

Caerphilly County Borough Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives 2023-2028

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Foreword from the Leader

This Corporate Plan sets out our direction, priorities and objectives for the next five years. The new well-being objectives help us shape services, target our resources and prioritise our efforts as we continue to deliver the services our communities need.

Since our last Corporate Plan in 2018 we have faced unprecedented challenges including a global pandemic, the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and significant and far-reaching reductions in budgets.

These issues have stretched our resources, tested our resilience and led to changes in the organisation itself. I would like to take this opportunity to commend our teams for the incredible 'can do' attitude they have shown.

In common with other public service organisations across Wales, we continue to face significant financial challenges, but we remain committed to delivering sustainable services that meet the present and future needs of our communities.

We know we must adapt to meet the challenges we face, focusing on flexibility and finding different ways to deliver what our communities need, when they need it. To do this we must engage with our communities to understand the needs of our residents and provide the right support to meet those needs as simply as possible.

Through this Corporate Plan we can take positive and progressive steps to achieve this. My Cabinet and our senior teams are committed to working together to deliver this plan, and through it, the services our communities need.

By working together, we can create a better future for all our residents.



S Morgan
Cllr Sean Morgan
Leader of the Council

2. Introduction by the Chief Executive

Our new Corporate Plan has been developed against the backdrop of some of the most significant societal, economic, environmental and financial challenges we have ever faced.

If we are to successfully deliver the key objectives set out within this document, whilst operating within this challenging landscape, it is clear we need to rethink and reshape what we do and how we do it.

We will achieve this through the delivery of the biggest change programme this Council has ever faced. A challenging, complex but really exciting transformation programme called 'Mobilising Team Caerphilly' and this innovative approach is now gathering pace across the organisation as we begin to see positive progress being made.

But this is just the beginning and, as we move towards delivering our Corporate Plan, even more effort will be required to make it a success.

We know we must adapt to meet the challenges ahead, but this isn't simply about cutting services; it's about flexibility and finding different ways to deliver what our communities need, when they need it.

This includes using fewer buildings, being more business-minded, and making our services more accessible. We will also listen carefully to feedback from our residents to ensure they have the chance to shape their services moving forward.

This isn't going to be easy, but this is absolutely the right thing to do as our communities deserve nothing less.

We have learnt that when we work together as Team Caerphilly, we can make a long-lasting positive impact and this Corporate Plan will provide the blueprint for this success.



Christina HARRY
Chief Executive



3. About us

Our Place

The Caerphilly county borough covers an area stretching from the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north, to Cardiff and Newport in the south. It is bordered to the north by Merthyr Tydfil, the west by Rhondda Cynon Taf, and to the east by Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen local authorities.

The area lies at the heart of both the South Wales Valleys and the Cardiff Capital Region. Caerphilly county borough occupies some 108 square miles (28,000 hectares) of the Valleys area of Southeast Wales. It is a little over 18.6 miles long and nearly 11 miles wide and is formed by the valleys of three rivers: the Rhymney, Sirhowy and Ebbw. Three quarters of the county borough is used for agriculture and forestry. We have an expanding economy and an attractive environment that benefits from excellent transport links with good access to public transport and the South Wales Metro. Active travel and accessibility are important for the county borough. The south has good links to the M4 motorway, and the north connects to the A465 and its links to the Midlands and West Wales/Ireland.

Our county borough is made up of five principal town centres: Caerphilly, Blackwood, Risca, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach. We also have four local centres: Newbridge, Rhymney, Nelson and Bedwas. Each town centre has their own characteristics and attractions that make them great places to shop, work, live and enjoy.

Our People

We provide services to approximately 176,000 residents living across a mixture of urban and rural communities, living in 76,000 households. The 2021 Census showed 40.9% of our population is aged over 50 years; we know that this figure will increase proportionately as life expectancy increases. In relation to protected characteristics we have growing diversity in terms of ethnicity and national identity, and more people are more open to stating their gender identity and sexual orientation. Below is data that gives some context to our place and people, compared where possible to the Gwent region, the rest of Wales and the UK.

Our Demography

	Caerphilly	Gwent	Wales	UK ***
Life Expectancy at Birth (Females) 2018-2020	81.1	81.7	82.1	82.9
Life Expectancy at Birth (Males) 2018-2020	77.4	78.1	78.3	79.0
Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth (Females) 2018-2020	57.0	58.9	62.4	63.6
Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth (Males) 2018-2020	56.7	60.1	61.5	62.8
Percentage of Children Aged 4-5 with Obesity 2021-2022	13.0	12.9	Not verified*	No UK data**
Percentage of Adults with a BMI of 30+ (Obese) 2021-22 & 2022-23	31.7	28.9	25.3	No UK data**

	Caerphilly	Gwent	Wales	UK ***
Percentage Economically Active (16-64) Jan-Dec 2022	74.3	76.2	75.6	78.3
Percentage Economically Inactive (16-64) Jan-Dec 2022	25.7	23.8	24.4	21.7
Percentage Unemployed (16-64) Jan-Dec 2022	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.6
Number of People Homeless (From 2022/2023 Performance Indicator data not census data)	1303 cases			
Number of People on the Common Housing Register as at April 2023	6,500			
Percentage Social Rented Accommodation 2021	18.8	20.0	16.5	17.1*
Percentage Private Rented Accommodation 2021	13.3	14.2	17.0	20.3*
Reliance on Public Transport (no cars or vans in household) 2021	20.3	19.7	1 9.4	23.3*
Percentage of Children living in Poverty (after housing costs) 2021-2022	27.7	25.6	27.9	29.2
Percentage of people with no qualifications 2021	24.1	22.3	19.9	18.2*
Percentage of people with level 4 qualifications or above 2021	25.3	28.8	31.5	33.8*
Percentage of people working mainly from home 2021	23.9	24.5	25.6	31.2*
Percentage of residents travelling to work by car or van 2021	65.2	64.3	61.3	49.0*

* Data only verified in ABUHB and Swansea Bay

** Data collected separately at England and Wales level

*** UK data is from a different source and may have been produced in a slightly different way, organisations in Wales such as Welsh Government and Public Health Wales produce data using their own methods for Wales, and similar organisations in the rest of the UK do this for their own areas, therefore comparisons should be used with caution as they may not be directly comparable.

