects.
	ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles 	Quarterly	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

UNPAID CARERS, YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- Support unpaid carers to care through flexible respite, access to accurate information, peer to peer support, effective care planning and through increased public understanding.
- Improve well-being of young carers and young adult carers and mitigate against the long-term impacts.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
Number of small grants administered	Number of organisations awarded CFE accreditation	Number of schools awarded YCIS award

The regional **Carers Board** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

1. There is still a need to increase awareness of the needs of carers and for frontline staff to be able to recognise when people take on caring responsibilities and signposted to information, especially young carers.
2. Peer to peer support and respite provision are continually highlighted as being a priority need for carers and there is a need to increase support through third sector and community partners to increase befriending opportunities and community groups.

Policy Drivers

The Unpaid Carers Strategy for Wales (March 2021) set out the following revised national priorities for unpaid carers:

- identifying and valuing unpaid carers, providing information, advice, and assistance, supporting life alongside caring and supporting unpaid carers in education and the workplace. [Strategy for unpaid carers \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)
- A Carers' Delivery Plan published in November 2021. [Strategy for unpaid carers: delivery plan 2021 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
Delivery of the Welsh Government national priorities for carers, as set out in Strategy for Unpaid Carers and national Delivery Plan Page 92	Carers Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and review small grants scheme. • Deliver Carer Friendly Employee Accreditation scheme. • Promote Carers Hub and Spoke model. • Continue with GP champions work programme. • Continued rollout of Young Carers in Schools Award Scheme and Young Carers ID Card Scheme. • Communication campaign to raise awareness of carers amongst public and in schools to identify young carers. • Explore options to share more widely existing good practice and support other ways that identify and offer support to unpaid carers through the hospital discharge process. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of small grants administered. • Number of organisations awarded CFE accreditation. • Number of schools awarded YCIS award.
Integrated Wellbeing Network Development to support unpaid carers	Carers Board ISPBs NCNs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify good practice in Community connector roles. • Ensure accurate information and advice available through effective IAA, Dewis, public awareness campaigns. • Support and build community resilience and grow social networks, tapping into sources of support in the community. • Review health and wellbeing hubs and identify effective hub coordination. 	Quarterly meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of unpaid carers better informed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore volunteering solutions and promote and extend regional Ffrind I Mi volunteering scheme. 		
<p>Work in partnership with third sector partners to provide effective support to Carers including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible respite • Training and awareness • Support to Young Carers • Advocacy provision 	Carers Board GAVO TVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with LA's and Third Sector Partners to deliver solutions to implement models of care and support hospital discharge. • Develop opportunities for peer-to-peer support. • Coordinate and administer respite grants and identify best practice. • Develop Young Carer network opportunities. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of peer-to-peer networks. • Number of respite hours.
<p>Ensure that the implementation of the care closer to home strategy increases the community level support for unpaid Carers</p>	Carers Board ABUHB/ ISPBs NCNS Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure carers are supported in discharge processes. • Signposting carers to relevant support services. • Providing training opportunities to staff in relation to unpaid carers. 	Quarterly meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff provided training/ awareness.
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care and capital spend</p>	Carers Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations. • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan. • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair 	Quarterly meeting	<p>Individual performance measures set out in project proposals</p> <p>Support delivery of national Models of Care and monitor effectiveness of projects.</p>




		<p>to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 		
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- **To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community-based support, and placements closer to home**
- **To ensure good mental health and emotional well-being for children and young people through effective partnership working especially mitigating long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

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	Increase number of partners adopting and delivering NEST principles	Increase awareness, number of referrals and support through SPACE Wellbeing panels	Decrease number of out of county placements in line WG's Eliminate agenda

The regional **Children and Families Board** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

1. There is a need to continue strengthening services and partnerships around a single front door approach, to reduce hand offs between organisations and establish a sequenced approach to multiple intervention needs.
 2. The RPB will continue to implement principles of NEST/NYTH across all services, to remain focused on what matters to children, young people, and families as we move to a whole system approach.
 3. Given the new programme of government priority to eliminate profit in residential care for children looked after, the RPB will support this agenda and the early intervention and preventative services that help reduce children becoming looked after.
- The Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2022-2027 contains several commitments that describe a new vision to transform children's services to support the family unit to remain together where possible, with local services working alongside families to help design and take forward family-owned solutions to their problems.

- This way families will be better equipped with the skills, experience, and resilience to work through difficulties, with far fewer children needing to come into care.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures
<p>The Children and Families Board will develop a joint response and solutions to delivering Welsh Government's Eliminate Programme for Government priority</p>	CFB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a joint safe accommodation task and finish group, to develop residential options with integrated processes across health and social care. Link to Health Housing and Social Care partnership in developing capital solutions. Consider joint commissioning opportunities across residential and foster care. 	July 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placements closer to home.
<p>Deliver and embed the NEST and NYTH framework across the region</p>	CFB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop self-assessment to support NEST/NYTH across partners. Develop regional NEST/NYTH plan. Standing item reporting to CFB to identify good practice and challenges. Explore how NEST/NYTH can support universal provision in line with PSB Wellbeing Plan, Marmot principles to provide all children best start in life. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of partners adopting NEST principles.
<p>Deliver Integrated Support Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN) partnership solutions</p>	ISCAN Board MHLD Transition Subgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing integrated therapeutic services for children with complex needs, as well as a continued focus on prevention and early intervention. Improve Transition arrangements through identification good practice and pooling partnership resourcing. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of effective Transitions between children and adult services.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Continuing Healthcare processes to improve partnership working. 		
<p>Deliver Together for Mental Health in partnership with MHLD partnership</p>	CFB & MHLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop joint task group to oversee and coordinate T4MH action plan, with a focus on CAMHS provision and aligned to ABUHB's IMTP. Standing item at CFB meetings. Support implementation of whole school approach to emotional mental wellbeing. 	Within 2 months of publication of new strategy.	See T4MH strategy.
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care</p>	CFB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 	Quarterly meeting	Project progress measures set out in individual RIF project profiles

<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>
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DEMENTIA

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- To improve outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

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Increase the proportion of people with dementia receiving a formal diagnosis	Increase Information, Assistance and Advice (IAA), to support cognitive wellbeing and inform of risk factors of dementia.	Increase number of Dementia Friends, Dementia Ambassadors and Dementia Friendly Organisations to provide further awareness and opportunities for social inclusion

The regional **Dementia Board** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

3. We need to strengthen partnerships, services, and coproduction models to improve the outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.

Policy Drivers

- Welsh Government National Dementia Action Plan
- NHS Wales All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards

September 2021 a companion to the Dementia Action Plan for Wales 2018-2022 was published, outlining the current priorities for action as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the launch of the plan in 2018, RPBs were asked to develop services which addressed any identified gaps, and they will recently have considered how older people, including those with dementia, can be supported by the six new models of integrated care under the RIF. Welsh Government are undertaking an independent evaluation to inform the content of any future action plans, and area plans will need to be flexible enough to respond to any relevant changes.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Delivery Welsh Government National Dementia Action Plan (DAP)</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 101</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Board and all members • People living with dementia and carers. • Housing and RSLs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Gwent Dementia Action Plan setting out how national priorities will be delivered regionally • Delivery of the Dementia Action Plan (DAP) is delivered through the programme of work overseen by the Dementia Board, with regular progress updates and monitoring through the biannual dementia board meetings. • Progress is also fed through to the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) through annual reporting and project updates at RPB meetings. 	<p>April 2023 and reviewed bimonthly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent Dementia Action Plan has been developed and aligns to the 20 All Wales Dementia Pathway of Standards which will also include performance measures. • Regular forums are held both face to face and online to gather case studies of good practice and where improvements need to be made. (Patient stories) • The Gwent Regional Action Plan for Dementia Friendly Communities aligns to specified needs in each LA area, as set by the multi-agency DFC groups. • Report progress and outcomes to RPB for review.
<p>Deliver NHS Wales All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Board and all partners • People living with dementia and carers. • Housing and RSLs • Third Sector, • Private Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of all Wales dementia pathway of standards promote a whole systems integrated care approach, through equity of provision, supporting the DAP. This work will be delivered through the subgroup workstreams, with 	<p>Leads provide monthly report to Dementia Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workstream subgroups have been developed to take forward this programme of work which includes the following workstreams: • Engagement • Memory Assessment Service/Dementia Connector role. • Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 10</p>		<p>oversight and management and coordination of the Senior Programme Manager reporting on performance and progress to the Dementia Board. This will also be monitored through annual reporting to the RPB</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education/Workforce • Measurement/ Performance • Performance measures will be developed for all workstreams • Subgroup leads report to National group to share learning/progress, then feedback to regional subgroups and Dementia Board. • Experts by Experience group set up to support coproduction of service provision. • Exception reports and risk register to provide updates against outcomes.
<p>Further develop and strengthen Dementia Friendly Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Board and all partners • People living with dementia and carers. • Housing and RSLs • Third Sector, • Private Sector • ISPBs/ NCNs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dementia Friendly Communities (DFC) agenda is overseen and coordinated by the Gwent Regional Partnership Team and supported through a network of Dementia Ambassadors within Gwent. 	<p>Bimonthly reporting via regional DFC. Annual conference showcasing innovation and progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities are monitored through bimonthly multi agency regional meetings and DFC is a standing item at each Dementia Board. • Case studies collected of difference made to people living with dementia, their families, and carers. • Increase in the number of Dementia Ambassadors completing training. • Increase in the number of Dementia Friends in Gwent. • Increase in the number of communities completing DFC accreditation to support inclusion.

<p>Integrated Wellbeing Network Development to support people living with dementia and their carers</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 103</p>	<p>Integrated Wellbeing Community Leads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify good practice in Community connector roles. • Ensure accurate information and advice available through effective IAA, Dewis, public awareness campaigns. • Support and build community resilience and grow social networks, tapping into sources of support in the community. • Review health and wellbeing hubs and identify effective hub coordination. • Explore volunteering solutions and links to schools to promote Age Friendly Communities. • Promote and extend regional Ffrind I Mi volunteering scheme. 	<p>Bimonthly meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi agency workforce with awareness of dementia and unpaid carers • Increase in information and advice available.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care</p>	<p>Dementia Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentation • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of national Models of Care and monitor effectiveness of projects.
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<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for joint commissioning
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HEALTH, PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- **To support disabled people, including sensory impairment, through an all-age approach to live independently in appropriate accommodation and access community-based services, including transport.**
- **Ensure people are supported through access to accurate information, assistance and ‘rehabilitation’ where required**
- **Improve transition across all age groups and support services.**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

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	Increase the number of frontline workers who receive up to date training and awareness raising in relation to the various information portals and sites that provide useful advice to the public	Increase recruitment across health and social care, including specific roles such as Rehabilitation Officers for Visual Impairment.	Increase accessible information, advice, and assistance to include British Sign Language (BSL) and Braille where needed.

The regional **Gwent Regional Partnership Board and aligned Strategic Partnerships** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed.

Policy Areas:

- Welsh Government’s Disability Equality Forum Impact of Covid-19 on disabled people in Wales and ‘Action on Disability’ framework.
- Wales Council of the Blind: Rehabilitation Officers for Visual Impairment, Addressing a workforce crisis in Wales.

- All Wales Deaf Mental Health and Wellbeing Group - Deaf People Wales: Hidden Inequality.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Promote equality and inclusion.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 108</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPB • Strategic Partnerships under the RPB. • Local Authorities • ABUHB • Gwent PSB • Independent/Third Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote advocacy services Golden Thread Advocacy Provision, Snap Cymru and NYAS for children and young people. • Developing consistent, integrated regional services, that are accessible and respond to the population needs assessment. 	<p>6 monthly reviews starting from April 2023.</p>	<p>Number of people accessing advocacy support.</p>
<p>Further development of accessible coproduced services to support people and promote inclusion, independence, and support people to become more resilient to manage their own conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Panel • Strategic Partnerships under the RPB. • Local Authorities • ABUHB • Gwent PSB • Independent/Third Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen panel working across Strategic Partnerships to continue to strengthen coproduction and implement Citizen Charter. • Continue with coproduction with children and young people through regional youth forum, to design mental health support. 	<p>Quarterly meeting</p>	<p>Number of engagement events/meetings Number of services reviewed which demonstrate coproduction</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the Gwent Regional Autism Group in coproduction with parents and neurodiverse individuals. • Continue with regional parent group to engage and coproduce support with parents in relation to neurodevelopment services. 		
<p>Increase use of assistive technology, such as telecare to transform domiciliary care and supported living services</p> <p>109</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Partnerships under the RPB. • Local Authorities • ABUHB • Gwent PSB • Independent/Third Sector • RSLs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects and pilots supported throughout Dementia Board, Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership and Carers Board, via their own strategic plans to support independent living and living well. • Links to the Age Well agenda and key partnerships through Dementia Friendly Communities. 	Reviewed quarterly from April 2023.	Individual measures linked to provision resources e.g., Dementia Hug dolls, magic tables etc.
<p>Promote healthier lifestyles and reducing health inequalities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Partnerships under the RPB • Public Health Wales • Local Authorities • ABUHB • Gwent PSB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work ongoing linked to strategic partnerships and work plans to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce inequalities. (Links to 	6 monthly reviews from April 2023.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent/Third Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wellbeing plans to avoid duplication) Maximise health and social care staff to promote strength based and what matters discussions. 		
<p>Continue to strengthen Transition arrangements between children and young people's and adult services.</p> <p>Page 110</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Partnerships under the RPB. Local Authorities ABUHB Independent/Third Sector ISCAN Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work currently ongoing linked to the Children and Families Strategic Partnership and Mental Health and Learning Disability Strategic Partnership, to scope current Transition models and how to develop and improve. Support ISCAN Board and ensure good practice identified 	Quarterly meeting.	<p>Improved positive life outcomes for children, young people, and adults.</p> <p>Decrease duplication of services for children with complex health needs and disabilities, through integrated services for children with additional needs (ISCAN).</p>
<p>Continue to improve accessible information, advice, and assistance including support for people with sensory needs including rehabilitation.</p>	<p>RPB ABUHB LAs RSLs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with WG and partners to continue to develop and promote on progress already made, with a range of Information, Advice and Assistance provision, such as Dewis Cymru and Info engine. Ensure information is accessible and in 		

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 111</p>		<p>various formats, especially for people with sensory needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Dementia Board with the implementation and delivery of The All-Wales Dementia Pathway of Standards, for people living with dementia and sensory needs. • Work with partners to increase and promote Rehabilitation Officers for Visually Impaired (ROVI) To build confidence; provide emotional support; regain lost skills and teach new skills. Also, to support, maintain and promote independence and choice. 		
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISP NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISP, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 		
<p>Integrated Wellbeing Network Development to support older people including those living with dementia and their carers</p>	<p>Integrated Service Partnership Boards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify good practice in Community connector roles. • Ensure accurate information and advice available through effective IAA, Dewis, public awareness campaigns. • Support and build community resilience and grow social networks, tapping into sources of support in the community. • Review health and wellbeing hubs and identify effective hub coordination. • Explore volunteering solutions and links to schools to promote age 	<p>Quarterly update from April 2023.</p>	

		<p>friendly communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and extend regional Ffrind I Mi volunteering scheme. 		
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HOUSING

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- **A multi-agency partnership approach to ensure appropriate housing and accommodation for older people and vulnerable citizens.**
- **To ensure effective use of Disabled Facilities Grants and appropriate partnership support and available resources.**
- **Homelessness requiring a collaborative response from public services and partners, especially the non-use of B&B accommodation for young people, and through prevention and early intervention.**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

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To increase the number of accommodation-based solutions for children look after (supporting Welsh Government's Eliminate agenda)	Ensure access to Disabled Facilities Grants to support people living at home	Reduce homelessness and the number of temporary accommodation long stays (Rapid Rehousing Action Plans)

The regional **Health Housing and Social Care Partnership will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. There will be a focus on:**

4. **Development of Strategic Capital Plan.**
5. **Regional delivery of shared Rapid Rehousing actions.**
6. **Alignment of Housing Support Grant to RPB priorities.**

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
Develop a 10-year Strategic Capital Plan, setting a partnership approach to developing accommodation-based solutions, for children looked after. Also integrated health and social care hubs and wider accommodation solutions for older people and vulnerable citizens.	HHSC Partnership RSG RSLs Torfaen Strategic Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using WG template develop a SCP that incorporates ABUHB Capital Planning, LA Housing Market Assessments, HSG plan and RIF Capital Plan. Link with ISPBS to increase integrated health and social care hubs. Link with CFB to deliver WG Eliminating Profit from Children Services and increase care placements within region. 	April 2023 – high level plan. July 2023 – full plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of care placements for children. Reduced number of out of county placements. Increased number of integrated hubs.
To ensure effective use of Disabled Facilities Grants and appropriate partnership support and available resources.	Regional DFC task and finish group & PMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure regular meetings to DFG regional task group to monitor DFG uptake across LAs and where RIF can support. Explore how DFGs can be maximised across RSLs and ensure citizens have equitable access Highlight good practice and blockages to HHSC Partnership. 	Monthly meetings Standing item HHSC agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of DFGs administered across region. Maintain people living in own home.
Deliver a regional Rapid Rehousing plan based on joint priorities identified within LA plans	Housing Operational Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Rapid Rehousing task and finish group to review 5 LA plans and identify joint priorities, which require partnership working. Identify and share good practice. 	Bimonthly meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce time to support people into temporary accommodation.


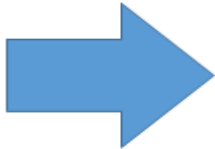

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align to Housing Support Grant delivery and avoid duplication. 		
Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care	HHSC & PMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop IRCF programme linked to regional Integrated Capital Planning Group. Monitor and exception report as standing item on HHSC agenda. Exception reporting to RPB. Unblock and expedite solutions to capital issues. 	April 2023/July 2023 IRCF to align to SCP above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total use of IRCF across the region.
Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.	ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABUHB IMTP ISPB, NCN Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 	Quarterly	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities for joint commissioning

JOINT COMMISSIONING GROUP

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Market Stability Report:

- **To deliver commissioning priorities highlighted through Market Stability Report in relation to Adult Services, Childrens Services, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities as well as reviewing opportunities for joint commissioning across health and social care.**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
Work with commissioners and provider groups to increase intelligence, co-ordination, improvement, and communication across the region	Develop consistent processes to be a resource for and to undertake work on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board and the strategic partnerships in Gwent	Identify and share good practice bringing stability to the commissioned and regulated sector across the region

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The regional **Joint Commissioning Group** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions identified across other population themes

- The JCG will ensure joint commissioning is prioritised across other strategic partnerships and coordinate and monitor actions to reduce duplication, effectively overseeing development across the region.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
Adult Services Deliver priorities identified in MSR with a focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • care homes, • Domiciliary care • Day services, • Advocacy • Provider groups and webinars 	RCG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care home fees methodology. • Exploring domiciliary care models e.g., micro-carers, regional approach to fees and QA. • Support domiciliary, care homes and 3rd Sector/provider fora/webinars. • Supporting Direct Payments regional delivery. • Common regional approach template for QA in care homes. • Supporting LAS with Day Services review. • Linking with LAs and ABUHB in supporting pooled budget arrangement. 	Autumn 2023 On-going On-going Summer 2023 On-going March 2023	Care homes and domiciliary care proposals currently with RPB processes. Awaiting further instructions/on-going. Working group established. Discussion re options at next RCG meeting.

<p>Childrens Services Support Eliminate profit from Children's Services priorities</p>	<p>RCG CFB HHSC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support CFB and HHSC with Eliminate agenda and reducing not for profit. • Linking to CFB in relation to CHC discussions. 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Awaiting further instructions/on-going.</p>
<p>Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Services</p>	<p>RCG MHLD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking with ABUHB MH division to explore regional commissioning. • Open invitation for Mental Health Division to join fees and QA workstreams. 	<p>Current on-going discussions within Division</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>Ensure joint commissioning issues identified by Strategic Partnerships and Integrated Wellbeing Networks, are coordinated across the region</p>	<p>RCG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCG Chair to attend Leadership Group and discuss commissioning arrangements and opportunities with other Strategic Partnerships. 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going via RCG.</p>
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care</p>	<p>PMO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align and link to commissioned projects where they align to commissioning priorities e.g. Winter plan and commissioning of care home beds. 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going via RCG and other strategic partnerships.</p>
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>




		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 		
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MENTAL HEALTH & LEARNING DISABILITIES

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- **Increased understanding and awareness of mental health amongst the public, to reduce stigma and help people to seek support earlier.**
- **To improve emotional well-being and mental health for adults and children, through early intervention and community support.**
- **To support people with learning disabilities to live independently with access to early intervention services in the community; and greater public awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities needs.**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
Increase Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) in more accessible formats to provide people with informed choices to support their wellbeing and increase understanding.	Increase emotional well-being support in schools and the communities through identified best practice models	Increase support to the workforce to ensure they have the skills, training, and emotional support, to effectively support their role

The regional **Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Partnership** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

8. We need to promote the mental wellbeing of people in Gwent and ensure that the workforce is supported, to be able to provide people with the support they need at the right time.

9. There is a need to increase the number of bespoke and individual support packages for people with a learning disability which will involve more one to one support in the community and will require the recruitment of a greater number of volunteers.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Review and align regional strategies to Together for Mental Health Delivery plan and develop new regional 10-year T4MH strategy.</p> <p><i>To include Strategic approach to support people with complex needs, including those who are entitled to Section 117 aftercare, as defined by the Mental Health Act (1983)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MH/LD Division/ ABUHB • Five LAs/ Social Services • Housing/Homeless prevention • Area Planning Board (complex needs) • Gwent Police • WAST • Third sector • Private Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership Board will develop the new 10-year T4MH strategy, setting out how WG priorities will be delivered at a regional level. • The Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership will ensure an effective sub partnership structure, to deliver priorities and ensure regular updates from subgroups, as a standing item on the partnership agendas. (Subgroup partnerships to include MH Operational Group, LD Operational Group, Complex Needs, Whole Person, Whole System Mental Health Crisis Board') 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Measures to be added after regional strategy developed and signed off by WG. • Effective subgroup structure developed to oversee delivery of strategy. • Reporting of outcomes to RPB and wider partners.
<p>Deliver T4MH CYP and ensure links with the Children and Families Strategic Partnership, to develop and enhance transition arrangements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MH/LD Division • Families/Children's Division • Crisis Liaison Teams • Social Services • Educational Teams • EDT's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Children and Families Board to align delivery and develop a joint action plan, to deliver priorities focussing on areas of collaboration. • Continue to organise a Transitioning subgroup to support 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint action plan developed and reviewed regularly, including review of support services. • Agreed transition pathways in place

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transition between children and adult services. Link and monitor effectiveness of specific services, such as Mental Health 111 Team, Peer Mentors in ED, and other commissioned services. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance measures to be added.
<p>Develop local strategy and action plan in response to WG Talk 2 me National Strategy, in relation to Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention.</p> <p>Page 124</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Wales MH/LD Division PHP's, NCN's IWN's Police Social Services Third Sector services (MH Alliance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwent Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Steering group work programme in place, including an Expert by Experience group and Communications, Engagement and Training group. Support development of National Bereavement service along with locally commissioned services. Shared Lives (and other crisis services, such as the Crisis Support House, GDAS. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T2M action plan developed and monitored regularly. Reporting of outcomes to RPB Performance measures to be added
<p>Work with Health, Social Care and Housing Forum and Supporting People to ensure that people with a mental health need, substance misuse need, a learning disability or a co-occurring need can access appropriate accommodation and housing related support.</p> <p><i>Work in close partnership with the Area Planning Board, co-occurring agenda for people living with complex needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APB Social Services Housing/Homeless providers MH/LD Division Housing Associations Private Landlords GSSMS) and Area Planning Board commissioned services, such as GDAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standing item to be included on MH/LD Partnership agenda to ensure effective links with partners with a focus on referral pathways to access services. Share work plans across partners to ensure effective mapping of services and avoid duplication and maximise delivery. Review and develop commissioning priorities for Commissioned Third sector 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective referral pathways in place across organisations supporting mental health, substance misuse and housing needs. Reviewed commissioning strategy based on mapping to avoid duplication

		services, floating Support commissioned organisations, Substance use services and VAWDASV providers and regional board.		
<p>Implementing the Gwent Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Foundation Tier programme.</p> <p>Page 125</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB • Public Health Wales • Local Authorities • Independent/Third Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the content and reach of Melo website, as a Central Point of access for people to support their mental wellbeing in Gwent. • Providing free self-help courses and resources for people in Gwent. • Developing and promoting Gwent Connect 5 as a workforce training programme to build knowledge, skills, and confidence to have everyday mental wellbeing conversations. 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of people undertaking Gwent Connect 5 training, and self-reported increase in knowledge, confidence, motivation, and skills to have a MH conversation after attending Gwent Connect • Number of users visiting Melo website, increased followers, and engagement on Melo social media channel • increased number local partners social media accounts following Melo social media • increased number of partners signposting to Melo from their website
<p>Integrated Wellbeing Network Development to support people living with dementia and their carers</p>	Integrates Service Partnership Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify good practice in Community connector roles. • Ensure accurate information and advice available through effective IAA, Dewis, public awareness campaigns. • Support and build community 	Quarterly meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi agency staff trained and awareness of mental health and needs of learning disabilities.

		<p>resilience and grow social networks, tapping into sources of support in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review health and wellbeing hubs and identify effective hub coordination. • Explore volunteering solutions and links to schools to promote Age Friendly Communities. • Promote and extend regional Ffrind I Mi volunteering scheme 		
<p>Deliver Welsh Government's Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026, including development of a regional LD Charter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MH/LD Division • Social Services • Local LD providers (voluntary and private providers) • People who access PIP and/or their personal carers? • Schools/colleges/ universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities Integrated Community Service model developed. • Review of Specialist LD in-patient provision. • Review of individual placements and providers. • Review of Day Services and funding constraints for all partners. 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD charter developed. • Mapping and review of services. • Citizen outcomes and case studies. • Increase early intervention and practical support to help people live independently. • Increase awareness and understanding of the needs of the individual needs of people with a learning disability. • Increase the number of social opportunities for people with a learning disability. • Increase the number of bespoke and individual support packages for people with a learning disability

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase learning, training, volunteering, and paid work opportunities for people with a learning disability. Increase number of social opportunities through 'My Mates'
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p> <p>Page 127</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles • Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for joint commissioning
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care and capital spend</p>	<p>MH&LD Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of national Models of Care and monitor effectiveness of projects. • Individual project performance information to be included




		<p>and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 		
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OLDER PEOPLE

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- **To support older people to live, or return following a period of hospitalisation, to their own homes and communities through early intervention, integrated care models and a whole system approach.**
- **To improve emotional well-being for older people by reducing loneliness and social isolation through earlier intervention and building community resilience.**
- **To mitigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic through, especially reducing waiting lists and times to access support, appointments, and medical procedures.**

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
Increase early intervention support and inclusion opportunities, to reduce loneliness and isolation	Reduce Delayed Transfers of Care through improved integrated working.	Increase wellbeing through access to the right support at the right time to reduce crisis referrals.

The regional **Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions below have been agreed

1. Increase early intervention support and inclusion opportunities, to reduce loneliness and isolation.
2. Reduce Delayed Transfers of Care, through improved integrated working.
3. Increase wellbeing through access to the right support at the right time to reduce crisis referrals.

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Ensure that the Home First ethos is always reinforced, if a person requires hospital admission</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 131</p>	Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventative Measures (Clinical Futures Level 3 and 4) e.g., home first, Care Closer to Home. Integrate Frailty into community services. Define and agree what Discharge to Recover then Assess Model (Wales) (D2RA) means for Gwent. Support Winter Planning arrangements. 	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home First measures to be included, setting out clearly how many people supported, how well service delivered, and the difference made.
<p>Oversee regional delivery of Frailty Service, in helping to address the needs of the ageing population by providing preventative support and early intervention</p>	Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frailty Service leads from each LA area to report as standing item setting out progress. The Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership are developing an integrated 'place-based' approach to supporting people by reconfiguring existing services to 	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Frailty measures set out in service specification. Relevant measures to be included, setting out clearly, how many people supported, how well service was delivered, and difference made. Regular reporting to GASP.

		<p>strengthen community resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign of Older People's Pathway. 		
<p>Maximise the use of Assistive Technology</p> <p>Page 132</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership • HHSC Partnership • Dementia Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the roll out of assistive technology across health and social care and identify good practice (in relation to Dementia 'magic tables') • Explore regional opportunities to develop Telecare services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved independence. • Improved emotional and/or physical wellbeing.
<p>Covid Recovery planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring learning is shared about public service systems to support future planning. • Ensuring individuals and professionals are aware of the Long COVID pathways • Monitor care home outbreaks. 	<p>Monthly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared learning and increased planning.

<p>Integrated Wellbeing Network (IWN) Development to support older people including those at risk of loneliness and isolation</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 133</p>	<p>Integrates Service Partnership Boards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and identify good practice in Community connector roles. • Ensure accurate information and advice available through effective IAA, Dewis, public awareness campaigns. • Support and build community resilience and grow social networks, tapping into sources of support in the community. • Review health and wellbeing hubs and identify effective hub coordination. • Explore volunteering solutions and links to schools to promote Age Friendly Communities. • Promote and extend regional Ffrind I Mi volunteering scheme. 	<p>Quarterly updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of engagements and community interactions as part of age friendly communities. • Designed measures to be included setting out clearly how many people supported, how well the service was delivered, and the difference made.
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care and capital spend</p>	<p>Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through 	<p>Standing item, each meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of national Models of Care and monitor effectiveness of projects.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 134</p>		<p>a standing item update at each meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 		
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>


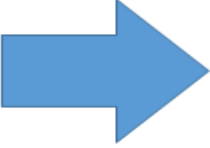

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles <p>Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework</p>		
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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Regional Priority / Outcome as identified in the Population Needs Assessment:

- To promote health and social care sector career opportunities and retain and improve support to existing workforce.
- To continue to develop the College Consortium in the region to promote and recruit students to sector.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS? Our Population level indicators.

		
Increase number of student placements across health and social care partners	Ensure workplace training and qualifications through SCWDP grant	Increased promotion of health and social care recruitment through We Care campaign

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The Regional **Workforce Board** will develop, co-ordinate and monitor delivery of this plan on behalf of the Regional Partnership Board. A market position summary was undertaken as part of the Population Needs Assessment and actions identified across other population themes

10. The WF Board will ensure workforce development is prioritised across other strategic partnerships and coordinate and monitor actions to reduce duplication, effectively overseeing development across the region.
11. The WF Board will work with key partners and stakeholders to deliver the vision of the national integrated workforce strategy for health and social care
12. The WF Board will build a skilled and valued workforce, developing the skills and talents of those within our local communities to provide high quality services.
13. The WF Board will ensure the workforce is equipped to deliver and record care through the medium of Welsh, meeting our statutory duty under the Welsh Government's 'Active Offer.'

(WHAT we are doing) Action	(WHO) Partner Agencies	(HOW) will we deliver	(WHEN) Timescales/ Milestones	Progress Measures <i>How much and how well have we delivered?</i> <i>What is the difference made?</i>
<p>Oversee the delivery of Social Care Workforce Development programme</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 13</p>	<p>5 Gwent LAs ABUHB SCW RSLs</p>	<p>Continue to ensure regional engagement arrangements mirror the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act implementation arrangements and ensuring health and social care workforce have necessary skills</p> <p>Meeting the key workforce development priorities identified in the SCWWDP 2023/24 including effective training course, opportunities to improve qualifications and professional development</p>	<p>Bimonthly meeting</p>	<p>Increase number of practitioners completing training.</p> <p>Increase number of qualified workforces.</p>
<p>Coordinate and promote careers in health and social care through College Consortium</p>	<p>Coleg Gwent USW 5 Gwent LAs ABUHB RSLs</p>	<p>Continue to facilitate regular meetings with partners through College Consortium.</p> <p>Develop a framework to facilitate student placements within LA social care and ABUHB care teams.</p> <p>Adding value to learning through ongoing engagement with local health and social care sectors, its workforce and local recruitment initiatives.</p>	<p>Regular meeting</p>	<p>Increase number of student applications.</p> <p>Increase number of student placements.</p> <p>Increase number of student apprenticeships.</p> <p>'Placement to Progression' events facilitated with LAs and local providers.</p>

<p>Ensure workforce issues identified by Strategic Partnerships and Integrated Wellbeing Networks are coordinated across the region.</p>	<p>5 Gwent LAs ABUHB SCW</p>	<p>Establish a mechanism for feedback regarding workforce issues from the strategic partnerships as a first step.</p> <p>Include standing item at WF meeting to review ISPB and NCN plans to identify workforce requirements and opportunities.</p> <p>Support workforce integration and transformation through Integrated Hub model.</p>	<p>Bimonthly meeting</p>	<p>Increase joint workforce and transformation training and awareness developing Integrated Hubs.</p>
<p>Ensure alignment with the 7 key themes and ambitions of HEIW's and SCW's: A Healthier Wales, Workforce Strategy for Health, and Social Care</p>	<p>5 Gwent LAs ABUHB SCW</p>	<p>Develop a workforce strategic framework for Gwent creating a seamless health and social care service across the region.</p> <p>Deliver joint health and social care workforce plan for mental health services.</p> <p>Increased recruitment of volunteers to support workforce as both a means to enhance capacity and as means as a pathway to employment.</p>	<p>Bimonthly meeting</p>	<p>WFB Terms of Reference, aligns with themes and ambitions of the national strategy.</p> <p>Increased understanding of mental health.</p> <p>Increase volunteers supporting health and social care sector.</p>
<p>Oversee and monitor delivery of Regional Integrated Funding delivery models of care where it relates to WF</p>	<p>5 Gwent LAs ABUHB SCW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board will oversee and review progress of all RIF funded projects through a standing item update at each meeting. • A complete list of related projects will be shared with members to determine the schedule of meeting/presentations • Projects will use a standard PowerPoint presentation setting out objectives, 	<p>Standing item at monthly meetings.</p>	<p>Individual measures included in project briefs</p>

		<p>progress, barriers, and next steps, in delivering against the Area Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the presentation, the Chair with partners will update a risk register for the Chair to update Leadership group and share a partnership report card. • The Chair will include an overview of RIF delivery as part of annual presentation to RPB. 		
<p>Support workforce attraction, recruitment and retention to Gwent's Health and Social Care sectors.</p> <p>139</p>	<p>5 Gwent LAs ABUHB SCW Coleg Gwent USW RSLs</p>	<p>Establish a specific sub-group to scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative approach to recruitment/marketing. • Tempering competition for staff between LAs, ABUHB and commissioned providers. • Consider solutions to support staff with personal wellbeing. 	<p>Established Nov 22.</p>	<p>Development of a 'recruitment bus' and regional enquiry form pilot</p>
<p>Review other local, regional, and national plans to identify areas of collaboration and alignment of resources.</p>	<p>ISPB NCN LAs ABUHB PSB</p>	<p>Review and identify areas of collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABUHB IMTP • ISPB, NCN • Local Authority Corporate Improvement Plans • PSB regional Wellbeing Plan and delivery Marmot principles <p>Identify how work contributes and deliver National Outcome Framework</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>	<p>Maximise resources Single work programmes</p> <p>Identify opportunities for joint commissioning</p>

Appendix 1: Policy Drivers and Current Work (March 2023)

Policy Drivers

- **Part 2 of the Code of Practice within the SSWB Act**
- **Autism Delivery Plan 2021-2022**
- **Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services 2021**
- **NHS Wales Act**

The Autism Code of Practice was implemented from September 2021 building on the Autism Strategy for Wales and reinforces existing duties within the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the NHS (Wales) Act 2006, as an alternative to a separate autism bill. RPB engagement through the covid 19 pandemic, highlighted the challenges faced by autistic and neurodiverse people and the potential of an increasing need for support. The Gwent Autism Strategic group supported by the RPB are the first in Wales to hold a stakeholder event with neurodiverse individuals, families' carers, and paid professionals to discuss the Code of Practice and what this means to peoples care and support. The workshops identified what is working well, where improvements are needed and gaps in provision, to help coproduce and shape future support provision. Discussions are also taking place around the name of the steering group to incorporate neurodiversity and its programme of work.

Current Work in Gwent

- In Gwent the referral rate to the Integrated Autism Service continues to increase. This is resulting in significant waiting times for ASD diagnostic assessment and post diagnostic support. Non recurrent funding has been allocated by WG to help address this and a programme is in place (to end of March 23) which is delivering additional diagnostic assessment clinics, post diagnostic support appointments, 'drop in' clinics and post diagnostic courses. This is in addition to core service provision and is mainly taking place during evenings and weekends.
- Several clinicians within Community Mental Health Teams across Gwent have undertaken training regarding ASD diagnostic assessment. This is allowing secondary care service users to access diagnosis and support in a timely manner.
- A further 4 Neurodevelopmental Practitioners have been appointed to secondary care services. These individuals will be instrumental in further developing and delivering neurodevelopmental services. They are currently developing psychoeducational packages for those referred for ND assessment, both pre and post diagnosis.
- Resources continue to be developed and are available on the Melo website. People may be signposted to these resources, but they are also available to the public and professionals.
- Work is ongoing to increase awareness and improve skills and knowledge of staff working across mental health and learning disability services. An online **Autism Awareness** course has been developed and is currently being rolled out to staff. ABUHB is also currently liaising with the National Autism Team, in relation to rolling out E-Learning modules to staff – **Understanding Autism** is currently available and **Understanding Effective Communication and Autism** will be available imminently.
- We have a Gwent Regional Autism Steering group, that is parent led and supported by the Regional Partnership Board Autism Champion. This is a



multiagency group with partners from Local Authority, ABUHB and Independent Third Sector and is in the process of strengthening links with RSL's, so they can improve how they meet diverse needs in housing and support.



Appendix 2: Links to Well-being of Future Generations Act, Public Service Board, and other Strategic Partnerships

The Regional Partnership Board will link and align priorities with other partnerships and strategic plans. There are several strategic partnerships which will share similar priorities and involve supporting the same cohort of people in local communities. It is paramount that there is not a duplication of services but a synergy between the partnerships, plans, workforce, and resources. Partnership and priorities are set out below; and

‘The RPB will establish a widened governance to ensure all partnerships are well informed of priorities, and which partnership will lead an agenda and where they will complement and support an agenda’.

Links with Public Service Boards under the Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) was established by the merging of the 5 PSBs across Gwent under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. PSBs have been set up across Wales to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being in the area by strengthening joint working across all public services in Gwent.

The Social Services and Well-being Act shares similar principles with several national strategies and legislation. However, the Act shares almost identical principles with the Well-being of Future Generations Act with the main difference between the acts being the time frame: the Area Plan under the Act reflects the Population Needs Assessment and covers a 3–5-year period based on electoral cycle and the Well-being Assessment under the Well-being of Future Generations Act covers a longer period.

A regional Well-being Assessments has been developed in parallel with the Population Needs Assessment to ensure duplication is avoided and a shared approach to improved wellbeing is established. More information on the wellbeing assessments can be found on the [Gwent Public Services Board website](#)

PSB Wellbeing Plan Priorities (to include)

- Objective 1 - to create a fair and equitable Gwent for all.
- Objective 2 - to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe, and confident communities.
- Objective 3 - to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced.

A strategic network of PSB managers and partners has been established to ensure good practice is shared when developing individual Well-being Plans and an opportunity for PSBs to undertake joint planning against regional priorities. The Gwent



Strategic Well-being Assessment Group (GSWAG) includes wider partners from Gwent Police, Public Health Wales, Welsh government, National Resources Wales, and South Wales Fire Service. The Regional Partnership Team is also represented on the group and promoting a consistent approach to the plans where they can easily be read and referenced in tandem to promote alignment. A mapping of Well-being Plan priorities against the Area Plan and a common definition of terms used across the plans – which will be the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding. Going forward an alignment of success measures will be required with the ultimate aim to avoid duplication across the plans and apportion priorities across the RPB and PSBs.

As we move forward, we will also align this Area Plan to the PSB's Wellbeing plan. This work has started through a Gwent Strategic Wellbeing Assessment group to ensure clarity where the RPB leads on a priority, where the PSB leads on a priority, and where there are shared priorities.

Safeguarding Boards

As of the 6th of April 2016, the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board and Southeast Wales Safeguarding Children Board became statutory boards as set out in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. The boards were formed in 2011 covering the local authority areas of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Torfaen. Both boards have developed work Programmes which ensuring the continued effectiveness of safeguarding practice during the implementation and transition of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The individual priorities are set out below and the RPB will support the delivery of priorities through joint working.

Adult Board Priorities:

- Targeting Interventions towards adults who are at risk of specific types of abuse.
- Improving the Quality of Care across the region.
- Improving the effectiveness of the Regional Adult Safeguarding Board.

Children Board Priorities:

- Reducing the effects of compromised parenting on children's well-being.
- Improving our work with adolescents who exhibit risky behaviours.
- Improving the effectiveness of the Regional Safeguarding Children Board.

Police Crime Commissioner and Gwent Police

The Chief Constable for Gwent Police will provide a detailed annual Delivery Plan of the activities proposed to achieve the outcomes required to meet the Police Crime Commissioner's priorities from a policing perspective. The office of the Police Crime



Commissioner will also produce a Business Plan which will detail its contribution towards delivering the priorities. The results of the progress against all activities will be reported each year in a PCC annual report. The priorities for policing are set out below:

- **Crime Prevention** – Taking action to prevent and reduce crime by working partners organisations and communities to tackle crimes that present the greatest threat, harm, and risk and especially those crimes committed against the most vulnerable.
- **Supporting Victims** – Provide excellent support for all victims of crime with a particular focus on preventing further serious harm.
- **Community Cohesion** – Ensure that the Police, partners, and my office engage with communities to encourage help and support them to work together to keep themselves safe.
- **Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour** – Ensuring the Police work closely with partner organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour effectively.
- **Efficient and Effective Service Delivery** – Ensuring that Gwent Police and my office are high performing organisation which value and invest in our staff to achieve value for money in delivering impressive services that meet the needs of all communities.

The full Police and Crime Plan can be found [here](#).

Area Planning Board

The substance misuse Gwent Area Planning Board works across the Gwent region to reduce substance misuse through a combination of education, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. The current priorities the board are working to address are below and the RPB will work in partnership to avoid duplication and create a synergism across partners.

Priorities:

- Improving emergency service substance misuse training and Naloxone roll out.
- Increasing alcohol prevention both in terms of treatment and education.
- Improved primary prevention including raising awareness of Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP).
- Co-occurring mental health and substance misuse services.
- Improved housing options.
- Securing capital estates funding (impact to service delivery if reduced).



Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Board

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 focusses on the prevention of issues, the protection of victims and support for those affected by such issues. Welsh Ministers are required to prepare and publish a National Strategy in relation to these matters and appoint a National Adviser on Violence against Women and other forms of Gender-based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. Relevant authorities are required to prepare and publish strategies to contribute to the pursuit of the purpose of the Act. A Southeast Wales VAWDASV Board has been established and supported by a VAWDASV regional team.

The board has identified several emerging regional priorities and the RPB will support the work of the VAWDASV Board in achieving the required outcomes:

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

The Area Plan will also set out where it contributes to ABUHB IMTP Plan, Local Authorities Corporate Improvement Plans, and 6 national urgent care goals. Our 'six goals for urgent and emergency care' below:

1. Coordination, planning and support for people at greater risk of needing urgent or emergency care
2. Signposting to the right place, first time
3. Access to clinically safe alternatives to hospital admission
4. Rapid response in a physical or mental health crisis
5. Optimal hospital care following admission
6. Home-first approach and reduce risk of readmission

Appendix 3: ABUHB Clinical Futures and Integrated System of Well-being

ABUHB's ambition is to create a new system of primary, community care and well-being across Gwent, in partnership with local government and the third sector. They aim for people to be able to access the care they need in their own community and homes, improving independence and wellbeing, and avoiding the need for unnecessary hospital admission. To do this they will require a radical transformation of services, and the development of new models of care, based in the community. ABUHB's vision is to create a system of primary, community and well-being services, based around the Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) footprint, where there is a consistent regional service offer, and effective locality based multi-disciplinary teams. A framework has been developed to set out a vision, with a 5-year programme plan developed from 2018/19 to deliver change.

The four stages are:

1. Keeping people healthy and well
2. Self-care
3. Primary Care and NCN Team
4. NCN Hub with specialist and enhanced services

ABUHB will draw on the findings of the Parliamentary review, recognising their expectations of a community focused, seamless service. Integrated commissioning, and a clear set of service principles will underpin the development of a consistent NCN model which includes:

- Establishing a Gwent wide unified vision for health and social care
- Increasing the pace of transformative change and integration
- Developing new models underpinned by the principles of prudent healthcare and the Social Services and Wellbeing Act

The system is predicated on the shared agreement by both Health and Local Government to provide more care closer to home, to reduce a reliance on primary care services, and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions. The system will build on the existing innovation across Gwent, and use the NCN footprint, as the basis from which services will be planned and delivered, around a model of community well-being. To drive action, a set of 10 high impact actions have been adopted to drive forward change, and which are focused on partnership working, the development of more productive flows, and the creation of a standard model of multi-disciplinary teams. Taken together, these principles can be translated into high impact actions including:

- The development of a new model of integrated care predicated on improved wellbeing, based on an NCN/IWBN footprint
- The development of active signposting through Information Advice and Assistance (DEWIS) to empower citizens to make informed choices about their healthcare needs and actions

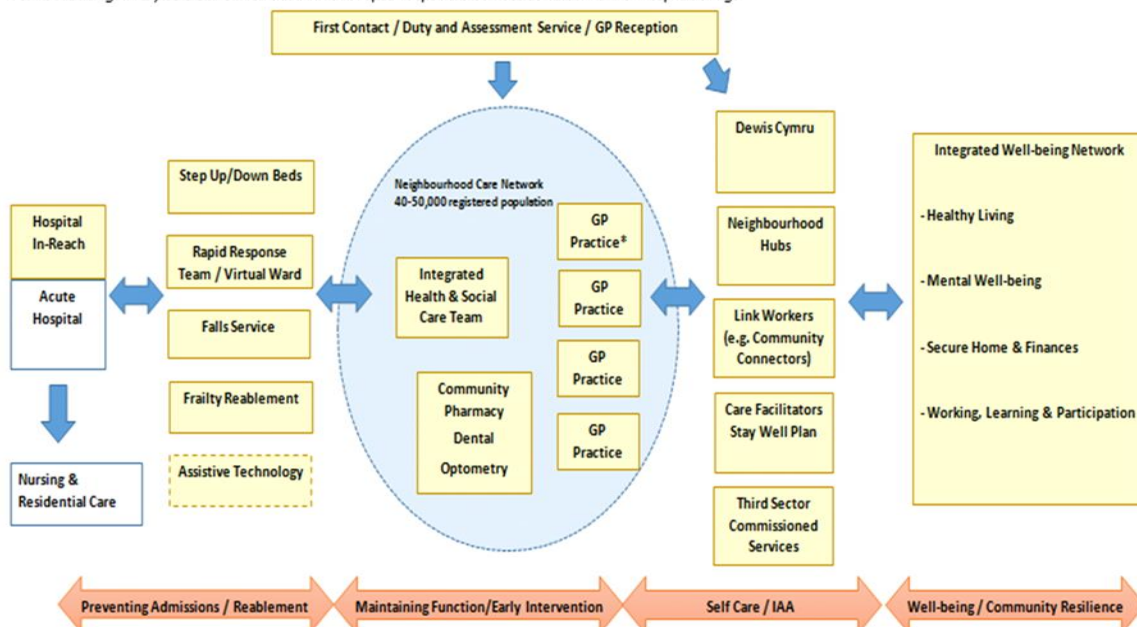
- Greater partnership working to deliver a consistent specification for NCNs across organisational boundaries to provide a seamless pathway to accessible local community services.
- Developing an appropriate skills mix within a modernised and more integrated workforce, aligned to the population needs assessments.
- Enhancing self-care through social prescribing, and new consultation methods in line with the principles of prudent health care.

Further pathways establishing secondary care and primary care responsibilities and enhancing the leadership of primary care, particularly for chronic conditions. Proposed Outcomes for ABUHB Integrated System:

- People are identified early if they need care or support, and they are prevented from ill health or decline in wellbeing wherever possible
- Improved community capacity to support improved health behaviours
- Reduced unnecessary hospital admissions through the provision of integrated community capacity, that is responsive and accessible
- A seamless pathway of care for patients, by integrating social services, health and third sector provision at a local level
- Improving the sharing of information across health and social care

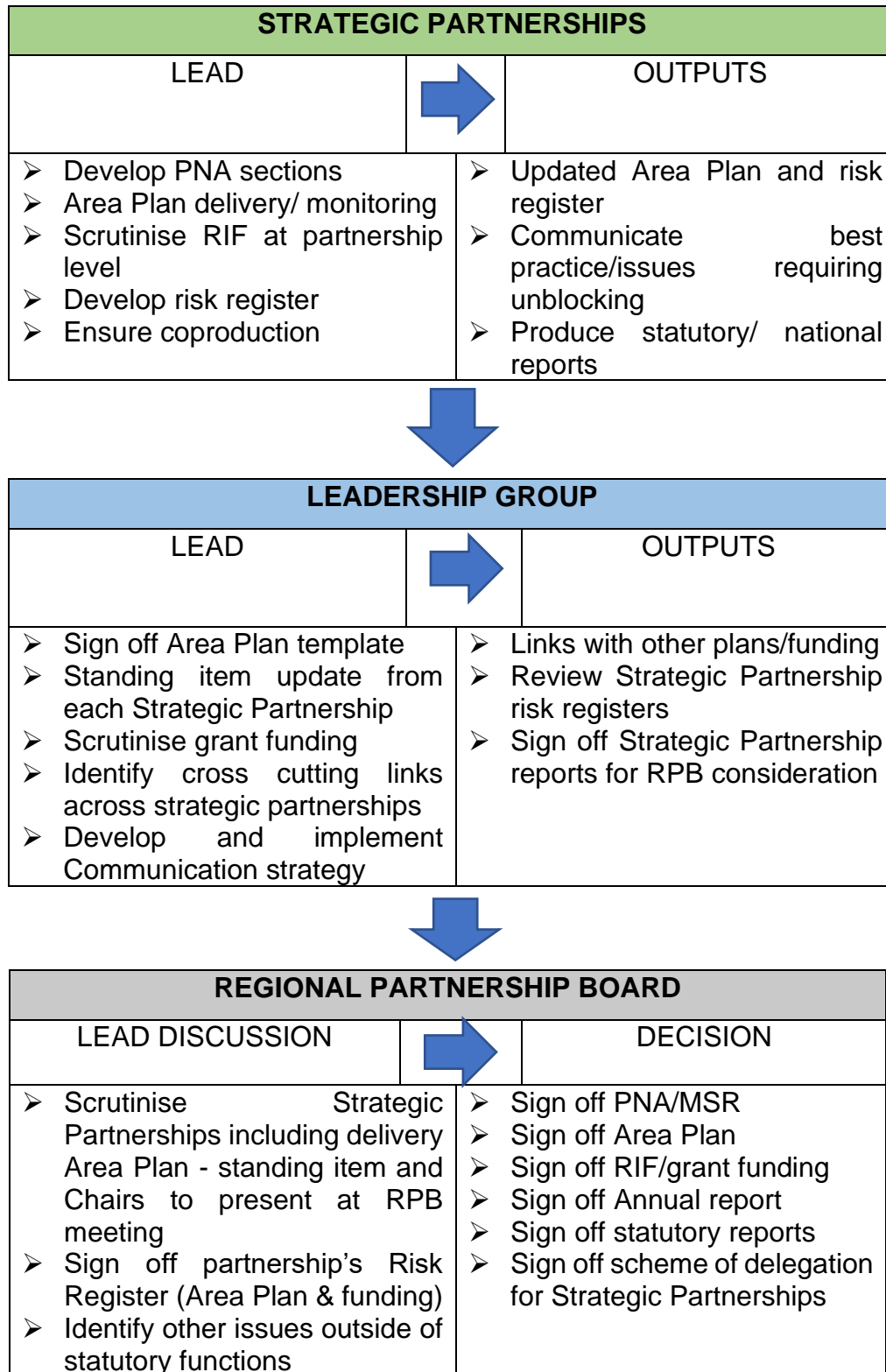
Continuum of services to maintain health, independence and well-being into old age

NB. Not including Primary Care Out-of-Hours and condition specific specialist services delivered in out-of-hospital settings



*Multi-professional teams might include - ANPs, Clinical Pharmacists, Community Paramedics, Mental Health Practitioners, Social Prescribers, HCSWs

Appendix 4: Performance Management Operation/Process Flow



Appendix 5: Welsh Government Principles of Working Action Plans and Acronyms

Acronym	Full Description
ABUHB	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
ACE	Adverse Child Experience
APB	Area Planning Board
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
BME	Black Minority Ethnic Group
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CFPB	Children and Families Partnership Board
CYP	Children and Young People
DEWIS	National website
GAVO	Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations
GNME	Gwent Needs Mapping Exercise
G+T	Gypsy and Traveler
IA	Integrated Assessment
IAA	Information Advice Assistance
ICF	Intermediate Care Fund
ISCAN	Integrated Services for Children with Additional Needs.
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community
LVSUW	Low Vision Service Wales
NCB	National Commissioning Board
NCN	Neighbourhood Care Network
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities
PNA	Population Needs Assessment
PSB	Public Service Board
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RPB	Regional Partnership Board
RCC	Regional Collaborative Committee
RJCG	Regional Joint Commissioning Group
SIMS	School Information Management System
SLCN	Speech Language and Communication Needs
TVA	Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
VAWDASV	Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

VT	Veteran Therapist
WBA	Wellbeing Assessment
WCCIS	Welsh Community Care Information System
WFG	Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOS	Youth Offending Service

Appendix 6: Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019- Liberty Protection Safeguards

The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 amends the Mental Capacity Act 2005, introducing a new legal process that recognises that care and support can happen anywhere, providing protection to people who lack capacity to consent to their care or treatment wherever they live or receive care. The Mental Capacity Act will eventually replace the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards with the Liberty Protection Safeguards and places responsibilities on Local Councils and Health Boards.

Changes include:

- Applies to people 16+ who have been assessed to lack capacity to consent to their care or treatment, where that care or treatment amounts to a deprivation of liberty
- The authorisation can be anywhere where that person is receiving care or treatment that amounts to a deprivation of liberty, including their own home, educational establishment, respite, day centre.
- A new role called the Approved Mental Capacity professional replaces the Best Interest Assessor
- A new role called the Appropriate Person is introduced, that replaces the Relevant Person Representative Councils and Health Boards will be known as Responsible Bodies
- Integrating LPS into existing assessment/planning practice – promoting principles of the MCA as part of core practice

Preparing for the implementation is an essential part of the process to ensure that the transition is as smooth and efficient as possible, helping to reduce the impact on our citizens and workforce, whilst providing key opportunities for them to influence the implementation across Gwent. The local councils, Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Caerphilly, and Torfaen along with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board are working in partnership to look at how this change can be implemented across Gwent, addressing the need to appropriately support the workforce as well as the people within our communities.

Most importantly the Act will ensure responsible bodies are applying the fundamental principles of the Mental Capacity Act into the core business to ensure that the people who are supported have their rights protected and are afforded the appropriate safeguards they are entitled to, promoting empowerment by placing them at the heart of decision making, to support their needs and provide a seamless pathway of care.

A successful implementation for Gwent will be:

- To understand and meet our statutory duty obligation in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 across Local Authority services, commissioned providers, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

- To raise awareness across services outside of health and social care to ensure that MCA practice is embedded in service delivery
- To support and develop skilled and competent workforce in applying MCA and the new legal framework following implementation
- To continue working towards sustainable training that can be delivered across the sectors for specific audiences with various roles and responsibilities
- Build on consistency and strengthening practice-based support within the health and social care sector.
- Utilise the opportunity to improve existing process and procedures to support the integration of health and social care
- Support resilience within the sector
- Identify opportunities to integrate existing practice to comply with new framework
- Work in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, identifying shared objectives to achieve better outcomes for the people we support
- Encourage engagement with the workforce and citizens, to listen and learn from experience
- Provide accessible and relevant information to meet the needs of citizens and the workforce
- Advice, support, and assistants that considers the demographics of the Gwent population, considerate of all needs, culture, and background.

Change, improve and deliver were three key words from the Area Plan 2018 and the amendment to the Act provides us with an opportunity to utilise this to our advantage by placing the workforce and people with care and support needs at the heart of the planning and implementation.

More information about Liberty Protection Safeguards [here](#).

Changes to the MCA Code of Practice and the implementation of LPS can be found [here](#).

Appendix 7: National Outcome Frameworks and Measuring Outcomes

The national outcome indicators evidence whether the national well-being outcomes are being achieved and provide a measure of the wellbeing of people who need care and support and for carers who need support.

The Regional Partnership Board continue to build on and strengthen the work we do with our statutory, independent and third sectors partners, building on people's strengths and abilities and enabling them to maintain independence and realise their personal goals. To support this work, Welsh Governments National Outcomes Framework, includes a series of national wellbeing outcomes which these groups should expect in order to lead fulfilled lives. These are set out in the table below:

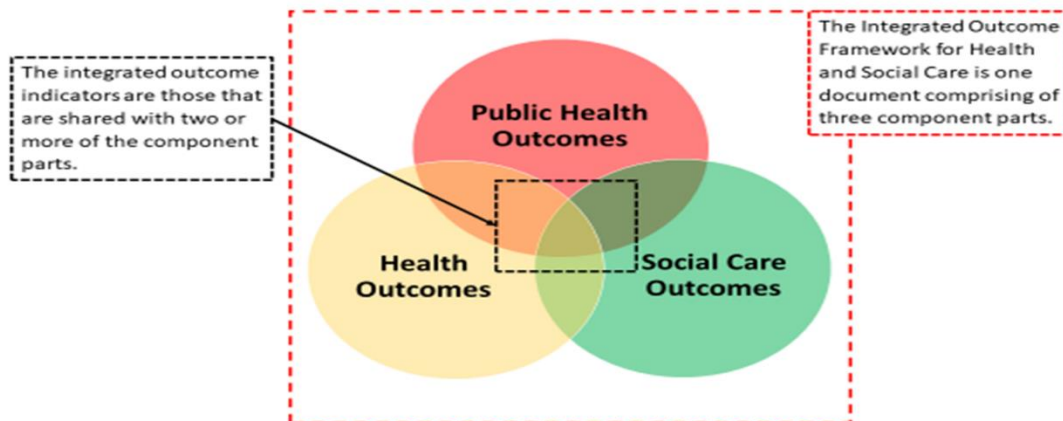
What Wellbeing Means	National Wellbeing Outcomes
Securing rights and entitlements Also for adults: Control over day-to-day life	<p>I know and understand what care, support and opportunities are available and use these to help me achieve my well-being.</p> <p>I can access the right information, when I need it, in the way I want it and use this to manage and improve my well-being.</p> <p>I am treated with dignity and respect and treat others the same.</p> <p>My voice is heard and listened to.</p> <p>My individual circumstances are considered.</p> <p>I speak for myself and contribute to the decisions that affect my life, or have someone who can do it for me</p>
Physical and mental health and emotional well-being Also for children: Physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and behavioural development	<p>I am healthy and active and do things to keep myself healthy. I am happy and do the things that make me happy. I get the right care and support, as early as possible.</p>
Protection from abuse and neglect	<p>I am safe and protected from abuse and neglect. I am supported to protect the people that matter to me from abuse and neglect. I am informed</p>

	about how to make my concerns known.
Education, training, and recreation	I can learn and develop to my full potential. I do the things that matter to me.
Domestic, family, and personal relationships	I belong. I contribute to and enjoy safe and healthy relationships.
Contribution made to society	I engage and make a contribution to my community. I feel valued in society.
Social and economic well-being Also for adults: Participation in work	I contribute towards my social life and can be with the people that I choose. I do not live in poverty. I am supported to work. I get the help I need to grow up and be independent. I get care and support through the Welsh language if I want it.
Suitability of living accommodation	I live in a home that best supports me to achieve my well-being.

The National Outcomes Framework will continue to support specific performance measures identified in the Gwent region, to help us monitor progress and continue to adapt how we work to ensure the best positive for outcomes for people needing health and social care.

The Gwent RPB will align the work of strategic partnerships with the new National Outcome Framework for Health and Social Care a recommendation of A Healthier Wales. It will demonstrate how integrated working has contributed to the health and wellbeing of the whole population. It will also contribute towards delivering the goals of: A Healthier Wales; the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The indicators included will provide all integrated partners with a Framework that enables them to review and prioritise their programmes and activities so that they are progressing the things that matter. It will measure whole system progress so that we understand the effectiveness of partner's actions.

Each strategic partnership will highlight where actions are contributing to the national indicators and review the data regularly to inform practice and update action plans.



Draft National Wellbeing Indicators

1. Healthy life expectancy at birth
2. Healthy birth weight
3. Healthy lifestyle behaviours
4. Prevention of people feeling lonely
5. People have positive mental well-being
6. Children are tooth decay/disease free
7. Supporting children to remain with their families
8. People of a healthy weight
9. Prevention of deaths from all substance misuse (drugs and alcohol)
10. Supporting people with a long-term condition to work
11. People's accommodation is suitable for their needs
12. Safeguarding adults from abuse and neglect
13. Prevention of falls among older people

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Bwrdd Partneriaeth
Rhanbarthol Gwent
Gwent Regional
Partnership Board

Regional Partnership Board Annual Report

An integrated system of health, care and wellbeing for Gwent

2022/23

Working in Partnership



Bwrdd Iechyd
Aneurin Bevan
Health Board



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Foreword



The Regional Partnership Board Annual Report provides RPB partners with the opportunity to highlight progress over the last year and to set out case studies where innovation and good practice have been developed through partnership working. The progress highlighted in this annual report is significant when considering the challenges and unprecedented demands placed on partners following the Covid-19 pandemic, the workforce challenges and difficulties in recruitment, as well as recent cost of living increases and cuts to budgets. We are moving on from one of the toughest winter periods ever experienced with 27th Dec 2022 the busiest day for the NHS in its 70-year history; an increase in demand replicated across the whole of health and social care services.

The challenges highlighted set out the need for partners to come together to collaborate more than ever, to create synergy across services and reduce duplication. The RPB is central to creating the partnership environment to tackle these challenges and has recently developed a new Area Plan for 2023/24 which sets out how we intend to work together, pool resources and transform services. This annual report sets out progress made through the previous Area Plan and also how we made steps to deliver the 'Further, Faster' ambition set by Welsh Government.

We are passionate about improving and creating the best health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Gwent and put people at the heart of everything we do. We work closely with our communities to co-produce care and support services and enable people and their families to feel supported and listened to; and I am pleased to include perspectives from our citizen panel, third sector and provider partners within this annual report.

As RPB Chair I feel it is important to ensure the RPB recognises the hard work of all partners and identifies innovation and good practice to develop further. However, we cannot be complacent as there are significant challenges ahead, but this annual report is an opportunity to recognise the efforts of all staff, volunteers, providers and unpaid carers for their huge efforts over the last year. This report belongs to them as well as the RPB and partners.

Ann Lloyd CBE
Gwent Regional Partnership Board Chair

1. Perspective from Partners

Lorraine Morgan - Citizen Panel Chair

This had been my last year as Chair, but I have now been re-elected, so will continue to focus on the voices of citizens around the table and how their well-being and quality of life concerns are responded to by the RPB, and services transformed for the better. I am so pleased that we also now have two vice chairs, which shares the voluntary work well. We are now holding blended meetings - virtual and face to face and so we will hope to see some old friends return. It has been a very difficult few years for many people, but many of us have also learned new communication skills.

Our meetings remain topical, but we do continue to monitor whether any issues have been acted on and changed for the better. I have enjoyed my involvement in the Engagement and Voice Task and Finish groups with Welsh Government which have concentrated on RPB guidelines and stronger evidence on co-production within RPBs and citizens.

We continue to include hospital discharge experiences as one of our standing items on the agenda and we now have joining us, the new Llais Cymru local body who were the previous Community Health Council but now include social care in their monitoring and citizen support role.

As we emerge out of a pandemic but into uncertain territory around serious social care workforce issues and long NHS waiting lists, we remained concerned about difficulties in accessing GPs for citizens. So, our focus must be more on how our well-being affects our ability to live our lives - and how citizens are really involved in measuring their own outcomes. To this end we had a very informative session from Dr Sally Lewis on Value Based Healthcare and how citizens can share their own reported outcomes to practitioners. We plan to work further with VBHC.

The speed of change is slow but still encouraging if we see some clear co-production within that change. The admin team and our support team from the RPB has been and continue to be so engaged with us - and show their understanding as citizens themselves. So, I would like to, on behalf of the whole Citizen Panel thank them for their real dedication in keeping us informed and engaged.

Jason O'Brien - Strategic Director for Children and Family Services Torfaen

As we continue to recover post pandemic, we are faced with the increasing cost of living crisis and subsequent economic downturn, which has impacted on all parts of our communities and public services. This, combined with a shrinking workforce across health and social care, has continued to present challenges and has further confirmed the need for services to work collaboratively across all sectors. The Regional Partnership Board is an example of shared priorities and joint ownership of resolution, where sectors and agencies can support one another, challenge one another, and reach collective solutions in order to meet the needs of those who present as being the most vulnerable. Our challenge going forward is to ensure that our work is increasingly effective and transparent, whilst drawing on and creating community resilience to enable people to live the lives they want to live independently and safely.

1. Perspective from Partners

Tracy Daszkiewicz - Executive Director of Public Health & Strategic Partnerships, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Over the past year strategic partners working together have established Gwent as the first Marmot region in Wales. What this means is a shared commitment to improving and protecting the health of our communities, through greater efforts around prevention and tackling health inequalities and assuring equity. We will work together to better understand the social, environmental, and economic determinants and how they contribute to health inequalities. We want our residents to live long lives in good health, living in safe communities, have opportunities for education and employment and live in good quality homes. Working to the Marmot principles enables us to put in place programmes which enable a focus on those who are disproportionately impacted by poor health and do more, faster for those who need it most.

Melanie Minty - Policy Adviser for South West and South East Wales, Care Forum Wales

In the last annual report, I reflected on the genuine partnership approach emerging in Gwent and I am pleased to say that the relationship has continued to mature. I have been able to contribute as provider representative to debate within the RPB and its subgroups, for instance feeding into the regional response to Welsh Government's challenge to provide additional winter capacity. In the coming months, we will be reviewing regional provider structures with a view to establishing a clearer purpose and distinction between the various provider groups in Gwent and a process for them to feed into a new, more strategic provider forum. I hope that this will strengthen the voice of regulated care services across third and private sectors whilst enabling closer working with third sector representatives on key priorities for the coming year.

Stephen Tiley - Chief Executive Officer, GAVO

2022/2023 continues to be challenging with the fallout of the COVID 19 pandemic still impacting on the way we work and the cost-of-living crisis hitting much of the Third Sector and its services. The cost-of-living crisis in particular is also having a heavy impact on our Public Service partners, so more than ever it's been vital that we have worked together for the benefit of the residents of the Region. Our County Voluntary Council Health and Social Care Teams across the GAVO regions of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Newport and Education Programme for Patients Project have been actively ensuring services have continued during challenging times, providing support and strategic links to the sector. We are very fortunate that we have built strong relationships with partners around the Regional Partnership Board whereby we can raise the issues affecting the sector across the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board footprint and have the opportunity to address those issues for resolution. Collaboration is at the heart of our work at the partnership, and this continues to progress for the benefit of our communities. Moving from Integrated Care Fund money to Regional Integrated Fund money has brought elements of change and will continue to change through the coming years but having partners that want to work together has ensured these are worked through together. I am enthused to be a part of the positive work of the partnership moving forward on behalf of the Third Sector.

2. Executive Summary

The Regional Partnership Board have recently developed and agreed a new Area Plan following the publication of the Gwent Population Needs Assessment (PNA) April 2022. The Area Plan sets out how the RPB will deliver the regional priorities identified in the PNA and forms the work programme for the strategic partnerships supporting the RPB.

All partners are still experiencing issues and challenges following the COVID-19 pandemic and this has been exacerbated with the busiest winter period in NHS history, cost-of-living increases and significant workforce recruitment and retention across health and social care.

Working in partnership and creating synergy across our services is fundamental to meeting the challenges, the RPB provides a forum to develop the solutions required whilst ensuring the focus is on outcomes. The continued focus on coproduction with citizens is key as well as working side by side with our third sector and independent providers.

We have the opportunity through the recent 'Further, Faster' announcement from Welsh Government to further invest in our community services as the pressure on hospitals is not just a health board challenge. The RPB and partners need to ensure we help people to remain at home, but also return home quickly and safely, following treatment. Winter planning is still proving to be a continuous all year process and the strain on front line workers will require close monitoring, given the pressures they have worked under over the previous years. Yet again it is testament to the passion and commitment of all RPB partners and their staff that we have been able to continue with the delivery of priorities in the Area Plan and key successes include:

Adult Strategic Partnership:

- Adult Strategic Partnership has continued to support the coordinated effort to deliver a Winter Plan programme with regards to admission avoidance and discharge to assess and community resourcing. The partnership has been key to the development, monitoring, evaluation and delivering the national '1000 beds' aim; and has continued to work very closely with local care homes and domiciliary care providers to support sustainable services through a regional commissioning programme.

Carers Strategic Partnership:

- Carers Strategic Partnership has started to develop support for carers and enabling effective hospital discharge in line with national priorities; as well as delivering the other Welsh government national priorities for carers of all ages. Information and support to carers during national carers week and carers rights day has been provided and the administering of the carer's small grant scheme has continued as well as the commitment to supporting young/young adult carers in education.

Children and Families Board:

- Children and Families Board are continuing to deliver the NEST Framework planning tool to ensure a 'whole system' approach for developing mental health, well-being and support services for children and young people as well as developing residential solutions to reduce the number of out of county placements.

Dementia Board:

- Dementia Board have continued to implement the All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards with dedicated sub groups and workstream leads. People living with dementia, their carers and families play a key role in supporting this work and engagement continues with our communities to help coproduce services. We have continued to lead and coordinate the Dementia Friendly Community programme of work in Gwent, to further build on dementia awareness, inclusive and connected communities.

Heath & Housing Strategic Partnership:

- Health & Housing Strategic Partnership has focused on the development of the rapid rehousing requirements. Members have continued to implement capital projects and improve existing resources especially using digital technology. Key priorities have been identified through the area plan, and members will continue to deliver on these as well as developing a Strategic Capital Plan for the region.

Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership:

- Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership have continued to support and improve access to, and awareness of, approved mental wellbeing self-help information, resources, and the workforce training programme (Gwent Connect 5). The Coproduction steering group continues to work with people with lived experience in the coproduction of future support provision, The Foundation Tier programme continues as well as planning through our self-harm and suicide sub-group.

Regional Autism Group:

- The regional group have developed an implementation plan to deliver against the new Welsh Government Autism Code of Practice and launched the code at a conference during Autumn 2023 - the event was attended by over 150 partners and families. The Gwent RPB were the only area in Wales to launch the code.

3. PART 1: Partnership Governance and Development Overview

i Purpose, role, membership, operating structure and key priorities of the regional partnership board.

“Working together for a Healthier Gwent for the right care and support, in the right place, at the right time”

Role and Priorities:

The Gwent RPB will deliver the key aims of Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 of co-operation, partnership and integration, which are set out as the following strategic priorities:

- To improve care and support, ensuring people have more say and control.
- To improve outcomes and health and wellbeing for people across the region.
- Provide co-ordinated, person centred care and support.
- Make more effective use of resources, skills, and expertise across partners.

The Gwent Regional Partnership Board will also deliver the strategic intent set out in Welsh Government’s ‘A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care’, specifically the four themes of the Quadruple Aim:

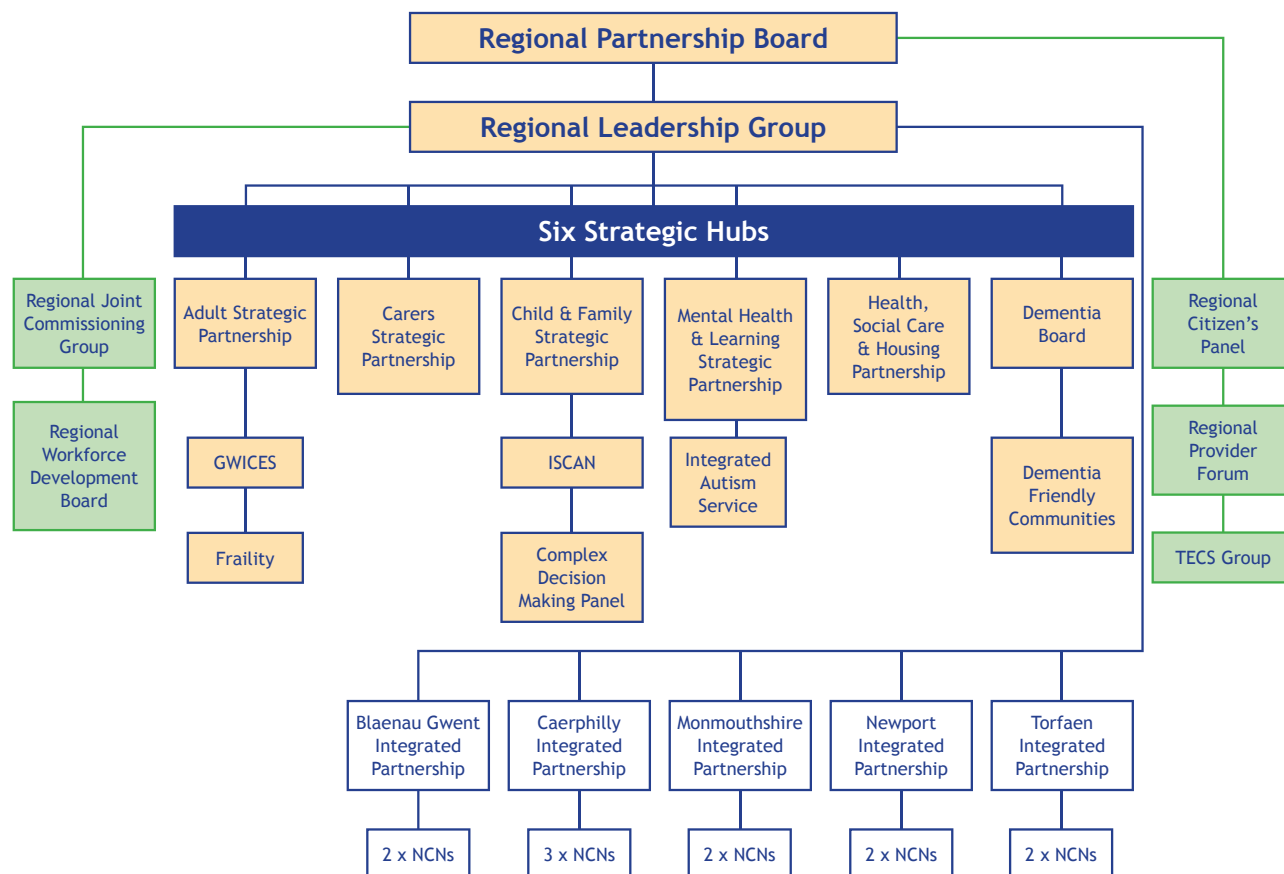
- Improved population health and wellbeing.
- Better quality and more accessible health and social care services.
- Higher value health and social care.
- A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce.

To deliver RPB priorities and the objectives of the Area Plan, the RPB have established 6 strategic integrated partnerships, which also have oversight of the relevant programmes of work and projects within the new Regional Integration Fund. These sub partnerships report to the RPB and update on progress against Area Plan priorities and challenges:

- Carers Strategic Partnership.
- Children and Families Strategic Partnership.
- Dementia Board.
- Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership.
- Health, Housing and Social Care Strategic Partnership.
- Mental Health and Learning Disability Strategic Partnership.

The thematic partnerships each deliver sections of the Area Plan as part of a strategic work programme, which is also translated at a local level via the Integrated Partnership Boards and Neighbourhood Care Networks. The RPB has also established enabling and supporting partnerships as part of the requirements set out in the SSWB Act and this includes:

- The regional citizens panel (including carers), with two representatives to sit on the Board.
- The Value-Based provider and third sector forum, to connect to the RPB directly - having two elected representatives to sit on the Board.
- A regional Joint Commissioning group.
- A regional Workforce Development Board.
- A regional Technology Enabling Care (TECS) group.



The Gwent Area Plan (<https://www.gwentrpb.wales/area-plan>) sets out actions for an integrated system of health, care, and wellbeing across Gwent. Collaborative leadership from Health, Local Government, and Third sector colleagues has driven the development of the plan. It is ambitious, and it sets a clear road map for the delivery of an integrated model of health care and wellbeing across Gwent. The Regional Partnership Board (RPB) will provide leadership and oversight on the delivery of the plan, supported by appropriate governance and performance management systems.

The Plan is structured around the statutory core themes identified in the published Population Needs Assessment and priority population groups older adults, children and young people, carers, autism and people with mental health and learning disabilities. A step change in the pace of transformation is required for all of the groups and we have also included housing, workforce and commissioning sections to our Area Plan aligning to the structure set out above, comprising regional activity (strategic partnerships) local activity (5 x integrated boards) and locality models (NCN's).

ii Key Developments over the last year.

Carers Annual Report:

Carers team supports implementation of various programmes across the region.

- 415 successful applicants provided with £415,000 to support.
- Young Carers in School: 599 members of staff have taken part in 17 face-to-face 'Young Carers: Identifying Us' training sessions and 19 virtual sessions.
- Over 100 Young Carers supported through schools.
- Training and awareness: a broad range of Gwent services have been represented at training sessions where 8 Community Awareness sessions were held attended by 120 people, 39 workshops were held attended by 332 people and 52 people completed the on-line training.

Dewis figures:

- The total number of published resources in Gwent over the past year has increased by 400 resources.
- Detailed views of resources have increased by 9,568. This is the amount of times someone has searched for something on Dewis and then clicked to find more information. In March 2022 there was 31,227 clicks and in March 2023 there was 40,795.
- Registered users have increased by 365.
- Expired resources have reduced from 158 to 65 showing that currency of the directory is improving.

Dementia Conference:

There were over 130 partners who attended the Gwent Dementia Friendly Communities conference at The Christchurch Centre, in September 2022 and 35 partners who attended the Gwent Dementia Friendly Webinar. When reviewing feedback, 87% respondents wanted to become more involved in the dementia agenda across Gwent.

Dementia Friends:

Dementia Friends sessions and supporting online connections with communities. 1,468 Dementia Friends have been made across 98 sessions during 2022 - 2023.

Assistive Technology (AT):

Over 650 AT devices have been distributed to all sectors across Gwent including the Happiness Programme, HUG and RITA to support well-being and positive stimulation.

Workforce & College Consortium:

- **Social Care Work Placements** - regional work placement process was launched in September 2022 to support students to apply for LA work placements and for LA social care teams to adequately prepare to accept these placements. 13 work placement applications have been received and facilitated by LA social care teams.
 - **Coleg Gwent campuses, the 'Placement to Progression' events** - held in Oct/Nov across 4 Coleg Gwent campuses, events have supported students with securing work placements while providing local providers the opportunity to promote part-time vacancies to the current student cohort. 52 work placement applications have been received by providers and 24 commissioned providers attended the events, all were from the adult care sector or 3rd sector.
 - **ABUHB Work Placements. 25 students** have been cleared and are ready to start placements with ABUHB. As of the 14th of November, these students will be placed on wards.
-

Micro carers MCC pilot:

As of Dec 2022 there are 7 micro carers on the directory, providing around 70 hours of care each week. In addition, there are 3 more micro carers going through training. Updated figures will be available following the project evaluation. Costings of Recruitment agencies total £1575 for 70 hours, whereas Micro carers costings total £1155 for 70 hours. Micro carers provide a saving of £420 per week.

Launch of Autism Code of Practice and Autism Conference:

240 people attended a day long awareness and training event in which 100% delegates felt better informed of autism after the event.

Communications and Engagement:

Regional Partnership page views have increased from 7,470 (2021-2022) to 22,502 (2022-2023) - See Annex: 4.

AskSARA:

As of February, all metrics (users, new users, sessions, reports, bounce rate) have increased. The user/report percentage and bounce rate remain at very positive levels, indicating users are interacting well with the site. Good variety of referral sources. **90% of users would recommend AskSARA, 71% were helped to find a solution or equipment.**

iii Progress on implementing changes in the revised Part 9 guidance. Specifically Housing and Education:

Housing and Education:

Housing partners are key members of the RPB and supporting partnerships in line with 'A Healthier Wales' and enabling effective delivery of capital grants. The revised Part 9 guidance requires: 'At least one housing representative from a local authority and at least one registered social landlord onto the membership of each board'. The Gwent region has an established a Health, Social Care & Housing Partnership and the Chair of this group, Chief Executive of Melin Homes, was nominated by Registered Social Landlord (RSL) colleagues to represent them on the RPB.

The Children's Commissioner 2018/19 Annual report called for greater focus from the regional boards on prioritising integration of services for children with complex needs. The Amendment Regulations add a requirement for at least one senior local authority officer from the education sector to be a member of the board. A nominated Director of Education sits on the RPB. It is worth noting that Directors of Education have identified a nominated representative on the Children and Families Strategic Partnership which reports directly to the RPB, and the collective regional education voice is also present during discussions.

Children and Young People:

Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS) provides targeted support and help connect children and adult services, focusing on the family as a unit. IFSS work with families to help them to make positive changes, so that any concerns are lessened, and children can stay safely at home. In the ABUHB region, Newport City Council were originally the lead organisation and coordinated operations across the region. The 5 local authorities funded a shared service specifically delivering the original IFST model. The pooling of funds for IFST is a requirement under Part 9 of SSWB Act, and these arrangements were in place prior to the Act implementation date of 6th April 2016 for the IFST model.

From 2016 to 2018 the 5 LAs reviewed and remodeled approaches to interventions for Edge of Care services. This included a review of the efficacy of our previous IFST provision. There was concern and potential risk of having parallel services with duplication for families. All IFSTs have evolved the original model of support to meet the needs of families experiencing parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental ill health more effectively. The 5 Gwent LAs have different structures with set ups which vary for family support, intensive interventions, family contact, preventions, and edge of care services. The previous IFST provision had been overtaken with the developments of improved edge of care services using the best elements of the IFST model but moving away from some of the less useful aspects.

The 5 LAs all offer intensive family support with a mixture of models, staffing and partners but rooted in research and evidence-based practice. Partners include health colleagues, consultant social workers, specialist domestic abuse workers as well as family support workers. The 5 LAs all take a role with the Children and Families Strategic Partnership and work together as appropriate; for example, on continued joint approaches to the use of RIF with edge of care services to further develop effective family support interventions and work in the court arena.

Under the Children and Families Strategic Partnership we have developed a regional Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN) subgroup, and this supports children with complex needs with a single front door approach and focuses on transition between children and adult services.

As outlined in Part 9 of the SSWB Act, the 5 LAs work together to share practice and collaborate with training and expertise. The five LAs have developed a Gwent offer across four areas of: Family Group Conferences, Mediation, Family and Friends, and Edge of Care services. All are delivered using a trauma focus and a strengths-based approach so embracing the learning of IFST methodology. The RIF resource is monitored regionally and work with the RIF team continues in order to evaluate this work across the region. Looking forward the five LAs will be looking to the evaluation of the Cardiff and Vale Family Drug and Alcohol court (FDAC) to consider further development of services across the region.

The Children and Families Partnership have also led on implementation of the national NEST/ NYTH policy and have developed and monitor an implementation plan to ensure consistent approaches across the region.

Joint Commissioning and Pooling of funds Including Progress Against KPMG Report Recommendations on Pooled Budgets

The Regional Commissioning Group (RCG) has developed a regional Market Position Statement (MPS) as set out under Section 144B of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The RCG have developed an action plan to deliver the identified priorities for care homes, domiciliary care, community services, advocacy and ensuring effective links with provider groups. The MPS has been adopted by all Councils and the Gwent Regional Partnership Board.

The RCG has a cross-cutting function across the regional strategic partnerships and has undertaken work on their behalf. The group is also an information and good practice sharing forum across the regional partnerships as well as specialist technical advice to partners on commissioning related activity. The focus over the next period is to continue to support the domiciliary care and care home sectors as they face a crisis in recruitment and retention. This works links closely to that of the Workforce Development Board and the development of a regional workforce strategy.

Progress:

Providers of care are experiencing considerable challenges but despite this, good progress had been made against Part 9 requirements and the revised regional Area Plan for commissioning, this includes:

- Section 33 Pooled Fund Arrangement signed by all parties.
- A review of the previously agreed regional contract for care homes for older people resulted in no significant changes to the existing document.
- Reconvened the working group with care homes regarding a regional fee methodology with good progress being made.
- Development work underway to establish a common joint contract monitoring framework for care homes for older people.

- Development work underway to establish a common joint contract monitoring framework for domiciliary care services.
- A relaunch of the 3rd sector Gwent Social Value Forum - large participative event planned for September 2023.
- Development of a commissioning approach to mental health and learning disabilities commissioned services within ABUHB - awaiting Divisional response.
- A discussion took place regarding pooled funds opportunities in Gwent - no further pooled funds were identified that this time.
- A review of day services in Gwent - concluded - further work being taken forward.
- A review of direct payments in Gwent - concluded - further work being taken forward.
- Establishment of a monthly webinar for care homes in Gwent - on-going.
- Establishment of a monthly webinar for domiciliary care services in Gwent - on-going.

The KPMG report has been used to develop the regional agenda and helped to provide a focus on key areas. The Gwent RPB continues to look for new opportunities to use the flexibilities afforded by pooled budgets and the current pooled fund supporting care homes is maintained. Torfaen Council hosts the pooled fund manager under a Section 33 Agreement.

The regional commissioning work program will ensure that the issue of pooled funds remains a 'live issue' and is routinely considered as an option when discussing, devising and developing joint commissioning arrangements. The existing regional pooled fund arrangement under the Section 33 Agreement 'Accommodation Arrangements for Care Homes for Older people in Gwent' remains in place. A report is presented to the RPB annually.

4. PART 2: General progress update

2a: Delivery against Key Objectives

The Area Plan outcomes are delivered and monitored through the 6 strategic Partnerships that also ensure the national themes set out in the Population Needs Assessment (PNA) are prioritised:

- Children and young people with complex needs (including new part 9 definitions).
- Unpaid carers.
- older people, with specific reference to supporting people living with dementia.
- People with physical disabilities.
- People with learning disability/autism.
- People with poor mental health or emotional support needs.
- People with sensory impairment.
- People experiencing VAWDASV or homelessness and the secure estate (as set out in the Code of Practice).

In addition to the above statutory themes, the RPB have also included focussed sections for Housing, and Autism.

Partnership working with strategic boards is key to creating synergy across the region and avoid duplication of efforts; and the RPB also links closely with the Area Planning Board, which lead on substance misuse issues and Safeguarding Boards. At a strategic level the RPB links closely with the regional Public Service Board to ensure there is a collaborative approach to the delivery of the Area Plan and regional Wellbeing Plan and VAWDASV agenda as well as delivering ambitions of a Marmot region.

This section of the annual report sets out key work taken forward through each of the partnerships under the RPB and key outcomes delivering the Regional Area Plan.

Gwent Adults Strategic Partnership (GASP)

Area Plan Outcome identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- To improve emotional well-being for older people by reducing loneliness and social isolation with earlier intervention and community resilience.
- To support older people to live, or return following a period of hospitalisation, to their own homes and communities through early intervention, integrated care models and a whole system approach.
- To mitigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic through, especially reducing waiting lists and times to access support, appointments, and medical procedures.

Market Position Summary:

- There is an increasing need to further support the emotional wellbeing for older people, through reducing loneliness and isolation issues and providing multi-agency early intervention and community support to boost wellbeing.
- The RPB will need to strengthen partnerships and practices across health, social care, and independent/third sector to ensure we are supporting people to remain well at home for as long as possible, and are able to return home from hospital, through an enhanced reablement approach.

2022-23 Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Programmes:

Revenue

There are four strategic programmes that report into the Gwent Adults Strategic Partnership and further information is included in the RIF annual report included in appendix.

- 1. Connected Communities**
- 2. Place Based Graduated Care**
- 3. Improving System Flow**
- 4. Assistive Technology**

Capital

Within Gwent, accommodation focused solutions for Older Adults, secured HCF funding for 10 schemes totalling a value of £2.4m over three years, of which £1.2m was delivered in 2022-23 across 7 of the schemes.

Partnership Progress

- RPB has once again overseen the winter planning across the region and following last years implementation of the Discharge to Recovery and Assessment pathway (D2RA) a further programme was devised for the region which was overseen by the GASP. This included the commissioning of a number of beds in the care home sector on a block purchase basis. Evaluation to follow.
- GASP has been key to the development, monitoring and evaluation and subsequent capturing of learning of and from the Winter Plan programme and the RIF initiatives that pertain to adults and older adults in the region.
- GASP also considered the review of older peoples' services and Gwent Frailty programme.
- The GASP and the Regional Commissioning Group has continued to work closely with local care home and domiciliary care providers following the pandemic to ensure responsive, sustainable services in the face of the increasing workforce challenges.
- Continued to develop a regional commissioning approach for care homes and domiciliary care agencies for example by monitoring bed vacancies in care homes, financial risks associated with high numbers of voids and to monitor the activity of domiciliary carers.

- The pandemic effected the timescales and testing of a common fee methodology; however, this is now moving forward at an acerated pace and is expected to be fully implemented during 2023/24 at an accelerated pace over the next year.
- The group will also further explore with third sector partners opportunities to prevent hospital admission and facilitate timely discharge. This work is now reflected in the RIF funding programme.

Case Study

Reablement Testimony

My husband had 2 strokes last year and spent almost 10 months in hospital, resulting in care needs when he came home in December 2022. He came under your reablement team from day one. The reason for my email is to give you feedback on the service as we always hear the bad and often not the good.

The initial assessment was carried out in a polite and caring manner, followed up by weekly calls from reablement team to review and pan for longer term care. Whenever I needed to call the office for any reason or asked to speak with the reablement team, the response was always friendly and helpful. Thank you and please pass this on to the ladies who answer the phone too.

Your care team across the board have been excellent and outstanding in their care and support for my husband as the client and me as the next of kin. Nothing has been too much trouble for anyone, and they have all been kind, caring, professional and helpful, always demonstrating respect for this being our home.

They not only delivered the care but also chatted with my husband in meaningful ways to help him recover from his acute brain injury, listened to him talking about his doggies with pride and never showed they had probably heard it many times before.

They gave him laughter to start his day, and safety to end it. We both cannot thank you all enough for everything and Charlie our large old dog of almost 15 loved them all. We had lots of different people calling but some were more regular but please say a massive thank you from our family and tell them all to be proud of the difference they make in someone's home. **Wife of Service User**

Children & Families Strategic Partnership

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community-based support, and placements closer to home.
- To ensure good mental health and emotional well-being for children and young people through effective partnership working especially mitigating the long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

Market Position Summary:

- There is a need to continue strengthening services and partnerships around a single front door approach to reduce hand offs between organisations and establish a sequenced approach to multiple intervention needs.
- The RPB will continue to implement principles of NEST/NYTH and across all services to remain focused on what matters to children, young people, and families as we move to a whole system approach.
- Given the new programme of government priority to eliminate profit in residential care for children looked after, the RPB will support this agenda and also the early intervention and preventative services that help reduce children becoming looked after.

2022-23 Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Programmes:

Revenue

There are five strategic programmes that report into the Children and Families Strategic Partnership and further information is include in the RIF annual report included in appendix.

1. Early Intervention & Support: Edge of Care
2. Supporting Care Experienced Children
3. Supporting Children development needs/ND
4. Good emotional health & wellbeing
5. Workforce development/professional support

Capital

Within Gwent, accommodation focused solutions for children with complex needs secured HCF funding for 20 schemes totalling a value of £12.7m across three years, of which £4.3m was delivered in 2022-23 across 15 of the schemes. In addition, there were 9 Legacy ICF schemes which utilised £439k of Programme Managed funds in 2022-23.

Partnership Progress:

- The five LAs with colleagues in ABUHB continue to develop residential solutions for children in the region following development of Windmill Farm in Newport using capital grant funding. Windmill Farm is a four bedroomed children's home developed specifically as a home for children who need time in a safe and trauma informed environment as partners support them and their family to establish the best care in the longer term.
- The Healing Hands project is supporting and upskilling staff with emotional wellbeing and additional needs - Approx. 200 professionals/staff received attachment informed positive behaviour support training and evaluation forms suggest over 95% scored high or very high to 'this training experience will be useful in my work.'

- Action for Children Platform Gwent4YP Support service continues to provide individual peer support and group peer support sessions with 88% of young people self-reporting improved emotional wellbeing.
- The Skills for Living project delivered by Action for Children within the RIF Care Experienced Children Programme supports care experienced young people to overcome their experiences and make changes in their lives. “Giving them a Life Worth Living - [CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)”
- The partnership work closely with Welsh Government to roll out the NEST/NYTH model to all partners and have developed an implementation plan following an audit.

Gwent Single Point of Access for Children’s Emotional (SPACE) Wellbeing Service

Background summary - provide the context:

- The CAMHS transformation programme supported the development of Single Point of Access for Children’s Emotional (SPACE) Wellbeing Service in 2019 working across the five local authorities in Gwent region. The model is driven by the ‘No wrong door’ approach endorsed by the Children’s Commissioner in 2020. The service operates in line with the Single Front Door principle of the NEST/NYTH model as per the national objective. It enables children, young people and families to access the right service at the right time. It is recognised as an example of good practice in Wales.



- SPACE Wellbeing is a process through which professionals and families can seek early help and support and panels meet weekly and include CAMHs, Families First, Youth Service, NYAS, Families Intervention Team (FIT) and Platform but are supported by other services who can offer support for the reasons that a child/young person is referred for.

What worked well, what didn’t work so well:

- The volume of referrals over the past four years has been challenging to process in a timely manner but by ensuring close links with services, duplication of referrals and offerings by services is reduced.
- The governance of the SPACE Wellbeing Service is overseen by the Regional SPACE-Wellbeing Steering Group (RSSG) which is in place to ensure collaborative working.

What ‘good’ or ‘success’ looks like:

Feedback from professionals who have submitted referrals concludes that the ‘no wrong door’ approach streamlines how referrals are processed and support is directed in a timely manner:

“Thank you for making SPACE Wellbeing work, you have no idea how much relief it has brought to GPs!”

“I am most proud of the multi-agency approach to working and how this helps support families and young people not to bounce around services when they are in need.”

“I feel that ABUHB SPACE Wellbeing Service acts as a bridge between our Social Service and Health Service. This improved collaboration, speeds up delivery of much needed mental health and wellbeing support to the youth and families in our communities. I am very proud to be a member of this first class team and accept the challenge to develop a more efficient and streamlined service so that young people can rely on us get the right service at the right time.”

Meeting the needs of the babies, children and/or young people:

The SPACE Wellbeing Service focusses on a holistic approach to early support ensuring families feel contained and receive a therapeutic experience from the outset. The panel aim is to ensure packages of support are sequenced/co-ordinated where multiple services are involved; panel chair aims to ‘hold the thread’.

Conclusion:

The SPACE Wellbeing Service continues to be the mainstay of referrals for children and young people who need the support to grow and develop. Communication between the Health Board and Local Authorities is a priority to ensure the sustainability of the single point of access.

The next steps include:

- Training Training and development of the new administrative assistants and ensuring they are supported plus continued professional development for the SPACE Wellbeing Co-ordinators;
- Ensure that referrals are appropriate for services attending the SPACE Wellbeing panels;
- Monitor unmet needs and liaise with services to minimise these;
- Exploring digital access and process to help with parents making good, quality self-referrals;
- Continue to promote the SPACE Wellbeing Service ethos of ‘right service, first time’

MH & LD strategic partnership including Regional Integrated Autism Service - key priority areas

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment Mental Health:

- Increased Increased understanding and awareness of mental health amongst the public to reduce stigma and help people to seek support earlier.
- To improve emotional well-being and mental health for adults and children through early intervention and community support.
- To support people with learning disabilities to live independently with access to early intervention services in the community; and greater public awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities needs.

Market Position Summary:

- We need to promote the mental wellbeing of people in Gwent and ensure that the workforce is supported to be able to provide people with the support they need at the right time.
- There is a need to increase the number of bespoke and individual support packages for people with a learning disability which will involve more one to one support in the community and will require the recruitment of a greater number of volunteers.

2022-23 Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Programmes:

Revenue

There are three strategic programmes that report into the Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership and further information is include in the RIF annual report included in appendix.

1. LD Independence & Wellbeing
2. Enhanced Foundation Tier
(recently renamed Gwent Emotional and Mental Wellbeing programme)
3. Transition

Capital

Within Gwent, accommodation focused solutions for Emotional Health & Wellbeing secured HCF funding for 13 schemes totalling a value of £2.4m across three years, of which £0.751m was delivered in 2022-23 across 3 schemes. Accommodation focused solutions for People with Learning Disabilities secured HCF funding for 7 schemes totalling a value of £4.2m over three years, of which £3.2m was delivered in 2022-23 across 3 of the schemes. In addition, £0.45m of Legacy ICF programme managed funds was fully utilised in 2022-23 to deliver Augusta House Phase 2.



Partnership Progress:

- **Foundation Tier work:** The Gwent Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Foundation Tier Programme, is funded through the Regional Integration Fund and focuses on two distinct but complementary projects, which set out to improve access to, and awareness of, approved mental health resources.

1: Gwent Connect 5

(‘Changing the conversation on mental wellbeing’) workforce training programme

- **Gwent Connect 5** is a mental wellbeing workforce training programme, supplying contemporary evidence-based tools and techniques, which can be applied within everyday life and working practice. It is managed by the Public Health team who work in partnership with organisations across Gwent, with the aim of improving population mental wellbeing by changing the way the frontline workforce has conversations about mental health and wellbeing.
- In total, **66** local trainers have now completed the Gwent Connect 5 Train the Trainer programme and **60** of these trainers are currently members of the Gwent Connect 5 Trainers Network and **169** modules were delivered across Gwent in 2022-23. More than 30 local organisations have access to in-house Gwent Connect 5 trainers.
- Training has been provided to over 40 partners including the Gwent Regional Partnership Team, South Wales Fire & Rescue service, Gwent Police, Department of Work and Pensions, Diverse Cymru, South-East Wales Carers Trust, ABUHB and Local Authority staff. Over 25 trainers are currently delivering the Gwent Connect 5 training across Gwent. Most trainers are delivering in-house, whilst 5 local Trainers from Third/Not-for-Profit organisations commissioned to deliver to organisations who do not have access to an in-house trainer.
- Outcome measures from the pre and post course evaluation forms demonstrate a small but positive increase in reported motivation, confidence, skills and knowledge to have a mental wellbeing conversation from attending Gwent Connect 5.

2: Melo

Website, for details on wellbeing self-help information, resources, and training.

- **‘Melo Cymru’** website launched in January 2021, developed by the Public Health Team and supported by partners. The site acts as a repository for approved self-help resources and information on mental wellbeing. It is an accessible bilingual resource, and the Reach deck tool enables speech to text and reading and translation of text into 99 languages. This makes online content more accessible for people with dyslexia, low literacy levels, mild visual impairments and those who speak English as a second language.
- Since the initial website launch in January 2021, there have been 43,000 visitors to the site. However, we are expecting this figure to substantially increase with the refreshed version of website launched on the 18th of August 2022.
- Melo is promoted across social media channels (Twitter - English and Welsh, Facebook - English and Welsh and Instagram - English and Welsh) and shared through partner social media channels. There is a continued increase in followers across these platforms. Melo has seen an increase in Facebook followers over the last year in both English and Welsh views.
- There are also more resources on Melo that are downloadable/printable, that can be printed off for people who are digitally excluded or can be given out by GPs and other partners. On Boxing Day 2022, Melo was also promoted as the matchday ‘sponsors’ at Dragon Rugby. This game was the biggest game of the season for our regional rugby club, with almost 9,000 seats sold.

- Melo has been recognised nationally as a beneficial resource, and discussions continue to take place regarding possible roll out of the website as a national wellbeing resource.
- In addition, the promotion of Melo continues to be part of ABUHBs Psychological Well-being Practitioner programme's staff induction training and an integral part of the Gwent Connect 5 training.

In September 2022 the website was relaunched and expanded from an 8-page site to a 105 page site. Since the relaunch of Melo there are now 378 resources, 61 courses, 78 helplines and 40 topics on the site.

Please see our refreshed website for more information:

<https://www.melo.cymru/>

Psychological Health Practitioners (PHP's):

- The The PHP service (formerly PWP service) provides support from non-registered, mental health practitioners, increasing GP service provision for people with mental health difficulties of mild-moderate severity.
- During 2022/23 they delivered over 12,700 appointments, 63% of which were delivered face to face.
- There is a current focus to adjust the current way in which PHPs are used at surgery level as they continue to be booked after a GP appointment (63% of the appts) which means that GP time is not being freed up as intended. The service is currently monitoring and piloting strategies to increase bookings direct from reception and other surgery staff.
- The majority of people seen are referred to self-help and community-based resources, with less than 25% being referred into statutory services.
- The service has an outreach worker who continues to deliver a proactive service to ethnic minority communities in Newport; working in collaboration with third sector and education partners to find suitable confidential spaces to support individuals.
- The PHP service is working closely with the new Mental Health 111 (press 2) service and primary care teams, to clarify pathways to access mental health support.

Mental Health 111 Service Data April 2022-March 2023

Accessing mental health services was previously difficult to navigate and people needing support often were unsure which services they should contact. The introduction of Mental Health 111 has simplified the pathway and allows anyone living in Gwent to access support quickly. This is an all-age service and does not have exclusion criteria. The ethos of the service is that a crisis is defined by the person calling, and not the service or staff, allowing for a person-centred approach.

The Mental Health 111 service was introduced on 28th November 2022 between 9am and midnight. From 19th March 2023 the service has been operational 24/7. The service is accessed by calling 111 and selecting option 2 for mental health.

To date, 95% of calls are answered in under 40 seconds by a Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner who is trained to have a meaningful conversation about why the person has called, carry out an assessment and, if required, deliver brief interventions over the phone. If the caller requires a mental health assessment, they will be triaged by a clinician within the service and booked in for an assessment or referred to the most appropriate service.



Am gyngor iechyd meddwl ar frys 24/7

Ffoniwch 111 & gwasgwch Opsiwn 2

For 24/7 urgent mental health support

Call 111 & press Option 2

GIG 111 Cymru
NHS 111 Wales

GIG NHS Wales
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Prifysgol Swydd
University Health Board

Call Stats:

7,666 calls
taken and
recorded

Average
49 calls
per day

95% calls
answered in
<40 secs

33 secs
average
wait time

Autism

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information and advice.

Market Position Summary:

- To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information and advice pre and post diagnosis.
- Improve awareness, understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity across the region to health, social care and wider RPB partners, including Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) as well as communities.
- Increase understanding and awareness of the varying support needs of people on the Autistic Spectrum, their families, and carers (Some people may require full time care support, some may be non-verbal and have complex needs, some may need support with day-to-day activities, whilst other people live fully independent lives).
- Support more opportunities and practical support for learning, training, volunteering, and paid employment, to support independent living.

"It was beneficial to hear about our rights as parents and carers."

Progress

We have an established Gwent Autism and Neurodevelopmental Strategic Group that is Co-Chaired by individuals with lived experience and carers. This group grows from strength to strength and is coordinated by the Gwent Regional Partnership Team and has members including; The RPB Autism Champion, Local Authority leads, ABUHB leads and Clinicians, Elected Members, Education leads, Third Sector and Charities.

First Autism Code of Practice Event in Wales

The Gwent Autism Steering group coordinated and led the first multiagency Autism Code of Practice event in Wales, in October 2022, which was very successful. It was facilitated by experts by experience who Chair the steering group and was attended by a range of partners such as, Welsh Government, National Autism Leads, the Gwent Regional Partnership Board Autism Champion, Gwent Regional Partnership Team, ABUHB leads, ASD and Local Authority Leads and Gwent Police.

The presentations and workshops gave neurodivergent people, families, carers and paid professionals a chance to discuss the Autism Code of Practice and ask questions and share their experiences. We had over **240** attendees and over **30** information stands at the event. All feedback from the event is now being fed into our action plan for Gwent, to ensure we are capturing the needs and voice of experts by experience, in the planning of future support provision.

"Helpful to speak to other autistic individuals and hear about their experiences."

Neurodevelopment (ND) Improvement Fund

We have been working closely with clinical leads, partners and the Gwent Autism and ND Strategic group, to ensure full use of the Neurodevelopmental Improvement Fund. This has been utilised to increase children's additional support sessions, increase assessment capacity, increase post diagnostic support and for the production of digital material for individuals and their families, whilst awaiting assessment.

The Third Sector allocation of ND funding (2022/23) was utilised in Gwent to provide local community support for families, supporting parents with a child awaiting an ND assessment via CAMHS and individuals awaiting an ASD/ADHD diagnosis. Five third sector organisations were successful in gaining funding, Hope GB, Torfaen Opportunity Group (TOGS) The ADHD Sisterhood, Growing Space and Autistic Minds. The support included:

- a project providing support specifically for families
- a project providing support to adults
- 3 projects providing support to both groups.

The projects have supported a total of **200** individuals through phone and online support and provided signposting opportunities and resources to **181** of those individuals. Of the individuals supported, **139** had an ASD diagnosis, **16** have an ADHD diagnosis, and **4** have Tourette syndrome. Additionally, the programme has provided information and support to **222** individuals on benefits/Personal Independence Payment (PIP), as well as to parents and professionals. Learning and feedback from the projects, is now being used to help inform some of the detail in the Autism Code of Practice Action plan for Gwent, which is being developed and monitored by the Gwent Autism and ND Strategic Group.

ADHD Training

In 2023, The ADHD Foundation (Neurodiversity Charity) Dr Tony Lloyd, worked with Monmouthshire ASD leads to provide a pilot training session funded through the ND Improvement fund. The session was well received with **46** attendees, who all found the training very beneficial. More sessions have been requested throughout 2023.

Carers

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- Support unpaid carers to care through flexible respite, access to accurate information, peer to peer support, effective care planning and through increased public understanding.
- Improve well-being of young carers and young adult carers, and mitigate against the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

Market Position Summary:

- There is still a need to increase awareness of the needs of carers and for frontline staff to be able to recognise when people take on caring responsibilities and need to be signposted to information, especially young carers.
- Peer to peer support and respite provision are continually highlighted as being a priority need for carers and there is a need to increase support through third sector and community partners to increase befriending opportunities and community groups.

2022-23 Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Programmes

Revenue

There is one strategic programme that report into the Carers Strategic Partnership Board and further information is include in the RIF annual report included in appendix.

1. Unpaid Carers

Partnership Progress

- We We continue to deliver against the four Welsh Government National priorities for unpaid carers. A complete carers annual report has been submitted to Welsh Government and can be found within the annexes of this report.
- The Gwent Regional Carers Hub and Spoke is a single point of access for all carers in the Gwent region that co-produces services for carers alongside existing provision across the partnership area.

In 2022/23:

- ◆ 2,731 Carers accessed the service.
- ◆ 2,295 were signposted for additional support.
- ◆ 579 were referred to other organisations for additional support.
- ◆ 51 Carers Assessments took place
- ◆ 92 Hub Events took place, and 146 Spokes were held
- ◆ We have continued to invest in our Small Grants Scheme (SGS) and the Regional Integration fund has supported this further. Post lockdown, we have seen an increase in the number of applications requesting short breaks and respite. In 2022/23 852 applications were received, and 166 carers were successful in receiving a small grant.
- ◆ 420 Carer's were referred for support within other services and 1,201 signposts were made to other services for those who were ineligible.
- HUG by LAUGH (HUG) is a new therapy device developed by design researchers, engineers, and health professionals from Cardiff Metropolitan University. The Hug is a teddy device with weighted arms and a heartbeat which helps to reduce anxiety and use other mechanisms to provide comfort. In the evaluation study, it was found that HUG improved the quality of life for 87% of the people who used HUG for six months. This is currently being piloted for unpaid carers in other areas beyond dementia. During end of February/March 2023, 32 hugs have been provided for young carers at schools, 25 hugs to carers of the diverse community autism project, 1 to the carers hub and 1 to the young project at community house. It is hoped to evaluate its impact in six months' time.
- The Gwent Young Carers in schools Accreditation programme is delivered by the Care Collective on behalf of the Gwent Carers Strategic Partnership. A total of 94 of the 233 primary/secondary schools in Gwent are engaging with the programme.
- Coleg Gwent provides post 16 education across Gwent and has achieved an Advanced Accreditation of our Carer Friendly Accreditation programme (a carers employment initiative developed for all public and private workplaces and communities to become more Carer friendly). To date 19 services have been awarded Carer friendly status and 1 employer.
- We have a number of initiatives in place that support unpaid carers with hospital discharge and this area will be strengthened in 2023.

Young Carers Action Day

This year the annual Young Carers Action Day took place on 15th March 2022 and the theme was 'Make time for young carers. Many activities and information provision took place across the Gwent local authorities where young and young adult carers benefitted from improved self-esteem, friendships formed, respite from their daily care activities and social development.



In Monmouthshire 15 young carers participated in activities at Gilwern Outdoor centre, 920 people viewed the Twitter posts and schools participated to celebrate the day e.g. life skills course at Caldicot comprehensive. Young carers were able to take a break from their caring role, make new friends and raise the profile of young carers.

In Blaenau Gwent 24 young carers were provided with a full day of activities at Bryn Bach Park which included crazy golf, the cave, go karting and climbing the wall, lunch and transport was also provided. 34 Young carers learnt new outdoor skills, had some respite, built their confidence, made new friendships and improved their mental and physical health by engaging in physical activities.

“Hi, I just wanted to thank you all for today ‘N’ had a brilliant time Thanks J” - Parent

In Torfaen 80 young carers were engaged. A disco was held for those aged 5 -10, this activity resulted in a social media reach of 214 people with a 103-post engagement. Bowling for the 11-13 and 14-17 age groups was arranged with a social media reach of 380 people with 2014 post engagements.

“I enjoyed spending time with my friend ” - YC

The Regional partnership team sent out information over social media over the week leading to Facebook post impressions of 8,812 to a reach of 3,978 and 164 post engagements. For Twitter there were 4,888 post impressions, 183 post reach and 43 post engagement. In Caerphilly 206 young carers engaged in a number of activities e.g. rock climbing day, family swim, poster competition, vouchers, little mix tribute show and deliveries of Beth's Bakes cakes. These small rewards provide sense of pride and recognition, promoting the message that being a young carer is a positive thing, even though it can sometimes be challenging. In addition, a social media campaign invited YCs and their parents to share positive stories.

“My young carers, in the last 2 years they’ve been through so much, I went into hospital Oct ’21. and was in until May ‘22. They’ve also had to move house as I lost the use of my legs so couldn’t get up the front steps. But even though we’ve been to hell and back they’re still the happiest little helpers I could ever wish for (well apart from the moody teenager lol) I’m so proud of them all xxxx” - Parent

Carers Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

Carers Café Project

We have supported the carers café model: an ICF/RIF funded project that provides greater support and information to carers within Older Adult Mental Health hospital settings throughout Gwent. The project aims to improve the wellbeing of carers and other family members, and ultimately impact positively on the health of the service user, enable carers to feel equipped with the necessary skills to support their caring role and ensure Carers are confident and able to consider their own needs.