Our Organisation

The Council is the 5th largest local authority area in Wales and the Council is the largest employer in the area. The Council employs just over 8,000 staff with 73% of employees living in the county borough. Staff are employed into a variety of different roles within service areas which make up the following Directorates:

- Corporate Services and Education
- Social Services and Housing
- Economy and Environment

The Directorates are headed by Corporate Directors who together with the Chief Executive, and Deputy Chief Executive, make up the Corporate Management Team who oversee the delivery of the Council's business, including delivery of this plan.

The Council operates a cabinet style of local government with a Leader, who is supported by 9 Cabinet Members. We have 69 elected Councillors with a variety of roles including agreeing the Council's policy framework, council tax and budget.

Our Responsibilities

The Council delivers over 600 services to the county borough to ensure our people and place are thriving and resilient. From early years support to social care, schools to care homes, environmental protection and infrastructure, provision of social housing, planning, public protection, economic regeneration, and transport planning etc. Our breadth of responsibilities is wide ranging and increasing.

We face significant challenges, the financial outlook for the Council is of serious concern, and the projections for government financial support are worsening year on year. To ensure we remain effective and efficient as a Council during these challenging times, we must reshape and repurpose our organisation and services to ensure we can meet the challenges head on and continue to support the needs of our people and place.

In delivering our Well-being Objectives and our transformation work we have a set of values that were created with our employees and guide us on this journey. They are:

- **Innovative** - We will empower staff to develop innovative and creative responses to challenges faced within a safe culture of mutual respect.
- **United and Connected** - We share a vision that serves the common good; we will actively collaborate and engage in healthy internal communication.
- **Trusted** - We will act credibly, reliably, and will foster, support and maintain positive relationships.
- **Resilient** - We will build teams that are able to rise to the challenges we face and adapt to any adverse conditions.
- **Open and Transparent** - We will communicate openly, share information, listen and appreciate other perspectives, give prompt feedback and learn from our mistakes.

4. How we developed our Well-being Objectives

In Wales we have a law called the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that is designed to help public bodies work together to improve our environment, our economy, our society and our culture.

The law asks us to apply sustainable thinking to our decision-making and to develop our Well-being Objectives to improve the lives of our residents and the environment they live in.

The Sustainable Development Principle is based on **five ways of working**:

- **Long Term** – looking at long term solutions without compromising the well-being of future generations
- **Integrated** – helping other public bodies to meet their goals for the overall good of residents
- **Involvement** – Involving those who have an interest in the well-being of the area and the delivery of our objectives
- **Collaboration** – working with a range of people, and sharing ideas and resources, to help deliver the outcomes
- **Prevention** – understanding the root causes of issues so we can put the right solutions in place to prevent problems arising or getting worse

Using the above principles is the beginning of the process to develop our Well-being Objectives.

We gathered a range of data and asked our communities what they thought by:

- Researching the local assessment of well-being and that was recently conducted on behalf of the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB). Our teams conducted a thorough assessment of five community areas across the county borough through the use of data, population statistics, consultation, and engagement. Caerphilly County Borough Council led on the development of the regional Well-being Plan for the PSB, and you can read more about the assessment in this link [Local Assessment of Well-being](#).
- Reviewing the Labour Party Manifesto, as this details the political commitment of the elected administration for the next five years and held workshops with the Cabinet to confirm the vision.
- Consulting with our communities as part of the ongoing ‘Caerphilly Conversation’ to ask people ‘what matters to them.’ We aimed to reach as many people as possible and paid particular attention to hearing the voices of seldom heard groups. This was both an online and face to face consultation, held in libraries and community places across the county borough. You can read more about our consultation work and methods here: [What Matters Conversation 2023-2024](#).
- Recognising that inequality exists in our communities, as identified in the Well-being Assessment, the Gwent Public Services board agreed to become a Marmot Region, and as such we will undertake actions to reduce inequalities within the county borough as our contribution to the Public Services Board Well-being Plan. There are 8 Marmot Principles, and we have reviewed our objectives and steps, to see how they contribute towards those principles. You can see the connections in section 6 page 40.

- Holding workshops with our management networks to establish what outcomes services could deliver to meet the draft Well-being Objectives.
- Asking our employees what they thought and promoted an online consultation.
- Reviewing other consultations that took place in 2022.
- Asking the Caerphilly Local Delivery Group of Public Services Board partners to consider our objectives.
- Looking at data in our performance reports to consider what areas we want to improve upon.
- Once formed, we took the draft Well-being Objectives to our elected members for their views and input.

From the activities above we have drawn out five Well-being Objectives each with five aspirational outcomes that we aim to deliver across 2023-2028.

The Act asks us to develop our objectives in a way that maximises delivery towards the National Well-being Goals that Welsh Government has set for Wales. The table below demonstrates how our local Well-being Objectives contribute to the National Goals.

How our Well-being Objectives link to National Well-being Goals	A Prosperous Wales*	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language	Globally Responsive
Well-being Objective 1 Enabling Our Children to Succeed in Education	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Well-being Objective 2 Enabling Our Residents to Thrive	•	•	•	•	•		
Well-being Objective 3 Enabling Our Communities to Thrive	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Well-being Objective 4 Enabling Our Economy to Grow	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Well-being Objective 5 Enabling Our Environment to be Greener	•	•	•	•	•		•

*We note that the National Goal – A Prosperous Wales will change its description from secure ‘decent’ to ‘fair’ work in 2024. When we review our objectives for relevance during our annual review cycle we will consider this change at that time.

The Well-being Objectives have been developed alongside the significant financial challenges faced by the Council. Due to the extended period of austerity and increasing demand for many services, the financial position for Local Government has been challenging for a number of years. During the period 2008/09 to 2022/23 Caerphilly County Borough Council has delivered savings of more than £100m to address reductions in funding and inescapable cost pressures.

The Council has managed the financial challenges presented by the cost-of-living crisis during the 2022/23 financial year, but the position is likely to continue to be extremely challenging for both residents and the Council. The 2023/24 budget proposals, approved by Council on 23 February 2023, included total cost pressures of £55.478m. These pressures are being funded through an increase in the Welsh Government Financial Settlement of £22.152m, permanent savings of £4.972m, temporary savings of £6.862m, the one-off use of reserves totalling £15.345m, and £6.147m from a 7.9% increase in Council Tax.

Due to the unprecedented levels of inflation experienced during 2022/23 (Consumer Prices Index peaking at 11.1%), the current economic outlook, and the range of temporary budgetary measures that were approved for the 2023/24 financial year, the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated based on a range of assumptions, resulting in a potential savings requirement of £48.335m for the two-year period 2024/25 to 2025/26.

Given the scale of the challenge that we collectively face, a financial strategy that seeks to continuously salami slice our services and deplete our reserves is not a sustainable or an appropriate approach, especially when the demands upon our services are far higher than ever, as our communities continue to present far greater and increasingly complex needs to us. To ensure we can meet the needs of our communities, whilst operating with reduced finances, a whole Council and a whole county borough holistic approach is needed.

The Council will require a new whole organisation approach to service delivery and this significant and complex change programme is being led by the Chief Executive, Leader, Corporate Management Team, and Cabinet. The programme is co-ordinated through two key elements - Service Transformation and Place-shaping Investment. It is vital that the required changes are developed at pace and key decisions are made early to ensure the projected savings requirement for 2024/25 and 2025/26 can be delivered.

5. Our Well-being Objectives 2023-2028

Our Well-being Objectives should be considered as an integrated suite of objectives that are complementary to one another. We have set our ambition for each outcome and the impact we intend to make at the end of the five-year period. These are 'future statements' that set out what we want to achieve and how we will measure our progress along the way.

Our Corporate Plan encompasses a wide range of delivery areas, including community regeneration, improving education, integrating health and social care, tackling environmental challenges and driving economic development. Through setting clear and measurable objectives across these areas, we can work towards improving the overall economic, social and environmental well-being of our residents, ensuring the people and places across our county borough can be the best they possibly can be.

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OBJECTIVE 1 ENABLING OUR CHILDREN TO SUCCEED IN EDUCATION	OBJECTIVE 2 ENABLING OUR RESIDENTS TO THRIVE	OBJECTIVE 3 ENABLING OUR COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE	OBJECTIVE 4 ENABLING OUR ECONOMY TO GROW	OBJECTIVE 5 ENABLING OUR ENVIRONMENT TO BE GREENER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have built effective leadership to maintain our aspiration for all learners to achieve high standards and make strong progress on their educational journey. • We will have safe and inclusive provision that will support the progress of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners • We will have improved literacy (English and Welsh), numeracy, digital, physical and wider skills to provide our learners with better life chances • Learners will have received effective support to ensure that post-16 destinations are appropriate and sustainable • We will have built new and refurbished schools and settings, creating learning environments that engage and inspire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have responded to our aging demographic including creating age friendly communities • We will have met the needs of our most vulnerable children and adults • We will have enabled the Community and Voluntary Sector to support our residents • We will have supported residents through the cost-of-living crisis • We will have built new Council houses, provided more affordable homes, brought empty properties back into use and worked towards the prevention of homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our physical infrastructure and digital connectivity will have improved to help people access towns, communities and services • We will have worked with partners to improve access to public and other alternative modes of transport to keep towns connected and enhanced active travel opportunities between communities • We will work with partners from across the Public Service Board towards improving the well-being and healthy life expectancy of our communities • We will have created conditions that enable our communities to be healthier and more active • We will have attractive open spaces that enhance quality of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have worked towards ensuring we have the necessary infrastructure in place to enable our economy and communities to grow • We will have worked in partnership to support businesses with a range of interventions aimed at stimulating the local economy • We will have a stronger relationship with our Business Community through town centre regeneration • We will continue to work with the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) to increase the availability of quality employment opportunities in the area and enhance our economy • Our local workforce will have the skills that employers need locally and regionally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have worked with our residents to meet our statutory targets in relation to waste reduction, reuse and recycling • We will have reduced our operational carbon emissions to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030 • We will have helped our communities transition to low carbon transport • We will have promoted and explored green energy opportunities for the council, communities and businesses • We will have protected and enhanced our natural environment to improve biodiversity and make us more resilient to climate changes • We will have set climate standards for new build Council Homes and worked to improve the green energy credentials and energy efficiency of our housing stock

5.1 How we will deliver our Well-being Objectives

The whole Council, our political leaders, our Corporate Management Team, and our employees, have a responsibility to deliver the Well-being Objectives and to work towards the outcome statements on behalf of the county borough.

Our Well-being Objectives have been developed with the guidance of the political administration; they cut across the whole of the Council and their delivery is the responsibility of the Corporate Management Team.

Whilst they are defined as a set of outward facing Objectives, the delivery of them together with the mechanisms to achieve them are firmly rooted in the day-to-day delivery of Council services. Our Corporate Management Team, working with senior leaders across the Council, will ensure that progress is integrated into our corporate and departmental performance management framework. Section 7 of this plan shows how we will monitor progress and build in democratic oversight through our Joint Scrutiny arrangements.

Reshaping the Council to meet the Challenge

We embarked upon our journey to transform the Council and established our *Team Caerphilly – better together* ethos in 2020. This has provided us with a sound basis upon which to build our whole organisation transformation programme. Over the next few years, we will reshape and refocus how we operate as a council and how we deliver services, with a focus throughout upon meeting the needs of our citizens. Our immediate efforts will concentrate upon:

- Improving our customer journey
- Transforming our internal ways of working to deliver efficiencies
- Collaborating with our partners to become more effective
- Ensuring we can adapt to changes and shift our services to new ways of working quickly
- Making sure our schools, social housing, leisure and social care sites are fit for the future
- Continuing to develop our physical infrastructure to regenerate the county borough

Looking Outwards

The Objectives are designed to complement the work of the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) and the desire of strategic leaders across the region to focus on the inequity some of our communities' face through the Marmot principles.