This year:

- We held 276 cafes supporting 566 carers.
- 396 carers reported an improvement in wellbeing.
- 87 referrals were made for carers assessments, 181 advised of benefit.
- Entitlements and 516 were provided IAA to support their caring role.
- 234 were advised to register as carers with their GP's, 172 were signposted to organisations and 39 carers accessed training.
- 254 felt listened to by professionals with 219 feeling they were more aware of the need to look after themselves.
- 350 Carers felt involved in care planning and how services were delivered and 382 felt they were given enough information about diagnosis and treatment.
- 467 carers stated they knew their rights.

Dementia

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- To improve outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.

Market Position Summary:

- We need to strengthen partnerships, services, and coproduction models to improve the outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.

2022-23 Regional Integration Fund (RIF) Programmes

Revenue

There are two strategic programmes that report into the Strategic Dementia Partnership Board and further information is include in the RIF annual report included in appendix.

1. Dementia - Assessment and Diagnosis
2. Dementia - Living with Dementia

Capital

Within Gwent, £1.2m of HCF funding was issued to support accommodation focused solutions for Older Adults, including those with Dementia. In addition to this, £3.2m of ICF Legacy funding was utilised in 2022-23 for the development of the Crick Road Dementia Scheme.

Case Study

Crick Road - Dementia Project

Severn View Park, is an innovative and inclusive 32-bedroom care home, designed to replace Monmouthshire Councils, Severn View home in Chepstow. Severn View Park is being constructed by Lovell and will support older people with dementia, both residentially and in the form of respite and shorter-term support.

Severn View Park will establish a new way of providing care, creating individual households designed around a communal, courtyard garden, and will ensure that residents of the home and the local area come together as one community. The Scheme is scheduled for handover by March 2024.

The scheme is being delivered through ICF funding

Total Project Cost	£6,937,903
ICF	£4,810,931
MCC	£2,126,972

Currently on site with the development of an innovative care home that specialises in dementia care (long-term and short-term care) and rehabilitation

The scheme will provide an exciting opportunity to deliver best practice in design and outcomes for people receiving council run services and support



Partnership Progress

- ABUHB have adopted the Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter for Wales. The Charter builds on the foundation offered by the Royal College of Nursing's Staffing, Partnership, Assessment, Care and Environment (SPACE) principles. It acts as a short, clear statement of the key principles that contribute to a dementia friendly hospital. It provides a set of principles and indicators that focus on the needs of people with dementia and their families, carers and supporters and offers an improvement guide to assist hospitals in their self-assessment against the dementia friendly principles. Importantly, the Charter informs people of what to expect when they receive care and visit a dementia friendly hospital. The following animation has been created to further raise awareness of the charter and it's aims:

English: <https://youtu.be/KudreUFNZ-E/>

Welsh: <https://youtu.be/8gu4AB5VFLM>

- Since Covid and restricted visiting, the distress and concerns from carers around in-patient hospital care has been highlighted through a number of complaints, through webinars and 'patient stories'. Locally, feedback about people's lived experience of dementia care when they are in hospital has been used to influence, shape and improve dementia care across our hospital wards. Our Hospital Dementia Action Plan has been significantly revised based on feedback and what matters to people.
- Through using Twitter, Facebook, internal intranet and external web pages, ABUHB have described the improvement plans that support both the Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter and overall dementia care including John's Campaign, patient bedside boards, dementia volunteer companions, Dementia Champions, and carers information.
- The Dementia Board have set up additional subgroups with workstream leads to take forward work, in readiness for the implementation of the All Wales Dementia Care Pathway of Standards to take forward workplans.
- Our Gwent Dementia Friendly Communities group now has over 170 partners flying the flag for dementia awareness, including support across Gwent.

- We have continued to work with schools, colleges, charities, community groups and partners across Gwent, providing online and in person Dementia Friends sessions and supporting online connections with communities. 1,468 Dementia Friends have been made across **98** sessions during 2022 - 2023.

Dementia Action Week 2023:

Free Digital Skills Training to Help People Living with Dementia

As part of Dementia Action Week 2023 Gwent Dementia Friendly Communities partnered with Digital Community Wales to offer free online training sessions for people living with dementia, their family, friends, carers and professionals. The sessions provided an opportunity to increase dementia awareness and understanding within the community and provide people with practical knowledge to help support people to live well with dementia in the community.

Six sessions were held in total including:

- Inspiring Digital Activities (24 attendees)
- Digital Storytelling (24 attendees)
- Digital Tools to Support People Living with Dementia (16 attendees)
- Reminiscence (18 attendees)
- Smart Speakers and Devices (15 attendees)
- How Digital Tools can Support People with the Cost of Living (9 attendees)



Darparwyd gan
Delivered by



“Thank you for the training sessions this week - they have been very inspiring!” - Member of Gwent DFC’s

A social media communications plan supported the advertisement of the free training sessions across the RPB’s Twitter and Facebook accounts. A blog post was also produced with DCW to highlight the partnership, Dementia Action Week and the training itself - <https://www.digitalcommunities.gov.wales/blog/dementia-action-week-2023-free-digital-skills-training-to-help-people-living-with-dementia/>

“While dementia can be challenging to manage, technology and the internet have provided a wide range of new tools, devices, and resources that can make a significant difference to the lives of those living with the condition.” - Angela Jones, Digital Inclusion Advisor, Digital Communities Wales

John's Campaign

Following a task and finish group that met throughout the year we re-launched Johns Campaign in March 2023 for carers of patients in hospital with Dementia which allows carers to support their loved ones along the hospital pathway. John's Campaign is a framework to ensure that unpaid carers of people living with dementia are welcome on hospital wards. It encourages staff to recognise the importance of unpaid carers and their valuable expertise to always maintain a positive attitude to the involvement of unpaid carers.

It recognises carers valuable contribution to the patient's assessment, care planning and ongoing recovery, demonstrating sensitivity to their needs whilst someone they care for is in hospital. At the centre of this initiative is the patients' needs to help the recovery of the patient, the wellbeing and ongoing involvement of the carer, the support of better communication with carers and the enablement of the patient's secure discharge.



Health, Social Care & Housing

Area Plan Outcomes identified through the Population Needs Assessment:

- A multi-agency partnership approach to ensure appropriate housing and accommodation for older people and vulnerable citizens.
- To ensure effective use of Disabled Facilities Grants and appropriate partnership support and available resources.
- Homelessness requiring a collaborative response from public services and partners, especially the non-use of B&B accommodation for young people, and through prevention and early intervention.

Partnership Progress:

- The HSC&H Partnership continue to oversee the ICF Capital grant and prepare for the implementation of the new RIF Housing with Care Fund (4-year programme) to support tenanted accommodation for people with complex needs, particularly where affordable housing standards are not appropriate, Intermediate care accommodation (e.g. step up/down, children's residential) and discretionary funding (aids/adaptations, feasibility studies, etc.).
- MCC and TCBC Care and Repair are continuing to deliver the Hospital to Healthier Homes project to support hospital discharge. Every £1 spent on home adaptations to support quicker hospital discharge generates £7.50 saving for health and social care.
- The Partnership continue to provide regional support to individual partners in relation to the homelessness and ending evictions agendas during the pandemic and going forward will coordinate a regional response to the Rapid Rehousing policy.
- Oversight of the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme especially in relation to early intervention programmes and housing related support to homelessness services and activity to help people stabilise their housing situation, prevent people from becoming homeless, or people affected by homelessness to find and keep accommodation.
- A Substance Misuse and Housing task group reporting to both the Area Planning Board and Regional Housing Support Grant Coordination Group developed a specific free online substance misuse training course targeted towards housing staff.

Case Study



Transitional accommodation - Former Caerphilly Police Station

HCF funding of £632,256 was utilised for the delivery of long-term sustainable accommodation for 6 self-contained units, within the same building for adults (16+) with mental illness, previous substance use or alcohol dependence or young people with support needs to address their emotional and mental wellbeing needs. This scheme forms part of a wider ICF, SHG and HFG funded project in partnership with CCBC and Linc Cymru.

4. PART 2: General progress update

2b: Supporting Better Integration and Delivery

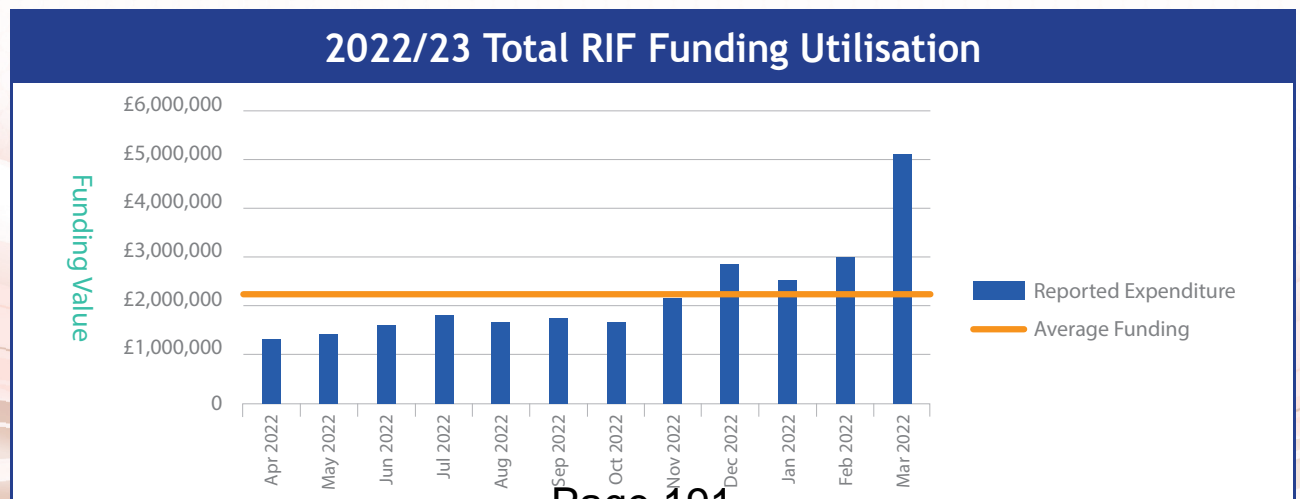
Regional Integration Fund

Welsh Government provided a 5-year commitment of partnership funding at the outset of 2022-23 within the Regional Integration Fund. The policy funding guidance introduces the concept of 6 National Models of Care as an output of the 5-year programme, with regional learning and best practice intended to shape a national specification for the following national models:

- Community based care - prevention and community coordination.
- Community based care - complex care closer to home.
- Promoting good emotional health and well-being.
- Supporting families to stay together safely and therapeutic support for care experienced children.
- Home from hospital.
- Accommodation based solutions.

Whilst the Regional Integrated fund guidance targets the models of care as the intended outputs, it acknowledges that funding is historic and existing allocations are in place. As a region, we have continued to deliver the strategic programmes identified within the RIF strategic outline plan during 2022-23 alongside seeking to describe the contributions and learning against the national models of care. Continued conversations with Welsh Government are taking place to manage the transition and ensure local ownership and oversight of Regional Integrated Funds with the development of the models of care. The core RIF allocation for 2022-23 was £26.8million. £15.4million utilised as Year 1 ‘acceleration funding’ and £8.3million as Year 1 ‘embedding funding’, with circa £3million has been provided in ring-fenced funding which consists of Dementia, Memory Assessment Service, Integrated Autism Service and Unpaid Carers.

In addition to the core RIF allocation, Welsh Government provided a further £0.666 million of additional funding, making the total 2022-23 allocation provided by Welsh Government £27.5million. This growth in funding relates to Carers Short Breaks, the Neurodivergent Improvement Programme and the Learning Disabilities Programme which is shown in the graph below. The utilisation profile also takes account of the approval of uncommitted funding utilised for the RPB winter plan delivery in the Autumn as strategic tests of change, and the usage of slippage materialised across the programme in Month 12.



In 2022-23 the Regional Partnership Board spent a total of £27.5m Revenue and the following has been achieved (the following headlines do not reflect specific activity within the RPB winter plan):

- 19,310 unpaid carers have accessed services, with 2083 feeling less isolated and 2479 achieving personal outcomes.
- 2,597 children at risk of entering care have been supported, to date 600 have achieved personal outcomes.
- We have provided intensive support to 267 care leavers to develop coping strategies and achieve personal outcomes.
- 611 neurodivergent children and their families have been supported, with 515 reporting good experiences.
- Additional capacity within Memory Assessment Services has enabled a total of 3644 people with cognitive impairment, living with dementia and young onset dementia to be supported and assessed.
- 12,462 contacts have been provided to support people to live well with Dementia, and an additional in-year referral acceptance of 2,577 people.
- The connected communities programme has assisted 25,276 adults via a range of prevention and wellbeing services to remain well within the community. Of which, 4968 report maintaining or improving their emotional health and wellbeing and 4396 are more aware of the support available to them.
- 12,498 individuals have received intermediate care in the community via the Place Based Graduated Care programme. 45% of stroke survivors have been supported to rehabilitate within the community, and 53% of individuals receiving intermediate care were prevented from hospital admission/crisis.
- Improving System Flow programme capacity supported 8824 individuals to leave hospital, with 1689 of these individuals receiving aids and adaptations to return home as independent as possible, and 2007 individuals achieved personal outcomes.
- 2505 people with learning disabilities achieved personal outcomes via the LD independence and wellbeing programme, with 1195 new individuals identified during 2022-23.
- 25,000 individuals have accessed information and advice via the Enhanced Foundation Tier programme, along with 169 training sessions provided across the partnership to support awareness and recognition of emotional wellbeing in self and others.
- The CVC led Third Sector Grants fund has supported 3107 individuals within the community, with 2511 reporting maintaining or improving their emotional health and wellbeing.

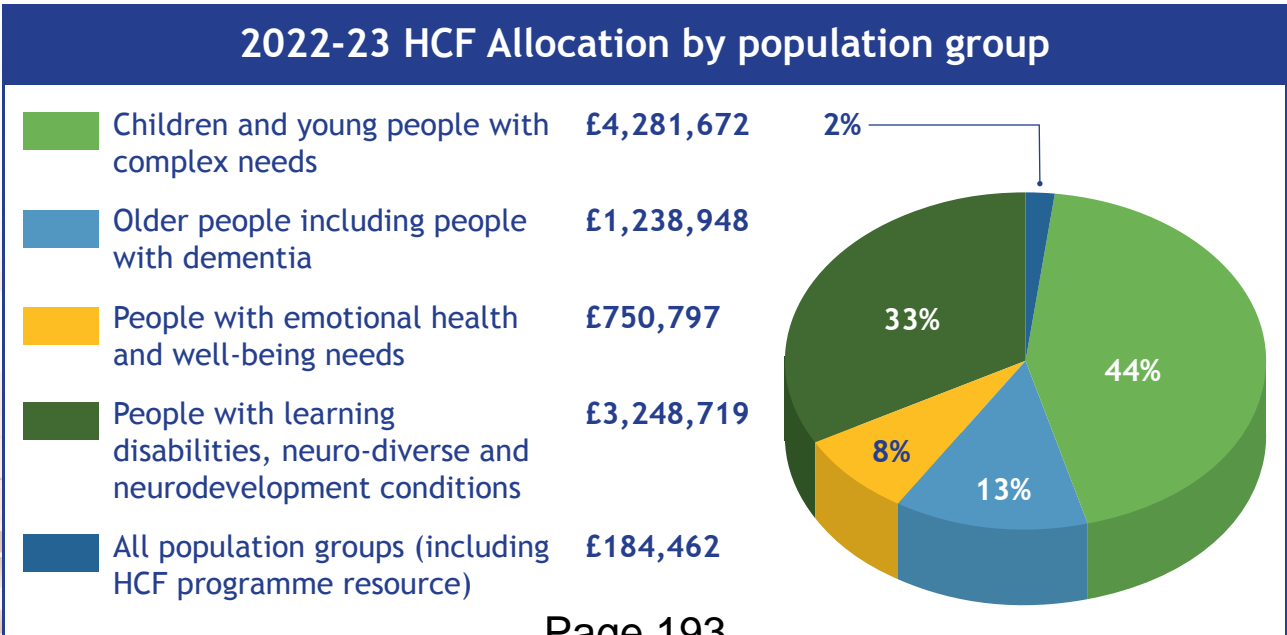
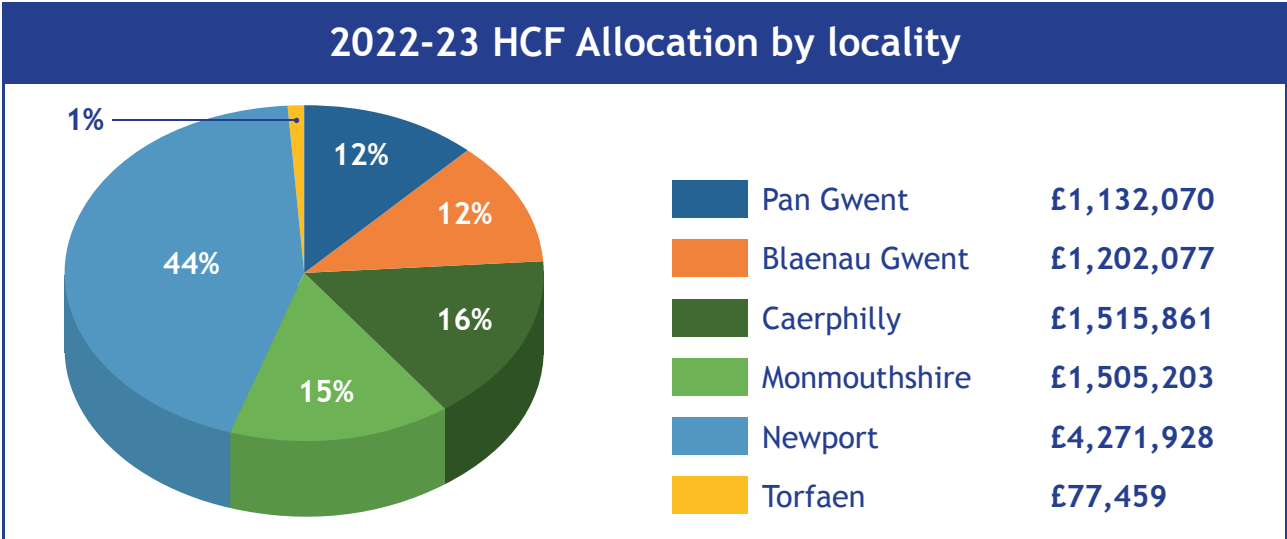
2022-23 Regional Partnership Capital Programme

Welsh Government provided significant growth in partnership capital funding at the outset of the 2022-23 financial year, building on the successes and learning from the ICF Capital programme. Welsh Government have therefore introduced two sources of capital funding for the region as the Housing with Care Fund (the successor to the ICF Capital programme), and the new Integration and Rebalancing Capital Fund. Both funding streams support key programmes for government commitments and are intended to be complementary and supported by RIF revenue to develop new models of preventative care.

With 2022-23 being the first year of a refreshed capital programme for Regional Partnership Boards, significant focus has been on fund utilisation against policy funding guidance in the early years of the programme, pending the development of a regional Strategic Capital Plan. With a significant collaborative effort between the Partnership PMO and partnership delivery organisations, the RPB were able to optimise the funding available to the region, utilising £9.7million of the £11.2million HCF allocation, achieving the highest number of committed accommodation bed spaces within Wales, with a pipeline of 44 units and 95 bed spaces being funded.

The graph below illustrates the fund utilisation on a county basis. Within Gwent, Newport City Council have secured £4.3m spend within the HCF programme, the second highest within Wales, whilst Caerphilly and Monmouthshire both secured £1.5m each, the third and fourth highest within Wales respectively. Whilst few developments were commenced in Torfaen during 22-23, there are a number of opportunities being explored for potential partnership funding in future years.

The graphs below provide an illustration of the Housing with Care Fund investment by population group and by geographical area for 2022-23.



In addition to the Housing with Care Fund, the Region utilised £3.3m of the Integrated Rebalancing Care Fund in 2022/23 for the Newport Integrated Health & Wellbeing Centre in 2022/23. With an expected completion date of December 2024, the remaining balance has been re-profiled into future years.

Improving System Flow

The Improving System Flow programme has two workstreams. The first is delivered by the Home First model which provides turnaround services at the hospital front door and preventing admission to the hospital where appropriate. Where admission is required, the second workstream provides a streamlined discharge liaison capacity to support people to be discharged to recover at home as quickly and safely as possible, transferring seamlessly between pathways. The overarching objective for the Improving System Flow programme is that community admission prevention and discharge support services are strengthened and redesigned to ensure that they are right sized to meet the needs of an individual. Through the redesign of services outcomes for individuals will be improved through the avoidance of unnecessary days in a hospital bed and subsequent deconditioning.

2022 to 2023 Delivery Summary

The programme primarily supports older people including those living with Dementia. The programme's Home First model has provided turnaround services at the front door of the hospital and the project has prevented unnecessary admissions, promoting efficient system flow. The emphasis on involving individuals in deciding where they receive care and support, as well as facilitating timely discharges with the necessary support in place, reflects good person-centred care practice and promotes individual involvement in the care journey.

Timely discharge of individuals from the hospital with appropriate support in place has been a notable programme success. By streamlining the discharge process and involving individuals in discharge planning the programme has facilitated smoother transitions and reduced unnecessary hospital stays.

- A total of 8,824 individuals accessed the services delivered by the programme. This demonstrates the programme's ability to reach a considerable number of people and suggests that it effectively addresses the needs of a diverse range of individuals.
- 1,689 individuals received aids and adaptations through the programme. This highlights the commitment to enhancing living conditions and promoting independence by providing necessary equipment or modifications at home.

2018-22 Dementia Action Plan

The regional Dementia Board oversee development and implementation of the national Dementia Action Plan (DAP) across Gwent; and general progress is highlighted in part 2a above, including how the RPB has delivered against the DAP aims. The Dementia Board have considered the new national Dementia Standards and strategic alignment across the DAP priority areas and this will be embedded during 2022/23. The RIF allocation has been distributed and allocated against the national DAP aims.

PART 3: Communication, engagement and social value

i How your Board engaged directly with service users, or groups representing service users.

Communication and Engagement Strategy

The RPB will be working to refresh its communications and engagement strategic approach in light of Rebalancing Care consultation (up to 14th August). The Gwent RPB website has undergone a redesign during 2022-2023, with many areas now finalised. The website redesign continues to take place and is due to be completed by the end of 2023. The new look website will be key to further raising the profile of the RPB with both the public and professionals. The new design will act as platform to share the work of the RPB across Gwent with the aim to engage citizens in policy decisions and share information, advice, and assistance.

The below data, demonstrates increase in website usage since the commencement of the redesign.

<https://gwentrpb.wales/>

The English facing site from 01 April 2021 to the 31 March 2022	The English site from 01 April 2022 to the 31 March 2023
Users - 2,214	Users - 3,912
Sessions - 3,070	Sessions - 6,034
Page Views - 7,470	Page Views - 22,502

The RPB raises awareness of national campaigns through social media (Twitter and Facebook) and includes key messages from Monday to Friday each week of national campaigns.

<https://twitter.com/BoardGwent>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068857284255>

Citizen's Panel

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) sets out through coproduction principles the need for partners, including citizens to work together. The Citizen Panel Chair and Vice Chair attend Regional Partnership Board (RPB) meetings and feedback topics raised at the Citizen's Panel Meetings. The Vice Chair is also an unpaid carer and ensures the voice of carers is included in discussions. Due to the pandemic the meetings are now hybrid so panel members can join either via teams or in person at the Civic Centre. The meeting has extended to 2 hours.

“Attending the Gwent Citizen panel gives me a chance to voice concerns, on matters that are important to me, in Health and Social Care, as well as catching up with new and useful information. It also gives access to people who can often make things happen. I enjoy the privilege of raising points from my community and feeding back to them.” - GCP Citizen

Standard agenda items discussed at each meeting: notes from previous meeting with an action log to monitor progress, community updates from partners including hospital discharge, update from Llais, Area Plan Priorities and upcoming Events. A more detailed list of topics discussed during 2022/23 is included in annexe 4.

Co-operation and participation with relevant partners and adults with care and support needs, carers, people with dementia and children and young people.

- The Regional Autism group include parents of people living with autism and meets regularly to monitor and implement the new autism code of practice.
- The Citizen Panel Vice Chair is an unpaid carer and identified RPB carers member. Carers sit on the Gwent Carers Strategic Partnership Board and provide a voice for carers across the region. The board also links to established carers groups and coordinators in each of the 5 local authority areas and ABUHB.
- The Dementia Board oversee Dementia Friendly Communities across the region with a regional group coordinating delivery and Dementia Friends awareness. People with Dementia and their carers sit on local groups and help coproduce approaches to deliver DFC. We have been continuing to link with people living with dementia and their carers via online webinars and forums during the past year and also a number of face-to-face events with ABUHB.
- The Mental Health & Learning Disability strategic partnership have engaged with people within mental health and learning disability services to develop an Engagement and Involvement Strategy for Gwent, to help transform future services and are continuing to implement coproduction training for both professionals and experts by experience and all citizen panel notes are easy read and produced by a third sector partner.
- The RPB have continued to engage with members of Coleg Gwent to promote careers across health and social care and how to design course content to promote the sector.
- The RPB continues to engage with the Regional Youth Forum around a Mental Health Campaign following the completion of the national UK Youth Parliament's Make Your Mark survey.

- Neuro Development parent group - we are working together with parents awaiting an assessment for their child to develop solutions together around how we might provide support to families on the waiting list. We have been working with the group to create a group identity (name/mission statement) and working on our 'key objectives' going forward.

Co-Production in Partnerships



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

What is co-production?

Partnership co-production is the process in which those who use or have used a public service become involved in the development of that service. Within the Health Board and other partners this is seen in voluntary and paid opportunities for service users and carers to be involved in a variety of projects such as sitting on interview panels, co-producing new pathways and becoming a peer mentor. This not only benefits the services, but also the individual and overall co-production is a process that is highly valued with the aim to embed it within all aspects of mental health and learning disabilities.

A multi agency steering group made up of public service staff, 3rd sector representatives and those with lived experience of mental illness and learning disability ambassadors meet every 6 weeks to collaboratively make progress on a work plan created to focus on embedding co-production throughout the Health Board and partners.

"Nothing about us without us"

Victoria Stock says...

"The opportunity to work co-productively has been a real positive for me in both a personal and professional manner. Being able to offer my insight from a lived experience view point and also my working role within mental health alongside those in other organisations and the Health Board has given me a true reality of the challenges we face. But together we can make a difference and I am excited for the amazing outcomes from working co-productively with the team."

Victoria Stock, Lived Experience Volunteer for the Health Board



As a team we are exploring new and exciting ways to embed co-production, including liaising with the National Forum for service user and carers on policy documents, exploring the use of time credits to show the value and payment of volunteers time, recruiting representatives to sit on the Partnership Board and sub-groups and setting up the foundations for Lived Experience Advisory Panels.

Stephen Ash says...

"I have been working alongside the health board in the Gwent area and also working with Senedd advisory group. I have also been working with the Melo website. I feel with my life experiences with mental health and autism that I have made a difference to services. Before working alongside services I used to have the opinion that they couldn't be bothered to help people who are neurodiverse but since working alongside the health board I have changed my opinion and it's made me appreciate things are changing for the better."

Stephen Ash, Lived Experience volunteer for the Health Board

Sally Hewitt says...

"We want to ensure that co-production is a key under-pinning principle that ensures that people who have lived experience are involved at all levels of service design and delivery. We are also committed to ensuring that people with lived experience have a real opportunity to shape policy and throughout 2023 the Welsh Government will be working co-productively to develop the successor of both Together for Mental Health and Talk to me 2, as we see this as key to driving forward improvements."

Sally Hewitt, Senior Policy Lead, Mental Health and Vulnerable People for Welsh Government

For more information please contact: Libby.Ford@wales.nhs.uk or Lorna.Anderson@wales.nhs.uk

Engagement with people living with dementia

We have been working in collaboration with partners and communities providing webinars through ABUHB, to highlight the Dementia Care Standards, and gather peoples experiences of dementia care. This included bespoke webinars for people who are deaf, people from ethnic minority communities, carers and people who identify as LGBTQ+



Evening and daytime online and face to face enagement opportunities have also taken place, to highlight the Dementia Standards, and what this will mean for people living with dementia, their family, and carers.

Wales Listens Campaign: Improvement Cymru has launched a Wales Listens Campaign, which encourages regions to engage with specific communities and work with those communities to identify what they feel is important to ensuring good dementia care and support.



How we have engaged with wider stakeholders, including Public Service Boards, other strategic partnerships, service providers from the third and independent sectors

Third sector partners sit on the RPB including the Chairs and senior strategic leads from the 2 CVCs: Gwent Association Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA). The chair of the Provider Third Sector Forum also sits on the RPB to ensure a voice for local providers and third sector partners. The third sector are also represented on the strategic partnerships under the RPB including CVC reps on Carers Board, GASP, Dementia Board and a specific third sector network developed under the Children and Families Board. The voice and input from third sector colleagues has contributed to partnership working across the region at all levels and in particular ensuring RIF funding was appropriately utilised across the third sector, in line with Welsh Government’s requirement for RPBs to ensure an identified proportion was made available. Third sector staff have also been seconded to work in the Performance Management Office administering RIF.

The Regional Partnership Team that supports the RPB work closely with Public Service Board colleagues and sit on a joint regional needs assessment and engagement group. A PSB Chair has also attended and shadowed RPB members at meetings. The 5 PSBs have now merged a regional board and developed a regional stakeholder engagement group and RPB officers attend to ensure synergy.

Progress to establish social value forums to promote social value and share good practice.

The RPB continues to engage with WCVA and the Wales Cooperative centre in adopting a Social Value Forum Toolkit and will look to support the development of social enterprises across the regions working with our third sector umbrella organisations. We will work at pace during 2023 to rebrand our current forums in line with new duties set out in Rebalancing Care and refreshed codes of practice.

The Regional Commissioning Group continue to explore new opportunities linked to RIF and will provide a renewed focus to further develop the role of 3rd sector social Value-Based services in the region. This may be linked to day services or to supporting hospital discharge, admission avoidance and maintaining low level support in the community.

The Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership are also exploring a new coproduction approach to commissioning based on a consortium approach across third sector providers.

Gwent Regional Domiciliary Care Provider Fora

The Gwent Regional Domiciliary care provider fora is a long-established forum led by the Regional Team and ABUHB to provide support to domiciliary care providers in Gwent. Meetings are held on a monthly basis collaboratively between the local authorities and ABUHB, and address current issues being experienced by providers. During the pandemic, these meetings were increased to weekly, to ensure that providers were suitably supported while receiving up to date legislative information.

Care Home Executive Liaison Group (CHELG)

As with third sector and domiciliary care providers, the regional team also engages with care home providers. Support is provided to ABUHB at monthly care home webinars. These were increased during the pandemic to weekly, although occurred more frequently when new legislation was released. This allowed local authorities and ABUHB to ensure care homes were suitably supported through a critical period.

More recent meetings have focussed on the recruitment and retention issues faced by providers, and the effects of the cost of living crisis on services. Regular engagement with care providers in Gwent while also ensuring key priorities are addressed by RPB through provider representatives. Providers also engage with ongoing workstreams, such as regional fee methodology and a regional approach to contract monitoring procedures in care services.

“I must commend Gwent for their partnership approach with commissioned services which I know is much appreciated by care homes, domiciliary care agencies and 3rd sector bodies alike. Prior to the COVID pandemic partnership working was well developed in the region and this provided a head start when it came to working through the many and varied issues brought about during the 2020 - 2022 period. The weekly webinars were particularly valued.”
- Melanie Minty, Provider Representative, Gwent RPB

PART 4: Forward look

The new Area Plan sets out the key actions and priorities following the Population Needs Assessment and will continue to focus on priorities requiring collaboration and include:

- Reduce length of hospital stays for older people and return safely back home with sustainable support through our winter planning and delivering the 'Further Faster' agenda.
- Continued focus on children with complex needs and children looked after, especially provision and impact of out of county placements.
- The increasing need to support people living with dementia and their carers especially with community support and earlier intervention.
- The domiciliary care marketplace requires innovative solutions to long term recruitment.
- Isolation, loneliness, and impact on mental health.
- Respite is critical for carers and needs to be available in a timely and flexible way (formal, informal) especially in crisis situations.
- Recruitment across health and social care, especially Domiciliary Care workers.

The RPB will continue to monitor and support progress of the Area Plan through 2023/24.

Annexe 1: Register of RPB bi-monthly meetings

Meeting date	Meeting type	Key topics covered
July 2022	Business Meeting	RPB Chair election and ratification. Terms of Reference update. Winter Plan and preparing for future challenges. Regional Integration Fund Outline Plan sign off. Programme Closure report. Frailty Budget proposals for consideration and sign off. Draft RPB Annual report. Views from Regional Citizen Panel. RPB Self-Assessment.
September 2022	Business Meeting	Eliminating profit from Children's Services. Winter Plan update and risk assessment. Regional Integration Fund financial plan and Memorandum of Understanding. Market Stability report. RPB Self- Assessment. Views from Regional Citizen Panel.
October 2022	Special Meeting	RPB Capital Workshop
November 2022	Business Meeting	Winter Plan and risk assessment. Workforce transformation and planning. Partnership Programme Development and Delivery. NCN Development and Integrated Partnership Strategic Planning. RPB Statutory Duties and Self-Assessment. Views from Regional Citizen Panel. Views from the Third Sector. Views from the Provider Forum. Autism and Neurodevelopment.
December 2022	Special Meeting	Regional Integration Fund.
January 2023	Business Meeting	Winter Plan review and system pressures. Redesign of Services for Older People and Frailty Service. RPB Statutory Duties and Self-Assessment. Views from Regional Citizen Panel. Views from the Third Sector. Views from the Provider Forum. Partnership Programme Development and Delivery.
March 2023	Business Meeting	RPB Chair's update. Redesign of Services for Older People and Frailty Service. Frailty budget sign off. Winter Plan review and system pressures. RPB Statutory Duties and Self-Assessment. Regional Partnership Board Footprint meeting (with Welsh Government) - proposed amendments to Part 2 and Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

Annexe 2: Membership of the Regional Partnership Board

The required membership of the Regional Partnership Board is set out in statutory guidance in Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. The Board also has the flexibility to co-opt additional members should they wish.

The current RPB membership as of March 2023 is set out below:

Name	Title	Organisation
Ann Lloyd CBE	ABUHB Chair	ABUHB (Chair)
Phil Robson	Independent Member	ABUHB (RPB Vice Chair)
Katija Dew	Independent Member	ABUHB
Nicola Prygodzicz	Chief Executive	ABUHB
Chris O'Connor	Interim Executive Director of Primary Care, Community and Mental Health	ABUHB
Tracy Daszkiewicz	Executive Director for Public Health & Strategic Partnerships	ABUHB
Cllr Hayden Trollope	Executive Member	Blaenau Gwent
Tanya Evans	Interim Director, Social Services	Blaenau Gwent
Cllr Elaine Forehead	Executive Member	Caerphilly
Dave Street	Director, Social Services	Caerphilly
Cllr Tudor Thomas	Executive Member	Monmouthshire
Jane Rodgers	Director, Social Services	Monmouthshire
Will McLean	Monmouthshire	Education Rep
Cllr Jason Hughes	Executive Member	Newport (Vice Chair)
Sally Jenkins	Director, Social Services	Newport
Cllr David Daniels	Executive Member	Torfaen
Jason O'Brien	Director, Social Services	Torfaen
Paula Kennedy	Chief Executive	Melin Homes
Melanie Minty	Care Forum Wales	Provider Rep
Lorraine Morgan	Citizen's Panel Chair	Citizen Rep
Christine Kemp-Philp	Citizen's Panel Vice Chair	Citizen Rep
Stephen Tiley	GAVO	Third Sector Rep
Anne Evans	TVA	Third Sector Rep

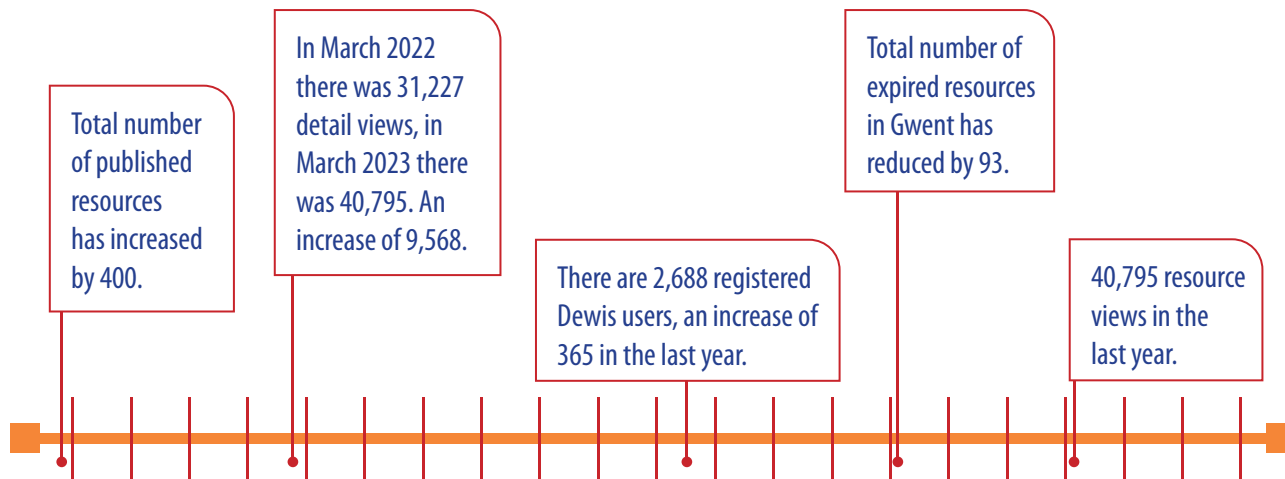
Annexe 3: DEWIS Citizen Portal

Overall Progress 2022 - 2023

www.Dewis.Cymru
Cael dewis a chymryd rheolaeth



www.Dewis.Wales
Have choice and take control



Top 3 Successes

1. Increased resources and a reduction in expired resources.
2. Increased registered users.
3. Resource detail views have increased.

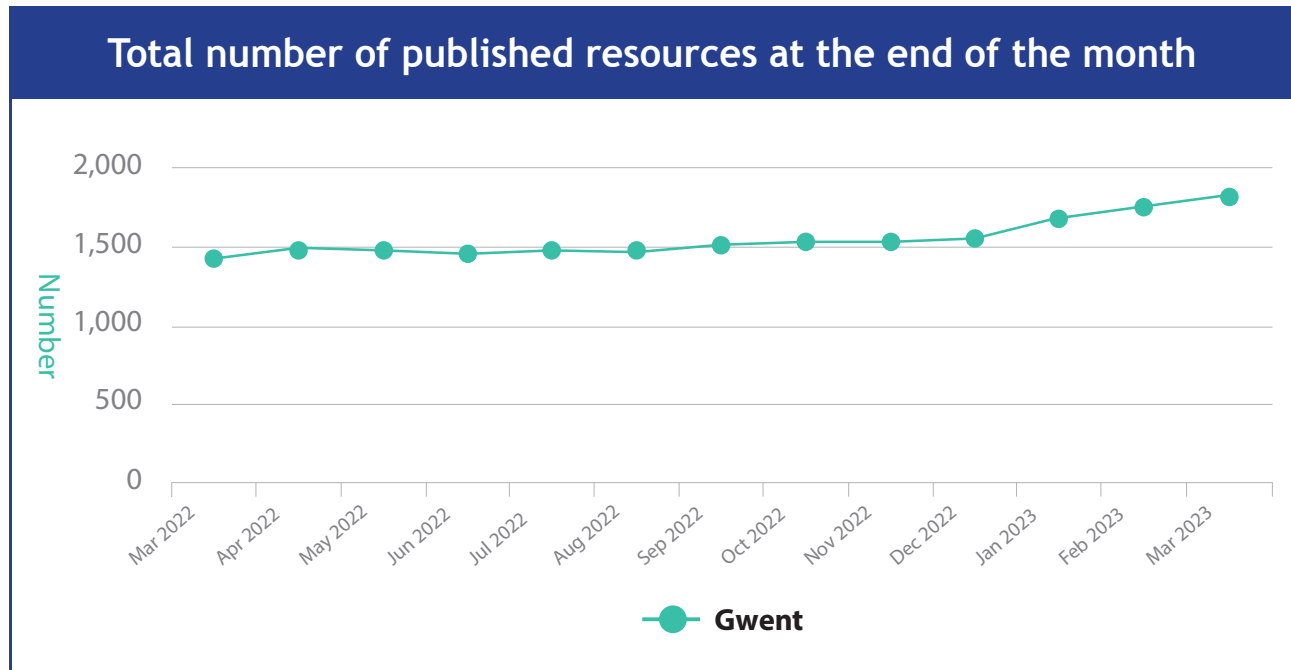
Top 3 Challenges

1. Re-engaging with expired resources.
2. Myth busting that DEWIS resources are out of date if viewable.
3. Ensuring DEWIS is developed with/linked to existing/new directories, developing stronger links with partners and organisations.

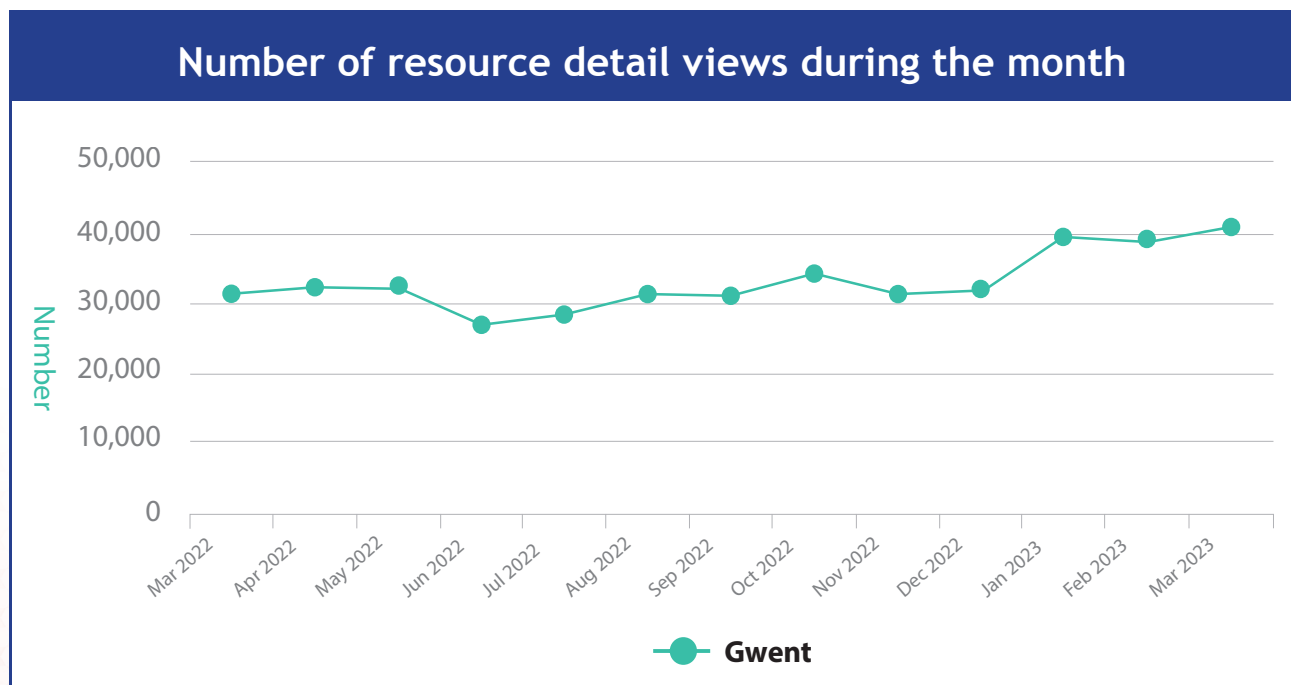
Next Steps

1. Continue to lead and coordinate DEWIS implementation across the region.
2. Promote and encourage the use of DEWIS within the community and with providers of support and services throughout Gwent.
3. Continue to increase available resources and reduce the number of expired resources.

March Data 2022-2023

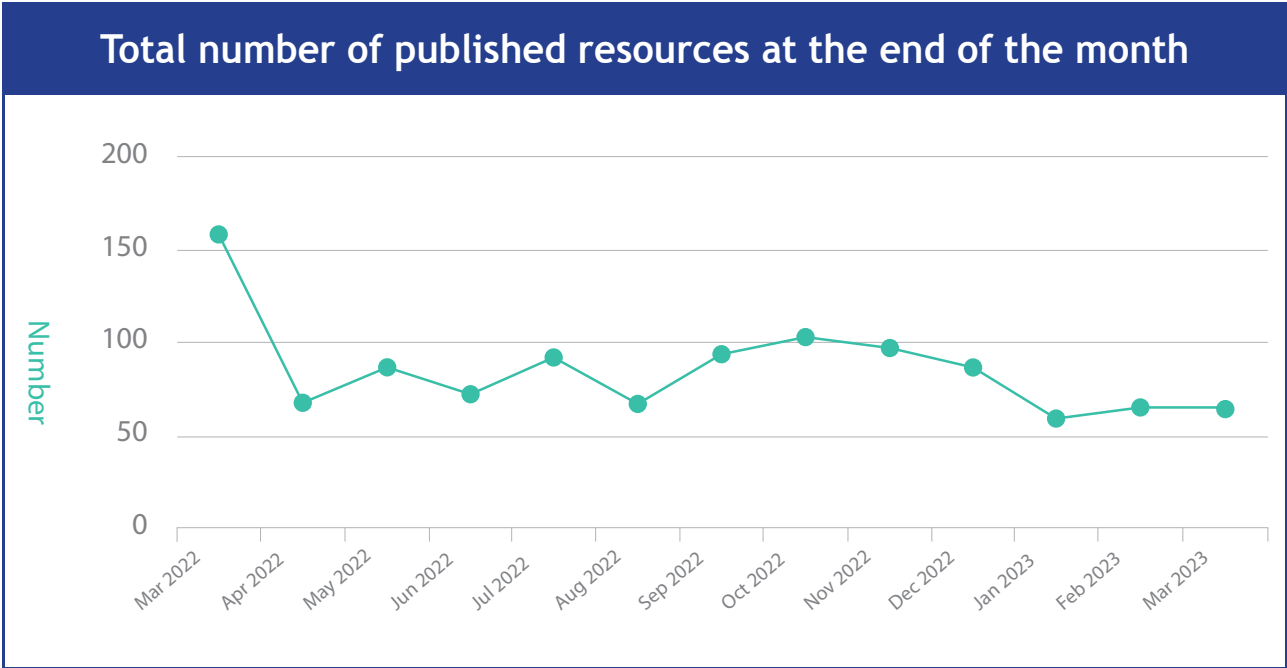


The required membership of the Regional Partnership Board is set out in statutory guidance in Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. The Board also has the flexibility to co-opt additional members should they wish.

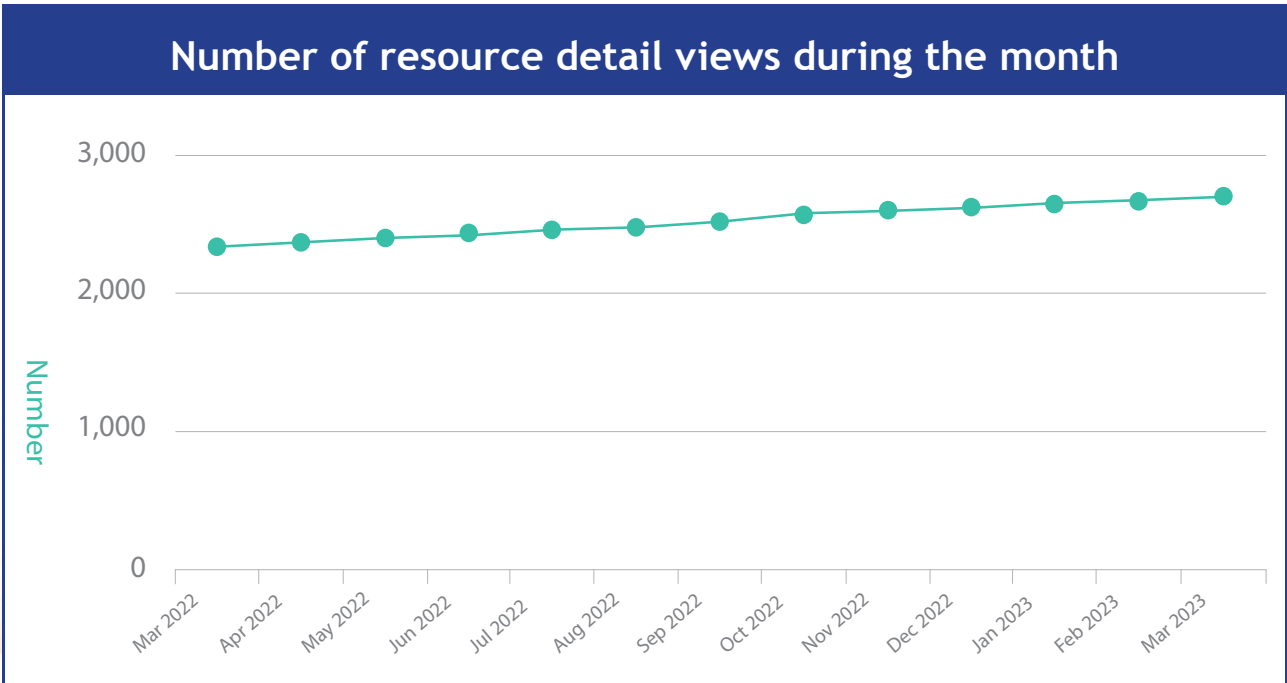


The graph above shows how many clicks there has been in Gwent over the past year, this shows how many times someone has searched for something on Dewis and then clicked to find more information about the resource. In March 2022 there was 31,227 clicks and in March 2023 there was 40,795. Over the last year there has been an increase of 9,568 clicks.

March Data 2022-2023



The graph above shows the Total number of expired resources in Gwent over the past year, in March 2022 there was 158 expired resources and in March 2023 there was 65 expired resources. This has been a decrease of 93 expired resources.



The graph above shows the Total number of registered users over the last year. In March 2022 there was 2,323 registered users and in March 2023 there was 2,688. There has been an increase of 365 users over the last year

Annexe 4: Gwent Citizen Panel discussed topics 2023/24

Meeting topics

Unpaid Carers.

Carer's week takes place in June every year, the theme for the last year was making carers valued. We have a young carers hub - in the last year held 28 events. Supporting Life Alongside Caring - a small grant scheme and a young carer in school's programme.

Finding the Light in Dementia presentation.

There is a training platform called 'My Favourite Things'. This has been developed with people who have dementia through the dementia, engagement and empowerment project and the 3 Nations Working Dementia Group. The training is available for hospital staff, volunteers, care homes, or anyone working within dementia linked roles.

Jackie's Revolution presentation.

Jackie's Revolution has moved from a concept to a campaign. The sole purpose of Jackie Revolution is to ensure that it's based on community and citizens and our community has been identified as the people born between 1945 and 1964, the so-called baby boomer generation. The intention is that our community has real choice and viable options to live and die in our own homes or wherever we choose.

Wellbeing Plan presentation. Online consultation.

Cost of Living Crisis.

This is something that we're trying to raise through all the strategic partnerships and dementia friendly communities, as this is a topic that's affecting everyone.

Obstructive Parking - Crime Commissioner and Gwent Police.

A Member of the panel put together a presentation. Dropped curb parking is endangering disabled people.

ASB - Crime Commissioner and Gwent Police.

A number of ongoing projects were discussed.

Community Podiatry Services presentation.

The acting head for podiatry in ABUHB took attendees through a presentation. Any health care professional can refer a patient to the service

Market Stability Report.

As a requirement of WG each LA and Health Board are required to produce a MSR and the Regional Partnership Board must publish a regional summary. The report has been taken through all LA councils for comment and sign off of the report.

Housing Support Grant presentation.

Housing Support Grant brought together 3 funding streams: Supporting People Programme, some Homelessness Prevention Grant funding and Rent Smart Wales funding.

Direct Payments presentation.

Direct Payments are monetary payments made to an individual who is eligible to receive a service for care and support from a Local Authority.

Meeting topics

Value Based Care presentation.

Value based healthcare is the equitable, sustainable and transparent use of the available resources to achieve better outcomes and experiences for every person.

Track the Act - Carers Wales presentation.

Under the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, unpaid carers in Wales have equal legal rights to support as well as the people they look after.

ABUHB CEO

ABUHB CEO attended the September meeting to discuss Covid 19 Pandemic, vaccination programme, annual plan and answer questions from the panel.

Compassionate Communities -

ABUHB presentation contained patient stories.

Police and Crime Plan Engagement Survey -

Link sent to panel to complete.

Engagement Reports - GAVO and TVA.

Results from the survey which asked of those who have accessed health services during the pandemic. BAME has been renamed Diverse Communities.

The State of Caring in Wales -

Carers Wales presentation. There are a growing number of carers. Welsh Government Strategy for Unpaid Carers: 4 national priorities and delivery plan.

Time Credits -

Paper time credits have now gone digital. The panel were encouraged to join the scheme.

ABUHB Primary Care Update -

Digital, face to face and home visiting is important as a blended approach. The telephony service must be fit for purpose. Recruitment and retention is important. Dental work was suspended due to the pandemic, this caused a backlog and urgent care is to be prioritised.

Day Services -

Several day services were closed and people with learning disabilities were accessing more local services available to them.

Population Needs Assessment -

RPT presentation looked at population increase and core themes including Dementia, Older people, Carers, Mental Health, Children Looked After, Learning Disabilities, Autism, Housing and next steps.

Older Persons Commissioner -

Helena Herklots presentation on priorities: Protecting and Promoting Older Peoples Rights, Stopping the Abuse of Older People, Ending Ageism and Age Discrimination and Enabling Everyone to Age Well.

Annexe 5: Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology (AT) Programme seeks to maximise the use and impact of Assistive Technology solutions to improve health and well-being outcomes, maintain and improve independence, and support the transformation of models of care. The programme goal is to work with partners across Gwent to optimise the implementation and effectiveness of AT and technology-enabled care (TEC) solutions, which enhance health and well-being outcomes, maintain and improve independence and aid escalation prevention.

2022 to 2023 Delivery Summary

The Assistive Technology (AT) programme includes regional Better Care projects, a Technology Coach and AT projects centrally managed by the RPB PMO team. Over the last year, there has been a positive increase in the collaboration and sharing of existing AT projects across the region and clarity of AT leads across local authorities, housing associations, third sector and within the health board.

Organisations across Gwent continue to innovate and use AT products that are person-centred and in ways that are making a positive difference. There has been an increasing investment in AT and Telecare over many years and there is a good level of awareness of the products available across all partners. Over the 2022-23 period, the programme has assisted 754 people in various capacities. Additionally, 290 people received training delivered through 92 sessions. The Gwent AT Network delivered an Inspiring Digital Activities Festival of training in partnership with Digital Communities Wales in March. The 4 sessions resulted in training 37 people accessing training. Programme Case Studies.

1. How Care and Repair is Helping to Tackle Hospital Waiting Times.
2. How British Red Cross support staff and patients within the Emergency Department.
3. Newport and other counties in the region have produced wellbeing town maps.
4. The Happiness Programme has been rolled out across Gwent including County Hospital.
5. 15 'happy to chat' benches have been installed in Monmouthshire to help tackle loneliness.

Assistive Technology and Dementia

- RITA (Reminiscence Interactive Therapy Activities), developed by My Improvement Network, enhances care for older individuals, including those with dementia and mental health conditions. It uses a touchscreen device with interactive screens to offer meaningful activities that blend entertainment with therapy. RITA assists patients, particularly those with memory impairments, in recalling and sharing past events through music, news reports, speeches, games, karaoke, and films. Over 120 RITA devices were purchased in 2020/2021 and distributed to care homes, hospitals, and healthcare teams. An additional 140 devices were purchased in 2021/2022 and distributed in partnership with local authorities and third-sector organizations in Gwent. RITA is also being used by mobile teams and has been trialled in complex care settings. More information is available on the Gwent RPB website - <https://www.gwentrpb.wales/rita>

- **500 HUG** devices were purchased for distribution across Gwent as a pilot in the financial year 2021/2022. A guide has been co-produced with partners to support implementation across the region. Although designed for people living with Dementia, the device is being tested in a range of different settings including - care homes, hospital wards, hospice care, carers and organisations within the third sector. A HUG evaluation by TEC Cymru is due for completion in Summer 2023. More information is available on the Gwent RPB website - [HUG by LAUGH - Gwentrpb](#)
- The Happiness Programme, developed by Social Ability, blends interactive, sensory light technology with a guided programme and training and support. Developed for people living with cognitive physical care needs the projector, known as a Magic Table 360, offers meaningful and engaging activity through over 80 interactive activities. The activities are a collection of interactive games, quizzes and mindful immersive content some of which are specific to Wales. Over **140** devices have been distributed across all sectors in Gwent with early feedback positive. More information is available on the Gwent RPB website [Happiness Programme - Gwentrpb](#)
- Stay Well at Home Pilot - The Stay Well at Home project is a free non-intrusive monitoring service being tested by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) in partnership with a smart home monitoring provider, HOWZ. This system aims to help people retain their independence by supporting people to stay safer at home for longer. The pilot project started in April 2023 with five patients.

Annexe 6: Micro Care

The Regional Partnership Team in partnership with Monmouthshire Council have completed a 12-month Micro Care pilot. The pilot aimed to explore if micro carers could support local care capacity and delivery, providing an alternative to traditional domiciliary care provision. Micro-care pilots have been introduced in other regions as a response to the national shortage of care workers and to meet the growing demand for care at home, particularly in rural areas where recruitment is difficult. During the initial stages of the project, a 'Community Catalyst' was commissioned on a consultancy basis to support with project roll out.

The pilot has focused on two identified areas where micro carers could potentially support local care capacity:

- Providing care to those that self-fund their care and support
- Providing care to those in receipt of direct payments.

The first 12 months of micro care in Monmouthshire has seen 9 micro carers meet the standards laid out in the code of practise and entered onto the micro care directory. There are currently 21 citizens being supported by micro carers in their local community, delivering a total of 161 hours of care and support each week. There are 5 citizens funding their own care through a micro care service, and 16 citizens via a direct payment.

Following the success of the first 12 months of the pilot, Monmouthshire CBC intend to continue the project for a further 12 months with a full-time member of staff.

Next steps will look to see if the Monmouthshire micro care model could be scaled up and learning shared with the other Gwent local authorities.

Micro Carer Video- Liza and Phoebe



The poster features the 'microcare' logo at the top left, with the tagline 'a little bit of good' underneath. The main headline reads 'Become a micro carer and make a big difference!'. Below this, it asks if the reader is passionate about supporting people in their community and interested in being their own boss. It provides contact information: 'Call us on: 07977094126 for an informal chat about becoming a micro carer Or Scan the QR code below or e-mail microcarer@monmouthshire.gov.uk to register your interest.' It also states 'We offer FREE support with business set-up and training.' A QR code is located on the left side. The central illustration shows a woman in a purple coat pushing a man in a wheelchair, with a dog and a silhouette of another person in the background. The bottom of the poster includes the Monmouthshire Council logo and contact details: 'Tel: 07977094126' and 'Email: microcarer@monmouthshire.gov.uk'.

Annexe 7: Annual Carers report

(Submitted separately)

Annexe 8: Gwent Dementia Friendly Communities Conference Report 2022

(Submitted separately)

Annexe 9: Regional Integration Fund End of Year Report 2022-23

(Submitted separately)



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject **Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022/23**

Purpose This report reflects Newport City Council's progress in delivering its 2020-24 Strategic Equality Plan and reports on the essential equalities employment information that the Authority is required to publish under the Equality Act 2010.

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

Author Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Ward All

Summary Under the Equality Act (2010), the Council is required to report annually on the progress it has made against the 6 Strategic Equality Objectives contained within its Strategic Equality Plan. The Equality Act also requires Local Authorities to publish staff equalities data contained within this report.

This report is the third Annual Report on progress towards meeting Equality Objectives in the Authority's third four-year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), as approved by Council in July 2020.

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

Action by Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation
- The Council's Strategic Equalities Group
- Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Signed

Background

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to set Equality Objectives every four years, which assist them in their duty to pay due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, foster positive relationships between community groups and eliminate discrimination. The council's current Equality Objectives are set out in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 (SEP).

As part of the Welsh-specific duties of the Equality Act, local authorities are also required to produce and publish an Annual Report within 12 months of the end of each financial year. The report highlights the challenges, changes, and progress made throughout the year and measures these against the Equality Objectives in the Strategic Equality Plan. The Annual Report also includes workforce data, a publishing requirement under Welsh-specific duties.

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

This Annual Report demonstrates the progress made during the third and penultimate year of delivery against the council's Strategic Equalities Plan, and work is beginning to draft the new Strategic Equalities Plan for 2024-2028 to be published by April 2024.

Legal Context

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

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

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

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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

In the first reporting period, Welsh Government also enacted Section 1 of the Equality Act, the Socio-economic Duty (SED), introduced in Wales on the 31st of March 2021. The SED requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions, to pay due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. Although the SED does not include a reporting duty, this Annual Report sets out the steps taken this year to ensure that the council meets its statutory responsibilities under this new legislation.

Governance

The Strategic Equalities Group (SEG) considers progress made against Equality Objectives throughout the year. SEG is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation, who also has responsibility for Equalities.

Respective Equality Objective leads provide a quarterly highlight report for consideration and support from SEG members. Specific delivery groups have also been established to ensure operational delivery of each Equality Objective. This report summarises the key achievements from the quarterly updates provided at SEG.

Report Summary

This report details the progress made during 2022-23 so is an historic look back at the actions undertaken against each of the strategic equality objectives contained within the Strategic Equality Plan.

The report lists the achievements against each strategic objectives, with key highlights below.

- Anti-Racism training completed by Elected Members, Senior Leaders, Managers, and wider staff.
- Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments including the Socio-economic Duty are embedded across the council and have been used as consideration for policy/decision making,
- £300,000 of funding has been distributed to 44 community projects, overseen by a representative community steering group, working closely with Newport’s Fairness Commission.
- Gender Pay Gap closed from 2.0% to -0.4%.
- Face to Face services reopened at Newport Central Library with improvements to accessibility.
- Staff networks for disabled, LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority staff continue to provide a platform for under-represented groups to influence our workplace policy, service delivery and strategic decision making.
- The Education Welfare and Inclusion Service tailored programmes to address the specific and growing needs of learners and schools.
- Floating support schemes supported over 2,800 people to access and maintain their accommodation including adults with learning disabilities, refugees, people escaping domestic abuse and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Developed of a range supported housing schemes, including specific provision for young people, people with mental health conditions and Care Leavers.

As well as the many positives, the report also recognises areas of improvement. The analysis of our workforce data highlights some potential focus areas, including the representation of minority ethnic people, disabled people and people who identify as LGBTQ+. Deep dives into any themes and associated improvements will be undertaken during this financial year.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

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

	Year 1 (Current) £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £	Ongoing £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs (Income)					Not applicable
Net Costs (Savings)					
Net Impact on Budget					

Risks

It is important to identify and manage any project or scheme's exposure to risk and have in place controls to deal with those risks.

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the Annual Report is not published	M	L	A draft report has been compiled and taken through relevant governance processes for approval	Corporate Management Team
That equality commitments are not understood by employees and members	H	M	Equalities training is mandated and regularly delivered to staff and members. The development of our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) process has further embedded equality considerations as part of the Authority's decision-making process.	Head of People, Policy and Transformation and Elected Members
That Equality Objectives are not implemented and reviewed	H	L	Progress against Equality Objectives is reported to and supported by the Strategic Equality Group.	Policy and Partnership Manager and Senior Equalities Officer

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

[NCC Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#)
[Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)

The SEP also takes account of the priorities for addressing inequalities set out in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) '[Is Wales Fairer](#)' 2018 review and the Welsh Government's ongoing Cohesion, Equality and Inclusion, and Nation of Sanctuary work programmes.

Options Available and considered

1. To approve the attached report and publish on the council's website.
2. To request further information or not approve the attached report and redraft.

Preferred Option and Why

1. To approve the attached report and publish on the Council's website so that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, with the cost of implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and the Equality Objectives being met from existing budgets and external resources held by each relevant service area.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the Council is required to publish an annual report setting out progress made and the effectiveness of the actions taken to meet its public sector equality duty and specific objectives. The annual report is also required to set out equalities data in relation to staffing information. The general public sector equality duty requires the Council to have due regard in the exercise of its functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct and to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. As from April 2021, the Council has a further duty under the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. The Regulations made by the Welsh Ministers impose specific duties on local authorities in Wales for the purpose of enabling better performance of these general duties. These include the duty to publish objectives designed to enable the authority to perform the statutory duty, to publish a statement setting out steps taken or intended steps in order to fulfil each objective and how long the authority will take in order to fulfil each objective.

This report provides an update on the third year of delivery against the new four-year Strategic Equalities Plan 2020-2024 and confirms that good progress has been made in meeting the 6 equalities objectives set out in the Plan, but also identifies those areas where further improvements are required. Although there is no requirement to report on performance in relation to the socio-economic duty, the report also sets out the steps taken to meet the requirements of this new duty.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

This annual report reflects the positive progress made over the past 12 months and highlights some examples of good practice. The report also identifies some areas we aim to improve in the next reporting period.

The continued delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan and work within this area align with and contribute to the achievement of the well-being objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan and national well-being goals, working towards a Wales of Vibrant Culture and a More Equal Wales.

Findings from this annual report will help inform the development of our new Strategic Equalities Plan and People Plan both due to be published in 2024.

Scrutiny Committees

The Strategic Equality Report Annual Report 22/23 was presented to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 9 October 2023.

The full details will be published in the minutes of the Committee meeting on the Council's democracy pages.

The Committee noted improvements from the previous year and the following issues were discussed:

- The Committee asked to be provided with further information regarding the number of people who contact the City Contact Centre via phone when they are unable to use the online services.
- The Committee highlighted the importance of ensuring that Newport City Council offers services that are accessible, inclusive, and useable for all residents, including those who require traditional means of interaction with the Council. The Committee highlighted that this was not exclusive to this report but was a wider theme across the Council.

- The Committee recommended that pupil attainment be included in the next Strategic Equalities Plan.
- The Committee recommended that more information about the data used to evidence the need for changes or improvements, and to measure the outcomes, be included in reports.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

This report assesses progress made by Newport City Council against the six Equality Objectives contained within the Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024.

A full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) was undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020 -2024, to which this Annual Report relates. This FEIA considers our legislative responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010), including the Socio-economic Duty, the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011). Therefore, no FEIA has been completed for this annual report.

• **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**

In terms of the Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act and consideration of the sustainable development principle, 5 ways of working:

Long Term – The delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan, Equality Objectives, and associated actions aim to influence the way that the Council makes decisions that have a long-term impact on communities.

Preventative – The report covers work undertaken to address challenges to equality. This work includes early intervention to prevent the identified problems from worsening and actions to promote equality of opportunity and outcome.

Integration – The continued delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan and work within this area align with and contribute to the achievement of the well-being objectives in the Council’s new Corporate Plan and national well-being goals, working towards a Wales of Vibrant Culture and a More Equal Wales, where people can fulfil their potential no matter their background or circumstances, including their socio-economic circumstances.

Involvement – Engagement with key stakeholders in delivering Equality objectives, developing associated policies, and drafting this report is demonstrated through this report.

Collaboration - The actions in the report were undertaken in collaboration with a range of internal and external partners, including the Strategic Equality Group, Equality Objective leads, service delivery groups and community partners. This collaborative approach enables the Council to build expertise and share resources.

Consultation

Not Applicable

Background Papers

[NCC Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#)

[Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)

[Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

[Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)

[The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)

Dated: 20 November 2023



Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

**Mae'r ddogfen hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.**

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Introduction

In April 2020, Newport City Council published its [Strategic Equality Plan \(SEP\) 2020-24](#), identifying six Equality Objectives that the Council will measure itself against over the next four years. Our Equality Objectives built on work delivered in previous SEPs and were developed following a programme of consultation and engagement events held with residents and representatives from protected characteristic groups.

Our six Equality Objectives are:

- **Equality Objective 1 (Leadership, Governance & Involvement)** - Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement.
- **Equality Objective 2 (Customer Service and Access)** - Newport City Council's services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need.
- **Equality Objective 3 (Representative Workforce)** - Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains staff.
- **Equality Objective 4 (Community Cohesion)** - Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions.
- **Equality Objective 5 (Learn Well)** - Newport City Council supports the well-being and attainment of the city's pupils, and actively looks to address any disparity in achievement of vulnerable learners.
- **Equality Objective 6 (Independent Living)** - Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently, and has in place a range of services that accommodates people in different situations.

As part of our duties under the Equality Act (2010), the Council is required to produce and publish an Annual Report outlining the progress we have made against the Equality Objectives set out in our SEP. This Annual Report sets out a summary of key achievements against our identified objectives and outcomes, a detailed update on work to meet each objective and finally, our workforce equality data which is also a publishing requirement under the Equality Act (2010).

This report relates to the third year of delivery of our 2020-2024 SEP. During the year, progress against our Strategic Equality Objectives is monitored and supported by the Council's Strategic Equalities Group (SEG). This group is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation, and membership includes representation from Newport's Fairness Commission, Trade Unions, Elected Member Equality Champions, Staff Support Network Chairs, and service area lead officers.

Summary of Achievements

The table below sets out a summary of key achievements during this reporting period against each of our Strategic Equality Objectives and outcomes. Further details on activities can be found in the relevant sections of the report.

Strategic Equality Objective	Outcome	Achievements
Leadership, Governance, and Involvement	Newport City Council shows clear and consistent leadership in promoting equality and diversity across the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Racism training completed by Elected Members, Senior Leaders, Mangers, and wider staff. • Llanwern High School awarded the inaugural Betty Campbell MBE Award for its work on anti-racism. • Significant dates, including Eid al-Fitr, Black History Wales, UN Anti-Racism Day and Pride in the Port, Newport’s first community Pride Event, have been recognised and promoted across the city. • Proud Councils Partnership shortlisted for the PinkNews Public Sector Equality award.
	Newport City Council has a clear governance structure in place to monitor equality performance across the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leaders, including Strategic Directors and Heads of Service received Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment training. • Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments including the Socio-economic Duty are embedded across the council and have been used as consideration for policy/decision making,
	Newport City Council will improve how it understands the impact of changing services by engaging residents and relevant groups in the decision-making process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Community Well-being profiles, which are used as evidence in decision making and in the design of services. • £300,000 of funding has been distributed to 44 community projects, overseen by a representative community steering group, working closely with Newport’s Fairness Commission.
Customer Service and Access	We have a better understanding of the demographics of our service users, and reflect these in service design, removing barriers to access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to Face services reopened at Newport Central Library with improvements to accessibility.
	Complaints relating to discrimination are managed in a way that ensures organisational learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy has been updated to simplify complaints procedure and improve organisational learning

	Through close partnership working with Newport Live, barriers to accessing sports and leisure provision in the city will be reduced,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed Diversity and inclusion review of Arts and Culture provision and developed improvement plan. Continued development of Newport Live programmes to ensure opportunities for as wide a range of people as possible. Continued progress on the Disability Sport Wales insport Gold kitemark scheme.
Representative Workforce	Staff with protected characteristics are better represented at all levels throughout the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated internal demographic monitoring categories based on census categories to better reflect local communities. Increased female representation in upper pay quartiles. Gender Pay Gap closed from 2.0% to -0.4%.
	Diverse staff have a voice within the organisation and are listened to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff networks for disabled, LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority staff continue to provide a platform for under-represented groups to influence our workplace policy, service delivery and strategic decision making
	The potential for unconscious bias in recruitment processes is recognised, and minimised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting managers and staff within HR attended Anti-Racism professional learning and development workshops
Community Cohesion	Everyone living in Newport feels welcomed, and integration is supported by local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant support provided to EU citizens in Newport to make late applications to the EU Settlement Scheme and access services. Supported Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and established two initial accommodation centres for individuals and groups displaced from Ukraine. Supported over 200 individuals and families displaced from Ukraine to resettle in Newport
	Community tensions are monitored and mitigated effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community tensions meeting and weekly community dial in established in partnership with Gwent Police have continued.
Learn Well	There is greater parity in attendance and exclusion rates for all pupils in Newport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education Welfare and Inclusion Service tailored programmes to address the specific and growing needs of learners and schools. The continued provision supporting learners, who are vulnerable to not having an educational pathway, including those who are Electively Home Educated (EHE), not attending due to Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and at risk of not being in education, training, or employment (NEET).

	<p>We have a better understanding of the challenges faced by potentially marginalised pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further supported schools to embed the ‘whole -school approach to emotional and mental well-being’ set out in the Welsh Government’s Framework (2021). • Provided support to schools based on the recording and reporting of incidents against Protected Characteristics.
<p>Independent Living</p>	<p>People are empowered to live in their own accommodation for longer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan developed to align with Housing Support Programme Strategy priorities. • During the year, over 2,800 people were supported by all floating support schemes to access and maintain their accommodation. • Over 430 homeless households at any one time were accommodated in temporary accommodation units. • Developed of a range supported housing schemes, including specific provision for young people, people with mental health conditions and Care Leavers. • The number of affordable housing units developed in Newport in this period was 220, a mix of 1,2 and 3-bed properties. • 38 void properties were brought back into use for homeless households under the Welsh Government’s Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP). • Creation of a homeless prevention team to upstream services
	<p>People are empowered to play an active role in their local communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Connectors supported 222 people to connect with, and be involved with, their local communities
	<p>The city is responsive to the accommodation needs of victims of domestic abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Support Grant continues to fund six projects for people escaping domestic abuse, including specific provision for people from an ethnic minority background. • Over 370 women supported by DAFS floating support to remain in their own homes. • Funding secured to change one refuge into a ‘safe house’ for five women subject to sexual and financial exploitation.

Equality Objective 1: Leadership, Governance, and Involvement

“Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement”.

Governance

To deliver on the objectives we set out in our Strategic Equality Plan, we must lead by demonstrating our commitment to equality and being an example of good practice. Since publishing our Strategic Equality Plan, we have worked hard to ensure that our equality objectives will be delivered effectively over the lifetime of the Plan.

In the last reporting period, we reviewed the membership and Terms of Reference of our Strategic Equalities Group (SEG). Throughout this period, this group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation, has continued to meet to support the Council's progress in achieving the objectives in our SEP and overcoming any barriers we encounter. The attendance of Staff Support Network Chairs has further enabled us to ensure the lived experiences of people who share a range of protected characteristics is heard and acted upon.

This year, to successfully implement the [Socio-Economic Duty \(SED\)](#), we have continued our work to increase understanding of the SED and maximise opportunities to achieve its overall goal of improving the lives of people and communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. SED assessments are embedded within the Council's strategic decision-making process, and the Duty has been considered against a range of decisions to ensure we reduce inequality of outcome. Building on progress made to provide a more streamlined, integrated assessment tool for decision-makers, we updated the [Community Well-being profiles](#), which are used as evidence in decision-making and service design. During this reporting period, we also provided training to Senior Leaders, including Strategic Directors and Heads of Service, on the updated Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment process to further embed thinking about the impact of decisions on this group into strategic decision-making and change how we deliver services to the most deprived groups.

We continue to publish all FEIAs on our [website](#) to ensure we publicly share information about our decision-making process and how FEIAs have enabled us to make fair decisions, take relevant evidence into account, and seek to secure the best outcomes for our communities. We were cited as an example of good practice in an [Audit Wales Report](#) for publishing our FEIAs in a central and easily accessible location on our website.

Corporate Plan 2022-27

In November 2022, Newport City Council approved its new [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#) to deliver ‘an Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone’. In line with the overarching aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), Newport City Council's Corporate Plan recognises the role of the Council in advancing equity internally and in local communities over the next five years. The delivery of this plan will contribute to Wales's Well-being Goal of "A More Equal Wales" set in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

In the development of the Corporate Plan, we also aligned the Corporate Plan with the Equality Objectives within our Strategic Equality Plan. More specifically, this plan includes the following objectives and sub-objectives:



- **Well-being Objective 1 (Economy, Education, Skills)**
 - Work towards eliminating education inequality faced by young learners that are from disadvantaged, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, low-income households, and/or have additional learning needs.
- **Well-being Objective 2 (Environment and Infrastructure)**
 - Collaborate and support investment into a digital infrastructure which will provide equitable access for residents and businesses across Newport.
- **Well-being Objective 2 (Quality Social Care and Community Services)**
 - Newport will be a City of Sanctuary which supports asylum seekers, refugees and our global community to settle and become part of our community.
 - Promote positive community inclusion and culture by engaging with key stakeholders and communities to address issues of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- **Well-being Objective 4 (an Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council)**
 - Become an inclusive organisation that represents the citizens of Newport, providing equitable opportunity for people to succeed and places the citizen at the centre of decision making.
 - Provide fair access to the council's in-person and digital services, including digital skills training and support.
 - Promote and improve the way in which residents and businesses can interact with the council's democratic process and decision making.
 - Generate opportunities to build wealth across Newport's communities through progressive procurement of goods and services and other initiatives such as participatory budgeting.

Leadership



In June 2022, the Welsh Government published the [Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan](#) (ARWAP). This plan signalled a new approach in Wales to tackling race inequality and racism, including actions for public bodies to tackle racism and make meaningful and measurable changes to the lives of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people. As a Council, we acknowledge that racism exists in our society and continue to take action to address the negative impacts it can have on ourselves, our colleagues, and the communities we support. In 2020, we signed up to Race Council Cymru's [Zero Tolerance to Racism](#) policy for Wales and as highlighted in

previous reports have taken consistent action to promoting a zero-tolerance approach to racism throughout the Council and within local communities.

As part of our work to support the achievement of the Welsh Government's vision of an Anti-Racist Wales, we have worked with Elected Members, Staff at all levels across the organisation, the Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and members of the wider community to deliver on recommendations outlined in the ARWAP. Two core principles identified in the ARWAP include leading from the front in terms of anti-racist values and behaviours and ensuring our decision-making process or senior leadership groups allow the lived experiences of ethnic minority people to be heard. This year to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (also known as UN Anti-Racism Day), we introduced a programme of anti-racism training for Elected members and all staff, including the Leader, Cabinet Members, senior leaders and managers to embed anti-racist values and promote anti-racist behaviours across the organisation starting at the highest level. This progress has also been mirrored in schools, where Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning has been launched to support school governors and all staff within education, including senior leaders on their anti-racist journey.

Listening and learning from staff, pupils and residents from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities with lived experience of racism has also allowed us to review and improve our policies, practices, and procedures. Our Diversity staff network have worked with us to review key policies such as our Bullying and Harassment Policy, update our Employee Exit process and with ongoing work to create a more inclusive work environment for all staff.

Llanwern High School – Inaugural Betty Campbell MBE Award

Llanwern High School received a [Professional Teaching Award](#) under the Betty Campbell Award category for promoting the contributions and perspectives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in June 2022. The award recognised their work in celebrating diversity and promoting anti-racism.

In line with recommendations in the ARWAP, pupils at Llanwern have been placed at the centre of the school's promotion of anti-racism and enabled to lead the way in shaping the school's attitudes to learning and dealing with the problem of racism. The school's approach allows staff to learn from and consider the lived experiences of their students and hopes for a fairer, more inclusive school experience.



Involvement

Over the past four years, the Council has significantly invested in Participatory Budgeting (PB) as a way of involving communities in improving well-being and actively participating in decision-making. This year's programme was the second round of funding allocated to tackle the impacts of COVID-19 on local people, particularly to reduce inequalities, tackle disadvantage and support those from disproportionately impacted groups.

PB funding is supporting new projects to start up and is helping to sustain some of the important activities and groups that emerged during the pandemic. 530 residents attended a series of voting events in Newport Centre and voted for the initiatives that were most likely to benefit local communities. 80 projects from across Newport applied for funding and presented their ideas to voters. 44 projects secured funding to the value of £300k, taking the total now allocated PB in Newport to over £750,000.

The successful projects will bring wide ranging well-being opportunities, activities and services for our communities and were particularly strong in support for:

- Children & Young People - Bundles Baby Clothing Bank & Birth Support, Newport Aces Basketball Club, St Giles Trust, Sparkle
- Older People's Services - Alzheimer's Society, Forget-me-not Chorus, Creative Spaces for Women
- Mental Health, Disabilities & Loneliness - Women of Newport, WALK Newport, Kidscape, Multisport Social Health & Wellbeing C.I.C
- Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities - Pill Millennium Centre, IQRA Youth Club, Operasonic Gypsy Stars Choir, Welsh Sisters Circle, Age Alive

Visibly celebrating Newport's diversity

Newport City Council is proud that Newport is a diverse city where people and residents from all backgrounds are valued and respected. We believe it is important to celebrate diversity and demonstrate our commitment to equality, as this will contribute to cultural awareness, encourage unity, eliminate discrimination, and overcome stereotypes. To ensure its continued visibility to staff and communities, we have worked hard to communicate our plans, raise the profile of our work, and promote key dates and celebrations. These included:

April – June 2022

- Ramadan
- Eid al-Fitr
- Pride month
- Carers Week
- Refugee Week Wales
- Disability Pride Month





July – September 2022

- International Non-Binary People's Day
- Pride in the Port, Newport’s first community pride event
- Pride Cymru Parade
- International Day of Sign Languages



Proud Councils

Newport City Council is proud to be an active member of the Proud Councils partnership, which has continued to unite to improve the support offered to LGBTQ+ staff, ensure that local government across Wales is a visible leader in the field of LGBTQ+ rights and actively champion LGBTQ+ inclusion in communities across Wales.

In June 2022, PinkNews shortlisted the Proud Councils for the [Public Sector Equality award](#), which celebrates those exceptional parts of the UK’s governmental or other public bodies that are making a change for the better. This year, the partnership supported Pride Cymru and community Pride events such as Pride in the Port and Gwent partners launched the [Gwent LGBTQ+ Timeline](#), highlighting key moments in Welsh LGBTQ+ history.



October – December 2022

- Black History Wales/ Black History 365
- Hate Crime Awareness Week
- World Aids Day
- St. Nicholas Day





St Nicholas Day

For many families living in Newport, the festive period starts on the 5th or 6th of December with St. Nicholas Day. This day is widely celebrated in Europe and has traditions across many European countries.

This year, our Community Cohesion Team partnered with Gwent Police, local services, community organisations and groups to hold an event to help Czech, Hungarian, Polish, and

Slovak families in Newport and new arrivals from Ukraine to mark this day. Children, Parents and Guardians expressed gratitude for the opportunity to celebrate their beloved traditions and shared that this helped them feel at home in Newport.

January – March 2023

- Lunar New Year
- Holocaust Memorial Day
- LGBT+ History Month
- International Women’s Day
- Anti-Racism and Intercultural Week
- UN Anti-Racism Day



Focus on the future.

Priorities for the next year include:

- Working in partnership with Welsh Government and the WLGA to deliver on recommendations made in the Welsh Government’s strategic documents, such as Anti-Racism Wales Action and LGBTQ+ Action Plan.
- Further developing our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment processes and deliver training to staff on its use.
- Deliver bespoke equalities training to all staff across the organisation, supported in consultation with our Staff Networks to share the value of lived experience.

Equality Objective 2: Customer Service and Access

“Newport City Council’s services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need”

Customer Service and Access

Newport’s digital infrastructure is vital to enable residents, businesses and visitors being able to access services online. The COVID-19 pandemic required all services, particularly Customer Services, to adapt to protect staff and residents. Service adjustments led to increased service requests online and through the Contact Centre. In 2022/23, the Council commenced the re-development of the website including the review of customer contact and processes to ensure our website can meet user needs and support the wider transformation of services. To support digital transformation, the Council launched its new [Digital Strategy 2022-2027](#) towards the end of this period. One of its themes ‘Digital Skills and Inclusion’ focuses on providing fair access to the council’s in-person and digital services, including digital skills training and support.



As restrictions have eased and we've adjusted to the new normal, we have worked towards reopening Face-to-Face facilities for high-priority services. Last year, we set up a temporary dedicated service and commenced work on a relocation project to permanently move services. This year, we relocated and reopened Face-to-Face services to the public in Newport Central Library Museum and Art Gallery. As part of this process, we consulted key stakeholders such as the Accessibility Stakeholder Group to improve accessibility for all residents, particularly disabled people. In addition, we reviewed existing customer data such as BrowseAloud and Language Line data to ensure services were equitable and culturally appropriate to resident’s needs.

These activities have allowed us to understand accessibility issues better and ensure we deliver services in a form, language, and manner accessible to people from diverse backgrounds. We implemented several adjustments to improve access, including but not limited to prioritising accessibility in reception design, installing hearing loops at reception, providing accessible computer facilities and training staff on how to support the public with the assistive technology provided. To ensure our services meet residents' cultural and linguistic needs, we are committed to offering interpreting or translation services when required. We have also recruited staff proficient in various community languages to improve our ability to provide comprehensive and inclusive support to all customers. The customer service team now includes staff who are fluent in a range of community languages, including Bengali, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, German, French, and Welsh.

In this period, we've also revised and updated our Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy to ensure the complaints procedure was easier understood by the public when accessing services.

Engagement in Sports, Leisure, Art, and Culture

Over the past year, we have worked with Newport Live to improve and further develop programmes that reduce barriers to accessing sport, leisure, and cultural provision within the city.

We have continued to support Newport Live to work towards Newport becoming the first local authority in Wales to achieve the Disability Wales insport Gold award. Partnership work with staff in Education, including Additional Learning Needs (ALN) staff has led to increased confidence and support for schools with developing solutions to perceived barriers to participation for pupils. The aim of this work is to ensure sport and physical activity in school is inclusive, whether in PE, wake and shake, daily mile, school teams, or as part of the new health and wellbeing areas of learning and experience (AoLE), ensuring all children have opportunity to participate and to be active.



The ongoing collaboration between our Parks & Recreation team and Newport Live to deliver the "Wheels for All" scheme has continued to reduce barriers to residents accessing public sports and leisure services within the city. In this period, this inclusive cycling programme has provided over seven hundred rides with tandems and wheelchair accessible bikes to people of all abilities and ages.

Our partners, Newport Live have also completed a review of Arts and Cultural provision at the Riverfront, which highlighted some positive activity, shows, performances, and engagement and led to the development of an improvement plan to support the organisation to develop. An Equality and Diversity Mentor was appointed to work with staff at all levels on training identification, community engagement, workforce representation, policy development, and recruitment.

Focus on the future:

Priorities for the next year include:

- Continued provision of an accessible and varied programme/timetable of sport and physical activity opportunities for children and families in partnership with Social Services Childrens Disability Team, and Disability Sport Wales.
- Identify, train, and support the development of Maes Ebbw pupils to become peer leaders/coaches in sport and physical activity.
- Work with ethnically diverse community groups and partners to support further access to sport and physical activity opportunities; ensure local people are identified, trained, and supported to become peer leaders/coaches.
- Assessment for Disability Wales insport Gold kitemark accreditation

Equality Objective 3: Representative Workforce

“Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city, and is a workplace with an inclusive culture, which recruits, develops, and retains staff”

Becoming a more representative organisation is key to achieving our vision of a more equal Newport. Diverse lived experiences, thoughts, and skills will support us in meeting Newport's needs and ensuring residents have trust in us. We have continued to make progress toward meeting our Strategic Equality Objectives despite the unprecedented workforce disruption and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we've continued to adapt to the new normal, we've remained committed to delivering a representative workforce. We have aligned objectives in key strategic documents, such as the Corporate Plan and as part of developing our new People Plan. We have also taken further steps to improve our policies, practices, and procedures to create an inclusive culture where all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

Representation and Gender Pay Gap

Working towards a more representative workforce and advancing equality of opportunity internally as well as within the communities we serve remains a priority for Newport City Council. Women have long represented a high percentage of our workforce. However, changes in policies and organisational culture have allowed the Council to further gender equality. In this period, we closed the gender pay gap from 2.0% to -0.4% and increased female representation in upper pay quartiles. Women now earn £1 for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly pay and represent the majority share at the most senior levels. The table below displays the differences in the average pay between men and women.



Table 1: Gender Pay Gap

	2021/2022		2022/2023	
	Mean Hour Rate	Median Hour Rate	Mean Hour Rate	Median Hour Rate
Male	£14.82	£13.01	£16.10	£14.15
Female	£14.91	£12.95	£15.92	£14.17
Pay Gap	1.5%	2.0%	0.6%	-0.4%

While we have made positive strides, we remain committed to advancing equity for people from all backgrounds and working towards increasing representation of minority ethnic people, disabled people and people who identify as LGBTQ+ as part of our commitment to address under-representation across all levels of the organisation. We recently started featuring dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) content, including information on staff networks, an anti-racism statement and links to our Strategic Equality Plan as part of recruitment campaigns.

This has received a positive response from applicants and contributed to an increased number of applicants from underrepresented communities.

Staff Networks

Newport City Council has three staff equality networks for minority ethnic, LGBTQ+ and disabled staff. These groups are a powerful agent for organisational change that support us to foster an inclusive culture and in the delivery of our equality priorities, internally and across our communities. The Council's work to attract, recruit, retain and develop staff from underrepresented backgrounds has also been supported by staff equality networks, who have continued to play a pivotal role in ensuring the voices of under-represented groups were heard, listened to, and influenced policy and process. In this period, Networks supported the review and development of key strategic documents, policies, and procedures, such as the new Corporate Plan, People Plan, Wellness at Work Policy and Employee Exit Process, as identified as a key priority in last year's report.

Workplace Culture

Similar to last year, we have continued to work to increase the amount of content relating to equality and diversity visible to staff on our internal communications platforms. This has included working with staff networks to mark significant dates throughout the year, topical updates or raising awareness on key issues, including Anti-Racism, Hate Crime, Gender Identity, and the Social Model of Disability. We have also offered a range of professional development and learning opportunities for elected members and staff at all levels, including Anti-Racism sessions in line with the ARWAP.

Focus on the future

Priorities for the next year include:

- Review and update of Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Improving our collection of staff data, increasing completion rates, and aligning with census categories to allow effective comparison.
- Developing a range of entry routes to the organisation and promoting these to under-represented groups
- Embedding anti-racism principles within our workplace culture
- Developing Gender Identity and Dignity in the Workplace Policies
- Development of the new People Plan 2023 -2027, including work to align themes with Strategic Equality Objectives, particularly objective 3 (Representative Workforce)

Equality Objective 4: Community Cohesion

“Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions”

As a local authority, community cohesion is a central theme within our equality related work plans, and our priorities in this area are informed by the delivery of the Welsh Government’s community cohesion work plan for local authorities. The ongoing implications of Brexit, the wider migration crisis, and the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on minority communities have continued to present additional challenges to community cohesion. Most of our cohesion work has been reactive, supporting communities to access information in their main languages, developing online communications channels to share important updates and responding to the conflict in Ukraine.

Hate Crime and Community Tensions

This year, we continued our commitment to addressing all forms of hate as it affects our communities. We continued our fortnightly tension monitoring meetings with our partners in Gwent Police, enabling us to monitor and mitigate emerging community tensions effectively. To improve understanding of the different types of hate crime and tackle rising incidents, we have continued to deliver hate crime training highlighting discrimination faced by people with different protected characteristics in schools and to frontline staff and community groups.

EU Settlement Scheme and Support

As a result of the EU referendum and Britain’s exit from the European Union, EU, EEA or Swiss nationals and their family members were required to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to secure their rights to live, work and study in the UK. From July 2021, people who failed to make an in-time or late application to the EUSS no longer had legal status in the UK.

Similar to last year, our teams have worked hard to promote awareness of the EUSS and post Brexit rights, including late applications, and status entitlements. Our EU Citizens Forum continued to meet virtually, bringing together community members and third-sector services to effectively address issues affecting EU citizens in Newport. We continued hosting awareness events for professionals and coordinating a weekly multi-agency drop-in for EU citizens in Newport to access immigration advice, EUSS application assistance, or other practical support.



EU Citizens for Ukraine

The Ukraine conflict has significantly impacted local communities, particularly residents from EU countries, many of whom have family or friends in Ukraine and surrounding areas.

To show solidarity with Ukraine and those impacted, in April 2022, we worked in partnership with Newport's EU communities and community organisations to host an event to raise funds for humanitarian aid for displaced Ukrainians and those remaining in the country. The event received significant support from Newport's residents and raised over £2000 for the [DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal](#).

Resettlement Schemes and Ukraine

As highlighted in our new Corporate Plan, we aspire to be a City of Sanctuary, which supports asylum seekers, refugees and our global community to settle and become part of our community. We've continued to support vulnerable people and those at risk who've arrived via resettlement schemes to resettle in Newport. In response to the conflict in Ukraine, we worked closely with the Home Office, the Welsh Government, other local authorities and, where possible, community organisations and residents to support Ukraine Relief Efforts. Building on this work, we signed up for the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine). As part of this scheme, we established two initial accommodation centres for new arrivals from Ukraine. Our Vulnerable People Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) team supported over 200 individuals and families displaced from Ukraine to resettle in Newport and lead independent, safe, and productive lives.

Hardship Group

The impact of the end of free movement from the EU, Nationality and Borders Act 2022, Immigration rule changes which were implemented in the lead up to the Illegal Immigration Act 2023 and creation of new categories of refugees and 'special visas', combined with the effects of the ongoing economic downturn, has resulted in the continued increased demand for hardship support within Newport, particularly for migrants with an Insecure immigration status. Insecure immigration status can result in significant consequences and hardship for migrants. For example, people may have limited or no access to welfare benefits, social housing, and some health services.

In 2021, we established a Hardship Group and a referral pathway to manage complex hardship cases arising from insecure migration status. Representation includes Social Services, Housing, Connected Communities, and external partners such as Health Services and third-sector organisations. During this period, this group coordinated support and explored sustainable solutions for 32 individuals and families experiencing hardship, up from 17 in the previous year.

Focus on the future

Priorities for the next year include:

- Developing a council Hate Crime Policy
- Working with partners on an inclusive 'safe house' network with venues in Newport for LGBTQ+ People to feel safe in the city
- Developing a 'Welcome to Newport' app for newcomers to the city

Equality Objective 5: Learn Well

“Newport City Council supports the wellbeing and attainment of the city’s pupils and actively looks to address any disparity in achievement, of vulnerable learners”

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, schools and education settings have remained committed to working proactively to support the changing needs of their learners and addressing the negative impact caused by disruptions to education. Schools have continued to deliver their Curriculum for Wales, including the new Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) requirements, the new Additional Learning Needs Act and the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Health Statutory document. However, some learners have been reluctant or unable to return to school and settings. As a result, this has put huge demands upon both the Educational Welfare and Inclusion Service. Various programmes have been tailored to meet the emotional needs of learners presenting as Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Students.

Attendance

As a result of schools closing in March 2020 due to COVID-19, Welsh Government made the decision not to collect attendance data for all academic years between 2019 and 2023. After improving rates of pre-Covid attendance in both primary and secondary sectors to a position above the Welsh average, our attendance data now highlights the negative impact of the pandemic on rates of school attendance.

Even though schools returned to their pre-Covid-19 practices, rates of attendance remained affected by several factors attributed to the pandemic. These included:

- Ongoing positive cases of Covid-19 affecting both staff and pupils.
- Asymptomatic pupils being kept at home when parents, siblings or another close contact has a confirmed case of Covid-19
- Parents not wanting to send their children to school because of concerns about Covid-19
- Higher levels of other illnesses
- Changes around the habit of attending school.
- Increased rate of absence from school because of mental health and wellbeing issues.
- The current cost of living crisis is placing pressure on many families not only those who have previously been considered as facing disadvantage. These families may find that holidays are only affordable when they are booked during term time.
- Increase in persistent absenteeism. Persistent absentees are pupils who are absent for at least 20% of the number of half-day sessions that schools are open to pupils.
- Students who are presenting as EBSA.

In recognition of the need to support schools to improve rates of learner attendance we introduced a broad range of activities, intervention and support which were utilised. These included:

- Ongoing monitoring and sharing of school attendance data amongst schools,
- Annual internal attendance targets (all schools set these),
- Increased support from the Education Welfare Service,

- All schools had a designated Education Welfare Officer (EWO),
- Reintroduction of Fixed Penalty Notices for persistent absenteeism and holidays during term time,
- Cluster attendance policies,
- Attendance clinics,
- Attendance at several partnership panels; Managed Move panel, SPACE panel, EBSA clinic and relevant Social Services meetings,
- Reintroduction of Attendance and Exclusions meetings with Headteacher and Chair of Governor's,
- Additional funding for school specific activities.

Exclusions

Recent exclusion data for Newport continues to highlight the increased challenges caused by the impact of the pandemic on rates of exclusion within schools. We responded to the rise in the number of incidents and days lost to exclusion with several newly developed approaches that aim to provide additional support to schools in relation to ongoing and increased complexities relating to pupil behaviour. Some of these initiatives include:

- Updating of NCC's 'Violence Reduction Protocol' (first introduced in September 2021). This protocol will be renamed and relaunched as the 'Reduction of Harmful Behaviours Protocol' by end of spring term 2023.
- Expansion of the weekly 'virtual inclusion helpline' for all school-based staff.
- The Inclusion Advisory Service collaboratively working with all schools across Newport with the aim of effectively supporting schools to reduce the number of incidents and days lost each academic year to exclusion.
- Training and CPD opportunities coordinated and delivered by the Inclusion Advisory Service.
- Support from the LA has moved from specific behaviour management policies to ensuring school policies focus more on building and sustaining effective relationships within schools (particularly between staff / pupils) and have a strong emphasis on de-escalation strategies as well as a clear graduated response in terms of escalating behaviour concerns.
- Weekly and monthly school exclusion data continues to be provided and analysed by the LA for exclusions to be tracked and monitored in a timely manner.
- All secondary schools have been re-issued with new targets for the academic year 2022-23 and progress against these are tracked and monitored by the Inclusion Adviser monthly.
- Attendance and Exclusions meetings with all Secondary Head teacher's and their Chair of Governor's have been reintroduced. Qualitative feedback has been gained after each meeting and this has been largely positive.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

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

Newport has a robust process for managing the early identification of young people needing support in all secondary schools and the Bridge Achievement Centre (BAC). The Youth Engagement and Progression Coordinator, based in Education Services, oversees this activity. Newport secondary schools assisted in the development of the Early Identification Toolkit (EIT), and this profile draws information from SIMS and supports the identification of pupils who are vulnerable and, long term, at risk of becoming NEET. The data set contained in the Early Identification Toolkit supports schools by acting as a Risk Assessment Profile to be used from Key Stage 2 upwards. The Early Identification Toolkit has fostered significantly better working relationships between schools and the local authority, ensuring robust plans are implemented for these young people.

The focus of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Coordinator is as follows:

- Coordinating and reporting to the Pre 16 NEET subgroup
- Key Stage 4 early identification meetings with all secondary schools and the Bridge Achievement Centre
- Key Stage 5 early identification meetings with all secondary schools and the Bridge Achievement Centre
- Early identification meetings with the Youth Justice Service
- Early Identification meetings with the Looked After Children Education (LACE) coordinators.
- Quality Assurance responsibility for alternative education provision
- Engagement with young people attending the alternative quality provision to obtain their views.
- Chairing of the Learning Coach forum
- Liaising with Careers Wales
- Help individuals identify and explore career options, make informed decisions about their future, and develop strategies to achieve their goals.
- Transition meetings held with all secondary schools, Coleg Gwent and Careers Wales
- Working with all Post 16 providers to ensure successful transition.
- Coordinating and reporting to the strategic Youth Support Services Board

Partnership work has significantly reduced Newport's NEET figures and ensured young people make successful, meaningful transitions. The relationship between secondary schools and the BAC has proved crucial to securing positive outcomes for young people.

It has enabled more collaboration when offering advice or practical solutions and ensured shared accountability regarding the number of young people who are NEET.

Our collaborative and cross-service approach has proved effective with the NEET figures reducing year on year with Newport performing joint 2nd position in Wales in 2022 for Year 11 leavers.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance

In response to schools reporting a significant issue in the number of learners identified at risk of or currently not attending school due to emotional needs (EBSA), Newport Education developed a partnership with Newport Mind with an aim of providing the following support package:

- To provide 1:1 support for young people
- To educate and support parents and caregivers.
- To deliver training to schools and provide access to a consultation service.
- To raise the profile of the issue within the Local Authority, in schools and within families.

While some progress has been made and engagement rates amongst pupils, parents and caregivers were good, impact is still being determined. We hope to include detail in future reports.

Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing and Recording and Reporting Incidents against Protected Characteristics.

The Welsh Government introduced new Anti-Bullying statutory guidance, Rights Respect Equality (RRE) in November 2019. This sets out a series of requirements that local authorities must regard when exercising their educational functions. The guidance includes prescriptive actions that local authorities need to adhere to. The local authority has required schools to record and report all incidents of bullying related to a protected characteristic for several years. In addition to recording incidents related to protected characteristics, Newport requires schools to record against other bullying related incidents that have a high prevalence for young people. The analysis of this data enables the local authority to understand the prevalence of bullying in schools and provide support for individual schools through training and interventions. The data on incidents of bullying related to a protected characteristic is shared with Headteachers and Wellbeing Leads. This element of existing practice is now a statutory requirement for all schools in Wales. We support schools to respond to RRE in several different ways, including supporting the links between this statutory guidance and other relevant statutory guidance, in particular the Relationships and Sexuality Statutory Guidance and Code.

Responding to the data, the following actions were put in place:

- Guidance, training and a model policy for Rights, Respect, Equality bullying prevention and Relationships and Sexuality Education provided to nearly all schools.

- Headteachers supported in different ways such as LA developed parental leaflets, discussions with individual parents where resources and activities had been shared, a parental presentation delivered by Teacher Advisors on both anti-bullying and Relationships and sexuality education.
- Relationships and Sexuality curriculum training delivered to primary and secondary phases.
- LGBTQ+ training developed and delivered widely across schools within the authority.
- Training around peer-on-peer Harmful Sexual Behaviour developed and delivered widely within the authority.
- Curriculum guidance and resources shared with all primary schools.

Focus on the future

Priorities for the next year include:

- Supporting schools and settings to improve attendance rates and reduce exclusion rates of known vulnerable groups of learners.
- Development of effective Equality Plans, focussing on protected characteristics, anti-bullying measures and anti-racism actions
- Supporting schools to address the impact of poverty within education.

Equality Objective 6: Independent Living

“Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently, and has in place a range of housing related services, which accommodates people in different situations”

Our housing services have continued to experience an unprecedented increase in demand during this period with the supply of new properties in all sectors not able to meet this demand. At the beginning of the pandemic, the UK and Welsh governments expanded the definition of vulnerability and the statutory housing duties of local authorities in recognition of the potential impact that Covid-19 could have on people who were homeless. This has seen a large rise in the number of people sleeping rough who have been assisted by the Council.

Housing Support Grant and Homelessness Prevention Grant projects, including floating support, mediation, and housing options staff, continue to support people to maintain their accommodation and prevent homelessness. In addition to over 80 units of supported accommodation, Housing Support Grant also funds 20 units in four refuges, including one specifically for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic women and two as part of a regional scheme for women with more complex needs.

Also, our Domestic Abuse Floating Support, crisis and advice scheme supports a minimum of 380 women in their current temporary or permanent accommodation. It includes a dedicated post working with minority ethnic women. Responsive to changing local needs, an existing refuge has been re-configured into a ‘safe house’ for financially and sexually exploited women in the City.

We have continued to consolidate and remodel our support services to ensure they meet the needs of marginalised groups. Our work with the Gwent Gypsy and Traveller Support Service, Light House Project Refugee Service, and European Economic Area (EEA) Housing Service continues, with dedicated support workers providing support and advice to proactively address the disadvantages and inequalities that result in barriers to accessing housing. A Hoarding Project has been developed as a pilot and quickly went to full capacity.

The Housing Support Team has started a three-year programme of re-tendering most of its floating support services. This will focus services more on homeless prevention and tenancy sustainment to align with the Housing Support Programme Strategy priorities and Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan’ Action Plan.

Partnership working is essential in addressing the issues in housing, homelessness and housing support services in the City and regular meetings are held with key partners. Multi-agency groups have also been established to address the long-term and complex needs of some of our most vulnerable citizens, with health services providing a crucial role.

Our Community Connectors for minority ethnic communities offers support to people who may be socially isolated to improve their well-being based on what matters to them. During 2022/23, they supported 222 people with information, advice and assistance and signposting to local services. Connectors continue to map community activity provision, work with groups

at a grassroots level to re-build their capacity and signpost to funding sources to ensure sustainability.

Focus on the future

Priorities for the next year include:

- Development of two supported housing schemes for 18+ care leavers.
- Focus services more on the prevention of homelessness and tenancy sustainment.
- Year 2 of a three-year programme of re-tendering floating support services in the city including schemes for people sleeping rough, refugees & migrants and a generic scheme to include a hospital support worker and two homelessness team support workers.
- Mid-term review of the Housing Support Programme Strategy's (2022-2026) nine strategic priorities.
- Re-configuring floating support for the dispersed supported housing scheme.
- On-going review of the Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (2022-2027).
- Continue the financial and digital inclusion offer for support workers via up-skilling support staff and increased training opportunities e.g. The Department of Work and Pension's Money Guiders Programme.
- Provide additional units of a range of social housing to address the high demand by maximising capital funding opportunities e.g. Welsh Government's Social Housing Grant, Housing with Care Fund and Transitional Accommodation Capital Fund.
- Work with landlords in the Private Rented Sector to keep existing provision and acquire more properties to assist with the local housing demand.
- Be responsive to changing demand, legislation and circumstances.

Equality Monitoring and Capturing Data

Equality data is used by the council to inform our decision-making, help us understand where we have gaps, and support effective impact assessments.

This section of the report will consider:

- Collecting data; how we collate information related to protected characteristics.
- Evaluating data; how we use this data to inform our practice.

1. Collecting Data

Collecting accurate information about our employees and the public is key to delivering services which are inclusive, and responsive to individual need. We collect and monitor equality data in a number of ways.

A. Systems

The council has a range of systems which collect data, for example, through our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, other databases linked to individual services, and through our internal HR system. These allow service areas to build a picture and profile of their customers or staff. Customer data is utilised in developing service area plans and work programmes and allows service areas to amend existing services and delivery where needed. We use our internal data to assist with workforce planning and inform our representative workforce work.

B. Consultations

The council regularly consults and engages with a variety of community groups, citizen panels and the public in general. We develop surveys and consultations based on needs for service changes, improvements or strategies that will affect the community. This year we have consulted on topics such as the setting of our budget, the new Leisure Centre provision and facilities and residents parking. Consultation methods have included online surveys, sharing of consultation opportunities on our website and social media platforms and Bus Wi-Fi surveys. Using demographic monitoring for all surveys and consultation exercises means we can now better understand the needs of people in Newport that share protected characteristics, and the differential impact of our proposals.

C. Community Well-being profiles

In line with the [Well-being of Future Generations Wales Act \(2015\)](#), the council published our [Community Well-being Profiles](#) in 2022. The profiles are available on our website for the public, as well as internally on our intranet system for staff. These profiles provide a source of data across different areas, including data on ethnicity and are often used by the council to inform equality impact assessments.

D. National Census

We continually review and update our standard equalities monitoring forms and are working to ensure that the data we capture aligns with the categories within the recent Census. This will allow us to better understand our resident population, any under or over-representation of communities accessing our services, and inform our workforce representation strategies and planning.

Data from the 2011 Census of England and Wales can be found [here](#).

2. Evaluating data

The council uses a range of processes which ensure that we use the data that we collect in a way that informs our planning, decision and policy making.

A. Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments

The completion of Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments at the outset of decision or policy making process, assists the council in evidencing that we are meeting our Equality duties, and, more importantly, using relevant equality data to ensure that any disproportionate impact is mitigated at an early stage, and the best decisions for the public are made. The council has an integrated model of equality impact assessment, combining considerations around Equalities, including the Socio-economic Duty, Welsh Language, Well-being of Future Generations, and the parameters of fairness set out by our Fairness Commission within a single process. FEIAs should be evidence based, drawing on internal and external data to support any findings.

All FEIAs completed in this period can be found [here](#).

B. Service Area Plans

Annual plans are produced by each of the council's service areas, and act as a key reporting mechanism for the delivery of our Corporate Plan, as well as our Wellbeing Objectives. Each Service area has performance indicators relating to priority actions, as well as areas of risk which are updated on a quarterly basis. Risks are currently identified in relation to non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Further information can be found [here](#).

Workforce Data

The following workforce data shows information about the protected characteristics of our employees between April 2022 and March 2023. The data shows that at the time of reporting there were 5941 staff employed by Newport City Council which is a decrease from 5982 in the last reporting period.

Comparing workforce data against national statistics remains challenging due to differences in how employee systems collect data compared to the Census of England and Wales. Work continues to align our systems to ensure comparative data can be analysed effectively, information is managed securely, and we instil confidence that our monitoring is inclusive.

During this reporting period, we continued to make changes to the recording options that we offer potential and existing staff to better align with the 2021 Census and as part of our ongoing commitment to continuously improve how we capture data. While the latest UK censuses were conducted in 2021, some topic summaries, area profiles and intersectional data are currently unavailable. We hope to include this data and further analysis in future Annual Reports.

In recent years, we have seen an increase in people providing their personal information across several categories, with fewer people opting not to provide information or leaving categories blank. Several factors have influenced this change, including an increased awareness of the importance of monitoring data due to the national census campaign and our efforts to move towards a culture that normalises the capture of demographic information and is clear about its role and purpose. This year, we have continued to reinforce the importance of updating personal information, update staff on new recording categories available and prompted colleagues to update their information when they log on to our employee self-service system.

In our first report period (2020-21), we started to capture data relating to Armed Forces connections, Care Leavers, gender identity, and gender reassignment for applicants and existing staff. This data can currently only be reported on in low numbers. However, we hope to include further detail in future reports.

As an indication of applicant data, we can report that out of 5459 applicants:

- 70 disabled applicants were eligible for a guaranteed interview under our 'Disability Confident Scheme'.
- 44 applicants from the Armed Forces Community were eligible for a guaranteed interview under our ['Defence Employer Recognition Scheme'](#).
- 30 Care Leavers were eligible for a guaranteed interview under our 'Care Leavers' agreement.
- From the 'Gender Identity' question, 40.37% identified as female, 14.03% as male, 0.15% selected 'other' and 42.02% of respondents left the question blank.
- 23 applicants disclosed that they have had gender reassignment.

Data Analysis

At the time of data capture, we had 5941 staff employed, 933 leavers and 5459 applicants. Anomalies in data (numerical statistics in 'pay band by sex', 'contract type by sex', 'working pattern by sex') are due to the time that reports were run/requested but were analysed from a date correct at 31/03/2023 and the percentages displayed are reflective of the correct data. Intersectional data was analysed from a master spreadsheet that allowed all categories to be filtered and defined simultaneously.