Gwent PSB agreed to become a Marmot Region and to adopt the eight Marmot principles to reduce health inequalities and inequity across Gwent. Gwent is the first area in Wales to become a Marmot region. The PSB performance management framework lists a set of proposed Marmot indicators, and we will also use these to help us monitor our progress against our Well-being Objectives. The majority of the data for the Marmot indicators will come from other organisations such as Welsh

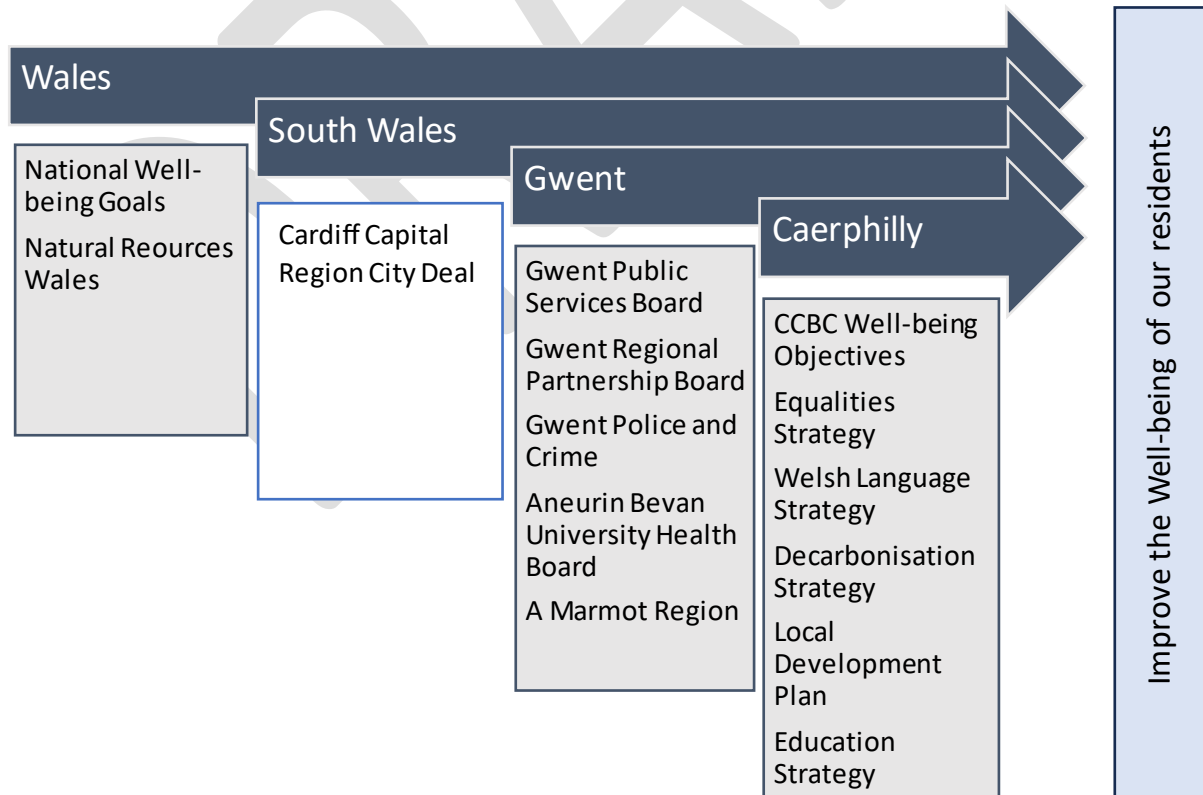
Government and Public Health Wales, but we will use them wherever they are relevant and whenever they are available. However, we may not always be able to report on some of the data as part of our annual review as it may be made available at different times during the year.

We know that some of our communities have poorer well-being and that factors such as the cost-of-living crisis impacts directly upon poor mental and physical health. We recognise that we have to work as effectively as we can to improve individual and community well-being, and this requirement is reflected within the corporate objectives.

The Council has declared a climate emergency with an overall aim to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030. This ambition will require us to embed carbon reduction into everything we do. This ambition permeates through all we do.

How our Well-being Objectives Align to Other Strategic Partnerships, Plans and National Policies

Whilst our aim is to serve the population of Caerphilly County Borough, we sit firmly within a wider partnership family. We know we can't deliver these objectives alone and working with our partners is a key requirement. It's a complex landscape and the diagram below outlines our key partnerships.



Our objectives, along with our partners objectives, are aimed at improving the well-being of our population. We each contribute and consult with each other to ensure that we have a thriving economy, a healthy population, safe and supported communities, and a biodiverse natural environment.

The table below demonstrates how our Well-being Objectives align with the objectives of our main partners. There are of course many other partners that work alongside us, working towards similar objectives, which we in turn will contribute towards.

How our Well-being Objectives link to our Partners	Gwent Public Service Board	Marmot Principles	Gwent Regional Partnership Board	Cardiff Capital Region	National Resources Wales
Well-being Objective 1 Enabling Our Children to Succeed in Education	•	•	•	•	
Well-being Objective 2 Enabling Our Residents to Thrive	•	•	•	•	•
Well-being Objective 3 Enabling Our Communities to Thrive	•	•	•	•	•
Well-being Objective 4 Enabling Our Economy to Grow	•	•		•	
Well-being Objective 5 Enabling Our Environment to be Greener	•	•		•	•

More detail on how our objectives contribute to our partners objectives can be found on page 40.

Well-being Objective 1 Enabling Our Children to Succeed in Education

1. What will this look like?

- We will have built effective leadership to maintain our aspiration for all learners to achieve high standards and make strong progress on their educational journey
- We will have safe and inclusive provision that will support the progress of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners
- We will have improved literacy (English and Welsh), numeracy, digital, physical and wider skills to provide our learners with better life chances
- Learners will have received effective support to ensure that post-16 destinations are appropriate and sustainable
- We will have built new and refurbished schools and settings thereby creating learning environments that engage and inspire

2. Why we chose this (our Well-being Statement)?

Stakeholders living and working across the Local Authority recognised the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent impact on children, learners and young people who were unable to regularly attend school. Vulnerable or disadvantaged learners, children in early years settings, learners accessing post-16 education, and learners in Welsh-medium settings may have been more disproportionately affected than others.

This is also a moment of significant transformation in education with the implementation of [Welsh Government Curriculum Reform](#), which aims to secure high standards and aspirations for all, including those affected by the impact of poverty. The purpose of every school and setting's curriculum is to support our children and young people to be:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

Throughout 2021-2022, a detailed and wide-ranging stakeholder engagement across Caerphilly identified ambitions for education across the county borough. This feedback directly shaped this corporate objective, revised education strategy and associated policies and plans and provided the following feedback:

- Pupils want an inclusive curriculum that provides creativity and autonomy. They would like a broad range of experiences delivered through high quality teaching. They would also like to take an active role in their school providing meaningful and valued feedback that informed decisions around curriculum content.