Ethnicity

Table 2: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Ethnicity

Ethnic Origin	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Arab	2	0	1	0.1	8	0.15
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	37	0.6	5	0.5	119	2.18
Asian or Asian British - Indian	20	0.3	6	0.6	75	1.37
Asian or Asian British - Other	28	0.5	5	0.5	98	1.80
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	42	0.7	7	0.8	131	2.40
Black or Black British - African	30	0.5	10	1.1	133	2.44
Black or Black British - Caribbean	17	0.3	2	0.2	11	0.20
Black or Black British - Other	8	0.1	1	0.1	8	0.15
Chinese	11	0.2	2	0.2	50	0.92
Other Ethnic Group	11	0.2	1	0.1	43	0.79
Gypsy/Traveller	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Mixed - Black African	2	0	1	0.1	22	0.40
Mixed - Other	28	0.5	8	0.9	40	0.73
Mixed - White & Asian	21	0.4	3	0.3	17	0.31
Mixed - White & Black African	9	0.2	4	0.4	12	0.22
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	29	0.5	5	0.5	35	0.64
Roma	1	0	0	0	1	0.02
White - British	3727	62.7	522	55.9	2648	48.51
White - English	114	1.9	22	2.4	119	2.18
White - Irish	33	0.6	5	0.5	17	0.31
White - Other	93	1.6	19	2	129	2.36
White - Other European	55	0.9	11	1.2	106	1.94
White - Scottish	10	0.2	3	0.3	7	0.13
White - Welsh	1413	23.8	253	27.1	1314	24.07
Not Stated	14	0.2	2	0.2	12	0.22
Prefer not to say	20	0.3	2	0.2	28	0.51
(blank)	166	2.8	33	3.5	83	1.52
Redacted (GDPR)	0	0	0	0	187	3.43
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100.00

Key findings:

- 92% of staff identify their ethnicity as white; this includes White – British, Welsh, English Scottish, Irish, European, Other White.
- 2.14% of staff identify their ethnicity as Asian British or Asian Welsh - Other, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian.
- 0.37% of staff identify their ethnicity as Chinese or Other – Chinese, Chinese or Other Ethnic Group
- 0.96% of staff identify their ethnicity as Black British or Welsh, African, Other, Caribbean, or Mixed Black African.
- 1.46% of staff identify their ethnicity as Mixed – Other, Mixed White & Black African, Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Mixed White & Asian
- The UK Census sub-category ‘White – Roma’ was adopted in 2021. In this reporting period, 1 member of staff came from a Roma background.
- 0.5% of staff were ‘not stated’, ‘unknown’, or ‘Prefer Not To Say (PNTS)’
- 2.8% of staff left their ethnicity blank compared to the previous reporting period of 2.71%
- 19% of applications were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Black (all categories), Asian (all categories), Chinese (all categories) and Mixed ethnicity (all categories) staff made up 6.13% of leavers, an increase from 4.15% in the previous period.

Age

Table 3: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Age

Age Group	Employees (as of 31 st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
16-24	308	5.2	102	10.9	1032	18.9
25-34	1210	20.4	252	27.0	1601	29.3
35-44	1579	26.6	233	25.0	1452	26.6
45-49	758	12.8	83	8.9	470	8.6
50-54	751	12.6	81	8.7	325	6.0
55-59	687	11.6	87	9.3	227	4.2
60-64	424	7.1	55	5.9	85	1.6
65-69	160	2.7	30	3.2	14	0.3
70-74	39	0.7	9	1.0	1	0
75+	25	0.4	1	0.1	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	65	1.2
Redacted (GDPR)	0	0	0	0	187	3.4
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100

Key findings:

- 64.9% of the workforce is aged 16-49 and over 50s make up 35.1% - similar figures as the previous year.
- We have an increase in our 16-24 age category of current staff from last year. Now 5.2 of our staff are aged between 16-24.

- 25–34-year-olds made up 27% of leavers, which was the highest percentage - same category as last year
- 71.8% of job applicants were under 45 years old, the majority (29.3%) were aged 25 – 34 years.
- In our last annual report 17.54% of applicants were aged 16-24; this report shows that 18.90% in this age bracket applied for jobs with us, an increase in younger applicants of 1.36%
- 1.2% of applicants preferred not to disclose their age.

Sex profile (biological sex assigned at birth, not gender identity)

Table 4: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Sex

Sex	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Female	4570	76.9	720	77.2	4218	77.3
Male	1371	23.1	213	22.8	1195	21.9
Unknown	0	0	0	0	46	0.8
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100

Table 5: Pay band by sex

Pay Band (£)	2021/22		2022/23	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
10,000-14,999	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
15,000-19,999	22.4	18.6	0.1	0.2
20,000-24,999	31.5	29.2	46.3	44.9
25,000-29,999	11.5	12.9	14.5	11.3
30,000-34,999	4.5	6.0	8.7	11.1
35,000-39,999	8.0	9.3	3.3	5.1
40,000-44,999	15.2	12.8	8.2	9.2
45,000-49,999	1.5	2.1	13.9	11.5
50,000-54,999	0.5	0.5	0.9	1.6
55,000-59,999	1.0	1.3	0.9	0.8
60,000-64,999	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.8
65,000-69,999	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.5
70,000+	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.8
Not known	2.1	4.6	1.0	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 6: Contract type by sex

Contract Type	2021/22		2022/23	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %

Permanent	68.0	68.2	68.2	73.7
Acting Up	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Casual	7.8	9.7	8.0	10
Fixed Term	20.4	16.2	20.7	14.2
Long Term Sickness cover	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1
Mat Cover	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.6
Seasonal	0.5	0.1	0.7	0.5
Secondment	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
Sessional	1.6	3.8	0.8	0.5
Supply	0.0	0.0	0	0
Temporary	0.2	0.1	0.4	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 7: Working pattern by sex

Working Pattern	2021/2022		2022/2023	
	Female %	Male %	Female %	Male %
Full time	33.7	64.7	33.2	64.7
Job share	1.2	0.3	1.2	0.3
Part time	65.1	35.0	65.6	34.8
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Key findings:

- 76.9% of the workforce are female and 23.1% are male.
- In this period, Newport City Council closed the gender pay gap from 2.0% to -0.4%. Women earn £1 for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly pay. Their median hourly pay is 0.4% higher than men's.
- In this period, Newport City Council's gender pay gap was 0.6% (mean) and -0.4% median.
- In this period, the percentage of women in upper pay quartiles increased. Women occupy 69% of the upper quartile/highest paid jobs and 71% of the upper middle quartile.

Marital status

Table 8: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Marital Status

Marital Status	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Civil Partnership	26	0.4	3	0.3	55	1
Divorced	277	4.7	39	4.2	176	3.2
Living with Partner	622	10.5	129	13.8	722	13.2
Married	2727	45.9	354	37.9	2037	37.3
Separated	106	1.8	22	2.4	75	1.4
Single	1784	30	316	33.9	1966	36
Widowed	50	0.8	3	0.3	16	0.3
Would prefer not to specify	66	1.1	15	1.6	93	1.7

(blank)	283	4.8	52	5.6	82	1.5
Redacted (GDPR)	0	0	0	0	187	3.4
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100

Key findings:

- Married people (45.9%) and single people (30%) make up most of the workforce. The number of married staff has slightly increased since last year.
- 0.4% of the current workforce are in a civil partnership, 4.7% are divorced and 10.5% are living with a partner.
- The highest proportion of leavers are married people at 37.9%
- The lowest proportion of leavers are those in civil partnerships, or who are widowed.
- The largest percentage of applicants are married people at 37.3% followed by single people at 36%.

Disability

Table 9: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Disability

Disability	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Disabled	149	2.51	34	3.6	246	4.5
Not disabled	5504	92.6	837	89.7	4749	87
Not known	288	4.8	62	6.6	92	1.7
(blank)	0	0	0	0	185	3.4
Redacted (GDPR)	0	0	0	0	187	3.4
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100

Key findings:

- 2.51% of the workforce are disabled, a slight decrease from 2.52% last year.
- The approximate global (and local) percentage of disabled people is 15%.
- 3.6% of the leavers were disabled, a decrease of 0.8% from 4.4% last year.
- 'Not known' or left 'blank' accounts for 4.8% of staff, 6.6% of leavers, and 1.7% of applicants.
- The number of disabled applicants has increased from 4.48% to 4.51%
- Applicants selecting 'not disabled' has increased from 75.52% last year to 86.99%

Sexual Orientation

Table 10: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Heterosexual	3281	55.2	596	63.9	4521	82.8
Homosexual/Gay Man	41	0.7	13	1.4	68	1.2
Bisexual	34	0.6	13	1.4	134	2.5
Lesbian/Gay Woman	33	0.6	10	1.1	66	1.2
Other	8	0.1	1	0.1	39	0.7

Declined to specify	267	4.5	40	4.3	241	4.4
(blank)	2277	38.3	260	27.9	203	3.7
Redacted (GDPR)	0	0	0	0	187	3.4
Total	5941	100	933	100	5459	100

Key findings:

- 1.95% of the workforce identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or another minority sexual orientation, an increase from last year of 0.13%.
- Of those who identified with an LGB+ orientation, 0.7% described themselves as homosexual (or gay man), 0.6% as lesbian (or gay woman), 0.6% as bisexual and 0.1% selected “Other sexual orientation”.
- 4.49% of employees, 4.29% of leavers and 4.41% of applicants declined to specify their current sexual orientation.
- The number of people choosing to leave this question blank has decreased from 42.08% last year to 38.3%
- We have had an increase in applicants who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or another minority sexual orientation rising from 4.41% to 5.62%
- Just over one third of leavers left this question blank, compared to just under half of all staff and only 3.7% of applicants.

Religion or belief

Table 11: Employees, Leavers, and Job Applicants by Religion

Religion	Employees (as of 31st March)	%	Leavers	%	Job Applicants	%
Agnostic	334	5.6	78	8.4	453	8.3
Atheist	583	9.8	139	14.9	1017	18.6
Buddhist - Hinayana	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buddhist - Mahayana	7	0.1	0	0	4	0.1

Key findings:

- Just under half of our staff chose to leave this blank.
- Christian (all categories) and ‘Not Specified’ were the largest groups, with 24.98% and 12.40% respectively, following blank.
- The majority (24.98%) of staff identified as Christian (all categories), with 12.4% identifying as Protestant, 7.4% as Roman Catholic and 5.2% as Orthodox.
- 1.46% of staff identified as Muslim (Sunni and Shiite), an increase from 1.25% in the previous reporting period.
- Those identifying as Buddhist, Jewish or Taoist has increased from 0.12%, to 0.22%
- 1.70% of leavers were Muslim, an increase from 1.41% in the previous reporting period.
- The largest group identity specified for applicants was Atheist with 18.63%.
- 7.84% applicants stated their religion or belief as ‘other’.

Actions to address under-representation.

We are committed to advancing equity for people from all backgrounds and working towards increasing the representation of minority ethnic people, disabled people and people who identify as LGBTQ+ as part of our commitment to address under-representation across all levels of the organisation. We've continued to take steps to address under-representation within our workforce, including working to identify and remove any barriers to recruitment and retention. Key activity in this period has included:

- Undertaking a comprehensive review of the inclusivity of our recruitment practices and workplace policies to ensure equality of opportunity irrespective of protected characteristics, caring responsibilities, social or educational background, language preference or any other factor.
- The continued delivery of unconscious bias training, including bespoke training on recruitment and selection for recruitment panels.
- Undertaking outreach activities within underrepresented communities and encouraging applications from diverse talent pools.
- Reviewing our advertising approach to promote Newport Council as an inclusive employer, including adding more Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) content, which has received a positive response from applicants and contributed to an increase in applications from underrepresented groups.
- Working with our Staff Equality Networks to develop internal policies, such as the Wellness at Work Policy, which a range of staff, particularly disabled staff, have reported was a positive change and beneficial.
- Working with our Staff Equality Networks to undertake a comprehensive review of our Employee Exit Process, which has led to the development of a new Leavers Questionnaire, including more questions related to inclusion as well as other changes.

In this period, we also began the development of our new People Plan 2023-27. To ensure increasing the representation of under-represented groups remains a priority for Newport City Council for the immediate future and the next few years, in developing this plan, we have aligned themes with our Equality Objectives, particularly Equality Objective 3 to ensure “Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city, and is a workplace with an inclusive culture, which recruits, develops, and retains staff”.

Supporting Documents

Newport City Council: Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives 2020-2024 (2020). Available at: <https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Strategic-Equality-Plan-2020-2024.pdf>

Newport City Council Strategic Equality Plan: Annual Report 2021-2022 (2022). Available at: <https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Strategic-Equality-Plan-2019-20.pdf>

Newport City Corporate Plan 2022-2027 (2022). Available at: [Corporate Plan 2022-27 FINAL \(newport.gov.uk\)](#)

Newport's Well-being Plan 2018-2023 Local Well-being Plan 2018-23 (English Final) (newport.gov.uk)

Fairness Commission <http://www.newport.gov.uk/fairnessCommission/en/Full-Report/Full-Report.aspx>

Stats Wales <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Earnings/genderpaydifferenceinwales-by-year>

Newport's Well-being Plan 2018-2023 Local Well-being Plan 2018-23 (English Final) (newport.gov.uk)

DRAFT



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 2022/23

Purpose Following consideration by Cabinet, Council is asked to endorse the annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report.

Author Chief Executive
Director of Transformation and Corporate

Ward All

Summary Newport City Council is required to self-assess the extent to which it has met the performance requirements under the Local Government and Elections Act and the progress it has made in delivering against its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives (Well-being of Future Generations Act). This Annual Report provides an overview of the Council's 2022/23 performance and the governance and performance arrangements in place. In compiling the assessment, the report has considered other strategic and statutory reports published by the Council for 2022/23.

The report has concluded that the Council has made good progress against 2 out of 4 of its Well-being Objectives (Objectives 2 and 4) but challenges remain in the delivery of Well-being Objectives 1 and 3. The report also assessed the governance and performance arrangements to being effective in the use its resources economically, efficiently and effectively through its Annual Governance Statement, Statement of Accounts, Internal Audit and External Regulatory activity.

Proposal Council is requested to endorse the annual Corporate Plan self-assessment report 2022/23.

Action by Executive Board
Corporate Management Team

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Cabinet
- Governance & Audit Committee
- Overview Scrutiny Management Committee

Signed

Background

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires local authorities across Wales to conduct an annual self-assessment of performance to:

- 1. Keep performance under review** – ensuring that the Council is exercising its functions effectively; using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and that governance arrangements are effective for securing these areas.
- 2. Duty to consult on performance** – ensuring that Councils consult with local people and businesses operating in Newport, with Council staff and Trade Unions.
- 3. Duty to report on performance** – demonstrating the extent to which the Council has performed in the previous financial year, the action it intends to take or has taken to meet and increase upon performance requirements.

Local authorities are also required to publish an annual report on the self-reflection and assessment of its performance and progress in the delivery of its Well-being Objectives as part of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act guidance from Welsh Government suggests local authorities may wish to consider opportunities to integrate its self-assessment report with reports on other duties such as Well-being of Future Generations. Previously, the Council presented a report to Cabinet and Governance & Audit Committee outlining its preferred approach to integrate its annual self-assessment report with its assessment of its progress against the Council's Well-being Objectives.

Newport City Council Annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 2022/23

This year's annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 2022/23 (Appendix 1) provides a self-assessment on the progress of delivery against the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 and the effectiveness of the Council's governance and performance arrangements to ensure it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively. Reflecting back to last year's report, this year's report has considered the recommendations and comments raised by the Council's Governance & Audit Committee and Overview Scrutiny Management Committee.

In November 2022, the Council approved its 5 year Plan to deliver an '*Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone*' with four Well-being Objectives focusing on the Economy, Education and Skills; Environment and Infrastructure; Quality Social Care and Community Services; and an Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council. To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan the Council's 11 service areas developed their service plans outlining the programmes and projects, objectives and actions which will be supporting each Well-being objective(s) and its strategic priorities; and delivering continuous improvement. These supporting documents are also published.

To self-assess the progress against the Well-being Objectives, and its governance and performance arrangements, the Council examined the position reported by the Council's 11 service areas at the end of 2022/23 which were reported to the Council's Performance Scrutiny Committees in July 2023. Additionally, the report also referred to several annual reports on the delivery of specific strategies and statutory duties such as the Director of Social Services Report, annual Equalities and Welsh Language reports and Climate Change reports. A full list of reports considered are included in the annual report.

To assess the effectiveness of the Council's Governance and Performance arrangements, the report referred to the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS), Statement of Accounts, Internal Audit and External Regulatory reviews completed by the Council's 3 regulators: Audit Wales, Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales. A progress update against the recommendations raised in the 2021/22 Annual Report have also been included in the report.

In relation to the progress made against the 14 actions raised in last year's Annual Report, the Council has 7 completed actions with 7 actions still in progress. The actions still in progress at the end of 2022/23 have been carried forward into 2023/24 action plan. The Annual Report has also been subject to review by the Council's Executive Board and Corporate Management Team senior officer group.

Overall Conclusion and Self-Assessment of NCC Governance and Performance Arrangements in 2022/23

The overall conclusion made by the Council is that it has made an encouraging start to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27. Good progress has been made by the Council in 2 out of 4 Well-being Objectives (Well-being Objective 2 and 4). However, significant challenges remain across the Council's Social Services, Housing, Infrastructure and Education services on the long term sustainability to meet the demands of residents in Newport within the financial and legislative pressures. Additionally, the governance and performance arrangements of the Council as outlined in the Council's Annual Governance Statement report remain effective but further actions are needed to improve existing arrangements to ensure the Council remains transparent in the delivery of its services and ensure key stakeholders are involved in decision making.

Including the actions carried forward into this year's Annual Report, the Council has raised a further 2 actions bringing the overall total to 9. Progress against these will be monitored and reported through the Council's Directorate Management Teams and Executive Board through service plan delivery.

Below is a summary of the Council's assessment, including its achievements, and the challenges the Council has faced in 2022/23 together with a summary of the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2022/23.

		2022/23 RAG Assessment Status
Well-being Objective 1- Education, Skills and Employment		
Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of key regeneration projects including Mercure Hotel, Central Library & Museum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term sustainability of school finances, buildings and assets to meet the needs of communities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No schools in special measures at the end of 22/23 with Newport High School and Malpas Church in Wales Primary school coming out of special measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving visitor figures to Newport to pre-pandemic levels. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Ysgol Gwent Is Coed school redevelopment through Communities for Learning programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To progress key strategies and initiatives from the Corporate Plan including Placemaking Plan, Cultural Strategy, and Sports Strategy. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of key adult and youth learning through initiatives such as Newport Youth Academy, job fairs and Adult Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Projects delivery managing inflationary costs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspire alternative learning programme supporting 36 learners to achieve recognised qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing increase demand and provision for children with Additional Learning Needs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led and supported over 30 events across Newport including the Food Festival, and Newport Marathon. 		

		2022/23 RAG Assessment Status
Well-being Objective 2- Environment & Infrastructure		
Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing good progress against waste performance targets and improvement on graffiti and gum litter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards delivery Net Zero Carbon by 2030. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of key Active Travel projects including Newport train station footbridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable and sustainable housing in Newport to meet the housing demand needs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Council's Digital Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing deterioration of highways assets, especially within the carriageway and bridge asset groups. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous work of regulatory services to comply with environmental and regulatory requirements. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing achievements and recognition for the Council's parks and bio-diversity. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electric Vehicle procurement, charging points and solar panel installations. 	

		2022/23 RAG Assessment Status
Well-being Objective 3 – Quality Social Care and Community Services		
Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Services recognised for Bronze Quality Mark. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Homelessness demands on the Council and impact on other front-line services such as Social Services and Education. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the demand to support Ukrainian refugees in Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate Programme and remove profit from the care of children. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing Cost of Living Delivery group collaborating with health, GAVO, charities and other not for profit organisations providing advice and support such as 'Warm Spaces' during winter period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability of social care providers and provision of residential / domiciliary care. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and approval of the Pillgwenly Master Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressures on Adult and Children services to meet demand. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of the Council's Flying Start offer to residents in Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Safeguarding training provided to Members and staff through the roll out of the National Safeguarding training standards and ensure compliance. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention & Inclusion grant funding from Welsh Government. 	

		2022/23 RAG Assessment Status
Well-being Objective 4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council		
Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Council's new Digital Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness and Check In performance did not achieve its intended targets 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of the Asset Rationalisation programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards delivery net zero carbon by 2030. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory budget programme supporting community and charity organisations across Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing and supporting the number of staff from disabled, minority ethnic and LGBTQ+ communities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Council's Participation strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy / and customer contact. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women occupy 69% of the upper quartile/highest paid jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of new website and review of customer contact 	

Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 Overview		
Principle	Annual Governance Statement Principles	RAG Assessment
A	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.	
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.	
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits	
D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes.	
E	Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.	

F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.	
G	Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.	

The annual report was also presented to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee on 28th September and to the Overview Scrutiny Management Committee on 9th October (full comments below). The feedback and recommendations from both committees have been considered and incorporated where necessary into the final version of the report presented.

Next Steps

Following approval of the report by Council in November, the report will be shared with Welsh Government, and its three Regulatory bodies (Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn). A final published version will also be made available on the Council's website in Welsh and English.

Appendix 1 –Annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 22/23.

Financial Summary

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Non-compliance with the Local Government & Elections Act and Well-being for Future Generations Act.	M	L	The approach outlined in the report will mitigate against non-compliance with the Acts.	Director for Corporate and Transformation

*Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Annual Governance Statement

Options Available and considered.

1. To endorse the annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 2022/23.
2. To request further information or not approve the attached report and redraft.

Preferred Option and Why

1. To approve the attached paper and publish on the Council's website so that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

As the report states, there are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The Annual Governance Statement is referenced within the report and this document provides a clear position of the Council's overall control environment, including areas where further action is required.

Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from the report, it does highlight a number of areas where challenges remain, many of which will or could have a financial consequence, in either revenue or capital terms. Examples include the demand pressures being experienced within Children's

Services and the ongoing growth in the challenge surrounding homelessness. Both of these are impacting significantly upon the Council's in-year financial position and are likely to in the future. As result, these pressures have been incorporated into the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and form part of the budget gap to be addressed as part of setting the 2024/25 revenue budget.

These examples highlight the need to ensure that there remains a clear ongoing link between the Council's Corporate Plan, performance and risk management, and financial management. Any new or ongoing challenges which also present a financial risk will need to be appropriately reflected as part of medium term financial planning, to ensure that any unavoidable financial consequences are reflected in future revenue and capital budgets. In addition, where relevant, certain financial matters will be reported through the annual Statement of Accounts.

The need for this clear link is heightened whilst the Council, like all local authorities, continue to operate within significantly constrained financial parameters. Because of this, there is a requirement for clear prioritisation of aims and objectives, to ensure that the most critical are afforded as part of future financial plans.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 has removed the previous statutory duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 for councils to secure continuous improvement in the delivery of services. The continuous improvement duty has been replaced by a more flexible performance self-assessment process which requires the Council to keep under review the extent to which it is exercising its functions effectively, using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively and has in place effective governance arrangements to secure these performance requirements. As part of that self-assessment process, the Council is required to produce an annual self-assessment report, setting out its conclusions on the extent to which it has met these performance requirements and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase performance. How the Council develops and publishes the annual self-assessment performance report is a matter for the Council to determine. The agreed approach, as previously endorsed by Governance & Audit Committee, is to combine the performance self-assessment with the Council's existing annual well-being report and to integrate the findings of other annual performance reports. Therefore, this annual self-assessment report has been prepared on that basis. The Annual Report has been considered by Governance & Audit Committee in accordance with their statutory role under the 2021 Act to review, assess and make reports about the effectiveness of the arrangements the Council has put in place for the performance assessments to meet the requirements of the legislation. Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee have considered the performance assessment in relation the well-being and strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. Cabinet has formally approved the Self-Assessment Report and agreed to its publication and submission to Welsh Government and the external regulator. Council is now being asked to approve the Report for publication on the Council's website.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

This is the first annual report on the progress the Council is making in the delivery of its Corporate Plan 2022-27 Well-being Objectives and the effectiveness of the governance and performance arrangements to achieve these. Following the first Annual Well-being Self-Assessment Report 2021/22, the feedback from the Governance & Audit Committee and Overview Scrutiny Management Committee have been taken into consideration to improve the self-assessment of the Council's arrangements. Throughout the last financial year, the Council has made significant progress in improving the governance and performance arrangements across the Council to ensure officers, Cabinet Members and elected members are provided with timely and evidence based information to make well informed decisions. As the Annual Report highlights, the Council has significant challenges across key front-line areas of the Council and challenging decisions will need to be made over the term of this Plan to ensure services remain sustainable and meet the needs of the city.

Prior to the report being published, we have considered the feedback and recommendations of the Governance & Audit Committee and Overview Scrutiny Management Committee.

Governance & Audit Committee (GAC)

The draft annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report was presented to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee on 28th September. GAC considered the contents of the report and provided the following feedback and recommendations (including the Council's response):

GAC advised that it was an improved report in comparison with last year's report. The Committee raised one recommendation for the Council to consider in relation to providing more explanation in the report concerning amber ratings in future assessments.

Scrutiny Committees

The Annual Report was presented to the Council's Overview Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on 9th October. The committee considered the contents of the report and provided the following feedback and recommendations (Including the Council's response):

- The Committee asked for clarification on how the number of visitors to Newport is calculated.
- The Committee recommended considering grouping the RAG ratings by objective rather than rating as this may make the assessment easier to understand.
- The Committee recommended the inclusion of scoring for footways in future reports, as highways assessments are already included.
- The Committee was pleased to see successes in the report such as progressive procurement and the heritage offer. The Committee felt that these successes could be highlighted more in the report to reflect the positive outcomes.
- The Committee recommended that the Key Decisions and Achievements table be revised so that the colours used are not the same as those used in the RAG system to ensure clear separation from this performance measurement.

Where practicable, recommendations are considered in preparation of the final version and will be considered as part of the Council's preparation for next year's annual report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

As this is an information only report there is no requirements to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment.

The Annual Report provides a summary of the Council's Equalities Annual Report which provides an overview of activities undertaken in relation to equalities, consultations and engagement.

The final version of the report will be published in Welsh and English.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Annual Report has considered the five ways of working principles in the delivery of the Well-being Act. These are outlined in the Annual Report.

Consultation

Considered by the Council's Governance and Audit Committee, Overview Scrutiny Management Committee.

Background Papers

[Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)

[Cabinet Report – NCC approach to the Self-Assessment, April 2022](#)

[Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23](#)

[Overview Scrutiny Management Committee Annual Report 2022/23](#)

[Well-being of Future Generations Act](#)

[Welsh Government Self-Assessment Guidance](#)

Dated: 20th November 2023

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‘An ambitious, fairer,
greener **Newport** for everyone’

Our **VISION**,
Your **FUTURE**



ANNUAL CORPORATE PLAN
SELF-ASSESSMENT
REPORT 2022-23



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Introduction and Purpose of the Report

Welcome to Newport City Council’s annual Corporate Plan Self-Assessment Report 2022/23. The purpose of this report is to assess the progress of delivery the Council has made against the Corporate Plan 2022-27; and the extent to which the Council has met its performance requirements under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan and deliver continuous improvement.

In November 2022, Newport City Council agreed its five-year [Corporate Plan](#) to deliver an ‘*Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone*’. To achieve this goal, the Corporate Plan has four Well-being Objectives that will prioritise the Council’s focus over the next five years and contribute towards its longer term vision for Newport over the next 20 years:

Well-being Objective 1 (Economy, Education and Skills) – Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.

Well-being Objective 2 (Environment and Infrastructure) – Newport is a city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.

Well-being Objective 3 (Quality Social Care and Community Services) – Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.

Well-being Objective 4 – (An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council) – Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

The delivery of this Corporate Plan contributes towards Wales seven Well-being Goals and 5 Ways of Working set in the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#). This Act requires all public bodies in Wales to think about the long term impact of our decisions and to work with our communities, people and each other to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health, inequality and climate change.



About Newport

Newport is situated on the River Usk that has served as a port since medieval times when the first Newport Castle was built by the Normans. In the last 10 years Newport’s population has grown by 9.5% to 159,600 (Census 2021). From the industrial revolution, Newport was built on the coal and steel industries, which saw the city becoming one of the key ports and a major exporter. Newport is home to some iconic landmarks such as the Transporter Bridge, Tredegar House, Belle Vue Park, Rodney Parade, International Conference Centre and the Civic Centre. Throughout the years Newport has welcomed people from across the world to settle and contribute towards the growth and success of the city. Newport also embraces the cultural diversity of the city allowing communities to come together to preserve its historic venues, support its music and art scenes, deliver inclusive festivals and events; and celebrate religious festivals.

Purpose of the Report

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act requires all local authorities to self-assess its governance, and performance arrangements for the previous reporting year. This report covers three areas: Self-assessment of progress against the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives (How well are we doing?); self-assessment on the effectiveness of its governance and performance arrangements to deliver the Corporate Plan and its statutory duties (How do we know?); and an overall Conclusion and improvements (What and how can we do better?).

The Self-assessment of performance and progress against the Corporate Plan is based upon the End of Year (31st March 2023) position reported through the 11 service area plans. The Council’s 11 service areas assessed its progress against their objectives, projects, actions and performance measures, which are contributing towards the delivery of the Corporate Plan. The Council will be assessing its progress based upon a Red / Amber / Green assessment.

Each service area presented a detailed overview of their progress to the Council’s Performance Scrutiny Committees in July 2023. Feedback from the committees has been considered in the production of this report. Links to the Reports can be found in the table below and a summary of service area performance in the overview of Performance and Risk Management arrangements which can be found on page 48.

Performance Scrutiny Report (Please click the link)	Service Area (Please click the link)
People Scrutiny Committee – 11th July 2023	Education Services
People Scrutiny Committee – 25th July 2023	Adult Services Children Services Prevention & Inclusion Service
Place & Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 10th July 2023	Environment & Public Protection Housing & Communities Infrastructure
Place & Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 24th July 2023	Finance Law & Standards People, Policy & Transformation Regeneration & Economic Development

In addition to the service plans, the report refers to other annual statutory / strategic reports produced by the Council to assess the performance and progress against key strategic priorities and statutory duties. Case studies, assessments and performance information has also been considered in this report and should further information be required, links have been provided to the full reports below.

- [Director of Social Services Annual Report](#)
- [Annual Safeguarding Report](#)
- [Climate Change Annual Report](#)
- [Information Risk Report](#)
- [Digital Annual Report](#)
- Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report (Final to be provided)
- [Welsh Language Annual Report](#)
- Statement of Accounts (Final to be provided)
- Annual Governance Statement (Final to be provided)

To inform this assessment throughout this report, we will refer to other annual statutory / strategic reports, External Audit and Regulatory work, and progress against recommendations raised in the 2021/22 Annual Well-being Report.













Welsh Local Government Association (Data Cymru) – Online Self-Assessment Toolkit and Benchmarking

In 2022/23 the Welsh Local Government Association (Data Cymru) launched its [online Self-Assessment toolkit](#). The purpose of the toolkit is to enable local authorities to access a standardised set of performance data to support the comparison of performance data. For the purpose of this report, where benchmarking data is available to support the Council’s own performance measures, we have provided the Welsh average to enable comparison. The reader of this report should also note:

- Data for 2022/23 has not been published at the time of drafting this report and therefore 2021/22 data has been used where appropriate to enable comparison.
- Not all performance measures reported by service areas in this report are included in the Self-Assessment toolkit.

Key Facts and Challenges faced by Newport and Newport City Council in 2022/23

Below is a summary of key facts and information about Newport but also some of the challenges faced by Newport in 2022/23. Figures as of 31st March 2023.

		
Population 159,600 9.5% Population Growth since 2001 (Census '21)	5,941 Staff (inc teaching staff) in Newport City Council	57 Schools in Newport
		
61,246 (provisional) NCC CO ² emissions (2022/23)	376 Children Looked After	443 People in Temporary Accommodation
		
3,757 children with Additional Learning Needs	26.6% (5,842) Free School Meals* (PLASC Jul '23 All school settings)	4.8% (3.1km) Principal A Roads in Poor Condition
		
£19.5m 23/24 Medium Term Revenue Plan Savings	607 No. Adults supported to live in residential care	801 No. people supported to live independently at home with a care & support package

Well-being Objective 1 – Economy Education and Skills

Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.

No	Strategic Priority	RAG Assessment
Well-being Objective 1 Overall Assessment		
1	Newport will have a robust economic strategy and replacement Local Development Plan to support sustainable economic growth and strong placemaking across Newport's communities.	
2	Lead and collaborate to attract major investment into the city and support our local entrepreneurs to thrive and bring prosperity to Newport's communities.	
3	Re-vitalise its city centre and wider communities to benefit families, businesses, and visitors.	
4	Become a destination that celebrates cultural diversity, heritage and delivers elite sporting events.	
5	Develop education facilities that support future generations to achieve their potential and positively contribute to their communities.	
6	Work towards eliminating education inequality faced by young learners that are from disadvantaged, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, low-income households, and/or have additional learning needs.	
7	Increase the number of Welsh speakers in Newport by improving access to Welsh education, supporting businesses, and promoting the Welsh language.	
8	Become a living wage city helping people out of poverty and provide opportunities to retrain, learn new skills and find long-term work.	

Summary of Achievements and Challenges in 2022/23

Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery key regeneration projects including Mercure Hotel, Central Library & Museum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term sustainability school finances, buildings and assets to meet the needs of communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No schools in special measures at the end of 22/23 with Newport High school and Malpas Church in Wales Primary school coming out of special measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving visitor figures to Newport to pre-pandemic levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Ysgol Gwent Is Coed school redevelopment through Communities for Learning programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To progress key strategies and initiatives from the Corporate Plan including Placemaking Plan, Cultural Strategy, and Sports Strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of key adult and youth learning through initiatives such as Newport Youth Academy, job fairs and Adult Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Projects delivery managing inflationary costs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspire alternative learning programme supporting 36 learners to achieve recognised qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing increase demand and provision for children with Additional Learning Needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led and supported over 30 events across Newport including the Food Festival, and Newport Marathon. 	

At the end of 2022/23 the Council has reported an amber status against Well-being Objective 1. The Council has continued to make good progress in the delivery of key regeneration, economic and education developments. However, the Council faces a range of challenges in relation to its assets and school buildings in particular, and in increasing visitor numbers to Newport back to pre-pandemic levels. The last three years has also been a challenging time for Newport's economy, education and schools through the uncertainty of Brexit, Covid-19 Pandemic and now the cost of living crisis. It is important to understand that many of the challenges and decisions fall outside of the control of Newport City Council. But it is important that we are able to respond and provide a voice for the businesses, schools, learners and people who need support and provide opportunities across the city and wider region.

Strategic Priority 1

As a local authority, it is a statutory requirement for the Council to replace its current [Local Development Plan \(LDP\)](#) which will include policies used to determine all planning applications in Newport, identify land for development and enhance the city's environmental and historical assets. The delivery of this work will take place over the next three years and the Council will be undertaking several consultations at key stages with the public and other stakeholders to help inform future decisions. This work will be vital to support sustainable economic growth and development to meet the needs of the city and wider region.

Newport City Council is one of 10 local authorities involved with the [Cardiff Capital Region \(CCR\)](#). The role of CCR is to collaborate together to attract major investment, create new jobs, improve transport links and provide private sector leverage. Progress of the CCR to develop a Strategic Development Plan for the region has not progressed as expected as a result of the CCR establishing its Corporate Joint Committee arrangements. It will be expected in 2023/24 for a team to be established in CCR and to progress the development of the plan.

Strategic Priority 2

Over the last year, we have seen several regeneration projects completed such as the renovation of Chartist Tower into a four star hotel, the Indoor Market which saw the refurbishment of a listed building into a modern food and drink venue, with retail, offices and event space. More recently the refurbishment of the Central Library and Museum has been completed and the public building now accommodates the Council's face to face facility alongside the Library, Museum and Art Gallery. You can view the Museum's latest video [here](#). This enabled the former Information Station building to be leased to Tramshed Tech as a second site for their co-working and innovation hub. In December 2022, the Indoor Market received the **Ystadau Cymru Award** for its work to ensure the Market remains at the heart of the city centre. In 2022/23, following the approval to commence the development of the Knowledge Quarter, work started on demolishing the leisure centre and to rejuvenate the area to accommodate a new leisure centre and city centre campus for Coleg Gwent.

Work also commenced on the development of the new Transporter Bridge Visitor Centre and despite increasing inflationary costs, the Council was able to secure additional funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. As part of the Council's Corporate Plan, work has commenced on developing a new Placemaking Plan for the City Centre which will provide a long-term, targeted framework for regeneration, refurbishment and investment across the city centre.



In the last 10 years, Newport has seen the growth in semi-conductor and technology companies locating in the area. The Council's Regeneration & Economic Development team in collaboration with CCR and Welsh Government supported [KLA](#) in the expansion of their operation at Newport's Imperial Park, which will act as their European HQ when completed in 2025. This commitment to Newport has seen the number of people employed by KLA in the city more than double between 2019 and 2023 and is expected to result in the company employing over 750 people in high-value jobs by 2024. This is an example of how Newport Council is supporting industries to locate and sustain their presence in the city providing long term employment opportunities to residents across Newport and South East Wales. In April 2022, the UK Government (UKG) published details of its £2.6bn [Shared Prosperity Fund](#). Newport was allocated over £27m of core funding to deliver over 50 projects / initiatives over the next three years and work will be commencing in 2023/24 to deliver these projects. Throughout the year, the Council's Business Support team also continued to help businesses to access advice and financial support through the City of Newport Business Grants. In total £36k was awarded to 17 businesses creating a total of 52 new jobs.

Strategic Priority 3

City centres are places where people live, work, learn and play and perform a number of different functions at the heart of urban areas. Like many other small cities in the UK there are many external factors impacting the long term

sustainability of the city centre such as online shopping and commerce, out of town shopping, the Covid pandemic and now the Cost of Living crisis. The Council has sought to encourage a variety of uses in the city centre, including residential, leisure, offices and education. A number of developments providing new residential units have been completed, including the former Carousel building on Skinner Street. Proposals for the new leisure and well-being centre are at an advanced stage with planning permission in place and the demolition of the Newport Centre will facilitate the development of the new city centre college campus. Having modern and sustainable facilities in an accessible location is important to ensuring that our city centre is vibrant and viable. Over the last 3 years Newport City Council has offered business rates support to businesses and has been supporting the development of Grade A office spaces. In 2022/23 we supported 20,000 sq ft of empty floor space brought back into use including Griffin House, a new pool bar at Station Quarter, and the Creative Hub on Commercial Street. Events are also an important feature of city centre activity and the Council have organised over 30 events across the City, many of which have been held in the City Centre. 2022 saw the return of the very popular Food Festival as well as the celebrations associated with the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee. There are several strategies that we need to update and implement to support the recovery and regeneration of Newport including the city centre. Many of these strategies such as the Placemaking Plan and the Replacement Local Development Plan are still in development but work is ongoing to ensure that these strategies align and complement each other.

Strategic Priority 4

Following the Covid Pandemic the Council's visitor performance measure has seen a fall in the number of visitors to Newport. The Council is working with partners to bring this back to pre-pandemic levels. To support this Newport is able to offer a diverse range of events across the city to celebrate our culture, heritage and sporting events. In 2022/23, Newport City Council supported over 30 events including the return of the Food Festival, Newport Marathon, Battle of Britain expedition, Art on the Hill and Small Business Saturday as some of the examples.

In January 2023, the Council and 'Friends of Newport Ship' reported the completion of a significant milestone in the preservation of Newport's Medieval ship. As widely reported across the [BBC](#), and other major media outlets, this has been a long process collaborating with experts from the Mary Rose museum to dry out the timbers. Over the next year, the Council and its partners are going to be focusing on finding a permanent home for the ship to enable visitors to view the ship and experience medieval life in Newport.



As part of the Council's Corporate Plan, we are also developing the Cultural Strategy and Sports & Recreation Strategy which will support the City's long term vision to embrace and promote the city's diverse communities and also to ensure we are able to offer residents and visitors opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports and activities. The Council is engaged with a broad range of local, regional and national partners to enhance its status as a city of culture, and celebrate and develop its unique historic assets including constructing the new visitor centre at the iconic Transporter Bridge. We are also working with partners, including Amgueddfa Cymru and CADW to identify a long term strategy to support the visitor offer of Caerleon.

Strategic Priority 5

Newport's Education service alongside Education Achievement Service (Gwent Education partner) supports one nursery, 44 primary schools, nine secondary schools, two special schools and one pupil referral unit. At the end of the academic year 2022/23, the city had no primary, secondary or special schools in an Estyn Statutory category with it being the only local authority area in the region not to be in this position. During the year, Newport High school and Malpas Church in Wales Primary school were removed from special measures. Headteachers, and their staff are to be congratulated on their continuous hard work and resilience to achieve this position.

The Council is committed to ensuring schools are able to meet the needs of its pupils, and communities creating safe, learning environments which they can all maximise their potential. At the end of 2022/23, the Council had 6 projects in development through the Communities for Learning Programme and Welsh Medium programme. The maintenance of our school estate is a challenge for the Council as evidenced through Millbrook Primary School needing to operate in temporary accommodation. The Council is now working with the school to consider options for a long term solution and will announce the future of the school in 2023/24.

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed

In January 2023, we delivered £18.7m new teaching block through the **Communities for Learning Programme**. Through the delivery of this project the school is now able to offer a full 11-18 Welsh-medium curriculum and improved external sports provision which can be used to support community use.

Newport is now able to meet the educational needs of children who are seeking Welsh-medium education from nursery to Post-16 removing the previous need for out of county provision. This also supports the Council's **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan**.



Strategic Priority 6

Recognising that there are many young learners who require additional support, it is important that schools can enable all learners to maximise their potential before entering into Post-16, further education, training and/or employment. The Council will be publishing a separate report on Key Stage 4 outcomes to the Council's Cabinet in October 2023.

Newport continues to perform well with low numbers of young learners not in education, employment and training (see performance measures). Schools have seen an increase in the number of learners with additional learning needs (ALN) and local authorities including schools are statutorily required to ensure their needs are met. Last year, Ysgol Bryn Derw was expanded from 68 to 96 placements through the creation of a dedicated Foundation Phase Satellite base by refurbishing Kimberley Nursery school which became vacant in July 2021. This meant we were able to provide additional specialist education places where mainstream environments are deemed inappropriate; a reduction in the number of current and future out of county placements and reduced travel time for those in out-of-county placements. In March 2023, the Council launched the *'Tackling all Aspects of Poverty in Education'* strategy in partnership with Children in Wales and all schools. The strategy is aimed to provide bespoke, targeted and universal approaches to tackling all aspects of poverty. Initiatives being implemented include subsidising school trips, 'One-million Mentors Programme' offering community based mentoring system through to courses on financial awareness and management as part of the curriculum. In September 2022, through Welsh Government funding, Newport's primary schools were able to offer all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 free school meals as well as extending free school meals in holiday times to May 2023.

Llanwern High School – Culture of Cynefin

Llanwern High School received a **Professional Teaching Award** under the Betty Campbell Award category for promoting the contributions and perspectives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in June 2022. The award recognised their work to install a culture of Cynefin, where all members of the school community foster a feeling of belonging.

The school reimagined the curriculum through the lens of diversity, embracing a whole school approach where pastoral and academic teams work together to ensure pupils authentically experience and celebrate diversity in their education.

In partnership with the Council, the school also established and developed an Education Hub for secondary aged pupils arriving from the Ukraine. This ensured Ukrainian young people were able to receive pastoral care and continue their educational development.



Newport City Council has also been collaborating with 3 high schools: Lliswerry High, Llanwern High and John Frost through the Aspire programme. Aspire is an alternative learning programme for pre-16 year olds providing learning opportunities to young people in years 10 and 11. Each school supported 12 young people (36 in total) in 2022/23 with their education and resulted in:

- 8 C-F grade in English and Maths G.C.S.E
- 19 YP achieved L2 Cert in Personal Dev and Employability (Princes Trust)
- 5 YP achieved L2 Award in Personal Dev and Employability
- 4 YP achieved L1 Cert in Personal Dev and Employability

[Newport Youth Academy](#) has been operating for over five years and has provided opportunities for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people to access training, employment and further education. The Academy in collaboration with ACT has supported young people to engage in education and training through innovative and exciting delivery programmes. The case study and videos below, showcases some of the work the Academy has delivered in 2022/23.

Newport Youth Academy Case Study

Two young learners with the Academy are aspiring sports coaches who have a strong interest in football. Both had been volunteering at local primary schools and wanted to further their knowledge and an opportunity to access and complete the Football Association of Wales Football Leaders Award.

Both learners achieved Level 1 Football Leaders Award and provided them with confidence and develop their own skills to progress further as football coaches. There are also videos linked below which also showcase some of its key achievements supporting young people:

[Liam's Interview](#)

[Study with Newport Youth Academy](#)



Strategic Priority 7

Last year the Council launched its new **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** and its **Welsh Language 5 year Promotional Strategy**. Both strategies support the Welsh Government's goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Every year the Council leads, promotes and participates in many Welsh language events across the city with its schools, communities and businesses. This is in addition to improving the Welsh language skills of council officers as reported in the Council's [Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report](#).

We want all Welsh speakers and learners to be able to access services through the Welsh language, which we promoted through the [Mae Geni Hawl video](#). The Council was also involved in key events and work such as: The Welsh for Adults services to support and signpost any adult who wants to start or increase their Welsh language skills; Welsh language child and parent events such as the *Cymraeg i Blant sessions*, baby shower events for expectant parents and reviewing and updating the 'Becoming Bilingual' information booklet for parents.



Newport City Council also made funding available to support local community groups, organisations and individuals to promote, facilitate and increase the use of Welsh language across Newport. Some of the organisations which benefited from the grant included the British Red Cross, Gaer Community Family Learning organisation, Newport Live, and Menter Iaith Casnewydd. Further information can be found in the Council's annual report linked above.

Strategic Priority 8

Poverty is a multi-dimensional, complex issue and is impacting more people in Wales. It is important to note that Newport City Council cannot eradicate and/or move people out of poverty alone. It requires significant leverages from UK Government and Welsh Government, our strategic partners across the city and more importantly Newport's communities and individuals to improve their life opportunities. The last year has been particularly challenging for the Council and partners with the cost of living crisis which has seen many households and families struggle to maintain their standards of living and meet the rising energy, food and fuel costs. Throughout this report we cover many areas which demonstrate the ongoing work the Council and its partners have been undertaking to support people in 2022/23.

This strategic priority focuses on the economic development, training and support which the Council has provided people but also our commitment for Newport to be recognised as a 'Living Wage City'. In collaboration between the Council and its partners in the One Newport group, the Council will be progressing this work further in 2023/24 establishing a Steering group to lead on its development.

Other examples of how the Council has been supporting young people to gain the qualifications, training and employment are highlighted in Strategic Priority 6 above.

Adult learning is a significant part of the Council's economic, education and community work. For young people leaving education and/or struggling with identifying the career path that is right for them, the Council alongside other government departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions support people to train, re-skill and find new employment.

Led by the Council's Regeneration & Economic Development team and collaborating with other services such as Prevention & Inclusion team and One Newport group, the Council has 19 job clubs operating across the city. Two jobs' fairs were delivered in 2022/23 in addition to other events such as Acorn Recruitment Day, Linc Cymru, Vital Rail / ARC training and His Majesties Courts and Tribunal Service. In September 2022, Newport City Jobs fair was held at Newport Market with 59 employers and partners and over 400 customers in attendance. Employers including Newport City Council attending included Pobl, Newport Live, Smyths Toys, Stagecoach, Tescos, Celtic Manor Gwent Police and TATA.



In collaboration with the Department for Work & Pensions / SERCO, Newport Council has been delivering the Restart scheme which welcomes all job seekers who have been out of work over a nine month period and receive tailored 1-2-1 mentoring. In the last year 130 participants were placed into work with 80 of these achieving their desired outcomes.

Restart Case Study 1 (AR)

AR had not been in paid work since 2015 and was coached for 8 months where they thought it was unlikely they would get a paid position before retirement. Working with AR and SERCO, AR was coached and supported through a robust interview process with Starling Bank. Following the interview process, AR was successful in securing the role with Starling Bank and has achieved their desired outcomes.

Restart Case Study 2 (GD)

GD joined the Restart programme not even having their own bank account. Working with GD, their coach helped them set up a bank account, develop their CV and right to work documentation.

Prior to coming to the service GD had never succeeded at interview and helped coached them to a successful interview at Wagamama. Since obtaining the role, GD has remained in employment.

The council's Adult Community Learning team have been delivering a range of fully accredited ICT and Digital Skills courses at St Julian's Community Learning & Library Centre and the East Neighbourhood Hub in Maesglas. These include: Computers Don't Bite, Stay In Touch – IT in Everyday Life, Stay Safe Online, Internet & E-Mail, Calendars & Forms, Stay In Touch using Tablets & Smartphones, Introduction to Word Processing, Introduction to Spreadsheets, ICDL Level 1 and ICDL Level 2. Most of these courses only cost £5 and from Sept 2023 digital skills courses and Computers Don't Bite will have no course fee.

Adult Community Learning also offer a range of bespoke courses for community organisations which can be informal, non-accredited sessions if required. This includes offering courses in community venues including residential homes and housing schemes using laptops and tablets. If a venue can be provided, then these courses are usually free of charge. In November and December 2022 free drop-in sessions were held at the University of South Wales (USW) City campus where citizens could have a free digital health check and receive assistance from students studying at the USW. This was a project part-funded through by the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund and was delivered as a partnership with NCC, USW and Welsh Institute of Digital Information (WIDI). Additionally, Community Connectors, Libraries and community hub teams signpost the availability of digital skills sessions. First point of contact employees such as librarians and hub staff can assist with basic digital queries and signpost citizens. Libraries have undertaken a digital skills audit with Digital Communities Wales so as to identify training needs in respect of the NCC libraries workforce.

Well-being Objective 1 – Performance Measures

Performance measures used to monitor service area and the Council's contribution towards the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objective.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Number of tourism related visitors (Jan'22 to Dec'22)	3.68m	4.67m	Not Available	2.11m	4.67m	Performance figures are for Jan – Dec 2022. The target figure reflected the 2019, pre pandemic visitor number and was considered a suitable benchmark to compare the rate at which the visitor economy is recovering. We cannot predict the amount of time it will take to recover from the various periods of lockdown and when factoring in the cost of living crisis, escalating energy costs, and loss of skilled staff following Brexit, and war in Ukraine resulting in the loss of hotel rooms for a number of months, there were clearly ongoing challenges within the sector. However, 3.68 million visitor numbers is positive and we expect to see this improve over the coming year as we have extra bed spaces through the new Mercure 4 star hotel, a growing programme of events and conferences at the ICCW and the Council's own events programme.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Number of young people aged 16 to 24 provided with employment and skills support through the Young Persons Guarantee	98*	200	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	A full delivery year has not been completed for the Young Persons Guarantee. *Based on a 6 month period the performance figure is just short of the expected target.
Percentage of young people NEET 13	1.4%	1.1%	2.8%	1.1%	2.1%	Despite Newport not achieving its target 1.1%, in comparison to the Welsh average, Newport remains below the Welsh average of 2.8%. As highlighted in the report, we are supporting schools; and vulnerable and disadvantaged learners with pathways so that will not become NEET.
Percentage of Young people NEET Year 11	1.3%	1.3%	2.1%	1.3%	1.4%	Education teams have continued to deliver sustained performance in this area keep NEET levels low.
Percentage of 16 - 18 year olds NEET	2%	2%	Not Available	2.6%	2.6%	This measure has improved this year thanks to a range of interventions and support provided to young people across Newport.
(New) Number of Permanent exclusions per 1,000 pupils (Academic year 20/21)	0.33%	0.58%	Not Available	0.55	0.3	In October 2022, the Welsh Government produced statistical data detailing national, regional and individual performance of Local Authorities exclusion data for the academic year 2020-21. Although this data showed Newport was above the Welsh average for permanent exclusions during 2020-21 with 0.55 per 1,000 pupils, significant improvement has been made which can be demonstrated through the 2021-22 full Year data of 0.33 per 1,000 pupils which is reported in 2022-23.
Percentage of Young people recorded as unknown following compulsory education	0.6%	1.1%	Not Available	1.09%	1.13%	The performance has improved in 2022/23. This has been as a result of early intervention and support work for young people.
(New) Percentage of schools inspected that are in an Estyn statutory category.	0%	5%	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	At the end of the year the Newport High School and Malpas Church in Wales Primary School were removed from special measures.

*Welsh Average Data provided if available on Data Cymru Benchmarking or Stats Wales website.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Percentage of young people positively progressing through the Youth Academy.	81%	60%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Target percentage is set by Welsh Government as a benchmark for all partners delivering on the Jobs Growth Wales+ contract. The percentages are RAG rated as per table below and therefore we finished 22/23 rated as Excellent .
Number of businesses supported through the provision of advice and guidance.	231	No Target / Comparator measure	Local Measure	3,922	4,114	Previous performance figures quoted were based on the number of businesses supported through the distribution of Welsh Government funding during the Covid period. The performance indicator is therefore being reset.
(New) Number of events supported or led by the Council	30	No Target (Baseline Year)	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	The events team have supported over 30 events including strategic events such as the Newport Marathon, Food Festival and Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
(New) Amount of floorspace brought back into use or developed / redeveloped in the City Centre.	20,000 sq. ft	No Target (Baseline Year)	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Empty space brought back into use includes Griffin House and the former Trout bar at Newport Market, a new pool bar at Station Quarter, and the Creative Hub on Commercial Street.

Well-being Objective 1 – 23/24 Key Deliverables

Below is a summary of some of the key priorities and deliverables Newport City Council will be delivering / progressing in 2023/24:

- Development of key Council strategies including Placemaking Plan, Cultural Strategy, and Sports Strategy.
- Delivery of the Council's Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Consultation at key stages of the Council's Replacement Local Development Plan.
- Delivery / progression of key regeneration projects including the Transporter Bridge, and the Leisure and Wellbeing Centre.
- Meaningful progress on becoming a Living Wage City including establishment of a Steering group.
- Delivery of key Communities for Learning projects across the school's estate.
- Ongoing delivery of projects and initiatives to support disadvantaged learners.
- Delivery of training, support and job fairs to enable people to access training, qualifications and job opportunities.

Well-being Objective 2 – Newport’s Environment and Infrastructure

A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.

No	Strategic Priority	RAG Assessment
Well-being Objective 2 Overall Assessment		
1	Become a net zero carbon council and city through the delivery of the council’s organisational climate change plan and local area energy plan.	Orange
2	Collaborate and involve developers, communities, and businesses to create buildings for working and living in that are sustainable, affordable and enhance the environment.	Orange
3	Continue our progress as a world-leader for recycling contributing towards Wales’s net zero waste goal.	Green
4	To protect and enhance the biodiversity and environment of Newport’s urban and rural communities, improving well-being and health.	Green
5	Transform Newport’s highways and transport system to improve air quality and safety. Promote active travel across the city and south east Wales region.	Orange
6	Collaborate and support investment into a digital infrastructure which will provide equitable access for residents and businesses across Newport.	Green
7	Support and champion reputable businesses that comply with environmental and regulatory requirements and take action against organisations that do not.	Green

Summary of Achievements and Challenges in 2022/23

Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing good progress against waste performance targets and improvement on graffiti and gum litter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress towards delivery Net zero carbon by 2030.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of key Active Travel projects including Newport Station Active Travel bridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and sustainable housing in Newport to meet the housing demand needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the Council’s Digital Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing deterioration of highways assets, especially within the carriageway and bridge asset groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous work of regulatory services to comply with environmental and regulatory requirements. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing achievements and recognition for the Council’s parks and bio-diversity. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric Vehicle procurement, charging points and solar panel installations. 	

This Well-being objective is focused on the Council’s work to support the city, its communities, and businesses to meet the environmental, infrastructure and digital challenges of the future. Overall, the Council has made a good start in the delivery of this Well-being objective and some notable projects such as the Newport Station Active Travel bridge and launch of key strategies such as the Local Area Energy Plan and Digital Strategy demonstrate the intention of the Council over the next 5 years. However, there are also many challenges which the Council needs to tackle such as the net zero carbon neutral target by 2030, meeting the Welsh Government’s waste targets and maintaining our highways assets and infrastructure.