- Young people want to learn life skills that will enable them for the future. This includes learning a range of practical activities such as art, music, sport, construction and financial management. They also want to receive the best support to enable them to make the right choices at post-16.
- Parents and carers want happy, confident children in schools where all children's strengths are recognised. They want to see strong relationships and effective communication between school and families. All children should be treated equally, regardless of background and circumstances.
- Governors in schools want to ensure pupils in schools are learning in safe, inclusive environments with focus on the acquisition of reading, writing and digital skills. They also want equity for all learners.
- School leaders, teachers, learning support assistants and other school staff want to see the successful implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act having tangible benefits for learners. Strong peer networks across clusters and the wider school community will lead to improve transition and support.
- Further education colleges and Careers Wales want to see pupils with additional learning needs thriving in post-16 environments. They also want to see a focus on improving pupils' resilience and well-being, equipping pupils with the skills to achieve their full potential.
- Union colleagues would like to see more support for key groups of learners including the most vulnerable and more able and talented learners.
- The Scrutiny committee want to close the gap in educational attainment between groups of learners and to increase the proportion of our residents able to communicate through the medium of Welsh. All aspects of the education system should be responsive to the needs of each learner, so that everyone feels valued and supported in the learning pathway.
- Respondents were asked to identify what was most important to them in relation to education. Recurring points raised include that:
 - Education provides skills for jobs and work and that vocational education is future proof.
 - The curriculum should focus on providing practical, broad ranging, life skills and not just academic achievements.
 - School buildings and facilities need to be, modern and fit for purpose
 - Provide a safe environment.
 - Teaching should be high quality.
 - Education needs to be diverse and inclusive and accessible to all (disability, Welsh language provision).
- Adult education is also important as is access to technology for all including reliable broadband to support education.
- We need to encourage higher aspirations and raise expectations.
- Pupil attendance has declined following the Covid-19 pandemic, with particular impact on families from disadvantaged backgrounds. Similarly, vulnerable pupils have faced additional challenges which has impacted negatively on exclusions data.

- Our wider Caerphilly Conversation to Residents in November 2022 identified that 93% of respondents thought Education was more important than the last time this question was asked.
- Welsh Government have set a minimum target of 26% of pupils taught through the medium of Welsh for learners in year 1 by 2032 in order to meet the 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 target. In 2019/20 our percentage was 17.9%. The period when young people leave Welsh medium education is a crucial time, in terms of establishing patterns of language use. We want to increase the number of pupils taught through the medium of Welsh as there is a high demand across all industry roles for Welsh speakers. It is therefore crucial we seek to increase the number of young people leaving school who speak Welsh, as well as increasing the opportunities for adult learners.
- The Labour administration manifesto pledge as part of the local government 2022 election campaign was to “Build and Rebuild more 21st Century Schools, and continue commitments to improving standards and outcomes, high quality Welsh Language Education, and life-long learning through libraries and adult education”.
- The Marmot principles focus on addressing inequality and this has a weighting towards children, early years and a best start in life.

3. What steps will we take to achieve this?

The key actions and detail are represented in the implementation of our education strategy – ‘Pursuing Excellence Together’ [Education Strategy 2022-2025](#). The Education Strategy redefines the vision for all children, young people and adults accessing education across Caerphilly.

In order to achieve the outcomes, we will prioritise:

- The development of skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment, provision, and well-being.
- The acceleration of the progress of vulnerable pupils educated outside school (EOTAS) or home educated/schooled, and those leaving school at 16 with no education, training, or employment (NEETS).
- The improvement of pupil attendance and reduction of exclusions, with particular focus on vulnerable groups as attendance was 10% down on pre Covid-19 levels. The exclusions were too high pre Covid-19 and are even higher now.
- Closing the gap in attainment between those learners from low-income backgrounds and those who do not live in poverty.
- The provision of sufficient school places to meet demand as well as upgrading/replacing school accommodation, as appropriate, through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (Formerly known as 21st Century Schools).

4. What evidence will we use to monitor progress?

A wide range of quantitative and qualitative data will be used to monitor our progress against this objective. From this we have chosen a set of priority indicators. We will also use the Marmot indicators wherever relevant.

Priority Indicators

1. Improve attendance for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
2. Reduce or ensure the number of schools placed in a follow up category by Estyn remains low
3. Reduce the percentage of 'at risk' NEET young people at the point of leaving compulsory education
4. Reduce the number of surplus places
5. Reduce the number of permanent exclusions and the number of fixed term exclusions

Marmot Indicators

None that are applicable to Caerphilly at this time.

5. What resources will we use to deliver these outcomes helping to meet the objective?

A range of grants are applied for throughout the year for a range of work. In 2022/23 there was an estimated £39m of revenue grant funding used by the Education Directorate. Whilst grant funding brings a degree of uncertainty for future planning purposes, the Council has been successful over recent years in maintaining high levels of grant income and expect this success to continue over the medium term

Although grants and funding can change over time, the list below identifies some of the main resources we have available to deliver our objective.

- A base budget of approx. £173m to deliver our work.
- We will work with our stakeholders to ensure school improvement services are as cost effective and impactful as possible.
- We will make best use of digital grant funding. For example, in collaboration with the Welsh Government and all 22 local authorities in Wales, developing the 'sector owned, sector led' EdTech Service to ensure schools and local authorities achieve the best value for money when purchasing digital equipment, software and services.
- Within childcare we are bringing funding streams together (both capital and grants) and services like midwifery are also coming together. We are sharing buildings with wider partners and have shared pooled funding agreements, as well as aligning funding streams internally to widen the staff team we have in Early Years to support further across the County Borough.

- Our new schools' builds programme will aim to include childcare from inception.
- We are creating community focused schools so schools can be an asset for the community. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is a jointly funded major capital investment programme between Welsh Government and the Council. As part of the current 'Band B' programme, the Council has secured a £78million investment which is currently delivering school improvement projects such as a new replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, an extension for Trinity Fields School, a new Centre for Vulnerable Learners in Pontllanfraith, a new build extension as part of the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School and a new replacement Plas-y-felin Primary School which will be the first Net Zero Carbon School for the Council.

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Well-being Objective 2 Enabling Our Residents to Thrive

1. What will this look like?

- We will have responded to our ageing demographic including creating age friendly communities
- We will have met the needs of our most vulnerable children and adults
- We will have enabled the Community and Voluntary Sector to support our residents
- We will have supported residents through the cost-of-living crisis
- We will have built new Council houses, provided more affordable homes, brought empty properties back into use and worked towards the prevention of homelessness

2. Why we chose this (our Well-being Statement)?

Over the next ten years (2033) 23.5% of our population will be in the 65 and over age group, an increase of 4.2% from 19.3% in 2018. Whilst our population of older adults is increasing, our birth rate is reducing. Social isolation and lack of connections can negatively impact our ageing residents. We therefore want to promote equality and interaction within communities and between generations.

We conducted a locality assessment over 5 community areas (the Gwent Well-being Assessment February 2022), and this identified that meeting the needs of our most vulnerable was a priority for both children and adults. Isolation in the wake of Covid-19, raised concern that we 'should cater for older people to remain as active and independent as possible' and 99% of respondents said looking after the vulnerable must be a priority post pandemic.

From a social care perspective, meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and adults is core business underpinned by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Safeguarding is everybody's business, and the Act places a legal responsibility on everyone, not just professionals, to report concerns to Social Services or the Police.

However, whilst safeguarding is at the heart of our core business, we provide services to a wide range of people who may require additional support in order to retain their independence and to remain living together as families. All assessments completed are based on the 'what matters conversation' enshrined in statutory guidance that aims to help people and families to help themselves. Services provided are based on the individual needs identified by the assessment.

We know our communities will be severely impacted by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Our population data highlights that 34% of children are living in poverty (after housing costs). Consequently, people in the greatest need will turn to the Council for support, navigating and accessing any financial or practical support that is available.

Increasing numbers of homelessness across the county borough is also a concern as well as a lack of affordable housing. Our ongoing Caerphilly Conversation consultation in Autumn 2022, highlighted 95% of people responding felt that homelessness should stay as important once lock down restrictions ended. 86% of respondents said housing and homelessness was important, 56% of whom said it was more important than last year.

Private sector housing accommodates 80% of households in Caerphilly and the Council has a finite resource to improve this, yet the outcomes can be significant. Private sector housing investment can make an important contribution to improving housing conditions, increasing independence, preventing homelessness, tackling fuel poverty, increasing housing supply, widening choice and creating sustainable communities.

Within the borough 20% of our residents live in social housing and Caerphilly Homes (the Council's Social Housing Service) are the biggest provider in the county borough as we own and manage nearly 11,000 homes. At present we have 6,500 people on our waiting list, consisting of a combination of those who wish to move from one area to another, a larger property, a smaller property or those who need a property. A lack of supply of an adequate range of homes, combined with the popularity of the county borough, has increased house prices for rental and purchase to unaffordable levels for some people.

Our evidence, supported with Welsh Government household projections, indicates we need to increase the supply of affordable homes, especially 1-bed and 4-bed homes, as we have a disproportionate over provision of 3-bed homes. North of the county borough up to 90% of housing is pre 1914 terraced housing of poorer quality, which brings challenges for achieving modern energy standards and suitability for modern family living.

In supporting the ageing demographic, elderly people tell us they wish to stay in their own home; to assist with this desire, we recognise this will require new homes to be built as flexible and adaptive 'lifetime' homes as part of our longer-term planning.

We are already making some progress towards this and have completed just over 500 minor adaptations and 86 major adaptations, alongside a further 52 Disabled Facilities Grants over the last year, thereby helping residents to remain independent in their own homes and this positive activity will continue over the longer term.

It is also well-documented that we have experienced unprecedented rises in inflation, and fuel bills leading to a cost-of-living crisis. The Private Rented Sector makes up 12% of the housing market and rent levels nationally, regionally, and locally are increasing.

We created a service called 'Caerphilly Cares' during the pandemic to support residents. Post Covid-19 we have adapted this service to meet the needs of our most vulnerable and in need of financial and emotional support. So far, this service has:

- Received over 5,000 calls from our residents and 200 emails asking for help.
- Set up 33 authorised Welcoming Spaces across 49 venues totalling £144,000 of investment.
- Supported 46 community organisations & groups to obtain funding worth over £250,000.
- Supported over 300 individuals on a 1-2-1 basis of which 78 have been helped to access local community provision.

- Arranged 800 food parcels and 800 successful applications for discretionary housing payments.
- Provided energy advice to over 250 tenants.
- Made 350 referrals to Citizen Advice Bureau for debt and money advice.
- Supported over 1,000 residents to apply for the Welsh Government Winter Fuel Payment.
- Generated £3.2m additional income for residents during the 2021/22 financial year.
- Welsh Data shows that the annual change in rental prices has gone from 1.7% from April 2022 to 4.4% by March 2023*.
- The cost-of-living data shows that the average price to heat a home from October 2020– April 2021 was £1042 and had increased in October 2022– April 2023 to £2500 per annum*.

**Source Data Cymru*

This information shows there is still a strong need to support our residents through the cost-of-living crisis, and in the longer term we intend to build further community resilience with our voluntary sector and community partners.

There is a long-term vision for a larger range of services to work collaboratively 'under the umbrella' of Caerphilly Cares to support early intervention and prevention, to meet the needs of all residents and support the most vulnerable.

3. What steps will we take to achieve this?

In order to achieve the outcomes, we will prioritise:

- Continue to build Council Housing as well as working in partnership with local housing associations and housing developers to deliver new homes.
- Developing a new respite/short breaks service for both adults and children.
- Expanding our Flying Start areas and offering joined up support in partnership across Gwent to more families than before.
- Creating better choices across housing options, identify and bring new sites forward and bring empty homes back into beneficial use.
- Implementing a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- Increasing accommodation by exploring opportunities to work with the Private Rented Sector for people who are in housing need.
- Promoting and running literacy courses and other learning such as cooking and drama, which can support residents with independent living skills.
- Continue with the approach of 'What Matters' conversations to better understand the underlying needs of our individuals and our communities.
- Work in partnership with the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) to further promote and expand the voluntary sector across the county borough.