Strategic Priority 1

The Welsh Government has set legislation requiring all public sector bodies to be net zero carbon neutral by 2030. In addition to this we also have to ensure the city’s infrastructure enables residents, commuters and businesses to become less reliant on cars; enable people to access high speed internet; and have buildings / communities which are sustainable, and enhance the city’s environment and communities.

In 2022/23 the Council commenced delivering against its [Climate Change Plan 2022-27](#). Progress against the Plan is reported separately through its annual report, which can be accessed [here](#). In the last year the Council reported a continued reduction with its CO2 emissions from 78,901 in 2021/22 to 61,246 (Provisional) in 2022/23. Some of the notable areas achieved by the Council include:

- Achievement of Carbon Literacy training and accreditation bronze award across the Council's Cabinet Members, senior leadership team and over half of the Elected Members.
- Installation of solar panels across 4 schools taking the overall number to 39.
- LED lighting upgrades across 4 secondary and 4 primary schools.
- 12 electric charging points installed across community car parks.



However, the report also highlights the significant work that the Council and its partners need to deliver over the next 7 years to achieve the net zero carbon goal by 2030 as highlighted in Well-being Objective 4.

In June 2022, the Council's Cabinet approved the [Local Area Energy Plan \(LAEP\)](#) for Newport which sets out its vision for reaching a zero-carbon local energy system by 2050. The LAEP is a long term Plan and will be delivered in collaboration with strategic partners at a local, regional and national level. Other Council strategies such as the Local Development Plan, Climate Change Plan, Digital Strategy will also contribute and support the delivery of this plan.

Strategic Priority 2

As already noted in Well-being Objective 1, work has commenced on developing the Replacement Local Development Plan which will be Newport's long term assessment of development of the city from 2026. Throughout the next 3 years, we will be involving and collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders including residents and businesses to develop this Plan.

As reported in Well-being Objective 3, Newport is facing a challenging housing situation with a lack of affordable and temporary accommodation to support households either at risk and/or are homeless. As Newport City Council does not own housing stock, we have to work closely with Registered Social Landlords such as Housing Associations and private landlords to deliver affordable and sustainable housing across the city. We acknowledge the challenge the Council and other local authorities across Wales face with reducing the number of empty private properties. Despite the offer of renovation grants and loans to support property owners, it is complex and challenging to encourage owners to provide affordable and sustainable properties. Last year the Council granted permission for 94 new affordable units in Newport and secured £24.9m for RSLs to deliver 396 units over the next 5 years. Newport was also one of six flagship areas selected to deliver the Prince of Wales 5 year transformative [Homewards](#) programme (see Well-being Objective 3, Strategic Priority 5 for more information).

We acknowledge that it is challenging to deliver more affordable homes to meet the demand and needs of residents across Newport which is why in 2023/24 the Council commenced a Housing Programme with the aim to improve the delivery of housing and homelessness services to residents, develop more affordable and sustainable homes and reduce the number of residents in temporary accommodation and on housing waiting lists.

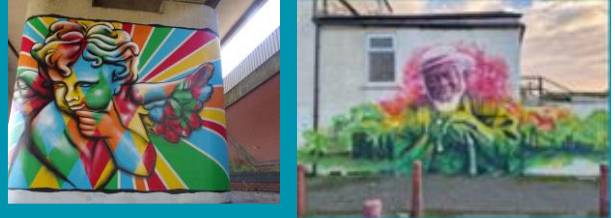
Strategic Priority 3

The Welsh Government has set a target for zero waste by 2050 and at the end of the financial year 65.2% (provisional) of waste produced was either recycled, re-used or composted which is above the Welsh Government current target of 64%. The next challenge for the Council is to increase its performance further to meet the future Welsh Government target of 70% by 2025. If the Council does not achieve this target then there is a risk of the Council being fined. As a result, the Council has agreed to implement 3 weekly collections for domestic residual and garden waste and deliver service efficiencies. In 2023/24, the Council will roll out the new service and will report its progress through the service plan mid-year review and next year's annual report.

Graffiti Wall Project

The Council continued its graffiti wall project in 2022/23 working with partners and community groups to commission a number of murals to improve the local environmental quality of the city.

To date 12 areas across Newport have been enhanced through the project including Harlequin Roundabout, Brays Sweet Factory on Conway Road, Commercial Street, Glebelands Park and Pill Millenium Centre. With all of the projects, the Council has involved local residents and community groups to decide the theme of the art. The graffiti has enhanced the areas and have proven to be very popular with residents and local businesses.



Last year, the Council's Waste and Cleansing team received £20k funding through the [Chewing Gum task Force](#) grant fund to tackle chewing gum pollution across the city centre. The funding was used to increase the cleansing of gum off the streets and funded gum litter prevention work included improved signage across the city centre.

In the last year the Council continued to report strong performance in clearing reported fly-tipping across the city. Additionally, the Council's waste enforcement team recorded 14 prosecutions or waste duty of care offences and issued 25 fixed penalty notices.



Strategic Priority 4

The parks, woodlands, waterways (where Newport City Council is responsible), allotments and open spaces contribute towards improving the well-being and health of communities across Newport.

In 2022/23 Beechwood Park and Belle Vue Park retained their Green Flag and Green Heritage status for the sixteenth and fifth year running, respectively. The Green Flag awards are a UK-wide scheme which recognise and reward well-managed parks and green spaces.

Newport Pollinator Project

One of our ongoing projects delivered in partnership with Buglife and local community groups is the Newport Pollinator Project. The aim of the project is to restore pollinator habitats to improve the resilience of ecological networks, and raise awareness and inspire people to take action for pollinators in their community including some of Wales' most rare and threatened species. This has been coupled with other initiatives such as our bee-friendly bus stops, with several installed in 22/23. These shelters serve not only to provide habitat for invertebrates, but will also be highly visible and serve to raise awareness of the importance of these habitats for biodiversity.

For further information you can visit the Council's website through the link [here](#).



Newport has received [Tree Cities of the World](#) status, a programme run by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. The programme is an international effort to recognise cities and towns committed to ensuring that their urban forests and trees are properly maintained, sustainably managed, and duly celebrated. A total of 168 cities and towns from 21 countries were recognised in 2022, with Newport one of over 50 cities earning the recognition for the first time.



Ash Dieback disease was one of the Council's Corporate risks due to the significant impact it has on the health & safety of residents and property, environmental impacts and the financial cost to remove and re-plant trees. In 2022/23 a significant programme of work along the Monmouthshire-Brecon Canal was completed to manage trees impacted by Ash Dieback disease. This work will be followed by other interventions in 23/24 to improve the area around Fourteen Locks and address issues with water retention along the canal. Due to this progress this risk was de-escalated from the Corporate Risk Register but will continue to be monitored by the service area.

NCC and Natural Resources Wales work in partnership with individuals and organisations to identify a number of green infrastructure (GI) interventions and nature-based solutions for the heart of the City during 2022. This resulted in a Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study that will inform green interventions in the city centre in the future. Some GI projects developed in the city centre during 22/23 include new raingardens along the riverfront and the new Devon Place Footbridge.

Strategic Priority 5

The Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of the local highway network for the city (not including motorways and major trunk roads). As with all other local authorities in Wales and England, the condition of the city's highways assets has continued to decline with highway investment failing to maintain "steady state" as a minimum asset condition, which is monitored via targeted performance indicators and the corporate risk register. The council continues to manage the highway assets in accordance with the Highway Asset Management Plan 2019-2023 which, as a quinquennial plan, is currently under review. In 2022/23, there were improvements to the A467 at Rogerstone that provided sections of new vehicle restraint (crash barrier) together with significant carriageway and drainage improvements under WG Resilient Roads funding. This was targeted at road safety and climate change sustainability as a result of the sites history of surface water flooding.

Newport City Council recognises it is important to work collaboratively with WG, Transport for Wales and CCR to attract significant investment to improve the local highway network. Over the last year, the Council's Infrastructure team has been collaborating with the Burns Delivery Unit to implement the recommendations from the report to improve the network across Newport and the region. The Burns Delivery Board Annual Report can be accessed [here](#). The Delivery Unit has been working on developments including improvements to Newport Central travel (Old Green roundabout), and the A48 Cardiff and Newport Active Travel and Bus Corridor. Through the Council's involvement with CCR, ongoing development is being made with the South Wales Metro across the region. There is ongoing development to increase the number of stations between Newport Cardiff and Bristol which will make it easier for residents to become less reliant on using their cars to travel across the region. Further information can be found [here](#).

Throughout 2022/23, the Council has been preparing for the Welsh Government default 20mph speed limit introduction on 17th September 2023. To implement the changes, Newport City Council has been drafting new traffic regulation orders and amending signage and lines across the city. Further information can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

The Council's Active Travel programme has continued to deliver projects that improve the way we can sustainably travel across the city. In 2022/23, four projects were completed including Sorrel Drive and, 14 Locks. The Council's Active Travel team will continue to work with Welsh Government to identify and deliver new Active Travel projects in 2023/24. Work is underway on the development of a city-wide cycle hire scheme which will include safe storage for bikes and continues to work with Newport Live in their delivery of the Welsh Government funded Behaviour Change Programme.

In support of a modal shift to sustainable travel, significant improvements have been made to the city's bus passenger shelter infrastructure with a continuation of the shelter replacement programme. This has delivered significant improvements to the asset group which has included living roof (bee friendly shelters) together with solar powered lighting and passenger information screens.

Successful school street trials were undertaken at three schools within the city in partnership with Sustrans. The three sites trialled were Malpas Church Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School and Tredegar Park Primary School. Their locations facilitated the closing of their roads without impacting on through traffic and had well documented issues with school gate congestion. Further roll out of school street trials are planned for 2023/24.

Active Travel Programme - Newport Station Active Travel Bridge

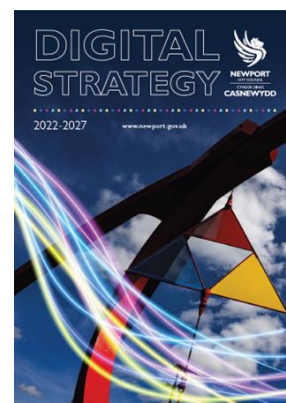
At the end of the financial year Newport Station Active Travel Bridge was officially opened connecting Devon Place to the city centre. The bridge, funded by Welsh Government, was completed in collaboration with Network Rail, Arup, Grimshaw and Corderoy, which provided many challenges to build the footbridge over a busy station with the requirement to ensure the safe running of the railway. The footbridge replaced the old subway providing residents and visitors a safer, more accessible route across the railway line. The new footbridge also provides access for wheelchair users, cyclists and walkers. This is one of many successful Active Travel projects delivered by the Council and further information can be found through the Council's website [here](#).



The council has available data from both the 2021 and 2022 [Air Quality Progress Reports](#). These reports provide information for air quality data captured in those years. In summary, and for both years, monitoring demonstrates the annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide is below the air quality objective of 40 µg/m³ in all Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). Whilst the nitrogen dioxide reductions for 2020 were celebrated with a note of caution, due to much-reduced travel due to pandemic travel restrictions, the reductions for 2021 support the view that the air quality is moving towards sustainable compliance. This can be attributed to the ever-increasing use of electric vehicles (EV) across the city, increases of EV vehicles in Council and other fleets such as Newport Transport, and other measures to encourage reduced use of vehicles in the city and cleaner air. To illustrate the progress; in 2018, of the 82 monitoring stations, 26 showed an annual reading in excess of 34 µg/m³, in 2021 this reduced to 5 stations and in 2022 this reduced further to 2 stations.

Strategic Priority 6

Newport's digital infrastructure is vital to enable residents, businesses and visitors being able to access services online, engage in digital transactions and connect through the global markets. As highlighted in Well-being objective 1 it is important that Newport has a digital infrastructure which enables high-tech companies such as KLA to locate in Newport as well enabling home grown, innovative and creative industries such as the film / tv industries to locate in Newport. To support the Corporate Plan, in March 2023, Newport Council launched its new [Digital Strategy](#) which has identified as one of its themes 'Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity'. The Strategy outlines the collaborative work which we will do to support invest in new technology to improve networks ensuring residents and businesses have access to fast and reliable digital services.



In 2022/23, the Council went out to tender for a supplier to deliver the Welsh Government's Local Broadband Fund (LBF). The Outcomes of the LBF will improve the full fibre connectivity and provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed residential care homes. Delivery of the project will complete in 2023/24. The Further information on the Council's digital transformation is reported in Well-being Objective 4.

Strategic Priority 7

Newport Council is required to protect the environment and ensure services delivered by businesses meet the necessary regulatory requirements such as health & safety and public protection. The Council's Public Protection team have continued to support businesses to comply with regulations and where non-compliance has been identified, taken action. In 2022/23 the Council's enforcement team:

- **Illegal Tobacco** – 8 premises received 3 month closure orders and seized over 300k of counterfeit cigarettes and 64,51 kilos of tobacco. Four businesses prosecuted and over £100k frozen assets.
- **Illegal vaping devices** – 1,930 illegal vapes seized from 10 shops and 1 shop owner prosecuted.
- **Age restricted sales** – 21% of 103 businesses tested sold age restricted items to underage children.
- **Food ingredients** – 40% of 449 food standard inspections failed allergen labelling requirements with 4 prosecutions for unsafe food.
- **Counterfeit goods** – 14 investigations undertaken with one investigation resulting in £140k confiscation order and another investigation with a £4k fine.

In October 2022, Newport Dogs Home won gold in two categories at the RSPCA Cymru Pawprints Awards for their work with stray dogs and kennel service. Newport Dogs Home takes in stray dogs found by residents or the council's dog wardens. The Dogs Home also provides a Re-homing service and offer opportunities for people to become a dog fosterer.

Well-being Objective 2 – Performance Measures

Performance measures used to monitor service area and the Council's contribution towards the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objective.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Percentage of principal A roads that are in overall poor condition	4.8%	2.3%	Not Available	2.1%	2.3%	The condition of the city's highway assets is declining, with asset condition continuing to deteriorate year on year. This is also reflected in the Council's Corporate Risk Register.
Percentage of principal B roads that are in overall poor condition	4.5%	3.5%	Not Available	3.1%	4.4%	
(NEW) Number of play areas replaced or improved annually	4	10	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	There have been improvements to the play areas planned work with a new heavy focus on engagement with residents. Significant work to develop and implement the engagement plan and complete preparatory work was carried out in 22/23, with a number of interventions being progressed. While overall number of interventions may be below target, the wider improvement programme is on track and results will be visible from 23/24
Percentage of significant Regulatory issues resolved	91%	95%	Local Measure	79.3%	78.3%	This is good performance given that 22/23 was a year of recovery from the impact of the pandemic, some staff were still focussed on the Covid response until August, standards in businesses have been more challenging to deal with due to reduced regulation during the pandemic, and certain teams have carried vacancies through much of the financial year.
(NEW) Number of Pocket parks/ rain gardens created or improved.	3	4	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	This indicator is close to the target, majority of the work carried out in 22/23 will lead to completion of another rain garden in early 23/24.
(NEW) Value of the impact service actions have on returning and protecting funds to residents	£257k	£300k	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	This new indicator aims to provide, for the first time, a monetary reference to the work carried out to protect residents. The service area aimed for an ambitious target as a starting point, so an overall result only 15% short of the target is a positive outcome.
Number of Active Travel (AT) Journeys	360,057	400,000	Local Measure	393,952	280,145	The decrease was due to Malpas-Bettws Canal towpath resurfacing where the AT counter was removed for 7-8 months. Corporation Rd AT counter had defects for part of the year. Pandemic recovery led to an overall drop in AT journeys.

*Welsh Average Data provided if available on Data Cymru Benchmarking or Stats Wales website.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Percentage of all planning appeals dismissed.	71.43% (30 / 42)	77%	Not Available	76.9%	74.1%	We aim to make good quality decisions and have set a target above the Welsh Government target of 66%. Planning is often subjective in respect of matters such as design and Planning Committee are entitled to make decisions against officer recommendation.
Percentage of Bi-monthly cleanliness inspections of highways and relevant land	99.6%	97%	Not Available	98.7%	99.2%	Improved standard ahead of target.
Percentage of Municipal waste re-used, recycled or composted.	65.2% (45,485 T / 69,793 T)	64%	65.2% (21/22)	67.1%	67.2%	This figure is provisional (subject to WG validation). Sustained performance levels for 22/23.
Kilograms of residual waste generated per person	152.25 kg / person	155 kg/person	Not Available	155.54 kg/person	153.24 kg/person	Improved performance compared to previous year and ahead of target.
Percentage of municipal waste recycled at the HWRC	84%	70%	Local Measure	82.4%	93.7%	Improved performance compared to previous year and ahead of target.
Average number of days taken to clear fly tipping incidents.	1.4 days (1,654 days / 2,219 days)	1.5 days	Not Available	1.23 days	1.53 days	Sustained performance levels over time, and under target limit.
Number of events held on a range of countryside biodiversity and recycling related matters.	96	45	Local Measure	102	0	Events delivered in line with previous year's figures and well ahead of target.
Percentage of all planning applications determined in time.	66.5% (658 / 989)	65%	Not Available	62.4%	67.1%	Performance is improving steadily as the year has progressed despite recruitment issues. Team continues to reduce the backlog of applications created during the prolonged covid period.
(New) Number of programmed highway safety inspections completed on time	100%	90%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	To ensure the asset condition, maintenance requirement and its associated risk to the highway user is understood, the service area undertakes programmed inspections of the highway in accordance with the councils Highway Maintenance Manual.
Percentage of principal C roads that are in overall poor condition	7.4%	8.8%	Not Available	5.9%	6.4%	The condition of the city's highway assets is declining, with asset condition continuing to deteriorate year on year. This is also reflected in the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Number of reactive highway safety inspections completed on time	100%	90%	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	To ensure the asset condition, maintenance requirement and its associated risk to the highway user is understood, the service area undertakes reactive inspections of the highway in response to stakeholder notifications in accordance with the councils Highway Maintenance Manual.
(New) Category 1 Defects completed within response time	100%	90%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Defects repaired within 24hrs in accordance with the councils Highway Asset Management Plan.
(New) Category 2 Defects completed within response time	89.1%	85%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Defects repaired within 5 days in accordance with the councils Highway Asset Management Plan.
(New) Metres (M) of new or improved Active Travel Routes completed	3,710m	500m	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Newport Station Active Travel Bridge, Sorrel Drive and Fourteen Locks.
(NEW) Percentage of businesses that were either compliant or brought into compliance during the period	97%	97%	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	First year this performance indicator is in use and delivered on target which is an excellent result.
(New) Number of new affordable housing units granted planning permission during the year.	94 units	No Target (Baseline Year)	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	A new performance indicator. Note this figure does not include Reserved Matters applications where the % of units to be affordable was secured at outline stage.
Percentage of Food establishments broadly compliant with food hygiene standards	95%	95%	96.4% (19/20)	95.5%	96.6%	Excellent result and target met, considering this was a post-covid recovery year.
(NEW) Value of the impact service actions have on regulatory criminality	£1,748m	£1.5m	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	New indicator that shows financial impact on public protection interventions, with very positive results.
(NEW) Total Council Carbon Emissions (Tonnes of CO2 equivalent)	61,246 CO2e	74,900	Not Available	78,900	89,942	Sustained reduction in carbon emissions over time, in line with climate change plan.

*Welsh Average Data provided if available on Data Cymru Benchmarking or Stats Wales website.

Well-being Objective 2 – 23/24 Key Deliverables

Below is a summary of some of the key priorities and deliverables Newport City Council will be delivering / progressing in 2023/24:

- Continuing delivery of the Council's Climate Change Plan and Local Area Energy Plan
- Implementation of the 20mph default speed limit.
- Continuing the roll out of the 3 weekly bin collection.
- Delivery of the Active Travel programme and Safe Routes in Communities.
- First year of delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy
- Delivery of new and refurbished parks, play areas and open spaces across Newport.
- Continuing delivery of affordable and sustainable housing units in Newport.

Well-being Objective 3 – Quality Social Care and Community Services

Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.

No	Strategic Priority	RAG Assessment
Well-being Objective 3 Overall Assessment		
1	Create sustainable adult, children’s and prevention services through a co-production model with providers, service users, and carers to meet our statutory duties, future demands, and eliminate profit from children’s social care.	
2	Safeguarding our children, young people, vulnerable adults and families so that future generations can maximise their potential and have control over their lives.	
3	We will support individuals and carers to maintain their independence and support them when they need help by providing equitable access to early intervention and prevention support.	
4	Strengthening our investment in early intervention and prevention with a range of youth, play and community based activities supporting families and individuals to live positive and healthy lives.	
5	Reduce the number of people that are and/or at risk of becoming homeless through the provision of a holistic housing and preventative multi-agency support services.	
6	Newport will be a City of Sanctuary which supports Asylum Seekers, refugees and our global community to settle and become part of our community.	
7	Promote positive community inclusion and culture by engaging with key stakeholders and communities to address issues of anti-social behaviour and crime.	

Summary of Achievements and Challenges in 2022/23

Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Services recognised for Bronze Quality Mark. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing and Homelessness demands on the Council and impact on other front line services such as Social Services and Education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting the demand to support Ukrainian refugees in Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate Programme and remove profit from the care of children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing Cost of Living Delivery group collaborating with health, GAVO, charities and other not for profit organisations providing advice and support such as ‘Warm Spaces’ during winter period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stability of social care providers and provision of residential / domiciliary care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and approval of the Pillgwenlly Master Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressures on Adult and Children services to meet demand.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of the Council’s Flying Start offer to residents in Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Safeguarding training provided to Members and staff through the roll out of the National Safeguarding training standards and ensure compliance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention & Inclusion grant funding from Welsh Government.

The progress towards delivering some of the Council’s strategic priorities in social services, housing and homelessness have been impacted by the need to manage winter pressures across health and social care, the cost of living crisis such as households struggling to meet increases in their mortgage and rental costs, increase cost of food and energy prices. Pressures across the Council’s Social Services, Housing & Communities service also have an impact on the Council’s financial revenue position as we meet our statutory duties to manage increases in demand, and inflationary cost pressures. These are reflected in some of our performance measures where the resilience to meet these demands is challenging.

In response, the Council has established a new service area (Preventions and Inclusions), and commenced several projects / initiatives to find long term solutions and improve our performance and to have more resilient services to meet demand.

Strategic Priority 1

Newport City Council is responsible for delivering Adult, Children and Preventative services for residents across Newport. The Council's Director of Social Services produces an annual report which self-reflects on the achievements, and challenges Social Services have faced and looking forward on their priorities for 2023/24. The full report can be found through the link [here](#).

As with many services across the Council, Adults, Childrens and Preventative services collaborate with third sector, private and charity organisations to deliver the range of statutory and non-statutory services. It is also important that the voices of individuals, families, and carers are also considered in the delivery our services. As highlighted above, the Council has experienced increasing demand to meet the needs of people with long term and complex care and support needs. Within Adult Services, there has been continuing review of the Adult Services structure and the provision of residential and domiciliary care services which is covered further in Strategic Priority 3 below.

Reablement Service, Adult Services

Newport Reablement Care Team are based within the Newport Integrated Frailty service. The Team provides short term Reablement Care for any adult living in Newport. The aim is to support people to be as independent as possible following a stay in hospital or to prevent people being admitted to hospital.

During the past twelve months the Reablement Care team support staff have continued to visit people in their own home after they have been discharged from hospital or become unwell at home and required some support. Initially when someone commences support with the team, they may feel very vulnerable and have experienced a loss of confidence. The team have a close, professional working relationship working with Frailty falls service, rapid nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, mental health nurses, district nurses as well as social workers, NHS staff and GPs.

At the end of the reablement care support some people are assessed as requiring a more long-term care package and a social worker will complete an assessment of needs to put this in place.

During the past six months 60% of people the care team have supported through reablement were discharged from the service as being independent. We regularly receive compliments from people, or their relatives and they often individually name staff.

Within Children services co-production in the context of complex family situation is often challenging but the Council's role is to navigate those complexities with the needs of all in mind but the needs of those requiring care support to the fore. One of the biggest challenges and risks the Council faces is the requirement for all Council's to implement the WG policy to eliminate profit from the care of children looked after (fostering and residential placements) by 2027. Prior to this Newport Council has already taken steps to increase the number of children residential settings through the development of Windmill Farm and Rose Cottage. In response Newport Council is leading in collaboration with the other Gwent local authorities a programme to develop more homes and placements through its own service and social enterprises. However, the Council has experienced challenges over the last year, as existing private sector providers are starting to leave the market and reducing the supply of providers and placing the Council at risk of non-compliance with the Social Services Well-being act. The Council is working closely with Care Inspectorate Wales, WG and other local authorities to prevent this risk.

Strategic Priority 2

The Council's Social Services presented its annual [Safeguarding Report 2022/23](#) to the Council's Cabinet in June 2023. The report highlighted and demonstrated how the Council is meeting its safeguarding requirements and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. However, the report highlighted some challenges in ensuring Members and officers had completed required safeguarding training, but also how this has been addressed.

As identified in the Annual Governance Statement and Internal Audit reports (reported to Governance & Audit Committee), weaknesses were identified in Children Services relating to the financial management of Adoption Allowances and Safeguarding of Children's money (Related to Junior Savings Accounts and Child Trust Funds). Improvements are being made with the internal controls and processes in Children Services and further updates will be provided in 2023/24.

In 2022/23, the Council saw increasing numbers of safeguarding referrals to both Children and Adult Services. Within Children Services we received over 11,000 contacts (majority from Police, Health and Education) relating to children at risk of harm and abuse. In Adult Services, 246 investigations were completed (up from 140 in 21/22) of which 92 resulted in criminal investigations. All referrals / contacts are managed within a clear framework of understanding risk with a need to balance personal determination and recognising risk is rarely a straightforward binary position.

Safeguarding Hub

The Safeguarding HUB is the first point of contact for the public and professionals who are making referrals with concerns for children who are at risk of significant harm or have care and support needs. The team processes a variety of enquiries ranging from requests for information and services through to concerns about the welfare or safety of a young person between the ages of 0 – 18 years.

The HUB is responsible for making initial decisions about what should be done in regard to referrals to Social Services. The Hub is extremely busy and processes more than 1,000 referrals a month, ranging from care and support needs to high end child protection concerns. The HUB is multi-disciplinary and has close working relationships with partner agencies including, Youth Justice Service, Early intervention and Prevention, Adult Safeguarding, Police, Education, health and IDVA's. Having multi agency partners all sat together in one room is invaluable in ensuring that families get the right support at the right time. As we know safeguarding is everyone's business and not just social services.

There are several positive success stories for the hub, where working together has supported families to feel empowered and included in the assessment process. The Hub staff work tirelessly to ensure that families are supported, and children remain safe. They work in a strengths-based way, whilst considering the families personal outcomes to exact and maintain change.

Strategic Priority 3

Independent living is important for people to remain living at home and within their communities. One of the biggest challenges is to support people transitioning from hospital care either back into their homes or into a suitable residential setting. The Council has been collaborating closely with Aneurin Bevan University Hospital (ABUHB) to improve this process for individuals, but the last year has seen the Council needing to review the pathways available and what the Council can deliver and where we need to look at other social enterprises / organisations to support.

In collaboration between Adult Services and Digital Services, the Council launched its SMART home pilot project in Newport Market. The purpose of this is to demonstrate the assistive technologies and to support residents with independent living. The service provides individuals and families information about how different technology can help people with complex needs such as Alzheimer's, and support with implementing the technology into their homes.



A significant pressure for the Council has been the provision of domiciliary care provision where external providers have been unable to offer the support needed for people to live independently at home. At its worse the Council saw up to 1,200 hours not commissioned for one week. In response and self-reflecting the Council worked closely with service providers, individuals and their families and with other teams to reduce this to less than 10 hours waiting to be commissioned. However, the pressures are likely to remain for the foreseeable future as inflationary pressures, workforce retention and demands on the service remain.

Strategic Priority 4

Early prevention and intervention work with families and communities are vital to prevent long-term impacts on other services delivered by the Council and other public sector organisations. Majority of the Council's work is delivered through WG grants, programmes and initiatives such as Flying Start. In 2022/23 the Prevention & Inclusion team successfully brought together a range of services such as Adaptations, Substance Misuse, Youth and Play services, Flying Start and Families First.

The service area, which is predominately grant funded, is committed to ensuring service provision is meeting the needs of Newport residents and is making a difference to their lives on the issues that matter to them. However, the financial position will be challenging in 23/24 as future grant funding is reviewed by WG. From 2023/24, Community Connectors Carers Officer and the Community Development team will have joined the service area from Adult services to continue front-line and work and support to vulnerable residents.

In 2022/23 the service has been working with partner organisations recommissioning key services in substance misuse and Families First programme. The service area also remodelled its Play services and improved its Youth service offer which was recognised with the Bronze Quality Mark for Youth Services. The service area also delivered the phased expansion of its Flying Start offer across Newport to a further nine areas, and procurement of an additional 5 childcare providers (2 of which are Welsh medium) and integrating its services more closely with health, Adults, Children and Education services to improve early intervention pathways. There are many emerging opportunities and challenges which the service is facing including the ongoing financial pressures of the grant funding to meet rising costs and are collaborating with the Asset Rationalisation programme to examine how communities are using Council buildings and services and improving the performance measures used to demonstrate the delivery of the Prevention and Inclusion services.

The cost of living crisis, pressures in the housing market, legislation and welfare benefit changes has had significant impact on households across Newport with people experiencing increases in their energy, food, rent and mortgage costs. Throughout 2022/23 monthly updates were reported to the Council's Cabinet on the impact of cost of living and the Council's response. The Prevention & Inclusion service established a multi-agency 'Cost of Living Delivery group' collaborating with a broad range of Council, health, third sector partners to deliver initiatives and support people struggling with the cost of living. This ranged from providing grant funding and support to food banks / organisations, delivering 'Cost of Living' events providing energy, debt, housing and employment / training advice and the provision of "warm spaces". Using funding from Welsh Government and in collaboration with GAVO, we supported 6,466 people across 498 sessions with "Warm Spaces".

Strategic Priority 5

Housing and homelessness in Newport is a significant pressure for the Council and the Registered Social Landlords. In 2022/23 the Council saw increase of 115% of people approaching the Council, with 450 people placed in temporary accommodation, an average of 28 people sleeping rough at any one time, and around 10,000 registered on the Common Housing Register. Newport has also reported the highest numbers of rough sleepers in Wales with an average of 28 people sleeping rough at any one time. All of this is impacting the Council's ability to meet this demand and increasing the waiting times for assessment. The Council's performance in this area is therefore challenging as a result of these pressures.

In response, the Council's Housing & Communities team has established a major programme of work which includes reviewing the structure of the service, improving systems and processes to improve the efficiency to support and signpost people to appropriate services and working with RSLs to increase the number of affordable and sustainable housing across Newport. Already, in 2022/23, the Council was able to distribute £24.9m of Social Housing Grant to RSLs to deliver affordable housing which will provide an additional 396 units of accommodation across the next 5 years. In June 2023, Newport welcomed Prince William to the city, where it was announced that the city will be one of six areas in the UK to launch his [Homewards](#) programme to end homelessness. Further progress on how the Council will be supporting this work will be reported in 2023/24.

Strategic Priority 6

As a Home Office Dispersal area, Newport City Council has a legal requirement to support Asylum Seekers and refugees. Newport City Council and our partners recognise the additional pressures which this has on existing services but we also understand that we have a duty of care and safeguarding duties to ensure vulnerable people, especially children are supported and not put at risk of exploitation, and criminal activity. In 2022/23, Newport City Council's Children Services has been leading and sharing best practice on a regional collaboration between Gwent local authorities to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and families seeking refuge. To meet the demands on the Council, we have expanded the capacity of the team to employ an additional support worker, senior practitioner and an immigration specialist advisory post. Additionally, the team has also funded a third sector partner to provide support work capacity for the Council and improving sharing of information across the Council's services to provide holistic support.

The Ukrainian conflict has continued to cause disruption for many Ukrainian families who have been unable to return home. Since the UK and Welsh Government's commitments to support the Ukrainian conflict and refugees, At the end of March 2023 Newport had 118 people living with 56 sponsors in Newport and 40 households living in one Newport hotel, 3 households living in Housing Justice Cymru interim accommodation and a further 12 householders living in a hotel under the Welsh Government Super Sponsor scheme. Across Newport's schools we had 50 Ukrainian learners. Newport Council is working closely with the Welsh Government, the third sector and charities to ensure that we are able to find longer term secure accommodation for those that are living in the hotels.

Strategic Priority 7

Throughout 2022/23, the Council has led as part of the One Newport Partnership the development of the Pillgwenlly Master Plan which was reported to the Council's Cabinet in [May 2023](#). Collaborating with partner organisations and involving local residents, community leads and local businesses, the Council developed the Master Plan as the key, strategic driver to improve the Pillgwenlly. The Master Plan sets out 5 key work areas:

1. Improving communication
2. Fly-tipping and refuse collection
3. Housing quality and management
4. Local businesses and community support
5. Physical environment and green spaces.

The Master Plan also set out improvements to the Safer Pill group jointly chaired by Gwent Police and the Council. As part of the plan the group will be focusing on the Exploitation of vulnerable people, drug supply, women and children and communications and community engagement. Finally, the Master Plan has also set out 3 Community Ambitions to improve green and public areas, better business and shopping offer and environment and mix of community and youth facilities. In 2023/24 the partnership will be implementing the proposals and developing feasibility and costings to support the projects and initiatives.

Newport City Council is a lead partner in the 'Safer Newport' Community Safety partnership which is engaged with preventing and challenging antisocial behaviour, Serious violence and local neighbourhood issues. The partnership includes other partner organisations such as Gwent Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, ABUHB, Public Health Wales and Gwent Probation Service. Full information on the Safer Newport activities are outlined in the report presented to the [Partnership Scrutiny Committee in March 2023](#). Some of the activities highlighted by partnership include:

- Community Action Days, assist days and neighbourhood walkabouts with a focus on tackling ASB.
- School, and community engagement and direct prevention work with families and young people around organised crime.
- Retention of the Purple flag award for the night-time economy in Newport.
- Working in partnership with Newport BID and Gwent Police to appoint 2 Community Safety Guardians in the city centre. Since July 2022, the service responded to 1,052 incidents relating to ASB, violence and support to women and girls.

Well-being Objective 3 – Performance Measures

Performance measures used to monitor service area and the Council's contribution towards the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objective.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Percentage of newly eligible children requesting childcare in Welsh medium (Flying Start)	0.8% (3 / 364)	2%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	This area of work is linked to the Flying Start expansion programme and NCC's commitment to Welsh Governments' Welsh in Education Strategic Policy (WESP) to increase Welsh speakers by 2050. WG aspiration is for 1 million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. This WESP has a set target of 4%, however this needs to be an aspirational target whilst we develop more Welsh Medium provision across the city. The Welsh Medium infrastructure is currently being developed. Ivor Hael Early Years provision is complete and waiting for CIW registration. Pill Capel Crescent Welsh Medium Early Years provision is now complete. The procurement process recently undertaken has successfully secured a Welsh medium provider who will offer Flying Start provision and broader Early Years provision strategically placed to support transition into the new primary school. Ringland Early Years provision has also expanded and has now become an Education provider supporting transition from Flying Start. Work force challenges are significant within Early Years. Recruitment into Welsh speaking practitioner posts are challenging.
Percentage of people seeking housing assistance who are determined as statutorily homeless.	15.1% (341/2,261)	30%	Not Available	17.6%	21.6%	As the Housing Transformation Plan is delivered, we expect the total number decrease in direct correlation to homelessness prevention and relief outcomes increasing.
The percentage of empty private properties brought back into use.	0.4% (4 / 993)	1.52%	Not Available	2.02%	0.9%	Empty properties are a complex issue with barriers including emotional attachment to properties, legal issues. A revised offer to property owners will be developed and publicised during the first two quarters. This will be combined with a reviewed and robust approach to enforcement.

*Welsh Average Data provided if available on Data Cymru Benchmarking website.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
The percentage of households for whom homelessness was prevented.	33.6% (181 / 539 cases)	50%	66.8% (21/22)	40.1%	43.5%	Performance for 22/23 has been challenging but since the homelessness prevention team was created in quarter 3 there has been a consistent improvement (quarter 4 performance was just under 40%), this improved performance is anticipated to continue. Increasing homelessness prevention performance is a key priority of the housing transformation work. Further interventions will be put into place over 23/24 including the establishment of a housing advice and homelessness prevention task force which will ensure effective interagency messaging and joint work.
(New) Households in temporary accommodation under homelessness duties.	443	360	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	This figure represents a snapshot at the end of quarter 4. There has been an overall increase of 31% of households in temporary accommodation over the year compared to end of 2021/22. Almost 60% of people living in TA are single adults to whom the council owes a statutory duty following changes to homelessness legislation. Reducing the number of people living in TA is a key priority for the council. A such a fortnightly Temporary Accommodation reduction group has been established and various measures are in place or will be rolled out across the course of 23/24.
(New) Number of private sector dwellings improved with local authority grants or loans.	2	5	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Several applications could not be progressed as they posed too great a financial risk under the terms of the loans. A revised offer to private sector owners will be agreed and publicised in 23/24 alongside a revised and robust approach to enforcement.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Percentage of households for whom homelessness was relieved.	32.4% (381 / 1,175)	35%	34.1% (21/22)	19%	18.3%	Performance has improved over the course of the year and reached 37.27% by the end of quarter 4. Initiatives which are being currently developed, including Leasing Scheme Wales, a revised offer to private landlords and partnership work with RSLs will sustain and build on this improvement.
Percentage of significant Regulatory issues resolved	91%	95%	Local Measure	79.3%	78.3%	This is good performance given that 22/23 was a year of recovery from the impact of the Covid pandemic, some staff were still focussed on the Covid response until August, standards in businesses have been more challenging to deal with due to reduced regulation during the pandemic, and certain teams have carried vacancies through much of the financial year.
Total Number of first Time Entrants (Youth Justice Service)	23	20	Local Measure	13	38	Less is better as we would want to see a reduction in first time entrants' and have diverted them to other services or earlier engagement and prevention
(New) Number and percentage of participants with improved emotional/mental wellbeing.	92% (315 / 343)	100%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Preventions, Mind and Newport Live are the commissioned services that deliver this outcome within Families First. Emotional/mental wellbeing is not the primary aim of all families that Preventions works with, therefore it is not possible to reach the target of 100% as the total number of cases (343) includes other primary needs.
(New) Number of children and young people achieving national and local accreditation with Youth Service.	128	150	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Work is ongoing to increase the number of young people achieving national and local accreditation through Aspire and the Youth service.
(New) Number of childcare spaces (Flying Start): • Medium of Welsh • Medium of English	Welsh – 24 English – 602 Total – 626	Welsh 28 English 662 Total - 690	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Flying Start has completed a procurement process to secure additional Welsh medium provision, which will increase the number of children engaging through the medium of Welsh in future once formal agreements are in place.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Quality of life for substance users is improved or unchanged between start and most recent review /exit.	74%	82%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	This KPI is mandate for all substance misuse services in receipt of Area Planning Board funding. This is information direct from the WG database and is the official source of validated data for treatment service providers and APBs to monitor and report performance against. Substance misuse treatment is a complex physical and emotional process for individuals and the Treatment Outcome Profile is reviewed once every 3 months and therefore is a snapshot at that moment where they could be dealing with a variety of issues and not necessarily representative of the full 3-month process. Newport reports a higher level of QoL than some other areas of Gwent.
(New) Percentage of participants whose financial situation has stabilised or improved.	48.1% (165 / 343)	40%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	This figure is made up of support offered as part of the Families First contract provided by Preventions (internal NCC service) and Citizens Advice Bureau, case studies are also available. As above the number of total cases will include all families, not only those whose primary aim was to improve their financial situation.
(New) Number of Disabled Facility Grants completed yearly	105	90	Not Available	78	86	The performance of the team has improved and demonstrates ongoing continuous improvement.
(New) Number of Youth Service Projects delivered.	6	6	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	The number of youth service provisions has successfully grown over the course of the year following a restructure, with the aim to establish a city wide offer in due course.
(New) Attendance figures at childcare provisions (Flying Start).	64.6%	60%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	The Flying Start programme continues to expand and engagement with eligible residents has improved. This means more parents are taking up available childcare spaces.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Percentage of places taken up in parenting groups resulting in positive distance travelled.	73.9%	60%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	The remodelling of our parenting groups has been successful with a greater integrated approach across P&I. Utilising the skill set of practitioners and in response to increasing demand for support the parenting group offer and engagement has increased.
(New) Number of places taken up on community speech and language group provision.	519	200	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	Speech and Language support is an intrinsic part of the Flying Start offer with specialist practitioners available to enhance this offer amongst teams. The growth in parents taking up childcare offers will see more children engaged with speech and language groups.
(New) Percentage of individuals who engage with substance misuse services between assessment and planned ending of treatment.	83.7%	75%	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	There is a myriad of support services in place for those using substances and wish to make changes to this. The services are robust in engagement and working with individuals' motivation for behaviour change.
(New) Number of Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) contacts made with children and young people.	506	No Target	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	As the Youth Service continues to have a greater presence within communities and alongside key partners, the opportunities to engage with more children and young people will arise.
(New) % of cases open to the YJS on a prevention basis	67.2% (225 / 335)	80%	Local Measure	66.4%	46.3%	More is better as we would want to see higher levels of cases receiving preventative services.
(New) % of cases open to the YJS on an out of court disposals	23.3% (78 / 335)	80%	Local Measure	24.1%	38.3%	Whilst we would want to see a reduction in out of court disposals, on the whole, this is a preferred option instead of a statutory order. Target will be reviewed as part of the service area 23/24 review.
(New) % of cases open to the YJS on a statutory order	8.7% (29 / 335)	38%	Local Measure	8.8%	15.1%	Less is better as we would want to reduce the amount of statutory orders cases. Target will be reviewed as part of the service area 23/24 review.
(New) % of cases on remand	0.9% (3 / 335)	1%	Local Measure	0.7%	0.4%	Less is better as we would want to have no remands cases where possible Target will be reviewed as part of the service area 23/24 review.
(New) % of cases re-offending (re-offending rates)	3.6% (12 / 335)	25%	Local Measure	8.9%	19.3%	Less is better as we would want to see numbers of re-offending cases to be as low as possible Target will be reviewed as part of the service area 23/24 review.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) % of cases open to the service with Criminal Exploitation (CE) /Criminal Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	14.6% (49 / 335)	Baseline Year	Local Measure	29.5%	27%	Less is better as we would want to see a reduction in CE or CSE cases. Target will be set for 2023/24.
Percentage of ASB incidents resolved by wardens	97.3%	93%	Local Measure	95%	92.3%	The service has improved performance and team continues to improve.
Number of people approaching authority for statutory housing advice and assistance.	2,261	2,000	Local Measure	1,830	1,778	The service is demand-led. There has been an increase in the numbers of households requesting assistance and due to changes to statutory 'priority need' categories and other external factors such as the impact of changes to landlord and tenant legislation and the cost-of-living crisis.
Number of employees trained in Prevent PVE.	527	145	Local Measure	136	145	A concerted effort to train staff in schools means that the service performed very well in this metric.
Percentage Quality Indicators (with targets) achieved by the library service.	60%	60%	Not Available	60%	70.3%	The number of Quality Indicators with targets in the WPLS return for 2022-23 was reduced from 22 to 6. As a greater number of the QIs retained were based directly upon revenue spend, the service met a lower overall percentage.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual
National (AD/002) – The number of contacts received by Adult Services where advice and assistance was provided during the year.	1,571	No Target	Not Available	1,725	1,718
National (AD/004) – The number of new assessments completed for adults during the year.	1,306	No Target	Not Available	1,444	1,538
National (AD/010) – The total number of packages of reablement completed during the year	439	No Target	Not Available	601	583
National (AD/011a) – The number packages of reablement completed during the year that reduced the need for support	32	No Target	Not Available	24	43
National (AD/011b) – The number of packages of reablement completed during the year that maintained the need for the same level of support.	64	No Target	Not Available	62	95
National (AD/011c) – The number of packages of reablement completed during the year that mitigated the need for support	314	No Target	Not Available	484	409
National (AD/011d) – The number of packages of reablement completed during the year that increased the need for support	29	No Target	Not Available	31	43
National (AD/012) – The number of adults with a care and support plan as at 31 st March.	2,249	No Target	Not Available	1,940	1,861
National (AD/013) – The total number of adults with eligible needs for care and support maintained by Direct Payments at 31 st March	101	No Target	Not Available	94	93
National (AD/023) – The total number of reports of adults suspected of being at risk where it is necessary for enquiries to be made.	730	No Target	Not Available	783	648
National (AD/024) - No. of Adult Protection Enquiries Completed Within Timescale	671	No Target	Not Available	745	Not Available
National (AD/020) - The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year.	957	No Target	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
(NEW) AD/L001 - Number of Adult Professional Safeguarding Concerns raised in the year.	39	No Target	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
National CH001- The number of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year.	11,024	No Target	Not Available	11,311	10,104
National CH/005b- The number where physical punishment by a parent or carer was the only factor	119	No Target	Not Available	85	144
National CH/015- The total number of children with a care and support plan at 31 st March	978	No Target	Not Available	945	978

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual
National CH/026- The total number of children on the child protection register at 31 st March.	135	No Target	Not Available	127	158
National CH/033- The total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year	141	No Target	Not Available	122	62
National CH/036- The total number of children removed (de-registered) from the child protection register in the last 12 months	201	No Target	Not Available	207	148
National CH/037- The number of children becoming looked after during the year.	122	No Target	Not Available	166	91
National CH/039 - The number of children looked after at 31 st March.	376	No Target	Not Available	372	378
Local CH/L002- The number of children who ceased being looked after during the year.	113	No Target	Not Available	120	92
National CH/043- The total number of children looked after at 31 st March who have experienced three or more placements during the year.	34	No Target	Not Available	50	26
National CH/045 - The total number of children who returned home during the year	49	No Target	Not Available	33	36
National CA/011 - The total number of contacts to statutory social services by young carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year. Provided by Barnardos	111	No Target	Not Available	127	74
National CH/L004 – Number of Childrens Residential Fostering Beds	24	No Target	Not Available	22	20
National CH/L005 – Number of Children in care proceedings during the year	73	No Target	Not Available	56	44

Well-being Objective 3 – 23/24 Key Deliverables

Below is a summary of some of the key priorities and deliverables Newport City Council will be delivering / progressing in 2023/24:

- Continuing delivery of the Eliminate Programme and Housing Transformation Programme
- Continuing delivery of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children programme.
- Delivery of the Strategic Needs Assessment for the Community Safety Partnership.

Well-being Objective 4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council

Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

No	Strategic Priority	RAG Assessment
Well-being Objective 4 Overall Assessment		
1	Become an inclusive organisation that represents the citizens of Newport, providing equitable opportunity for people to succeed and places the citizen at the centre of decision making.	Orange
2	Transform our neighbourhood and community services to enable communities to make best use of land and property through community asset transfer.	Green
3	Deliver our organisational Climate Change Plan to become a net zero organisation by 2030.	Orange
4	Provide fair access to the council's in-person and digital services, including digital skills training and support.	Green
5	Promote and improve the way in which residents and businesses can interact with the council's democratic process and decision making.	Green
6	Rationalise, protect, and enhance our buildings and assets enabling co-productive working environments with our strategic partners, public sector bodies and other organisations.	Green
7	Generate opportunities to build wealth across Newport's communities through progressive procurement of goods and services and other initiatives such as participatory budgeting.	Green

Summary of Achievements and Challenges in 2022/23









Key Achievements 2022/23	Key Challenges 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the Council's new Digital Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sickness and Check In performance did not achieve its intended targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commencement of the Asset Rationalisation programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress towards delivery Net zero carbon by 2030.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory budget programme supporting community and charity organisations across Newport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing meaningful public participation in the Council's decision-making processes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the Council's Participation strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing and supporting the number of staff from disabled and minority ethnic communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women occupy 69% of the upper quartile/highest paid jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of new website and review of customer contact

At the end of the financial year 2022/23, the Council has made a good start in the delivery of Well-being Objective 4. Good progress has been made to reduce the gender pay between men and women but we know more can be done to improve workforce resilience; and representation across minority ethnic, LGBTQ+ and disabled groups. There are significant challenges over the next 5 years to develop a long term sustainable estate to meet our climate change goals and the needs of Newport's communities. This is particularly challenging in the context of challenging budget settlements, and the need to transform the delivery of our services.

Strategic Priority 1

The health and well-being of staff is extremely important to the Council. The People Strategy has been pushed back to 2023/24 as we engaged and involve staff in its development. The performance measures indicate an increase in sickness and we recognise further work needs to be undertaken to embed the Wellness at Work policy and improve the check in performance across the Council. The number of women in senior officer positions and Cabinet has increased in 2022/23. But we recognise further work needs to be undertaken to increase the representation of minority ethnic, disabled and LGBTQ+ staff. Below provides further assessment across the strategic priorities in 2022/23.

Newport City Council has a [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#) which outlines the Council’s duties to comply with the Equalities Act and also support the Corporate Plan goal to become an inclusive organisation. The Plan will be developed in 23/24. The Council’s annual **Strategic Equality Plan 2022/23** report provides further detail of the Council’s progress. In 2022/23, the Council increased its representation in upper pay quartiles and senior officer roles and the gender pay gap closed. The Infographic below highlights some of the headline areas from the 2022/23 annual Strategic Equality Plan report.

			
4.9% Staff identify as Black and Minority Ethnic.	6.1% leavers Black and Minority Ethnic (increase from 4.1% in 21/22).	2.51% workforce disabled (2.52% in 2021/22)	22.5% of 151 staff left NCC declaring disability in 21/22
			
2% workforce identified as LGBTQ+ (Increase from 0.13% 21/22)	76.9% female workforce	Gender Pay Gap (Median) closed 2% (21/22) to -0.4% (22/23)	Women occupy 69% of the upper quartile / highest paid jobs.

Newport City Council is committed to advancing equity for people across all backgrounds and increasing the representation of minority ethnic people, disabled people and people who identify as LGBTQ+ to address under-representation across all levels of the organisation. The Council’s three staff networks are supporting the delivery of this change playing a pivotal role in ensuring their voices were heard, listened and influenced policy and procedure changes such as the Wellness at Work policy and employee exit process.

To deliver the priorities of the Corporate Plan it is important that we are able to provide a package which not only provides equitable financial reward but more importantly is flexible to support people in the workplace. This includes flexible working, hybrid working and also other benefits. The implementation of the People Strategy has been pushed back to 2023/24 as we engage and involve staff in its development.

Sickness absence performance has been challenging, with Covid absences now featured as part of our performance reporting. It is recognised that further work needs to be undertaken by the Council’s Human Resources team to better understand the reasons for absences and to assess the impact of the Wellness at Work approach. This is also the same with the ‘Check In’ performance for 2022/23, where significant work has been completed to understand performance levels, resulting in changes to the process and wider engagement with staff. Consequently, the last quarter saw an improvement to the check in performance which has continued into 2023/24.

Strategic Priority 2

Three of the Council’s strategic priorities in this objective relates to the long term use of the Council’s assets and to also ensure assets remain sustainable for future use by residents, businesses and staff. Newport City Council owns over 400 assets and land across Newport including schools and community centres. The Council also has a maintenance backlog circa £100m and has a commitment to ensure our assets are net zero carbon by 2030. In 2022/23, the 5 year Asset Rationalisation programme commenced and is tasked to review and rationalise the use of the Council’s estate to ensure buildings and land are effectively used by residents and staff, can meet net zero carbon goals and provide social value to the communities they serve. One of the projects in this programme is to review the use of our buildings and land to develop a new Strategic Asset Management Plan. It is important that we examine and understand how these assets are being used by staff and communities, the value and benefits which the assets provide and where we can make long term investment to meet the needs now and in the future. The Corporate Plan also outlines the priority to work with community groups and organisations who have the opportunity to own, and maintain assets for use by local communities.

Over the last five years we have seen the community groups such as Maindee Unlimited run key assets such as Maindee Library, and Maindee Triangle. But we want to ensure more groups are able to do this as well and will be looking at how we can develop the potential for more Community Asset Transfer over the next 5 years.

Strategic Priority 3

As highlighted in Well-being Objective 2, the delivery of the Climate Change Plan will provide many opportunities and challenges to become a net zero organisation by 2030. As highlighted in the Climate Change annual report, good progress has been made towards providing training and development for Members and staff to understand the impacts of climate change and what it means for the Council and city over the next 20 years. Additionally, we have continued to improve access for staff and residents to use electric vehicles, alternative transport to commute to work and also modal shift of staff being able to work flexibly from home, office and onsite using digital technology. However, we also understand that one of the biggest challenges is how assets such as the Civic Centre, schools and other buildings can become net zero carbon by 2030 considering significant costs to retrofit and improve the maintenance / insulation.

Strategic Priority 4

As noted in Well-being Objective 2, the Council launched its new [Digital Strategy](#) at the end of 2022/23 and reported its progress in its annual **Digital Report**. The Digital Strategy has several themes focused on ‘*Digital Transformation*’, ‘*Digital Skills and Inclusion*’ and ‘*Data & Collaboration*’. Digital Transformation is a key theme for the Council and using technology to improve the efficiency and delivery of council services to people and businesses. In 2022/23 the Council delivered several internal projects such Microsoft 365, replacement telephony system using Microsoft Teams Phone, Hybrid committee room and meeting rooms. We also commenced the re-development of our website. During the initial development it was identified that the Council would not be able to achieve its original deadline due to technical issues and the resources (external) needed to deliver the project. The outcome of this has been for the Council to deliver a revised project plan and to implement a new technical solution, Local Government Drupal, which is used by 37 councils at the time of this report and for a new website to be available in the first quarter in 2024/25.

As reported in the performance measures section, customer services reported good performance against its targets and has continued to see an increase in the number transactions completed using the online My Council Services app. As part of the Council’s transformation work in 2023/24, the Council will be commencing work on examining the customer experience and understanding the Council’s strengths and weaknesses towards enabling people to complete transactions online, in person and also signposting to other organisations to access the services they need. Newport Council also continued the delivery of the Welsh Government EdTech programme to support individual schools and pupils to develop their digital and learning practice. £567k was spent on improving digital access including:

- 924 digital devices including laptops, PCs, Chromebooks, iPads, Macbooks and iMacs
- 156 projectors, with 98 of these being laser projectors
- 165 digital screens
- 144 sets of speakers
- 89 webcams
- 344 class sets of headphones

Strategic Priority 5

One of the Council’s principles in the delivery of the Corporate Plan is that we will consider the views of communities, service users and partners in shaping the services we deliver and the places people live and work in Newport. Throughout this report we have highlighted where we have engaged with service users, communities and individuals in either improving the delivery of key services or developing new policies, or changing the way we deliver our services. On page xx of the we have provided an overview of all the consultations Newport Council has delivered in 2022/23, where we have engaged with businesses and with Trade Unions.

In May 2022, Newport Council agreed its new Participation Strategy to encourage local citizens to participate in the democratic process and decision making. One of the first areas of improvement has been the reintroduction of Ward meetings from 2023/24 with at least one meeting to support the budget setting process and another meeting to highlight the progress which the council is making against key objectives and projects. Additionally residents will also be provided the opportunity to set their own points of discussion and set agenda to discuss the key matters in their own community.

The Council has taken other steps to promote and improve the way in which residents and businesses can interact with the democratic process and decision making. As part of the budget consultation, rather than a simple agree/disagree response, residents were able to give their view on whether they agree with the proposal or support a smaller saving or now saving at all. Furthermore residents were able to rate the relative importance of particular savings proposals to others within the draft budget, giving them a richer opportunity to inform budget decisions. This new approach was well received by the Scrutiny committee tasked with oversight of the budget consultation.