4. What evidence will we use to monitor progress?

A wide range of data, including qualitative feedback, will be used to monitor our progress against this objective. From this we have chosen a set of priority indicators. We will also use the Marmot indicators were relevant as noted below:

Priority Indicators

1. Increase the numbers of adults who are supported to live independently
2. Reduce or ensure the number of children on the Child Protection Register and Children Looked After remains stable
3. Increase the percentage of people whose care and support has helped them have a better quality of life
4. Increase the value of financial savings generated as a direct result of face-to-face support on the effects of cost-of-living crisis
5. Increase the number of cases where residents have had risk of homelessness prevented by remaining in existing accommodation
6. Increase the number of new homes built directly or in partnership

Marmot Indicators

1. Percentage of people whose care and support has helped them have a better quality of life. *Source: National Survey*
2. Percentage children living in relative low-income families. *Source: Department of Work and Pensions*
3. Percentage people living in households in material deprivation. *Source: Welsh Government*
4. Rate of households for whom homelessness was successfully prevented for at least 6 months per 10,000 households. *Source: Welsh Government*
5. Rate of households in temporary accommodation per 10,000 households. *Source: Welsh Government*

5. What resources will we use to deliver these outcomes helping to meet the objective?

Safeguarding and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable adults and children is an essential element of our core business and this is delivered with core funding to deliver an effective range of services. Welsh Government grant funding is also used to provide a wide range of early intervention and prevention services that underpin the statutory work undertaken across the Council. Any changes to this grant funding will inevitably impact upon demand for statutory intervention. We continue to engage in all regional partnerships and collaborations to share learning, to inform service development and improve service delivery.

We will fund this objective from our core budgets but we will also establish a workstream of the Affordable Homes Partnership with Registered Social Landlord partners, looking at the later living requirements and options to encourage right sizing.

We will use Housing Revenue Account funds to redevelop existing sheltered stock and new build housing for our ageing community. The Rapid Rehousing Transitional Plan Housing Revenue Account (HRA) identifies resources and use of borrowing for new builds.

The Council funds Cornerstone who work with us to provide a homeless outreach service and support in bed and breakfast. Cornerstone also lead on the Prison Pathway, delivered in partnership with National Probation Service and Local Authorities to deliver immediate response, enhancing engagement levels with prison leavers to help reduce re-offending rates.

Our reconfigured rents team will move rent collection officers into tenancy support roles to support our contract holders to sustain their tenancy and not look to evict when facing difficulties with low level arrears.

Our Adult Education and Life skills work has a programme called 'Multiply' which is an educational and learning funding stream via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Coleg Gwent Franchise also deliver essential skills for 5 authorities across the region.

ILS (Independent Living Skills) Coleg Cymorth also provides a fund to deliver independent living and community learning grant.

Supporting People is funded by the Housing Support Grant which is currently £8.5m. This is an early intervention grant programme to support activity, which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to keep accommodation. Funds are allocated for four primary objectives: People have been able to engage with housing related support services (advice, information and assistance), are better informed about the options available to them and/or know where to go for assistance, people have been able to access emergency/temporary accommodation or short-term supported accommodation and can access and sustain a suitable settled home.

Caerphilly Cares will use the Shared Prosperity Fund and enhance working relationships with housing in delivering green energy project to residents' homes. The project aims to assist with decarbonisation and cost-of-living for heating homes and providing suitable energy saving related measures.

There are many different grants that support early years work, this is detailed in Well-being Objective 1.

We have successfully bid for funding from Welsh Government to employ an Age Friendly Community Co-ordinator for 2 years. This is to support working on the standards of age friendly communities.

Well-being Objective 3 - Enabling Our Communities to Thrive

1. What will this look like?

- Our physical infrastructure and digital connectivity will have improved to help people access towns, communities and services
- We will have worked with partners to improve access to public and other alternative modes of transport to keep towns connected and enhanced active travel opportunities between communities
- We will work with partners from across the Public Service Board towards improving the well-being and healthy life expectancy of our communities
- We will have created conditions that enable our communities to be healthier and more active
- We will have attractive open spaces that enhance quality of life

2. Why we chose this (our Well-being Statement)?

We believe developing Community Hubs across our county borough will provide a “holistic” service by providing access to a range of council services, such as libraries, council tax advice, customer services and other interactions all in one place. We know a lot of our residents rely on public transport and access services in their local communities. Data on car ownership as part of the Well-being Assessment shows that our county borough is below the national average compared with the rest of Wales. Wales national cost-of-living data tells us that fuel (petrol and diesel) have increased dramatically from December 2020 to December 2022, so bringing our services closer to our residents where possible will be vital.

The Gwent Well-being Assessment (February 2022) identified accessible transport (in cost, availability, routes to access) across the county borough and in every community area as a significant area that mattered to people. This highlights the need for creating more affordable and accessible public transport options, alternative private transport options and active travel routes. Information on this is covered under Well-being Objectives 4 and 5.

All respondents reflected in the assessment and the Caerphilly Conversation from January 2022 strongly valued their green spaces and environment and therefore, felt strongly about things like litter and dog fouling as they spoiled their environment. In the ongoing Caerphilly Conversation in Autumn 2022, 93% felt we should increase opportunities for people to be physically and mentally fit. 93% of respondents thought Green Spaces and Parks were important to be prioritised in the 2023 budget, with just over half of those saying they thought this was more important than last year.

Our complaints data shows there are frequent concerns around public spaces such as trees, general weed control, grounds maintenance, grass cutting, illicit tipping, litter and dog fouling, parking and footpath quality.

We want to create a place that supports a healthy lifestyle and helps people to become more physically active. In the National Survey for Wales (March 22) the

proportion of adults reporting good or very good general health was lower than in 2020-21. Only 36% of people are a healthy weight, while 62% are overweight or obese (including 25% obese). Our percentage of children aged 4-5 with obesity is higher than the rest of Gwent. Our Education Well-being Objective has actions that will help to address this. The Percentage of Adults with a BMI of 30+ (obese) is nearly 32% compared to Wales average of 25%.