Over the course of 2022/23 the volume of engagement work was increased as Covid restrictions were lifted. The Newport 50+ Forum was reinitiated following a period of suspension during the pandemic. Survey work undertaken using the Citizens Panel and Bus Wifi recommenced as normality returned. During the 2022 calendar year the Policy and Partnership Team ran 40 engagement exercises for the Council and its partners and received over 10,000 responses from local residents.

Every year the Council reports on its performance relating to Compliments, Comments and Complaints to the Council's Cabinet and Governance & Audit Committee. In March 2023, the Council's Cabinet approved the Compliments, Comments and Complaints policy which was updated to reflect improvements to the Council's processes and improved processes. An overview of the Council's progress against its action plan from 2021/22 is provided on page xx. And further information can be found in the 2022/23 annual report [here](#).

Strategic Priority 6

In Strategic Priority 2 we stated how the Council commenced the Asset Rationalisation programme towards the end of 2022/23 to examine the Council's estate to ensure that the Council has a sustainable and affordable estate to support the long term needs of its communities, services and staff. To deliver the programme, the Council has established an officer led programme board which will oversee the delivery of this work. The initial focus of the Board has been on building the evidence to understand how buildings and land are being used alongside our organisational needs. From 2023/24, we will start to see some outcomes from this work as various projects use this data to inform decisions on the future use of assets. This programme will be delivered over the next 5 years and future decisions on asset use will be determined by the new Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Towards the end of 2022/23, we commenced work on reviewing the Council's contract arrangements with its Property Services provider, Newport Norse. The contract will be ending in December 2025 and in preparation the Council will be exploring different options and presenting further updates on its progress in 2023/24.

Strategic Priority 7

One of the Council's strategic priorities is to build wealth across Newport's communities through progressive procurement of goods and services. In March 2023, [the Council's Cabinet](#) approved the adoption of TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) to unlock social value through its integration into procurement and project management. From 2023/24, Newport City Council will use the framework to evaluate future procurement work and to measure the Council's progress in implementing the new framework with six monthly reports presented to Cabinet and will be included this report. In 2022/23 we trialled the use of the TOMs to evaluate procurement tenders with the case study below to demonstrate how it supported a tender exercise.

Traffic Management Tender (Infrastructure)

In February 2023, the Council's Infrastructure service area retendered for traffic management to meet legislative requirements and because the Council does not have the specialist expertise to deliver the service. Companies were invited to tender for the contract and as part of the evaluation exercise had to submit evidence to support how they meet the Council's TOMs in addition to their tender quotation. The evidence submitted by the successful company demonstrated how their work contributes over £96k per annum of direct social value to Newport through local employment and contributing towards reducing carbon emissions such as using electric vehicles and latest energy saving technology with equipment.

In January 2023, Newport City Council collaborated with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and One Newport partners including Gwent Police, GAVO and Newport City Homes to deliver the fourth **Participatory Budget** programme with £300k available to strengthen volunteering and the third sector in Newport. The core aims of this year's programme was informed by the Council's Corporate Plan building safer, stronger and more resilient communities; improving people's health, well-being and independence; reducing inequalities, tackling disadvantage and supporting our most vulnerable people; tackling the climate and nature emergency; and making Newport a better place to live, work and visit. The premise of the Participatory Budget programme is that people in Newport are involved and support the decisions on which organisations and projects will receive the funding.

Across 4 sessions, 80 projects from across Newport submitted applications with 44 projects securing funding. 530 people also took part in deciding which projects received funding and covered a range of community projects including services for older people; sports and fitness; arts, culture and creative arts; minority ethnic community projects; mental health and loneliness. Following the receipt of the funding, projects were asked to provide the Council an update on how the funding has supported their projects and improved their local communities. Below are some links to the videos submitted by organisations on how the funding has supported their projects and communities:

- [Forget Me Not Choir](#)
- [Gypsy Stars Choir](#)
- [New Life in the Park Reality Theatre CIC](#)
- [Newport Veterans Hub CIC](#)
- [IQRA Youth Club](#)

Well-being Objective 4 – Performance Measures

Performance measures used to monitor service area and the Council's contribution towards the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objective.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
NCC Sickness Days Lost.	12.35days	10.06 days	Not Available	10.06 days	7.28 days	<p>19/20 & 20/21 reported a change in previous variations on sickness data due to the pandemic, and therefore the last few years within and coming out of the pandemic, normal absence rates reduced, although COVID absence, which was not part of the reporting at that time, is now included in this figure. April 22 also saw the Council approve its Wellness at Work approach, which adopted a more mature approach to managing absence. It is also widely reported that absence across sectors has increased as we emerge from the pandemic, into other crises such as cost of living.</p> <p>Work is required to understand Council absence and further engagement work is required in the still embedding wellness approach and this has started in 23/24.</p> <p>(actual 22/23 amended following report to Scrutiny from 14.13 to 12.35 which includes teaching staff, for consistency with previous years)</p>
Percentage of managers undertaking regular check-ins	37.91%	80%	Local Measure	23.9%	No Data	<p>Following changes in practice during the COVID pandemic we are relaunching our check-in process and ensuring these are recorded.</p> <p>As outlined above, considerable activity has taken place in Q3/Q4 to assess and redress this measure. Managers tell us that they do regularly hold conversations with their team members and recording it may not always be at the forefront. Work is continuing to develop this measure in 2023/24 to ensure we continue to improve and record.</p> <p>To demonstrate this, quarter 4 data (Dec-Mar) since the changes, is 50.52%, representing improvement.</p>

*Welsh Average Data provided if available on Data Cymru Benchmarking website.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) % of staff that are able to speak Welsh at least intermediate or above level.	8.1%	20% (to be amended to 7.5% 23/24)	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	<p>This performance measure is reliant upon staff members self-assessing their Welsh language skills within their Employee Self-Service account and therefore may not be accurate. We are working to remind all staff to complete this section in their accounts.</p> <p>In addition, we are working with partners on a programme of Welsh Language training aimed at improving Welsh Language skills across our officers and in increasing confidence for people to use Welsh in the workplace.</p> <p>The target will be reviewed for 23/24 to reflect the language skills of our population, ensuring we continue to develop but reflecting our recruitment challenges. 7.5% is the percentage of people in Newport who said they could speak Welsh in the 2021 census.</p>
(New) Percentage of complaints to the PSOW intervention	17.0%	Less than 14%	Not Available	11%	11%	<p>This is a new measure which has missed the target for the full year, although following changes to processes and policy has improved and was within target for Quarter 4. The overall number of upheld complaints is relatively low, at 8.</p> <p>During autumn 2022/23, the newly revised complaints policy and improved processes, are anticipated to result in improved future performance. In addition, there is a lag in the figures as they are based on when complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) are closed not when received.</p>
Number of Apprentices per 1,000 employees	17 per 1,000 employees	20 per 1,000 employees	Not Available	20 per 1,000 employees	29 per 1,000 employees	<p>As budget pressures continue across the Council the ability to convert roles into apprentices or support workplace apprenticeships becomes more challenging. Opportunities for further funding are being developed and apprentice pay is now being reviewed.</p>

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Number of staff undertaken Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training.	339	240	Local Measure	168	7	High levels of engagement in equality and inclusion training during the year at all levels. Plans for 2023-24 include building on the awareness raising training and adding more specific equality and inclusion related subjects. Updated FEIA to be launched in quarter 1 of 2023-24 alongside associated training to aid awareness and understanding.
(New) Number of Council staff completing Welsh language training.	194	180	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	Engagement with Welsh Language training has been encouraging this year and has been supported by the new Welsh Language Policy Officer. Discussions with a 3 rd party are continuing with plans to extend the offer of training in different ways to encourage further uptake in 2023-24.
Percentage of customer transaction requests carried out Face to Face	0.6%	30% or less	Local Measure	0.86% (1,459)	29%	Over the past few years, there has been a decline in face-to-face transactions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and self-serve options. It is worth noting that our Face-to-Face Centre reopened properly in March this year, now located at Newport Central Library. Customers have become accustomed to our new central location, we have now observed an increase in footfall and a growing number of individuals returning to utilise our services.
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- Council Tax enquiries	20 mins 23 secs	25 minutes	Local Measure	22 minutes 59 seconds	14 minutes 29 seconds	Due to the financial hardships faced by many across the city, there has been a notable rise in the length of Council Tax calls, particularly regarding arrears. Due to this we have tried to allocate more staff resource onto the Council Tax line to assist these customers.
Customer transaction requests made online using My Council Services	78.4% (326,190)	70% or more	Local Measure	76.5% (320,133)	Not available	Since April, we have made several forms exclusively available online, encouraging more customers to utilise self-service options. Additionally, we have provided self-serve PCs at Newport Central Library, enabling customers to conveniently access online services.
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- main enquiry line.	4 mins 29 secs	5 minutes or less	Local Measure	8 minutes 1 second	4 minutes 56 seconds	Our wait times have decreased due to a combination of factors. The introduction of our full face-to-face offering at Newport Central Library, alongside several services transitioning to online-only, has contributed to this improvement.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- Welsh enquiry line	2 mins 17 secs	5 minutes or less	Local Measure	3 minutes 44 seconds	2 minutes 26 seconds	To enhance our service delivery, we have recently recruited two additional Welsh speakers and introduced a call back option to avoid callers waiting on the line for a Welsh Speaker to become available. These changes have allowed us to achieve a reduction in the average wait time for customers.
(New) No. of views of Scrutiny meetings including live and You Tube.	593	First year measure – monitoring data	Local Measure	Not Available	Not Available	First year of monitoring viewership of Council meetings and setting benchmarking.

Well-being Objective 4 – 23/24 Key Deliverables

Below is a summary of some of the key priorities and deliverables Newport City Council will be delivering / progressing in 2023/24:

- Commence delivery of the Council’s Asset Rationalisation programme and review of the Council’s property services function.
- Delivery of the Council’s updated website.
- Development and approval of the Council’s new 4 year Strategic Equality Plan.
- A review of customer experience across Council services.
- Further implementation of the Council’s TOMs and regular reporting to the Council’s Cabinet.
- Delivery of the Council’s Digital Strategy and Digital Transformation.

Self-Assessment of Governance & Performance Arrangements

This section of the report provides an overview of how Newport City Council meets the performance requirements under the Local Government and Elections Act to deliver its Corporate Plan, strategic priorities and statutory duties. To assess its effectiveness, we have included the outcomes of the Council’s Annual Governance Statement (AGS), external regulatory reviews, and Internal Audit’s overall assessment of the Council’s internal controls. These support our assessment in determining the three key areas: How well are we doing? How do we know? And what and how can we do better?

We have also included in this section of the report an overview of the Council’s internal governance arrangements and key policies in place for ensuring good governance is applied throughout the Council. This section of the report provides an overview of how the Council has involved and engaged with key stakeholders throughout 2022/23. Finally, we have concluded the effectiveness of the Council’s Governance and Performance arrangements and recommendations for improvement.

Newport City Council Governance Arrangements

Newport City Council consists of 51 elected members representing [21 Wards](#) across Newport. Local Councillors are elected by the community to decide how the council should carry out its various activities and represent public interest as well as individuals living within the ward.

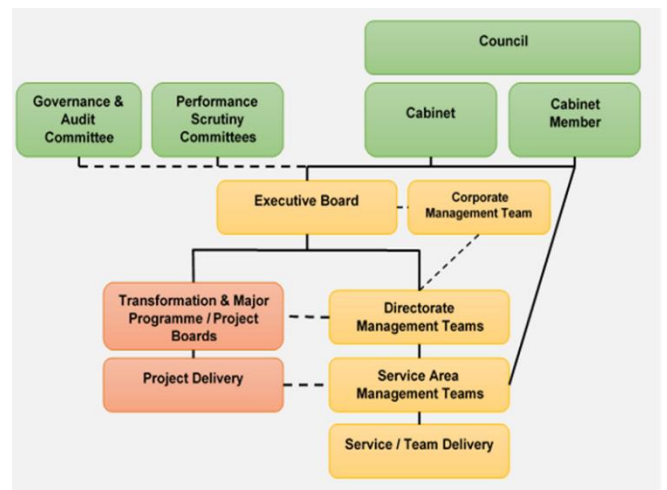
The Roles and responsibilities of the Council, its Cabinet and supporting committees are outlined in the [Council’s Constitution](#) which was last updated in July 2023.

Officers (employees, staff inc. agency or other non-employed situations) are responsible for carrying out the Council’s functions.

The Cabinet carries out all the Council’s functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council (whether by law or under the Council’s Constitution). The Cabinet consists of the Leader with a maximum of 9 other Councillors appointed to the Cabinet to oversee the delivery of specific functions.

The diagram above provides an overview of the key officer groups and democratic groups responsible for monitoring and reporting on the Council’s governance and performance arrangements. At Newport City Council there are four Performance Scrutiny Committees (Overview Scrutiny Management Committee / Partnerships Scrutiny Committee / Place & Corporate Scrutiny Committee / People Scrutiny Committee) responsible for assessing the performance of key Council services. The Governance & Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the Council’s Governance, Internal Control and Risk Management arrangements including the activities of the Council’s external regulators, Internal Audit and its financial accounts.

The Council’s Chief Executive is the Council’s primary policy advisor, works with elected members and lead the Council’s strategic management team to ensure that direct services to the public and support services are managed effectively and economically to provide best value. To support the Chief Executive in carrying out her duties, the Council has three Strategic Directors and 11 Heads of Service including key roles of the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. The Chief Executive leads the Council’s Executive Board which oversees the delivery of the Council’s 11 service areas and key functions. The Council also has 4 Directorate Management Teams responsible for overseeing the delivery of the service area functions, performance, risk, finance and human resources.



Newport City Council Performance and Risk Management Arrangements

As part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 development, the Council undertook a review of its performance and strategic planning arrangements considering the feedback from the performance scrutiny committees, staff as well as the requirements of the new Local Government Act. As a result, in 2022/23 the Council's [Performance and Planning policy](#) was updated to reflect the feedback and changes of legislation.

To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan and deliver continuous improvement, each service area has their own Service Plan which sets out their objectives, projects, actions, performance measures and risks which will monitor and report progress. As identified in the diagram above, the Council's Executive Board, Directorate Management Teams and service area management teams are responsible for monitoring and reporting progress against these plans.

Considering feedback from the 2021/22 annual Well-being Self-Assessment report, improvements were made to align key actions, projects and performance measures to support the monitoring and reporting of the Council's Corporate Plan. Additionally, improvements have also been made internally to effectively challenge and assess service area delivery. In June 2022, the Council's Executive Board held their first Challenge reviews of the End of Year service area performance. Feedback and recommendations to Heads of Service identified areas of improvement to service plans including:

- Improvements to performance measures to demonstrate the impact of service delivery.
- Review of targets to ensure targets are set to demonstrate continuous improvement, reflect resources required to achieve targets.
- Requirement from the Executive Board for service areas to provide more data and supporting information to support narrative provided by service areas.

A summary of Service Area End of Year performance in 2022/23 is highlighted below:

Service Area (Directorate)	Service Plan Objectives End of Year Status (Red / Amber / Green)				
	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5
Adult Services (Social Services)	Green	Amber	Green	Grey	Grey
Children Services (Social Services)	Amber	Green	Amber	Green	Grey
Education (Chief Executive)	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Green
Environment & Public Protection (Environment & Sustainability)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey
Finance (Transformation & Corporate)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey
Housing & Communities (Environment & Sustainability)	Amber	Green	Green	Grey	Grey
Infrastructure (Environment & Sustainability)	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Grey
Law & Standards (Transformation & Corporate)	Green	Green	Amber	Grey	Grey
People Policy & Transformation (Transformation & Corporate)	Green	Amber	Green	Green	Grey
Prevention & Inclusion (Social Services)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey
Regeneration & Economic Development (Chief Executive)	Green	Amber	Green	Green	Grey

Service areas have considered the feedback from the Challenge reviews and Performance Scrutiny Committees to review and update their service plans for 2023/24 and will be used to support Mid-year and End of year performance reviews in 2023/24. From 2023/24, the Executive Board will be undertaking quarterly challenge reviews and will be using the Council's Management Information (Mi) Hub to support the reviews.

Towards the end of 2022/23 and into 2023/24, the Council's People, Policy & Transformation service area also implemented improvements in the monitoring and reporting of performance and projects in the Council. Continuous development of this work will be progressed in 23/24 and is also covered in the Council's Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan later in the report.

Newport City Council has an established risk management approach which monitors and reports Corporate and service area risk every quarter to the Council’s Cabinet, Governance & Audit Committee, Executive Board and Directorate Management Teams. At the end of 2022/23 the Council had 45 risks across the 11 service areas. Fourteen out of the 45 risks were deemed to pose the most risk to the Council and were reported on the Corporate Risk Register.

Risk	Lead Directorate / Service	Q1 Risk Score	Q2 Risk Score	Q3 Risk Score	Q4 Risk Score
Pressure on the delivery of Children Services.	Social Services / Children Services	20	25	25	25
Stability of Social Services Providers	Social Services / Adult Services	25	25	25	20
Pressure on Adult & Community Services	Social Services / Adult Services	25	25	25	20
Balancing the Council’s Medium-Term budget	Transformation & Corporate / Finance	12	20	20	20
Highways Network / Infrastructure	Environment & Sustainability / Infrastructure	20	20	20	20
Pressure on Housing and Homelessness Service	Environment & Sustainability / Housing & Communities	20	20	20	20
Newport Council’s Property Estate	Transformation & Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	16	16	16	16
Eliminate Profit from Social Care	Social Services / Children Services	-	-	15	15
Information and Cyber Security	Transformation & Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	16	12	12	12
Schools Finance / Cost Pressures	Chief Executive / Education Services	9	12	12	12
Demand for ALN and SEN support	Chief Executive / Education Services	12	12	12	12
Educational Out of County Placements	Chief Executive / Education Services	12	12	12	12
Welsh Government’s Net Carbon Zero Target by 2030	Environment & Sustainability / Environment & Public Protection	12	12	12	12
City Centre Security and Safety	Environment & Sustainability / Infrastructure	10	10	10	10

A Summary of the quarterly risk reports presented to Cabinet and the Governance and Audit Committee in 2022/23 are highlighted below:

Quarter	Cabinet	Governance & Audit Committee
Quarter 1	14th September 2022	29th September 2022
Quarter 2	14th December 2022	26th January 2023
Quarter 3	22nd March 2023	30th March 2023
Quarter 4	12th July 2023	27th July 2023

Last year we acknowledged that the current Risk Management policy needed to be updated and at the end of the 2022/23 financial year, we were behind in this development. However, the People, Policy & Transformation service area have scheduled for the policy to be approved by January 2024. This has also been identified in the Council’s Annual Governance Statement and raised as an action for improvement.

Newport City Council also has a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act to provide local emergency planning and business continuity support to the Council and communities across Newport. The Council’s Civil Contingencies team is responsible for supporting the Council’s services and emergency response team to manage and co-ordinate the Council’s joint service response. National and community risks including the Council’s response are managed through the Civil Contingencies and Local Resilience Forum. Further information can be accessed [here](#).

Newport City Council Annual Governance Statement

The Council is required to undertake an **Annual Governance Statement (AGS)** as required by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014. The AGS provides an overview on the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements including performance. The AGS is assessed on the principles set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE).

Principle	Annual Governance Statement Principles	RAG Assessment	No. of Actions
A	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.	Amber	6
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.	Green	3
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.	Green	0
D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes.	Green	4
E	Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.	Amber	3
F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.	Green	2
G	Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.	Green	1

In summary, the AGS found that the Council's overall governance and performance arrangements to be **effective**. As noted in the table above 2 out of 7 principles were assessed as Amber with the remaining 5 areas assessed as Green. The assessment identified 19 actions for improvement across the 7 principles to improve its governance arrangements.

Key areas for improvement included:

- Improvement to the Council's Counter fraud arrangements (see also External regulators assessment).
- Review and update the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.
- Delivery of key Human Resources training and staffing policies around the People Plan, and staff values.
- Development and understanding of the Council's workforce capacity and capability to deliver its transformation plan and Corporate Plan.
- Implementation of the Council's TOMs (Procurement see Well-being Objective 4).
- Improvements to Capital and grant governance / performance monitoring.
- Finalising and implementing the Council's Risk Management policy.

A copy of the full AGS can be found as part of the Council's Statement of Accounts. The findings of the AGS were agreed by the Council's senior officers and was presented to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee for comment. The final version of the AGS will be signed off by the Council's Leader and Chief Executive before being included into the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2022/23. The 2023/24 AGS actions have been included in this report as further action to improve its governance and performance arrangements and can be found at the end of this report.

Internal Audit and External Regulator Assessments

Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the Council's operations. It provides a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. It also objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

The Council's Internal Audit service gave an overall opinion of the Council's 2022/23 internal controls as **Reasonable** based upon the completion of 77% (80% target) of the audit plan. This means that they are adequately controlled although risks identified which may compromise the overall control environment; improvements are required; and reasonable level of assurance. This was also included into the Council's AGS covered in the section above. The full Internal Audit annual report can be found [here](#).

Audit Rating	2021/22		2022/23	
	Audits Completed	%	Audits Completed	%
Good	10	29	9	24
Reasonable	23	66	25	66
Unsatisfactory	2	5	3	8
Unsound	0	0	1	2
Total	35	100	38	100
Overall Opinion	Reasonable		Reasonable	

In 2022/23 4 audit reviews were deemed Unsatisfactory (3) and Unsound (1). These were reported to the Council's Executive Board and to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee. These reports were related to:

- **Unsound** – Safeguarding – Children's Money, Children Services (Social Service Directorate)
- **Unsatisfactory** - Purchasing Cards (Transactions), Finance (Transformation & Corporate)
- **Unsatisfactory** - Adoption Allowances Follow Up 2, Children Services (Social Services Directorate)
- **Unsatisfactory** - Passenger Transport Unit Contracts Follow Up Infrastructure (Environment & Sustainability)

At the end of the financial year and into the first quarter of 2023/24, the Internal Audit team has been impacted by the loss of several key members of staff which will impact the delivery of the annual audit plan for 23/24. Further updates on the delivery of the service will be provided separately to Governance & Audit Committee and escalated as a Corporate Risk at the time of this report.

External Regulatory Reports - Audit Wales, Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales

The Council's three External Regulators are responsible for providing assurances and assessments into the effectiveness of the Council's services. Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are responsible for providing assurances in relation to the Council's delivery of Education Services and Schools (Estyn) and Social Services including Residential settings (CIW).

In [July 2023](#) the Council reported to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee an overview of the three external regulators. A summary of the external regulator's reports published is below. In addition we have also included the Audit Wales reviews commenced in 2022/23 but at the time of this report have not been published. These will be reported in 2023/24 as part of the 6 monthly updates to Governance and Audit Committee.



Audit Wales	Estyn	Care Inspectorate Wales*
NCC Annual Audit Summary 2022	Thematic Review – Effective approaches to assessment that improve teaching and learning.	Frailty Reablement Care
National Report - Digital Inclusion in Wales	Tredegar Park Primary School	Childrens Provision A
Poverty in Wales 'Time for Change'	Jubilee Park Primary School	Childrens Provision B
Social Enterprises 'A Missed Opportunity'	Milton Primary School	Childrens Provision C
Together We Can – Community Resilience and Self-Reliance.	High Cross Primary School	Childrens Provision D
Flood Risk Management	Langstone Primary School	Childrens Provision E
Assurance and Risk Assessment Review	Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School	
National Review – National Fraud Initiative 2020/21	Newport High School	
Springing Forward Workforce.	Monnow Primary School	
Equality Impact Assessments 'More than a tick box exercise'	Newport Nursery School	
Springing Forward, Strategic Asset Management	Malpas Church in Wales Primary school (Special Measures Follow Up)	
Direct Payments for Adult Social Care	St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School	
NCC Counter-Fraud Arrangements	Crindau Primary School	
Setting of Well-being Objectives (To be Published)	Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	
Digital Strategy (To be Published)		
Service user perspective Performance (To be Published)		

* Reports and details of Childrens Provision settings cannot be published as per Care Inspectorate Wales requirements

As part of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and Audit Wales work programme, in 2022/23, Audit Wales undertook a review of the Council's Corporate Plan and setting of Well-being Objectives. At the time of the report, the Audit Wales findings have not been published (subject to change). Overall, Audit Wales found that the Council had applied the sustainable development principle in setting its well-being Objectives but raised one recommendation for the Council to develop measures which enables it to monitor progress against its long and short term objectives and progress against objectives that cut across multiple of its own services and other organisations. This recommendation has been captured in the action plan on page 67.

Newport City Council's Financial Outturn 2022/23

The Council produces its annual **Statement of Accounts**. This provides a detailed analysis of where the Council spent its money during the previous financial year. It includes the Council's income, revenue (money used to deliver services) and capital (money it uses to build assets like roads and buildings). The full version of the Statement of Accounts can be found here. The below is a summary of key areas covered in the report.

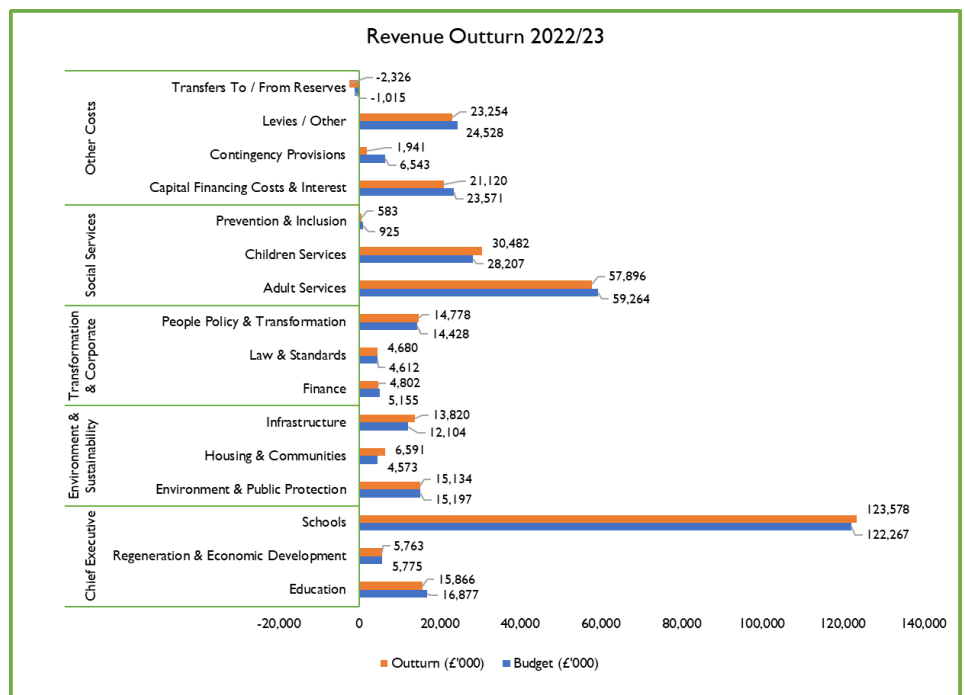
 Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	
£265,617,000 (Revenue Support Grant & Non Domestic Rates)	£77,411,000 (Council Tax)

Newport City Council's net budget is funded primarily by the Welsh Government through an annual grant and also through Non Domestic Rates. The remaining income comes from households through Council Tax.

Revenue Outturn 2022/23

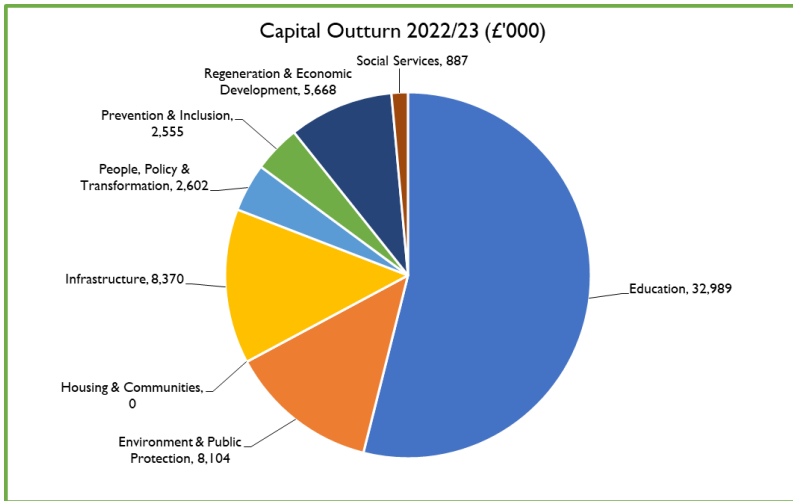
In 2022/23, the Council's revenue outturn produced a net underspend of £5.1m against the £343m budget. The underspend was because of the underspend against general and covid contingency budgets; and an underspend against the capital financing budget, partly due to capital programme slippage and higher than expected returns on investments because of rising interest rates.

These underspends were partly offset by increase in demand / costs in delivering services and higher than anticipated pay award.



Newport City Council monitors its revenue finances on a monthly basis with budget holders (Team / Service managers, Heads of Service) responsible for ensuring actual and forecasted spending are accurate. Service area management teams, Directorate Management Teams and Executive Board are provided monthly monitoring updates against their budgets. The Council's Executive Board also through its Challenge review and assess the service areas financial performance against their budget and MTFP savings targets.

Capital Outturn 2022/23



The Council's capital programme delivers large-scale investment towards its assets and infrastructure such as schools, roads, regeneration projects e.g. Cardiff Capital Region. In 2022/23 the Council's budget was £91.8m with £61.2m spent across service areas. £30.6m has been 'slipped' into future years capital spending. As identified in the Council's AGS, improvements have been identified with the governance and monitoring capital spending.

NCC Budget and Medium Term Revenue Plan 2023/24

In February 2023, Council agreed the 2023/24 budget and a council tax increase of 8.5%. In addition the Council also agreed a £20.1m savings over the next three years with £19.5m to be achieved in 23/24. The Council recognises the risk (see Corporate Risk Register) many services are under significant financial pressure to meet its statutory duties, deliver the goals of the Corporate Plan and to transform services. For the preparation of the Council's budget for 2024/25 we will consider these pressures as well as any further announcements from Welsh Government following their own statement on budget pressures. In December 2023 and January 2024 we will be consulting on future budget requirements.

Finance – Performance Measures

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Grant claims Percentage of grant claims submitted in line with awarding body deadlines.	77%	95%	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	The percentage shown reflects the total performance for both Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 in 2022/23. Across the period, a total of 114 grant claims were submitted, with 88 of those being submitted on time. Of those that were submitted late, in a number of cases the delay would have been only a small number of days and, in some of those, there may have been agreement with the funding body for a claim to be submitted late. Delays are often caused by delays in receiving information from either the funding body or service contacts. Going forward, relevant parties will be reminded of the need to provide information in a timely fashion and additional planning work will be undertaken to ensure that preparatory work is completed in advance of deadlines.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Budget monitoring – Budget Manager submissions Percentage of monthly forecasts submitted by budget managers.	67.3%	80%	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	The percentage shown reflects the cumulative performance throughout the 2022/23 financial year, across the whole Council. The performance is inconsistent across service areas, with a number of services exceeding the target and others performing significantly under the target. Going forward, especially in light of revised budget monitoring arrangements for 2023/24, Finance Business Partners will work closely with budget managers (providing training where required) with the aim of increasing compliance. Heads of Service will also need to ensure that their budget managers prioritise the submission of forecasts on a monthly basis.
Increased Council Tax paid by Direct Debit.	66.7%	67%	Local Measure	65.35%	62.4%	The number of direct debit payers has increased overall, with a large increase early in the year to coincide with the cost-of-living payment scheme. However, as the year has progressed a larger than expected number have subsequently cancelled their direct debits possibly due to the cost of living crisis.
Percentage Council Tax Collection	96.1%	96%	Local Measure	96.1%	95.4%	Council tax in year collection target was met despite the cost-of living crisis. Signposting help available and offering flexible payment options to those struggling financially prevented many council tax payers falling behind with their payments.
Percentage Non-Domestic Rates Collected.	97.8%	96.5%	Local Measure	96.3%	94.4%	Collection target was comfortably met, the rate burden faced by business ratepayers has been eased by Welsh Government and Newport City Council relief schemes that have reduced the amount payable.
Percentage total Council Tax Collected as a percentage of annual budgeted amount.	100.3%	100%	Local Measure	100.53%	101%	Council tax overall collection target was met despite the cost-of living crisis. Signposting help available and offering flexible payment options to those struggling financially prevented many council tax payers falling behind with their payments.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
Percentage of Council Tax arrears collected	30%	30%	Local Measure	32.71%	25.4%	The arrears collection target was met although slightly lower than in previous years. This was due to the need to allow longer repayment terms due to the cost-of-living crisis and the squeeze on household budgets.
Percentage of NDDR arrears collected	50%	40%	Local Measure	42.51%	22.8%	A good result and the target was comfortably met.
Percentage of Payment of Invoices within timescales	90%	90%	Local Measure	92.61%	91.9%	An on-target performance, slightly lower than previous two years, mainly due to personnel changes and staff shortages. However, with all the resource issues, a positive on target performance.
(New) Average time of processing new housing benefit claims	25.7 days	32 days	Local Measure	33.19 days	34 days	The team have been focussed on reducing the time to process housing benefit claims and a number of initiatives have enabled the target to be exceeded.

Performance Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Welsh Average*	2021/22 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Commentary
(New) Average time of processing change events.	6.3 days	14 days	Local Measure	7.9 days	9.32 days	The use of some automation in the processing of changes in circumstance for benefit customers as well as removal of some of the covid support schemes has enabled the target to be exceeded.
(New) The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered during the quarter as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayments identified during the quarter	115.1%	Min 103%	Local Measure	105.4%	102.02%	The team's proactive collection strategy has enabled the target to be exceeded.
(New) The amount of housing benefit overpayments written off during the quarter as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayments outstanding	0.49%	2%	Local Measure	3.84%	0.01%	Due to the improved collection of housing benefit overpayments a lower than anticipated write off percentage was achieved.
(New) Budget monitoring – Forecast accuracy. Percentage variance between January forecast and final outturn	0.1%	0.5%	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	The difference between the January forecast and final outturn was £304k, excluding the impact of transfers to risk reserves that were agreed by Cabinet as part of approving the outturn report. The difference of £304k represents 0.1% of the Council's net £343m budget.
(New) Financial Training Satisfaction or better ratings from individuals participating in training provided by Finance service	100%	80%	Local Measure	No Data	No Data	This PI is assessed via a feedback form completed by those who attend courses. However, completion of the form is not mandatory and, therefore, the view of all participants is not necessarily captured. Going forward, attempts will be made to obtain a complete picture of the views of participants.

Involvement and Engagement with Citizens, Businesses and Trade Unions

Newport City Council uses several mechanisms to engage and involve people in the development of policies, decision making and insight into perceptions of how we deliver our services. The three main mechanisms which we use are the Online SNAP Surveys, Bus Wi-Fi (in collaboration with Newport Bus) and Newport Citizen Panel (circa 697 members). In 2022 the Council introduced the Participation Strategy that sets out the Council's commitment to the principle of participative decision making, and supporting residents to be actively involved in the democratic process.

Date	Subject	Service Area	Consultation Source	Responses
May 2022	One Newport Climate Change Survey	People, Policy & Transformation	Online SNAP Survey	64
	Perception of Newport Survey and Safety in Newport Survey	People, Policy & Transformation	Newport Citizen Panel	200
	Perception of Newport Survey	People, Policy & Transformation	Bus Wi-Fi Survey	2,354
	Parental Free School Meal survey	Education	Online SNAP Survey	856
August 2022	One Newport Climate Change Survey	People, Policy & Transformation	Newport Citizen Panel	220
	City Centre Safety in Newport	People, Policy & Transformation	Bus Wi-Fi Survey	1,631
September 2022	NCC Corporate Plan	People, Policy & Transformation	Online SNAP Survey	266
	School Category Survey	Education	Online SNAP Survey	33
October 2022	Newport Food Festival 2022 and Newport Food Festival (Trader Survey)	Regeneration & Economic Development	Online SNAP Survey	110
	One Newport Climate Change Survey (Primary & Secondary)	People, Policy & Transformation	Online SNAP Survey	400
November 2022	Shared Prosperity Fund	Regeneration & Economic Development	Bus Wi-fi Survey	1,352
			Online SNAP Survey	79
	Understanding our Audience	People, Policy & Transformation	Online SNAP Survey	308
	Safe Streets - CCTV	People, Policy & Transformation	Newport Citizen Panel	144
			Online SNAP Survey	84
	Education and Exploitation Survey	Education	Online SNAP Survey	14
	Schools Active Travel Plan Survey			18
Secondary ALN Provision (Llanwern High)		78		
December 2022	EU Citizen Survey	Housing & Communities	Online SNAP Survey	9
	One Newport Climate Change Survey	People, Policy & Transformation	Online SNAP Survey	1,444
	NCC Budget Consultation 2023-24	Finance	Online SNAP Survey	820
Bus Wi-fi Survey			653	
January 2023	Over 55s Accommodation Survey	Environment & Public Protection	Online SNAP Survey	176
February 2023	Cost of Living Crisis	Prevention & Inclusion	Newport Citizens Panel	164
	Perception of Newport Survey			
	Safety in Newport Survey			
	Perception of Newport	People, Policy & Transformation	Bus Wi-Fi Survey	2,180
March 2023	Pill Parks	Environment & Public Protection	Online SNAP Survey	91

NCC Corporate Compliments, Comments and Complaints

The Council publishes its annual Corporate Compliments, Comments and Complaints report which is presented to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet. A copy of the full report can be accessed through the link here. Below is a summary of the key findings in relation to Compliments and Comments are below:

- 106 Corporate Compliments recorded (39% decrease since 2021/22).
- 1,168 comments recorded (73% decrease since 2021/22).

For complaints received by the Council, the table below provides an overview of Stage 1, 2 and Ombudsman complaints received in 2022/23 and in comparison to the last 5 years.

Year	No. Stage 1 Complaint	No. Stage 2 Complaint	Stage 2 Complaint %	No. Ombudsman Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints %
2018/19	271	28	9.4%	38	14%
2019/20	354	33	8.5%	31	8.8%
2020/21	261	39	9.5%	14	7.7%
2021/22	271	31	11.4%	24	8.6%
2022/23	341	46	11.9%	47	12.14%

A summary of progress against the action plan from 2021/22 annual report is highlighted in the action plan update where it reported 4 out of 7 actions were completed and 3 remained in progress and has been included in the 2023/24 action plan.

NCC Involvement and Engagement with Businesses in Newport

The economy and businesses of Newport are a vital backbone to providing prosperity and opportunities for the communities of Newport. At Newport City Council we have continued to ensure the views and engagement of businesses are considered in the development and delivery of Council strategy and policies. Throughout 2021/22 the Council was represented at the Newport Now (Business Improvement District) and has continued to engage with businesses through the following mechanisms. In 2022/23 Newport engaged and involved businesses through the following activities:

- General responding to business enquiries from the NCC Business Services inbox, including:
 - o Property enquiries
 - o Funding enquiries
 - o Signposting to general support
- Hosting of business events (M4 Business Breakfast)
- Engagement through business grants programme
- 1:1 meetings with specific businesses
- Newsletter
- Chair and host the Newport Business Account Managers Meeting
- Maintain sites and property register
- Developed and managing new business directory, free to public access

Across these activities the service has directly engaged over 350 city businesses. The Council provides an annual grant facility to directly support the city's SMEs. This provision has been developed in consultation with the local business community in order to ensure that it is targeting the businesses and facilities most in need of support. Where the Council cannot provide direct support, it engages and works alongside other partners including Business Wales and UK Steel Enterprise to ensure entrepreneurs and established businesses can find the support they need.

Engagement with businesses is an important part of the work that we do. We have a dedicated team of support officers who advise and signpost businesses to the right agencies and networks and maintain a sites and property register. We host businesses at the M4 Business Breakfast which provides a valuable opportunity for networking and building relationships with the Council and between businesses. We issue a regular newsletter to businesses, providing them with important information and updates which may assist them in the operation of their business. As a partner of the Cardiff Capital Region and Western Gateway, we also look for opportunities to link businesses and investors across the region through events such as UnLeash.

The Council is also part of the Business in the Community (BITC) project. BITC has eight ‘place’ based programmes throughout England which aim to “facilitate meaningful connections between businesses, communities, and local councils to reset economic ambitions and collaborate on new, innovative solutions that will deliver long-term, transformative impact”. Newport is the first in Wales and is seen as the ‘flagship’ programme in Wales. Businesses are critical to the success of place programme intervention and there are a range of businesses onboard who use their knowledge and skills to support local communities.

NCC Involvement and Engagement with Trade Unions and Staff

Working in partnership with our Trade Unions and staff is critical to the successful delivery of a number of our workforce strategies. The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Human Resources continues to chair our Employee Partnership Forum (EPF) on a quarterly basis for strategic matters. EPF brings together all our Trade Unions colleagues in a consultative forum with officers from HR to engage in and help steer direction for workforce matters. Alongside EPF, some of our service areas, supported by HR, hold joint consultative committees (JCW’s) to discuss strategic issues affecting their areas. The EPF arrangements were again consulted our Trade Unions on restructuring proposals to meet our financial challenges as an organisation.

At an operational level regular dialogue continues with our internal and regional Trade Union representatives on employee relations issues, such as individual concerns around wellbeing and conduct. Our Trade Union colleagues continue to support their members through transformation across the Council. Our Trade Unions have supported the development of enhancing working relationships by supporting action plans as appropriate.

Partnership working with our Trade Unions is important to the Council. Trade Union colleagues bring our staff voice to discussions and supplement our staff forums and challenge the Council to do more for our staff, which in turn provides a more productive and engaged workforce and helps build employee relations.

As also highlighted in Well-being Objective 4, the staff network groups and Newport Managers Network also engaged and involved with ongoing policy development, health and well-being support and staff development.

Examples of our staff and Trade Union engagement is outlined below:

New Normal Policies	Flexible Working Policy
Travel & Subsistence	Working from Home
Flexi Scheme	Drug & Alcohol Policy
Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy	Annual Staff Conference
Service Area & Directorate Meetings	Newport Manager Network
Chief Executive Focus Groups	Staff Networks
Changes to Pay and Terms and Conditions	Pay Policy

Key Newport Council Decisions & Achievements 2022/23

The below table provides a summary of Newport City Council's key strategic decisions and achievements in 2022/23.

Month	Decision / Achievement
April 2022	The Council's Cabinet agreed to sign the Joint Committee Agreement for the National Adoption Service for Wales to oversee the governance and delivery of Foster Wales.
	The Council's Cabinet agreed the Transporter Bridge project funding uplift from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
May 2022	Local Government Elections held and appointment of the Council's Cabinet, Scrutiny and Regulatory Committees.
	Newport City Council's received £78k from the Transformation Capital Grant
	Newport City Council approved and adopted the Public Participation Strategy and Petition Scheme.
	Newport City Council, Job Centre Plus and Restart hosted jobs fair in Newport Centre.
June 2022	The Council's Cabinet approved Newport's Local Area Energy Plan to support the city to become net zero carbon by 2050.
	Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years approved the adoption for the agreed syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics for implementation from 1 st September 2022.
	Newport receives the official Purple Flag for its evening and night time economy.
July 2022	Newport City Council agreed Dog Control Public Spaces Control Orders.
	The Council's Cabinet endorsed Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council as Lead local authority to oversee the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delegation of powers to Head of Law & Standards on behalf of the Council.
	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Assets approved the adoption of the Infrastructure Highways Maintenance manual as the new Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance delivery in Newport.
	Cabinet Member for Community Well-being approved Newport City Council to deliver a Community Food Organisation support fund to help support ongoing revenue costs of community food organisations in Newport.
	Green Flag awarded to Beechwood Park and Belle Vue Park.
August 2022	Joint Cabinet Member decision between the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community and Well-being to support the allocation of cost of living payments from Welsh Government to households.
	Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation approved the updates to the Council's Human Resources policies for Flexible Working, Homeworking and Travel and Subsistence.
	Work commenced on site at the Transporter Bridge Centre.
	Adult Services achieves Carer Friendly accreditation.
	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan was approved by Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh-medium places in Newport.
September 2022	Newport City Council hosted a recruitment and jobs fair hosted at Newport Market with over 40 employers offering opportunities for prospective residents.
	Newport City Council in collaboration with GAVO launched a £100k grant fund to support community food groups.
	Flying Start expansion launched offering support to children and families for those in part time, parenting support, enhanced health visitor support and speech, language and communication skills.
October 2022	The Leader of the Council approved 18 month pilot ' <i>International Sort Landing Programme</i> ' aimed at increasing the presence of international businesses in the city centre.
	Newport City Council's Dogs Home won gold in two categories at the 2022 RSPCA Cymru PawPrint Awards.
	Newport hosted the Knife Angel event as part of the national anti-violence tour with a giant angel sculpture made from over 100,000 knives.
	Return of Newport Food Festival to the city centre.

Month	Decision / Achievement
November 2022	Newport City Council approved the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27.
	The Council's Cabinet approved to enter into a cost sharing arrangement with Coleg Gwent as part of the development of the city centre Knowledge Quarter.
	Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years approved the establishment of a 20 place specialist base for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder at Llanwern High School.
	Cost of Living support event delivered by Newport City Council and other partners providing advice, guidance and support to households and individuals struggling with the cost of living.
	New cycle storage unit opened in Newport City Centre offering 24/7 access to store their bikes securely when visiting the city centre.
December 2022	The Leader of the Council approved the Council's Business Development Fund for 2022/23 to 2025/26.
	Joint Cabinet Member decision between the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community and Well-being to support the allocation of second and final cost of living payments from Welsh Government to households.
	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation & Housing approved the planned public consultation on a Public Spaces Protection order within Maesglas.
	Newport Market receives an award at the Ystadau Cymru Awards 2022.
	Newport City Council, religious groups, and community organisations offer 'Warm Places' for households and individuals struggling with the cost of living crisis.
	Jubilee Park Primary School receives an outstanding report from Estyn.
January 2023	Newport City Council approved the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24.
	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing approved the Pavement Café Licensing Policy to allow businesses to apply to the Council for a licence to place tables and chairs on the highway.
	Conservation of the Medieval Ship timbers was completed.
February 2023	Newport City Council approved the Council's 2023/24 budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and national Non-Domestic Rates: Discretionary Rate Relief Schemes 2023/24.
	Newport City Council approved the Gwent Well-being Plan 2023-28.
	Cabinet Members approve 11 service area plans 2022-24 to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27.
	Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed new teaching block was completed providing new classrooms and facilities for learners.
March 2023	The Council's Cabinet approved the Council's core Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) for measuring Social Value in future contract and procurement arrangements.
	The Council's Cabinet approved the Council's updated Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy.
	Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years to set the Council's admission arrangements for the academic year commencing September 2024 as consulted upon without amendment.
	Newport schools, Newport High School and Malpas Church in Wales removed from Special Measures.
	Gender Pay Gap for the year one of the smallest in Wales

Self-Assessment Actions Update 2021/22

The table below provides an update on the actions raised in the 2021/22 Well-being Self-Assessment Report. Where actions remain in progress, these will be carried forward into 2023/24 Action Plan.

Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date	2022/23 Progress Update
Improve the reporting and presentation of the Council's performance and Annual Well-being Self-Assessment Report in line with the newly developed Corporate Plan and considering feedback from the Council's Scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how best to self-assess performance against the Corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives. Evaluate the impact which key decisions and activities have had on service users and communities. Ensure the Council's service plans align to strategic priorities. 	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2023	<p>Complete</p> <p>Following the approval of the Council's Corporate Plan, service areas updated their Service Plans 2022-24 to align with the Corporate Plan. Actions across all of the service plans have been aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and strategic priorities.</p> <p>This year's annual report now shows the progress against each strategic priority. The Council is developing mechanisms to assess the impact of key decisions and activities in the published Participation Strategy. The FEIA process supports key decisions and impact on communities.</p>
Review the Council's Planning, Performance and Risk Policies to align with the Local Government Act and to support the Council to deliver its new Corporate Plan.	Review and update the Strategic Planning, Performance and Risk Management Framework considering feedback from key stakeholders to support the delivery of the new Corporate Plan.	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2023	<p>In Progress</p> <p>The Performance & Planning policy was approved July 2023 and is aligned to the new legislation. The Risk Management Policy review is ongoing and a new action will be taken forward in this year's annual report.</p>

Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date	2022/23 Progress Update
The Council needs to deliver the priorities identified in its Participatory Strategy to strengthen the arrangements to involve and engage its key stakeholders in the democratic process and decision making.	Deliver the actions from the Council's Participatory Strategy to improve involvement across Council activities including their role with the Council's performance and meeting with the requirements of the Local Government Act.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2024	In Progress The Participation Strategy was approved by Council in May 2022. Since that time feedback from Scrutiny Committees and public is being reviewed by Democratic Services to develop ways of improving engagement. The reintroduction of Ward meetings has been approved, and these have commenced, with a view to engaging the public in budgetary and service performance related issues.
A review of the governance arrangements around the development, delivery and monitoring of the Council's future Transformation Plan is currently underway and will also include clear responsibilities and arrangements for other key areas, such as financial management, capital programme, major projects etc.	To conclude the review and ensure arrangements are in place.	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2023	In Progress Transformation approach under development June 2023. The first programmes have commenced and new project management documentation is being reviewed. Clear owners (SROs) are established for the programme, and the escalation is to Executive Board. Included in Planning and Performance Policy update as above.
New Members have the appropriate skills to effectively undertake their roles.	Training and Induction for new Members will be reviewed and updated following Local Government elections in May 2022.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2023	In Progress Following the elections in May 2022, a full programme for members has been implemented. All members have received induction training and Code of Conduct training. Carbon Literacy has been introduced and take up has been positive. Full member training plans are being developed. A survey of members will inform the second year of training and capture feedback on topics / methods most valued by members.
Ensure key decisions within NCC support the principles of equalities and Welsh Language	To deliver the actions identified in the Council's Annual Report 2021/22 against the Strategic Equalities Plan.	People, Policy and Transformation	31 st March 2024	In progress The strategic equalities plan is in its penultimate year and will be updated during 2024-25. The latest annual Welsh language and Strategic Equalities Report for 22-23 demonstrate progress to date and key actions for 23-34.

Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date	2022/23 Progress Update
Development of the engagement and participation strategy.	Ideally there should be a formal policy for the type of issues that the Council will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes needs to be developed. Consideration to be given to developing a formal policy and communicating it to all relevant stakeholders.	Law & Standards / People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2023	Complete The Public Participation Strategy was agreed by full Council in May 2022. Participation Strategy Final Format (newport.gov.uk) Engagement in the Strategy will be considered by Democratic Services Committee and performance scrutiny committees as part of their terms of reference.
The Council's Constitution is kept up to date following recent legislation.	The Council's Constitution is kept up to date following recent legislation. Consideration needs to be given to further update the Council's Constitution to reflect the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2023	Complete This is an ongoing process. Council Constitution last updated in March 2023 and includes Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act.
Revised decision making and review/reporting arrangement.	Following the new structure, the interim decision making arrangements which have been in place should be formally updated and implemented.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2023	Complete The Scheme of Delegation has been updated and implemented following the restructure in September 2022. This is reflected in the constitution.
The Council will continue to improve safeguarding arrangements	To deliver the actions identified in the Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22.	Children Services (Safeguarding Team)	31 st March 2024	In Progress As reported in the annual Safeguarding report 2022/23, two actions relating to Member and staff training and external communications have been carried forward into 2023/24. Additionally, three new actions have been raised to improve audit cycles, regional self-assessment tool, and training.

Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date	2022/23 Progress Update
The Council should demonstrate longer-term considerations for its property portfolio strategic planning and associated decision-making processes.	Following the pandemic and the introduction of our 'New Normal' working policies and the development of our new Corporate Plan we will review our Strategic Asset Management Plan, and Disposal and Asset transfer strategies. This will be supported by an asset rationalisation programme in our Transformation Plan.	People, Policy & Transformation	31st August 2023	Complete The Council has commenced its Asset Rationalisation Programme which is now examining the long term strategy in use of the Council's estate to meet the needs of its citizens and users. In the delivery of this programme, the Council is ensuring evidence based cases are considered to support strategic decision making. The delivery of this work is monitored and reported through the People, Policy & Transformation service plan.
Engage with public sector partners across Gwent to realise the potential benefits arising from a strategic approach to a single public estate.	The asset rationalisation programme in our Transformation Plan will also consider opportunities for working with partners, which may be within a Gwent or local/Newport context.	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st December 2023	Complete The Council is delivering its Assets Rationalisation programme. The Council will be considering all viable avenues as part of evidence based cases which its estate have can be effectively used by other partners including public, charity, not for profit and private organisations. The delivery of this work will be monitored and reported through the People, Policy & Transformation service plan.
Implement the actions identified through Information Risk Report and Digital Report to improve the Council's Information and digital governance and processes.	Deliver the actions identified through the Council's Information Risk Report 2021/22 and Digital Report 2021/22.	People, Policy and Transformation	31 st March 2023	Complete Full action plan monitoring is outlined in the Annual Information Risk Report 2022-23 and Annual Digital Reports. And the service plan. Main achievements – accreditations achieved, and Digital Strategy developed and published.

Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date	2022/23 Progress Update
<p>Implement the 'Actions for improvement' from the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2021/22.</p>	<p>Deliver the seven 'Actions for Improvement' identified in the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out of hybrid training to service areas. Review 'My Council' services and improve data capture in the Contact Centre. Analyse complaint demographics and improve recording of data. Standardise digital complaints process. Improve compliance with the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy across service areas. Review and update the Unacceptable Actions Policy. Improve accessibility for disadvantaged and vulnerable customers. 	<p>People, Policy and Transformation</p>	<p>31st March 2023</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>At the end of March 2023, 4 out of 7 were completed and 3 actions remained in progress and continuing into 2023/24. The actions continuing into 2023/24 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse complaint demographics and improve recording of data. Review and update the Unacceptable Actions Policy. Improve accessibility for disadvantaged and vulnerable customers. <p>A full report on the progress against the actions will be presented separately to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee in September 2023 and Cabinet in November 2023.</p>

Overall Conclusion and Self-Assessment of NCC Governance and Performance Arrangements 2022/23

At the end of the last financial year the Council has made an encouraging start to the delivery of the new Corporate Plan 2022-27. As the report highlights good (Green) progress has been made in two of the four Well-being objectives (Objective 2 and 4). But challenges remain across our Social Services, Housing, Infrastructure and Education services on the long term sustainability to meet the demands of residents in Newport within the financial and legislative pressures which the Council is needing to make. The Council has started to deliver several programmes to meet these challenges but we recognise further work will be needed to transform the way which we deliver our services over the next 5 years.

Since the last annual report, we have considered the feedback of the Council's Governance & Audit Committee and Oversight Management Scrutiny Committee to improve how we monitor and report progress against the Corporate Plan and our other strategic priorities across the Council. As the Annual Governance Statement report 2022/23 highlights, the governance and performance arrangements have overall remained **effective**, but we acknowledge that further actions are needed to improve existing arrangements and ensure the Council's governance arrangements continue to improve to support the delivery of its services and ensure stakeholders are involved in decision making. The actions for 2023/24 will support this work and progress will be reported through the Council's service plans and next year's annual report.

Looking ahead at 2023/24 and beyond the Council will need to make challenging and difficult decisions not only to ensure our statutory services remain sustainable but also to ensure that we will have a balanced budget for 2024/25 and in our medium term financial plan. As part of our ongoing monitoring and assessment against the Council's Corporate Plan we will continue to assess and evaluate our Well-being Objectives and strategic priorities to ensure that they remain achievable and will benefit Newport's communities, economy and long term sustainability of Newport City Council.

Actions for Improvement 2023/24

Action No.	Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date
1	<p>Carried Forward (Annual Report 21/22) and AGS</p> <p>Review the Council's Planning, Performance and Risk Policies to align with the Local Government Act and to support the Council to deliver its new Corporate Plan.</p>	Review and update the Strategic Planning, Performance and Risk Management Framework considering feedback from key stakeholders to support the delivery of the new Corporate Plan.	People, Policy & Transformation	30 th January 2024
2	<p>Carried Forward (Annual Report 21/22)</p> <p>The Council needs to deliver the priorities identified in its Participatory Strategy to strengthen the arrangements to involve and engage its key stakeholders in the democratic process and decision making.</p>	Deliver the actions from the Council's Participatory Strategy to improve involvement across Council activities including their role with the Council's performance and meeting with the requirements of the Local Government Act.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2024
3	<p>Carried Forward (Annual Report 21/22) and AGS</p> <p>A review of the governance arrangements around the development, delivery and monitoring of the Council's future 'Transformation Plan' is currently underway and will also include clear responsibilities and arrangements for other key areas, such as financial management, capital programme, major projects etc.</p>	To conclude the review and ensure arrangements are in place.	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2024
4	<p>Carried Forward (Annual Report 21/22)</p> <p>New Members have the appropriate skills to effectively undertake their roles.</p>	Training and Induction for new Members will be reviewed and updated following Local Government elections in May 2022.	Law & Standards	31 st March 2023

Action No.	Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date
5	Carried Forward from Annual Report 21/22 Ensure key decisions within NCC support the principles of equalities and Welsh Language	To deliver the actions identified in the Council's Annual Report 2021/22 against the Strategic Equalities Plan and draft the future Strategic Equalities Plan	People, Policy and Transformation	31 st March 2024
6	Carried Forward from Annual Report 21/22 The Council will continue to improve safeguarding arrangements	To deliver the actions identified in the Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22.	Children Services (Safeguarding Team)	31 st March 2024
7	Carried Forward from Annual Report 21/22 Implement the 'Actions for improvement' from the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2021/22.	Deliver the seven 'Actions for Improvement' identified in the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Annual Report 2021/22: Roll out of hybrid training to service areas. Review 'My Council' services and improve data capture in the Contact Centre. Analyse complaint demographics and improve recording of data. Standardise digital complaints process. Improve compliance with the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy across service areas. Review and update the Unacceptable Actions Policy. Improve accessibility for disadvantaged and vulnerable customers.	People, Policy and Transformation	31 st March 2024
8	Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 Implementation of the 19 actions identified in the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2022/23	Deliver the 19 actions identified in the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and to report progress to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee.	Transformation & Corporate Directorate (Finance, Law & Standards and People, Policy & Transformation)	31 st March 2024

Action No.	Recommendation / Issue(s)	Action	Lead Service Area	Anticipation Completion Date
9	<p>Audit Wales – Setting of Well-being Objectives Report 2022/23</p> <p>As the Council develops the measures it will use to monitor progress against its Well-being objectives, it should ensure they reflect the sustainable development principle – for example enabling it to monitor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against long and short-term objectives and • Progress against objectives that cut across multiple of its own services and other organisations. 	<p>The Council will examine the performance measures available and assess these alongside the Welsh Government’s National performance indicators and Milestones.</p> <p>These will enable the Council to provide an assessment of progress between the short term delivery /service plans and the longer term work which it is undertaking through other programmes such as the Gwent Public Services Board, Cardiff Capital Region.</p>	People, Policy & Transformation	31 st March 2024

Glossary

The table below provides an explanation of the acronyms and terms used throughout the report:

Acronym	Description
AT	Active Travel
ALN	Additional Learning Needs
AQMA	Air Quality Management Areas
CCR	Cardiff Capital Region
CLA	Children Looked After
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
TFW	Transport for Wales
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children
WG	Welsh Government

Corporate Plan / Service Area Plan Red / Amber / Green Assessment

RAG Assessment	Description
Red	The delivery against the strategic priority or objective is not on track. Immediate management intervention is required to improve performance and escalation to relevant senior officer group(s).
Amber	The delivery against the strategic priority or objective is mainly on track with some areas requiring management intervention to improve performance and escalation to relevant senior officer group(s)
Green	The delivery against the strategic priority or objective is achieving and/or succeeding against its agreed targets.

Performance Measure Monitoring and Tolerance Assessment

Newport City Council has an agreed 15% tolerance against targets set in service plans.

RAG Assessment	Description
=> 15%	Performance is under achieving against target or previous year's performance. Immediate management intervention and escalation to relevant senior officer group(s) is required.
< 15%	Performance is off target or previous year's performance but within the agreed 15% tolerance. Management intervention and close monitoring by the service area and Directorate is required.
Achieving	Performance measure is achieving or succeeding against its agree target or previous year's performance. Commentary provided is at the discretion of the service area.

Have Your Say

We welcome your views on this report, the council's plans for the future and how it did last year. We would also like to know how you; your family and your community have been affected by our work to improve the services that we deliver.

Ways to get in touch:

Newport City Council Website: www.newport.gov.uk



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Minicom – (01633) 656 657



Write to –

Newport City Council
Civic Centre
Godfrey Road
Newport
NP20 4UR

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Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Amendment to Council Constitution – ‘Budget Framework procedure rules’

Purpose To update the Constitution regarding the Budget Procedure Rules.

Author Head of Finance

Ward N/A

Summary Following the Council budget setting meeting for 2023/24, the requirement for further clarification of procedures became apparent. The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer have reviewed the position and prepared a draft update to the Council’s constitution which clarifies the position and ensures that Newport City Council’s procedures better align with the ‘Welsh model’ version regarding this whilst ensuring it is also practicable.

Proposal To approve and adopt amendments to the Council’s Constitution in line with the ‘Welsh Model Constitution’ and support the Council to meet its statutory requirements in terms of decision making concerning the Council’s budget.

Action by Head of Finance and Head of Law and Standards – amendments to be applied to the Constitution.

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law and Standards/ Monitoring Officer
- Chief Executive
- Strategic Director - Resources
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Background

1. During the 2023/24 budget setting meeting of the full Council in February 2023, a small number of councillors requested that they introduce some changes to the Cabinet's final budget proposals. They were consequently raised at the meeting as a motion to amend the budget proposals, however, the motion failed to achieve sufficient support and the Budget as proposed by Cabinet was approved.
2. This situation highlighted that the constitution requires amendment to clarify the procedures for alternative budget proposals to be submitted in sufficient time for the budget setting process to be completed in time for the statutory deadline in early March. In addition, this section of the constitution required adjustments to ensure it aligns with the Welsh Model constitution. In light of this, the Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer undertook to review the Council's constitution in regard to the budget procedure rules and how they were being interpreted in terms of the procedures and processes followed.
3. That review has now been completed and the findings and recommendations from that include:
 - (i) Whilst the Council's Constitution broadly aligns to the 'Welsh model', clarification is required in relation to procedure rules for alternative budget proposals to be submitted prior to the budget setting full Council meeting, held at the end of February each year.

The recommendation arising from this review is that the Council's Constitution is amended to ensure that it now aligns with the Welsh model but with permitted local variations to suit our own budget setting timescales.

- (ii) The review noted that the following relevant sections of paragraph 4.1.2 of Article 4, Part 2 of Council's Constitution mirrors the Welsh model:

"The Budget

The budget includes the allocation of financial resources to different services, proposed contingency funds, setting the council tax and decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirement.....and the setting of virement limits."

Therefore, no changes are required to provide any further clarity on what defines the Budget however, members may be reminded of the following points as part of the budget setting process:

- The Cabinet, following consultation, makes the final budget recommendation to the Council on the rate of Council Tax and budget investment/pressures and savings in individual services.
 - The Council makes the final decision on the rate of Council Tax and the budget allocated to services i.e. the budget investment/pressures and savings in individual services.
 - In fulfilling this role, the Council receives the Cabinet's final budget proposals and can adopt them, amend them or substitute its own proposals in their place, provided that any alternative proposals are submitted in line with the newly amended version of the process before the Committee today.
- (iii) The model Constitution combines the budget and policy framework procedures. This introduces practical challenges in relation to the budget setting process and the statutory timescales involved. Managing both processes in the same way introduces significant risk of the Council being unable to set a balanced budget within the statutory timeframes.

There is however local discretion for Councils to introduce variances to the model to suit their own budget setting timetable.

Recommended changes to the Council’s Constitution introduce some practical requirements and processes into the changes outlined above via a separation of the processes for the budget from other policy frameworks. These amendments are as follows:

- A strict deadline for Members to give notice and provide any proposed amendments to proposed Budget to the Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer for consideration; and
- that this includes time for consideration of the suitability of any proposed amendments.

These amendments are required to enable the Council to conduct its business in accordance with statutory requirements whilst enabling oversight by statutory officers who have legal duties to ensure that the budget is robust, balanced and is agreed by full Council in sufficient time to meet statutory and billing deadlines for Council Tax purposes.

4. The changes outlined are incorporated into the draft amended Budget and Policy Procedures document attached as Appendix 1. The amendments are proposed to provide clarity on the respective roles of Cabinet and Council as regards setting the Council’s revenue budget and rate of Council Tax. If adopted and agreed by Council at its January 2024 meeting, the amendments will be applied for the 2024/25 budget setting full Council in late February 2024.

The Head of Finance and Monitoring officer will further review other budget related areas of the Constitution such as the Financial Regulations in due course.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

There are no direct costs in relation to this review and implementation of the changes.

Risks

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?
The new arrangements are implemented without the local additions to ensure practical and other issues are addressed	H	L	The practical additions to the Constitution include deadlines for Members to raise proposed amendments and allow Cabinet time to review and consider.	Head of Legal / Monitoring officer and Head of Finance

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The budget underpins all of the Council's policies and priorities and the recommended changes in this report ensure the full Council determines the budget allocation in line with legal requirements which underpin the 'Welsh Model Constitution'.

Options Available and considered

- (i) To approve the recommended changes to the Council's Constitution as recommended by Democratic Services Committee
- (ii) To not approve the changes as recommended by Democratic Services Committee and keep the current working practices/policy and Constitution in place.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1; the amendments recommended are in line with the 'Welsh Model Constitution' which in turn enables the Council to meet its statutory requirements in terms of decision making concerning the Council's budget.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The report deals with procedural matters pertaining to the Cabinet and Council roles in agreeing the Council's revenue budget and rate of Council Tax. There are no direct financial impacts here.

The proposed changes will provide useful clarification to the respective roles of Cabinet and Council and the practical changes are essential to ensure that the changes can be implemented in a way which ensures the Council agrees a budget that meets both statutory and Council Tax billing deadlines.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The changes recommended are in accordance with the requirements that the Council implements the Welsh Model Constitution as updated in May 2022, with local permitted variations. The Local Government Act 2000 requires every Principal Council to publish a constitution which includes the rules, codes and protocols that govern its business. The Act also gives ministers powers to specify what should be included. The contents of the constitution include provisions that replicate legislation; rules that the Council are required to have but which are not specified; and rules that Council have chosen, to reflect local conventions on how we work.

The current constitution is based on a national model commissioned by the Wales Branch of Lawyers in Local Government ("LLG") and the Welsh Local Government Association ("WLGA") in 2014. The Council made some changes to the national model to reflect local conventions. However, legislation has changed since it was produced and as a result, in 2021 the LLG and the WLGA commissioned a firm of solicitors to produce an updated version. Welsh Government were consulted to ensure that the model conforms to its expectations of what it should contain. The model therefore complies fully with the legislative requirements.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

There are no direct HR implications arising from the proposed change.

The principles of open and transparent governance are consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan and objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

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

All budget proposals which impact on services to the public require an FEIA and this is an established part of the Council's budget setting processes. In formulating final budget proposals, Cabinet and Council are assured and made aware of issues coming out of FEIA's and this will continue

The changes outlined here and included in the Appendix do not give rise to any particular FEIA and arguably, enhances the Council's assessment and approach given the wider range of decision maker's for individual budget proposals

Through ensuring the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance and decision-making processes, the Council will meet the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Consultation

In their meeting on 20th November 2023, Democratic Services Committee considered the proposed amendments to the Constitution and recommended the option presented to Council for approval.

Background Papers

Welsh Model Constitution

Dated: 21st November 2023

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APPENDIX ONE – Revised Constitution

Part 4: Rules of Procedure

2. Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

2.1 General

The Council will be responsible for the adoption of its Policy Framework and Budget as set out in this Constitution. The Policy Framework and Budget documents shall be proposed by the Cabinet. Once a budget or a policy framework is in place, it will be the responsibility of the Cabinet or its individual members or officers to implement it.

2.2 Process for Developing the Policy Framework and Budget

The Policy Framework and Budget shall be prepared by the Cabinet for formal adoption by the Council. Although the Cabinet will propose it, there is a role for Scrutiny Committees in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, which will eventually be adopted by the Authority.

The process by which the Policy Framework and Budget shall be developed is:

- a) The Cabinet will agree and include in its work programme a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of any plan, strategy or budget that forms part of the Budget or Policy Framework. The timetable will allow for the budget proposals to be presented to Scrutiny Committees as part of the consultation process.
- b) At the end of the consultation period, the Chair of the Cabinet will then draw up firm proposals for presentation to the cabinet, having regard to the responses to consultation. The relevant Scrutiny Committee shall be consulted in relation to any item included in the Policy Framework or budget proposals. The Cabinet and cabinet members shall also carry out such other consultation, as they consider appropriate having regard to the nature and effect of the decision. If a relevant Scrutiny Committee wishes to respond to the Cabinet in that consultation process then it may do so. As the Scrutiny Committees have responsibility for fixing their own work programme, it is open to the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, research or report in detail with policy recommendations before the end of the consultation period. The Cabinet will take any response from a Scrutiny Committee into account in drawing up firm proposals for submission to the Council, and its report to Council will reflect the comments made by consultees and the Cabinet's response.
- c) Once the Cabinet has approved the firm proposals, they shall be referred at the earliest opportunity to the Council for decision.
- d) In approving the Budget and Policy Framework, the Council will also specify the extent of any change to approved virement within the budget and degree of in-year changes to the Policy Framework which may be undertaken by the Executive. Any other changes to the Policy and Budgetary Framework are reserved to the Council.

2.3 Process for developing the Budget

- a) Having received the Cabinet's firm proposals, and in reaching a decision, the Council may adopt the Cabinet's proposals, amend them, or substitute its own proposals in their place. The decision shall then be made public.
- b) Any member exercising their right to make amendments or substitute their own proposals to the Cabinet's proposals can only be considered if notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the Proper Officer in writing and signed by the proposer and seconder not later than 5.00pm at least 5 clear days before the date of the Council meeting.
- c) Any proposed amendment by a Member of the Council to the proposals of the Cabinet made in accordance with the above shall only be accepted and submitted to full Council for consideration if in the opinion of the Proper Officer (in consultation with advice sought from the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer) it is deemed to be:
 - Legal, including the requirement to maintain/achieve a balanced budget.
 - Within the competence of the Council.
 - Financially robust.

Members should discuss any proposed changes and amendments with appropriate officers but always including the Council's s151 and Monitoring officers at the earliest opportunity.

2.4 Process for developing other Policy Frameworks

- a) The Council's decision will be publicised, and a copy shall be given to the Leader. The notice of decision shall be dated and shall state either that the decision shall be effective immediately if the Council accepts the Cabinet's proposals without amendment or if the Cabinet's proposals are not accepted without amendment, that the Council's decision will become effective on the expiry of 5 working days after the publication of the notice of decision, unless the Leader objects to it in that period.
- b) If the Leader objects to the decision of the Council, he/she shall give written notice to the Chief Executive to that effect, prior to the date upon which the decision is to be effective. The written notification must state the reasons for the objection. Where such notification is received, the Chief Executive shall convene a further meeting of the Council to reconsider its decision and the decision shall not be effective pending that meeting.
- c) The Council meeting must take place within 10 working days of the receipt of the Leader's written objection. At that Council meeting, the decision of the Council shall be reconsidered in the light of the objection, which shall be available in writing for the Council.
- d) The Council shall, at that meeting, make its final decision on the matter on the basis of a simple majority. The decision shall be made public in accordance with Section 2.4 (a) and shall be implemented immediately.

2.5 Decisions outside of the Budget or Policy Framework

- a) Subject to the provisions relating to virement, the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet, an officer, or joint arrangements discharging Cabinet functions may only take decisions that are in line with the Budget and Policy Framework.
- b) If any of these bodies or persons wishes to make a decision which is contrary to the Policy Framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget approved by full Council, then that decision may only be taken by the Council, subject to 2.4 below.
- c) If the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet, an officer, or joint arrangements discharging Cabinet functions want to make a decision and there is any concern that the proposed decision is outside the Policy Framework or the agreed Budget, the Monitoring Officer will conclude whether the decision would be contrary to the Policy Framework. The Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer will conclude whether a decision would be contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget. If the advice of either of those officers is that the decision would not be in line with the existing Budget and/or Policy Framework, then the decision must be referred by that body or person to the Council for decision, unless the decision is a matter of urgency, in which case the provisions in paragraph 2.4 (urgent decisions outside the Budget and Policy Framework) shall apply.

2.6 Urgent decisions outside the Budget or Policy Framework

- a) The Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet, officer, or joint arrangements discharging Cabinet functions may take a decision which is contrary to the Council's Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget approved by full Council if the decision is a matter of urgency. However, the decision may only be taken in accordance with Standing Orders:
 - if it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the full Council; and
 - if the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee agrees that the decision is a matter of urgency; and
 - having regard to advice from relevant officers, including the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer.
- b) The reasons why it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of full Council and the consent of the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee must be noted on the record of the decision. In the absence of the Chair of a relevant Scrutiny Committee the consent of the Chair of another Scrutiny Committee will be sufficient.
- c) Following the decision, the decision-taker will provide a full report to the next available Council meeting explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

2.7 Limits on decisions on Virement

Action taken by the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet, an officer, or joint arrangements discharging Cabinet functions to implement Council policy shall not exceed those budgets allocated to each budget head. However, such bodies or individuals shall be entitled to vire across budget heads as follows:

Limits	Action By
Within Service Budgets -Up to an aggregate total of £50,000 or 5% per annum of the Objective Analysis as set out in the Budget Book (whichever is the lower)	Chief Officer after appropriate consultation
Within Service Budgets -Up to an aggregate total of £100,000 or 10% per annum of the Objective Analysis as set out in the Budget Book (whichever is the lower)	Cabinet Member following receipt of a report containing the comments of the Chief Financial Officer
An aggregate total of £100,000 to £250,000 or 15% per annum of the Objective Analysis as set out in the Budget Book (whichever is the lower)	Cabinet
Over £250,000	Council

2.8 In-year changes to Policy Framework

Changes to any policy and strategy that make up the Policy Framework can only be made by the Council, except those changes:

- a) necessary to ensure compliance with the Law, ministerial direction or government guidance;
- b) which relate to policy in relation to schools, where the majority of school governing bodies agree with the proposed change.



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Standards Committee Annual Report 2022/2023

Purpose To present the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2022/23

Author Head of Law and Standards
Chair of Standards Committee

Ward General

Summary In accordance with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Standards Committee are required to make an annual report after the end of each financial year and Council is required to consider that report within 3 months.

The statutory annual report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the previous year and, in particular, must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee. In addition, the annual report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups.

This Annual Report covers the period from November 2022 to March 2023 and follows-on from the last report presented to Council in November 2022. This is a shorter reporting period to support alignment with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Proposal To receive the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2022/2023 and to note the forward work programme.

Action by Head of Law and Standards

Timetable Immediate

Signed

Background

1. Standards Committee have presented an Annual Report to the Council over the past 10 years, which provides information about the work carried out by the Committee during the previous 12 months, identifies particular issues that have arisen and sets out the forward work programme for the forthcoming year. The previous annual report was presented to Council on 22nd November 2022 and covered the 12-month period from November 2021 to November 2022.
2. Since May 2022, there has been a statutory requirement under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for Standards Committee to make an annual report as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year and for full Council to consider that report within 3 months. The statutory report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the previous year and, in particular, must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee. In addition, the Annual Report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups. Copies of the Standards Committee Annual Report must also be provided to the Ombudsman and all of the local community councils.
3. In order to align with the financial year, as recommended by the Annual Report for 2021/22 to meet the new legislation, this report considers a shorter reporting period of December 2022 to March 2023.
4. A draft of the Annual Report for 2022/23 is attached for comment and approval prior to its presentation to the next meeting of full Council on 28th November 2023.
5. The Report confirms that, once again, no serious complaints of misconduct were referred to the Standards Committee by the Ombudsman during the period December 2022 and March 2023 and no complaints were referred for determination by the Committee under Stage 3 of the Local Resolution Protocol.
6. The training requirements for City Councillors, community councils and their clerks will continue to be monitored as part of the Committee's forward work programme. The Committee will also be undertaking a review to ensure that all mandatory training has been completed and that all declarations of acceptance of office and registers of members' interests have been completed properly, following the May elections
7. The Annual Report also contains a draft forward work programme for the forthcoming 12 months.

Financial Summary

8. There are no financial implications.

Risks

9. This report is a retrospective consideration of the work of the Standards Committee.

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (1-5)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (1-5)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?

An ineffective Standards Committee would undermine public confidence in local government and would lead to poor quality decision making, with the risk of legal challenge, reputational harm to the Council and sanctions imposed on individual Members	4	1	By proactively promoting high standards of ethical conduct among elected Members and officers and delivering effective training, there have been no findings of misconduct and no serious complaints of breaches of the Code.	Standards Committee Monitoring Officer Deputy Monitoring Officer
Failure to agree key priorities and a structured forward work programme could lead to a reduction in standards and behaviour and undermine the effectiveness of the Committee	3	1	The forward work programme sets out a structured basis for reviewing all ethical standards policies and procedures and reviewing training needs and development	Standards Committee Monitoring Officer Deputy Monitoring Officer

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

10. The Nolan principles, which underpin the ethical standards framework, and principles of good governance, are all enshrined in the Council's corporate and well-being objectives.

Options Available

- (a) To receive the Standards Committee Annual Report and note the forward work Programme.
- (b) To reject the report and/or ask for further work to be undertaken

Proposed Action

- (a) To receive the Standards Committee Annual Report and note the forward work Programme

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

12. There are no financial implications.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

13. Included in the Report.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

14. The Annual Report assists the Standards Committee and the Council in improving ethical standards.

There are no human resources arising from the report.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

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

15. The principles of fairness and equality are embodied within the Members Code of Conduct and the Ethical Framework. No FEIA is required, as the Annual Report is for information purposes only.

- There are no negative impacts in terms of equalities or social disadvantage.
- In terms of the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working

Long-term – The Annual Report will assist Standards Committee and the Council in taking a long-term view about improving ethical standards

Prevention – The Annual Report guide will help to prevent future complaints of misconduct

Integration – The Annual Report has been produced in consultation with key stakeholders

Collaboration – The Annual Report will assist people in interacting with councils and elected members, in a more collaborative way. It will also facilitate collaboration between Standards Committees in discussing matters of common interest.

Involvement – The Annual Report will encourage greater involvement in reporting and resolving complaints

Consultation

16. No comments at this stage.

Background Papers

17. There are no additional background papers.

Dated: 20th November 2023



Standards Committee Annual Report 2022-23

Foreword by the Chair

I am pleased to present the tenth Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2022/23. The Annual Report provides information to the Council about the work carried out by the Committee during the past 12 months and identifies particular issues that have arisen.

This tenth Annual Report covers the period from December 2022 to March 2023 and follows on from the last report presented to Council in November 2022. The Annual Report was previously presented to Council on a voluntary basis. However, Section 63 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced an additional statutory duty under Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000, which requires Standards Committee to make an annual report after the end of each financial year and for full Council to consider that report within 3 months. The statutory report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the previous year and, in particular, must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee. In addition, the Annual Report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups. Copies of this Annual Report must also be sent to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and to the local community councils.

Section 63 of the 2021 Act inserts a new section 56B into the 2000 Act which places a requirement on Standards Committee to make an annual report to the relevant authority. In the case of a principal council, the requirement to report to "the authority" in this context includes any community councils in its area. The draft guidance set out those matters that should be included within the annual report. We were satisfied that the format of this Annual Report to full Council meets most of the requirements of the 2021 Act. The only difference is that the statutory report needs to be in relation to the previous financial year, while the current report (usually presented in November) reflects on the previous 12 calendar months. In order to support this change, this report considers a brief period of time that spans from the time of presenting the last report, to the end of the last financial year. In terms of the future work programme, it may be advisable to bring the annual reporting year more into line with the financial year and presenting this report earlier in the year. Also, the guidance recommends that the Standards Committee annual report is also submitted to each of the local community councils and a copy is sent to the Ombudsman. The annual report also needs to set out how the Committee is discharging its new duties in relation to monitoring group leaders' compliance with their new duties, and the provision of advice and training to group leaders.

The Standards Committee is committed to promoting high standards of ethical conduct among elected Members and officers in order to maintain public confidence in local government. The Committee will continue to proactively review all ethical standards policies and procedures as part of the forward work programme.

This year, we are pleased to report that no serious complaints of misconduct were referred to the Standards Committee by the Ombudsman during the reporting period and no complaints were referred for determination by the Committee under Stage 3 of the Local Resolution Protocol. However, as I have mentioned previously, there is no room for complacency, and it is essential that these standards are maintained.

The training requirements for City Councillors, community councils and their clerks will continue to be monitored as part of the Committee's forward work programme. We will also be undertaking a review to ensure that all mandatory training has been completed and that all declarations of acceptance of office and registers of members' interests have been completed fully.

There have been no changes to the independent members of the Standards Committee during the past year and John Davies continues to serve as the community council representative.

Councillors Paul Cockeram, Farzina Hussain and David Fouweather continue to serve on the Committee as elected member representatives.

Finally, I would like to thank all Members of the Committee and Council officers for their advice and support throughout the last 12 months.

Andrew Mitchell (Chair of Standards Committee)

1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Terms of Reference**

The Local Government Act 2000 Part III requires the Council to establish a Standards Committee to carry out the following statutory functions: -

- (a) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives;
- (b) Assisting the councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (c) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (d) Monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) Advising, training, or arranging to train councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (f) Granting dispensations to councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (g) Dealing with any reports from the Monitoring Officer and hearing any complaints of misconduct or breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct referred by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and determining appropriate action, including the imposition of any sanctions;
- (h) The exercise of (a) to (g) above in relation to the community councils and the members of those community councils.

As from May 2022, the Standards Committee also has the following additional statutory functions, in accordance with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

- (i) Monitoring compliance by leaders of political groups on the Council with their duties under section 52A (1) of the 2000 Act (as amended) to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their groups, and to co-operate with Standards Committee in the exercise of these functions.
- (j) Advising, training, or arranging to train leaders of political groups on the Council about matters relating to those duties

Standards Committee also carries out the following additional functions, making recommendations to the Council, as appropriate:-

- (k) The hearing and determination of “low level” complaints of misconduct at Stage 3 of the Local Resolution Protocol;
- (ii) Providing advice to the Council on the Council's Codes of Practice, including the Officers' Code of Conduct and the Whistle Blowing policy;
- (iii) Monitoring and updating the Codes of Practice as required; and
- (iv) Overseeing the Council's confidential complaints procedure;

1.2 Structure and Membership

The composition and membership of the Standards Committee is prescribed by the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Standards Committee comprises: -

5 Independent Members (persons who have no connection with the local authority)

- Andrew Mitchell (Chair)
- Kerry Watkins (Vice Chair)
- Dr Paul Worthington
- Richard Morgan
- Gill Nurton

3 councillor representatives: -

- Councillor Paul Cockeram
- Councillor Farzina Hussain
- Councillor William Routley (replacing Councillor David Fouweather as from May 2023)

1 community council representative: -

- John Davies (Bishton Community Council)

The independent members serve a term of office of 4 years, although they are eligible to serve two consecutive terms of office. The Councillors are appointed annually by the Council at the AGM and replacement members can be appointed, as necessary, at any time. The community council representative continues as a member of the Committee until his term of office ends or he ceases to be a community councillor, or until he is replaced by another nominee.

1.3 Enforcement of the Members Code of Conduct

The Council's Monitoring Officer is Elizabeth Bryant, the Head of Law & Standards, and the Deputy Monitoring Officer is Mike Wallbank, the Assistant Head of Legal Services

The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer are responsible for: -

- advising Standards Committee on law and procedure,
- ensuring compliance with statutory requirements (Registers of Members interest etc.)
- resolution of "low-level" complaints under Stage 2 of the Local Resolution Protocol
- investigation of complaints referred by the Ombudsman

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("Ombudsman") is responsible for: -

- considering all formal complaints of breaches of the Members Code of Conduct and applying a two-stage test of (1) prima facie evidence of misconduct and (2) whether the breach is so serious as to warrant any sanction
- investigating and reporting (where appropriate) any serious breaches of the Code to the Standards Committee or a Case Tribunal of the Adjudication Panel for Wales

The Adjudication Panel for Wales: -

- Case Tribunals hear serious misconduct cases referred by the Ombudsman
- Interim Case Tribunals can suspend Councillors for up to 6 months pending investigation of serious complaints
- Determine appeals against Standards Committee decisions or sanctions
- Can suspend Councillors for up to 1 year or disqualify for up to 5 years

The Standards Committee

- Conduct hearings and determine complaints referred to them by the Ombudsman and the Monitoring Officer
- Can censure or suspend Councillors for up to 6 months

2. The Committee's work in 2022/23

The Standards Committee is required to meet at least once annually in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000. In practice, the Committee meets on a scheduled quarterly

basis and additional special meetings are arranged, as necessary, to deal with specific matters such as misconduct hearings and requests for dispensation.

Three members are required to attend for a quorum at meetings (including the independent Chair or Vice Chair) and at least half of those present must be independent. The community council representative is not “independent” for this purpose.

The Standards Committee met on one occasion during the reporting period, which is much shorter than usual to align with the new legislative requirements: -

- 12th January 2023

The meeting has been conducted in accordance with Sections 46 and 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Council’s published arrangements for “hybrid” or multi-location meetings. The Committee meeting has been conducted on a “hybrid” basis, with some members present in person and others joining remotely, and the meetings have been broadcast live.

2.1 Dispensation Applications

There have been no applications for dispensations during the reporting period in accordance with the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 and Section 81(4) of the Local Government Act 2000.

Standards Committee are able to grant special dispensation for individual members to speak and/or vote on a particular matter where they would otherwise be disqualified because of a “personal interest” under the Code.

2.2 Local Resolution Protocol

In accordance with the recommendations of the Minister for Local Government and the Ombudsman, the Council has adopted an internal procedure for dealing with “low-level” member/member and officer/member complaints that are not sufficiently serious as to warrant formal investigation and sanction.

It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would periodically update the Committee on the numbers and types of complaints determined at officer level under Stages 1 and 2 of the Protocol but maintaining the anonymity of both the complainant and the Councillor concerned.

No complaints were formally determined under Stages 1 and 2 of the Protocol and no complaints were referred to Standards Committee under Stage 3 during the reporting period.

One Voice Wales has developed a similar Local Resolution Protocol for community councils, in conjunction with the Ombudsman, and further guidance has been provided. The responsibility for resolving these minor complaints rests with the community council clerk, the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer will continue

to provide advice and assistance to community council clerks in relation to the local resolution of minor complaints.

2.3 Succession Planning

In accordance with the Standards Committee (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, independent members are appointed for a period of four years, but they can be re-elected for a second term of office. However, after a consecutive period of 8 years' service, their term of office automatically comes to an end.

There have been no changes to the independent members of the Standards Committee during the reporting period and John Davies continues to serve as the community council representative. Councillors Paul Cockeram, Farzina Hussain and David Fouweather continue to serve on the Committee as elected member representatives.

Andrew Mitchell continues to serve as the independent Chair of Standards Committee and Kerry Watkins continues as the Deputy Chair.

2.4 Group Leaders duty

Section 52A(1)(a) of the 2000 Act (as amended by the 2021 Act) requires that a leader of a political group consisting of members of a county council or county borough council in Wales, must take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group. A "group" for this purpose is defined as 2 or more members who give notice to the Proper Officer that they wish to be treated as a group for the purposes of political balance requirements and the allocation of seats on Council Committees. It should be noted that opposition Group Leaders are only entitled to receive a senior salary under the IRP determinations if their group represents not less than 10% of the overall Council membership (which means a minimum of 6 Councillors, as from May 2022, when the Council was increased to 51 members). The guidance makes it clear that this duty does not make leaders of a political group accountable for the behaviour of their members, as conduct is a matter of individual responsibility. However, they do have a role in taking reasonable steps in maintaining standards, setting an example, using their influence to promote a positive culture, being proactive in promoting high standards of conduct in their group and addressing issues as soon as they arise. A leader of a political group who fails to comply with the new duty in a meaningful way, may potentially be regarded as bringing their office into disrepute, and likely to be in breach of the Code.

Section 62(3) of the 2021 Act amends section 54 of the 2000 Act to extend the specific functions of a Standards Committee to include monitoring compliance by leaders of political groups with the new duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of their group. The draft Guidance issued by Welsh Government suggests that the political group leaders and Standards Committee should agree on the form and frequency of a report from each group leader to the Committee, which would then consider each report and provide feedback to the group leaders. Standards Committee must also provide advice and training or arrange to train group leaders on the new duty. At the start of each administration this should take place within six months of the election and be reviewed at least annually.

The guidance also suggests that the Standards Committee may wish to meet with group leaders periodically to review behaviour.

In November 2022, the Standards Committee met with leaders of all four political groups on the Council – Labour, Conservative, Newport Independents Party and Lliswerry Independents group –, to agree how this duty should be monitored and the nature and frequency of the information that should be submitted to the Committee. We discussed the following matters: -

- demonstrating personal commitment to and attending relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- encouraging their group members to attend relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- demonstrating personal commitment to and attending relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- encouraging group members to attend relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- ensuring nominees to a Committee have received the recommended training for that Committee;
- working to implement any recommendations from the Standards Committee about improving standards;
- working together with other group leaders, to collectively support high standards of conduct within the Council.

Group Leaders were invited to attend the Committee in April 2023 to share updates with the Committee concerning the learning and development activities completed by their members, including that which relates to the standards and behaviour expected from members under the Code of Conduct. Group Leaders were invited to present to the Committee, and to provide a written update summarising these points. The Committee looks forward to this opportunity to find out more about the steps that the Group Leaders are taking to promote and maintain high standards of ethical conduct within their respective groups.

(c) Ombudsman's Annual Report

The Ombudsman's Annual Report is issued in the months following the end of the financial year. This will be tabled for discussion at the Committee following receipt and be considered as part of the next Annual Report.

2.5 Ombudsman complaints

The Ombudsman advises the Monitoring Officer of complaints made against elected members of Newport City Council and community councillors and the outcome. The Monitoring Officer updates the Committee at each meeting about the numbers of on-going complaints being referred to and considered by the Ombudsman's office. This information is provided on a general basis, without disclosing precise details of individual complaints, to avoid any issues about pre-determination in case the complaints are reported to the Standards Committee for determination.

The Committee was advised that 1 complaint was referred to the Ombudsman during the reporting period about a City Councillor and 1 further complaint was determined by the Ombudsman as requiring a referral to the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

The only complaint regarding a City Councillor concerned a failure to respond to telephone calls made by a professional acting on behalf of the complainant. The Ombudsman declined to investigate the matter on the basis that insufficient evidence had been provided of a breach and it was unlikely to be in the public interest to investigate the matter further.

The decision by the Ombudsman to refer a complaint to the Adjudication Panel for Wales relating to the criminal conviction of the former Councillor Chris Evans and a decision from the Panel is awaited during the reporting period.

3. Forward Work Programme for 2022/23

Date	Topic	Information
As and when applications received Review annually	Dispensations	Granting individual and blanket dispensations to Councillors. Reviewing decisions annually to identify common issues and consistency of approach. Produce guidance to Members on any issues arising.
As and when required	Local Resolution Protocol complaints	Update of numbers of complaints received and outcomes. Update on complaints resolved through Local Resolution Protocol
Quarterly	Complaints of Misconduct	Conducting hearings into any Stage 3 complaints by Members or Officers .
April 2023	Group Leaders Discussion	Review compliance by leaders of political groups on the Council with their duties under section 52A of the 2000 Act to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their groups, and to co-operate with Standards Committee in the exercise of these functions.

		Advising, training, or arranging to train leaders of political groups about matters relating to those duties, as necessary
April 2023	National Standards Committee Forum Feedback	Chair to share highlights of the inaugural meeting of the Forum which will consist of all local government organisations in Wales with 4 monitoring officers in attendance at any one time from principal councils, a monitoring officer from the Fire Service and one from the National Park Authorities.
April 2023	Code of Conduct and General Member Training Update	Under the Council's Constitution, the Standards Committee is required to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors. This includes ensuring that members have access to training regarding the Members' Code of Conduct. Ensuring that members have access to a reasonable level of training and development. falls under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years, and the Democratic Services Committee. This information only report includes an update on training conducted since local elections in May 2022 until December 2022.
July 2023	Penn Report	Verbal update.
July 2023	Community Council Support	Verbal update.
October 2023	Annual Report to Council	This tenth Annual Report covers the period from December 2022 to March 2023 and follows on from the last report presented to Council in November 2022 as the statutory report needs to be in relation to the previous financial year. In order to support this change, this report considers a brief period of time that spans from the time of presenting the last report, to the end of the last financial year. In terms of the future work programme, it may be advisable to bring the annual reporting year more into line with the financial year and presenting this report earlier in the year.

		<p>Review of work undertaken in the shorter reporting period, identifying any specific ethical standards issues facing the Council and priorities for the forthcoming year. This is a statutory requirement. The statutory report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the period and must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee.</p> <p>In addition, the Annual Report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups.</p> <p>Copies of the Annual Report must be sent to the ombudsman and all community councils.</p>
October 2023	Group Leaders Discussion	<p>Review compliance by leaders of political groups on the Council with their duties under section 52A of the 2000 Act to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their groups, and to co-operate with Standards Committee in the exercise of these functions.</p> <p>Advising, training, or arranging to train leaders of political groups about matters relating to those duties, as necessary</p>
October 2023	Welsh Government Statutory and Non-statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales (including guidance on standards of conduct)	To update the Committee in relation to the final Statutory Guidance issued by the Welsh Government which was previously reported during the consultation process in March 2022
January 2024	Community Council Review - review of Code of Conduct Compliance and Register of Interests	Check that statutory registers are being properly maintained and procedures for declarations have

		<p>been completed by community councils, following the elections</p> <p>Engage with community councils to ensure compliance and to identify any training and development needs.</p>
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4. Helpful Information

4.1 Can I attend Meetings of the Standards Committee?

Yes, all our meetings are open to the public, except for specific items where personal or confidential information is likely to be disclosed and the public interest requires that these meetings are conducted in private, for example hearings into misconduct complaints

Dates of forthcoming meetings, agendas, reports and minutes are available on our own webpage on the Council website which can be accessed by clicking here: [Standards Committee Webpage](#)

4.2 Who do I contact if I want to know more?

If you wish to find out more about the Standards Committee or make a comment or suggestion, please visit our website: [Standards Committee Webpage](#) where you will find an online contact form or email us at info@newport.gov.uk

Andrew Mitchell
Chair of the Standards Committee

Liz Bryant
Head of Law and Standards

Leanne Rowlands
Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

Anne Jenkins / Taylor Strange
Governance Officers



Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 28 November 2023

Subject Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee

Purpose To present the Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee 2022/23 to Council.

Author Head of Law and Standards and Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Chair of Democratic Services Committee

Ward All wards

Summary The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires each council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Measure prescribes the functions of the committee and requires the committee to make a report at least annually to the Council.

This report proposes the content of the Democratic Services Committee's annual report 2022/23. It also provides evidence that the committee has carried out its required function by reviewing the adequacy of staff to support members.

Proposal To receive the Democratic Services Committee's Annual Report for 2022/23.

Action by Head of Law and Standards and Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Executive
- Head of Finance
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation

1. Background

1.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (“the Measure”) requires each council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Measure prescribes the functions of the committee and requires the committee to make a report at least annually to the Council.

2. Functions

2.1 The Measure prescribes the functions of the Democratic Service Committee as:

- Designating the Head of Democratic Services;
- Keeping under review the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services in order that it is adequate for the responsibilities of the post;
- Making reports, at least annually, to the Council in relation to these matters.

2.2 The Democratic Services Committee cannot discharge any other functions or perform any dual role (for example doubling-up as a Scrutiny committee).

2.3 The Council agreed to widen the role of the Democratic Services Committee to include the consideration of any proposed amendments to the Council’s constitution for recommendation to the executive where appropriate and to the Council.

2.4 The Measure was subsequently amended by the Local Government Democracy (Wales) Act 2013, to specifically provide for a wider range of functions for Democratic Services Committees, along the lines adopted in Newport. The full terms of reference of the Committee, as set out in the Constitution, are contained in the draft Annual Report.

3. Provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services

3.1 Elsewhere on this agenda, the Head of Democratic Services annual report informs the Committee that the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources by the Council is adequate to discharge the statutory requirements in relation to decision making, democratic administration and scrutiny as they currently exist.

3.2 The impact of any changes in statutory requirements, or the needs of members would need to be kept under review and would be the subject of a report to this committee.

4. Financial Summary

The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee is entitled to a special responsibility allowance in accordance with the prescribed members’ allowances scheme. There are no specific costs associated with the running of this committee other than those involved in the cost of administration of this and other council functions within the democratic process.

5. Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs*	Probability of risk	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for
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	(H/M/L)	occurring (H/M/L)		dealing with the risk?
Non-compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Measure	M	L	This report suggests the content of an annual report in line with the requirements of the Measure.	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager / Head of Law and Standards
Inadequate resources to discharge the statutory requirements of the Measure	M	L	The Annual Report confirms the adequacy of existing resources and the proposals for a more effective management structure. The arrangements are the subject of review by the Committee in the event of any changes in functions or requirements.	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager / Head of Law and Standards

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Options Available

- (a) To receive the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report and note the forward work programme.
- (b) To reject the report and/or ask for further work to be undertaken.

Proposed Action

- (a) To receive the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report and note the forward work programme.

6. Comments of Chief Financial Officer

As a position statement, the report is not asking members to approve any financial implications. Other than the special responsibility allowance for the Chair and the budgeted cost of administration incurred in supporting the Council's democratic processes, there are no specific costs associated with the establishment of this committee.

7. Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal issues arising from the Report. The Annual Report sets out the work of the Committee over the past year and confirms that it has discharged its responsibilities in terms of the democratic services function in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

10. Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

There are no HR issues arising from the report. The development of the Participation Strategy is important in meeting the 'Involvement' principle within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

11 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Democratic Services Annual Report outlines how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities in terms of the democratic services function in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. Part of its role is to review and monitor the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance and decision-making processes and the terms of the Council's Constitution.

Through ensuring the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance and decision-making processes, the Council will ensure that requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are met and the following principles of the Act are able to be properly embedded within the Council's governance and decision making structures:

- 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 us meet our objectives.
- Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives or those of other public bodies.
- Collaboration: have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objective.
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City.

The Committee's work in developing and publishing the Council's Participation Strategy supports the development of A More Equal Wales; achieving more diversity in decision-makers and the voices that are heard in decision-making will help to reduce inequalities. The Strategy does not adversely affect any of the other Well-being Goals for Wales. The Strategy underpins the Involvement principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by supporting residents to be involved in making the decisions that affect them, considering diverse needs when developing services, and helping people to feel connected to the place that they live.

Background Papers

[The Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

[Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

[Elections Act 2022](#)

[Newport City Council Constitution](#)

[Participation Strategy](#)

Dated: 20th November 2023



Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-23

1. Introduction

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires each council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Measure prescribes the functions of the committee and requires the committee to make a report at least annually to the Council.

2. Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the committee are set out in the constitution and meet the requirements of the prescribed functions within the Measure.

The Committee's terms of reference are:

- a) To designate the Head of Democratic Services
- b) To consider reports by the Head of Democratic Services in accordance with Section 9(1)(h) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (adequacy of resources to discharge democratic services functions) within 3 months and make recommendations to Council, as appropriate
- c) To ensure that all reports of Democratic Services Committee under Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (recommendations regarding the adequacy of resources to discharge democratic services functions) are circulated to all Members and considered within 3 months
- d) To require the attendance of any Members or officers of the Council to answer questions and invite other persons to attend meetings, as required.
- e) To require any Member or officer attending meetings to answer any questions (unless they are to refuse on legal grounds)
- f) To appoint one or more sub-committees and to arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by such a sub-committee
- g) To review and monitor the effectiveness of the Council's democratic services functions, including:
 - the provision of support and advice to meetings of the Council, committees, sub-committees and joint-committees
 - promoting the role of Overview and Scrutiny
 - the provision of support and advice to Overview and Scrutiny
 - the provision of support and advice to individual Councillors in carrying out their roles as Members
 - such other democratic services functions as may be prescribed from time to time by Regulations made by the Welsh Ministers
 - make recommendation to Cabinet and Council, as appropriate.
- h) To review the adequacy of the Council's democratic services resources and to make recommendations, where necessary

- i) To review and monitor the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance and decision-making processes and the terms of the Council's Constitution and make recommendations, as necessary, to Cabinet and/or the Council.

3. Structure and Membership

The membership of the committee changed following the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May 2023. This included a change of Chair.

From November 2022 to the AGM in May, the Committee was comprised of the following members and Chair;

- Councillor David Fouweather (Chair)
- Councillor Trevor Watkins
- Councillor Kate Thomas
- Councillor Andrew Sterry
- Councillor Phil Hourahine
- Councillor Tim Harvey
- Councillor Alex Pimm
- Councillor Mark Spencer
- Councillor Emma Stowell- Corten

Following the May 2023 AGM, the Committee and Chair now comprises;

- Councillor Ray Mogford (Chair)
- Councillor Kate Thomas
- Councillor Andrew Sterry
- Councillor Phil Hourahine
- Councillor Tim Harvey
- Councillor Bev Perkins
- Councillor Mark Spencer
- Councillor Emma Stowell- Corten

This is a politically balanced group comprising members with various roles in the Council and varying levels of experience. This group works well together and shares a joint aim of seeking to improve the way the Council works.

Councillors from the various groups work together in a non-partisan way to consider various aspects of the Constitution and other matters that impact on the governance of the Council. The apolitical stance taken by members of the committee has encouraged interesting discussions on the topics presented to the Committee.

4. Activities in 2022-23

This Annual report covers the period from November 2022 to October 2023.

The Committee has met on five occasions during this period

- 13th December 2022
- 27th January 2023
- 21st February 2023
- 27th April 2023
- 27th July 2023

All of these committee meetings were conducted in accordance with the Regulations under sections 46 and 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“the 2021 Act”) and the policy for the conduct of hybrid meetings adopted by the Council.

In the preceding 12 months, the Democratic Services Committee has considered the following:

(i) Participation Strategy

- a. Ward Meetings
- b. Participation Strategy Update

The last annual report set out the development of the Participation Strategy, which was facilitated through the Democratic Services Committee. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) 2021 Act required the Council to publish a Strategy on engagement with the public, encouraging people to participate in decision-making. The Council was required to formally adopt a Participation Strategy and Petition Scheme, by May 2022 and to review the strategy at least once following every local government election. Democratic Services Committee considered the draft and final versions of the Participation Strategy and Petition Scheme and approved them for consideration by full Council on 17th May 2022. The Strategy and Scheme were formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on this date.

Under the time period considered by this report, the Committee considered ward meetings as one of many ways that the Council is able to support public involvement in decision-making. The Committee shaped an agreed framework for ward meetings, including the support available for ward councillors, to promote consistency and equality in line with the principle aims of the Participation Strategy.

There was robust discussion around the appropriate schedule of meetings, the support in place for ward members, and the other approaches taken by ward members to engage with residents outside of the ward meeting framework. Committee Members recognised the value of meeting face to face with residents as a channel of interaction that sits alongside other methods of engagement. It was acknowledged that digital engagement is useful to gather feedback from residents, and face to face opportunities to seek feedback from communities would enhance the Council's approach to engagement.

Committee members felt it was important not to limit the meetings to two per ward each year, and for residents to set part of the agenda which reflected the issues pertinent in that community.

The Committee set out the proposed framework to include two fully supported meetings per year attended by senior officers, recognising that this represented a significant investment of resource in supporting ward engagement activities. It was proposed by Committee that a third meeting be retained, with administrative support to secure venues and help to promote the meetings, but this third meeting would not be supported by senior officers.

As setting the budget is one of the most important decisions that the Council makes, the Committee considered that having this as a standard item on one of the ward meeting agendas would boost the feedback and involvement of residents as part of this process. Similarly, having performance updates as a standard agenda item on another ward meeting date in the year would support the Participation Strategy's objective of supporting the public to digest and explore information before they may be asked to give their opinion or recommendations.

The Committee also recommended that officer support for publicising meetings beforehand should form part of the framework. The finalised Ward Meeting Framework was formally presented to Council and adopted in April 2023.

The Committee considered an update on the Participation Strategy in July 2023, and recommended questions to be included in a survey to Newport residents in order to provide a data benchmark concerning factors linked to people feeling able to influence decisions affecting their local area.

(ii) Constitution

(a) Model Constitution

(b) Standing Orders

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 contains a number of measures that required changes to the Council's governance arrangements and Standing Orders, prior to May 2022. Since the Act came into effect, the Committee has considered a number of consequential amendments to the Constitution.

Continuing this work in 2022/23 the Committee received an update on the Model Constitution developed to support harmonisation in local authorities in Wales. The Assistant Head of Law and Standards confirmed that the Model Constitution had been finalised, and outlined the decision-making process of consideration and approval of changes that would take place over the coming year, firstly by Democratic Services Committee, then by Cabinet or Council as appropriate. The Assistant Head of Law and Standards confirmed that the all-Wales document was intended to make decision-making arrangements clearer and more accessible for residents, and that the blanket document would need to be amended in places to reflect localised arrangements where appropriate. The Committee explored the background and implications of the legislation through discussion and welcomed further updates and proposals in order to comply with the legislative requirements and standardise documentation.

The Committee heard that the Model Constitution would be considered as part of the Forward Work Programme, however this will be set out over a number of meetings due to the detailed nature of the relevant sections of the Model Constitution. Furthermore, the Committee heard that any updates to the Constitution would need to be made in accordance with any localised arrangements before being presented to Committee for recommendations. The Committee were appraised that the following provisions were of particular relevance to the current Standing Orders and the way in which business is conducted and managed in Council meetings:-

- the council's arrangements in relation to—
- (i) financial planning,
- (ii) asset management, and
- (iii) risk management

The Committee noted that Council Standing Orders will need to be reviewed and updated to accommodate any changes in governance processes.

In their January meeting, members of the Democratic Services Committee stated that they wished to debate the time limit for Leader's questions under Standing Order 4.2 Questions at Council to the Leader of the Council, as they felt that the time allotted did not afford a sufficient opportunity for Opposition members to ask questions of the Leader in Council.

In addition, a notice of motion was tabled and moved at Council on 24th January 2023 to consider Council Standing Orders under Part 4: Rules of Procedure. This was proposed to clarify the proceedings of the Council meeting when the Deputy Leader is called on to deputise for the Leader in her absence.

The Democratic Services Committee debated potential options and proposed that the Standing Orders make provision for the Deputy Leader to make Leader announcements as part of their deputisation duties at Council. The Committee did not accept all of the proposals outlined in the draft report they considered, but instead presented their own recommendation to Council; that the deputisation role for the Deputy Leader at Council does not require answering Leader's questions at Council, citing the existing provision in the Standing Orders for submitting questions to be answered by the Leader outside of the Council meeting, for example through Standing Order 4.8 Formal Questions at any other time.

A proposal paper based on the recommendations of Democratic Services Committee was presented by the Chair of the Committee to full Council in July 2023. Council approved the recommendations of the Committee, and the Standing Orders were updated in the Constitution accordingly.

(i) Update on Member Training

Under the Council's Constitution, the Democratic Services Committee is required to ensure that members have access to a reasonable level of training and development. The draft Induction Curriculum set by the WLGA to support Members following the May 2022 local elections was considered by the Committee in 2021: a final draft for members at Newport City Council was shared in February 2022.

At the February 2023 meeting, Committee Members were asked to note training and development for elected members in 2023/24. The Committee considered the forward plan for training and made recommendations on topics and provision for the future programme. The Committee also helped to design a survey for all members to provide further input to the learning and development programme.

(ii) Independent Remuneration Panel Wales: Draft Annual Report

The Committee received the final Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report for information only. This is the final Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, setting the Decisions and Determinations on pay, expenses and benefits for elected members of principal councils, community and town councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities for implementation from April 2023. Building on this decision the IRP determined that for the financial year 1 April 2023 to

31 March 2024 it was right to retain a link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents.

The Committee noted the final Allowance Scheme and acknowledged that the Council would consider the Scheme in July 2023.

(iii) Update on Appointments to Regional Scrutiny Committee for the Gwent Public Services Board

In November 2022 Performance Scrutiny Committee for Partnerships resolved to recommend the Terms of Reference for the new regional scrutiny committee and for two representatives to be agreed by full Council. In February 2023, Democratic Services Committee considered a report providing further details of the arrangements for regional scrutiny and the procedural arrangements for appointing representatives.

The Committee received and noted the development of a new regional scrutiny committee to take forward the duties under Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the appointment of two representatives by full Council. The Committee reflected that the Constitutional arrangements would need to be amended to reflect the discharge of this scrutiny function through a regional joint-committee. This will be considered under the Terms of Reference of the Democratic Services Committee as part of the Forward Work Programme; the Committee will make recommendations, as necessary, to Cabinet and/or the Council concerning the Council's corporate governance and decision-making processes and the terms of the Council's Constitution.

The Committee reflected that under the Council's Constitution, Article 4.2 of Part 2 confirms that appointing representatives to outside bodies is a function of full Council, unless the appointment is an executive function or has been delegated by Council. Therefore, the appointment of the two representatives was put forward as an item of business and determined at the Council meeting in February 2023.

(iv) Annual Report of Head of Democratic Services

Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Democratic Services Committee is required to keep under review the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services, to ensure that adequate resources are provided for the responsibilities of the post.

The Committee explored the implications of the Electoral Services being adjoined to Democratic Services and reflected on their experience of the local elections in May. The Committee noted and endorsed the Annual Report and expressed their thanks to the team for their hard work.

(v) Elections Act 2022

- a) Voter ID
- b) Postal Voting

The Committee requested information only updates on some of the key changes the Elections Act 2022 introduced.

The Committee considered the legislative background surrounding the changes, and the key challenges and implications for residents and the Electoral Services team.

The Committee made suggestions concerning the approach to communication and engagement with residents to promote changes and encourage participation.

5. Work Planned for 2023/24

The Committee has maintained an overview of the forward work programme and assessed this at each meeting. The following priorities are identified for the remaining meetings in the current financial year.

(a) Constitution Review

The Committee will continue with the work of systematically reviewing the various parts of the Council's Constitution, with a view to changing to the new modular style of document previously agreed by the Committee.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires Local Authorities to determine when it is appropriate to prepare a report to the Authority setting out proposals in relation to:

- the manner in which the discharge by the Authority of its different functions is co-ordinated, including rules of procedure for various committees;
- the council's arrangements in relation to—
 - (i) financial planning to include budget setting and financial procedure rules,
 - (ii) asset management, and
 - (iii) risk management

(b) Participation Strategy

The Committee will continue to review and monitor the Participation Strategy concerning how the Council engages with the public in order to build on the baseline and ensure its effectiveness.

(c) Annual Reports

In addition, we will continue to provide consultation responses to the IRP draft report and keep under review the adequacy of the Council's democratic services resources and make recommendations, where necessary.

6. Democratic Services Annual Report

Both the Committee and the Head of Democratic Services are required to produce an annual report to Council each year, and this is built into the forward work programme.

Councillor Ray Mogford
Chair of the Democratic Services Committee

Head of Law and Standards

Democratic and Electoral Services Manager