In our own Sports and Active Recreation Strategy, we acknowledge that obesity levels have increased and there is little evidence of change in physical activity level. Overall, it is estimated that the total cost of physical inactivity to Wales is in the region of £650,000,000 per annum. Physical health and mental health are the foundations for every other activity from learning and education, to finding a job, all of which are more difficult without a good level of health. Despite these trends 'Creating an Active Wales' reports how physical activity has many mental as well as physical health and well-being benefits, for example:

- Up to 50% reduced risk of developing major chronic diseases such as heart diseases/ diabetes and some cancers.
- A 20-30% reduced risk of premature death.

In Autumn of 2022 leaders from across public sector organisations in Gwent came together for the 'Building a Fairer Gwent' launch event. There are various inequities across the region identified, in health, housing, education and employment. The health board's Director of Public Health at that time, explained that women in the most deprived areas of Gwent are living just 48 years of their life in good health, 20 years less than women in the least deprived areas.

Tackling inequities across Gwent is complex. When looking at the root causes of inequities, there is a complex system made up of institutional structures, services, organisations, policies and people. Therefore, equalities and addressing inequalities are the foundations for creating a good quality of life. The primary purpose of the Public Services Board is to focus upon these differences and develop improvement preventative interventions.

Actions and benefits delivered here also will make a difference to the delivery of Well-being Objective 2 'Enabling our Residents to Thrive'.

3. What steps will we take to achieve this?

In order to achieve the outcomes, we will prioritise:

- The development of a modernised presence in communities that makes best use of our assets in providing a wider range of services and, at the same time, opening up our spaces for use by communities and partners by developing Community Hubs to provide greater targeted services.
- Promoting Public Transport Integration, Active Travel, Connectivity and Digital Infrastructure to reduce travelling distances and promote and improve key transport hubs.

- Review of our enforcement activities with a view to developing a more coordinated and holistic approach across the county borough.
- Developing and delivering the new Active Travel Network Map and prioritised programme increasing our capacity for faster delivery of the Active Travel infrastructure programme.
- Delivering on the ambitions of our Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.
- Helping local community clubs and groups to engage people in volunteering, and in supporting people to lead independent and healthy lives.
- Seeking to improve digital connectivity and skills across our communities.

4. What evidence will we use to monitor progress?

A wide range of quantitative and qualitative data will be used to monitor our progress against this objective. From this we have chosen a set of priority indicators. We will also use the Marmot indicators were relevant as noted below:

Priority indicators

1. Increase the healthy life expectancy of Caerphilly residents
2. Increase the percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/access the facilities and services they need
3. Reduce the percentage/number of people who are lonely
4. Reduce the number missed waste and recycling collections as a % of total collections undertaken (food, garden, waste, recycling).
5. Cleanliness standards within our streets to meet national standards
6. Increase the overall number of visitors to our sport facilities and country parks
Increase resident satisfaction with their local environment or community

Marmot Indicators

1. Healthy life expectancy at birth (males, females). *Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health Wales.*
2. Inactivity rate excluding students (males, females). *Source: Annual Population Survey.*
3. % of people feeling safe at home, walking in the local area and when travelling. *Source: Welsh Government.*
4. % of people satisfied with their ability to get to/access the facilities and services they need. *Source: Welsh Government.*
5. Percentage overweight or obese adults (BMI<25). *Source: Public Health Wales.*
6. % of people who are lonely (age 16+). *Source: Welsh Government.*

5. What resources will we use to deliver these outcomes helping to meet the objective?

The new Leisure and Well-being centre is estimated to cost £33.6m, £20m of which has been provided by the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund following a successful funding bid. The remainder is being funded by the Council.

Project specific grants and existing planned capital and revenue budgets, for designated programmes and projects will be used to deliver this objective.

With specific reference to housing, new build funds attached to the Housing Revenue Account and additional borrowing will be used alongside Welsh Government Social Housing Grants.

Existing staffing structures will be used in different ways to deliver all works required within this objective, with occasional, specialist staff, contractors, and partnerships appointed where necessary.

Asset rationalisation will be used so we are able to provide a full council offer in central places providing a 'one stop shop' service where customers can access multiple services and facilities from a single location. This is anticipated to save money by reducing our asset costs and add a positive contribution to our overall carbon emissions.

Our infrastructure hosts a large and diverse range of assets that requires continuous maintenance and periodic improvements, to secure and address current and future needs, such as roads, footpaths, cycleways, street lighting, signage and street furnishings, that will mainly be operated through in-house provision and some contractual partnership arrangements.

Accessibility of information will be improved through digitisation and technology and training to ensure our website and mobile usage is as accessible to those with disabilities accessing our information, to ensure there is equal access to information. and inform our citizens of council functions, news, and activities.

Well-being Objective 4 – Enabling Our Economy to Grow

1. What will this look like?

- We will have worked towards ensuring we have the necessary infrastructure in place to enable our economy and communities to grow.
- We will have worked in partnership to support businesses with a range of interventions aimed at stimulating the local economy
- We will have a stronger relationship with our Business Community through town centre regeneration
- We will continue to work with the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) to increase the availability of quality employment opportunities in the area and enhance our economy
- Our local workforce will have the skills that employers need locally and regionally

2. Why we chose this (our Well-being Statement)?

Our long-term thinking, along with the Covid-19 response, meant that we focused on planning effectively for future crises, which has required us to take a long-term view to supporting our town centres and improving our local economy. Changes in working practices and the general downturn in the economy, post the pandemic, means this is an area we should concentrate on. Our town centres are being used differently and the South Wales Metro links are starting to come to fruition.

When looking at developing this objective, the Gwent Well-being Assessment (February 2022), for every community area, identified accessible transport (in cost, availability, routes to access) across the county borough as a significant area that mattered to people.

The ongoing Caerphilly Conversation consultation on Budget Setting for 2023/24 undertaken in January 2023 echoed the results from the Caerphilly Conversation consultation that took place in January 2022, where residents were provided with a list of Council services and asked which ones we should prioritise when planning services. 84% of those who responded agreed that public transport should be a priority showing that this is an enduring concern for our residents.

When we followed up the Caerphilly Conversation in Autumn 2022, we asked residents “What matters to you?”. We asked if the priority areas previously identified in January 2022 were more important, or the same or less important. 51% of respondents felt that public transport was more important (34% felt it was the same).

One of the key themes that came out of our ongoing consultation was a lack of public transport, in general, and more specifically, a lack of integration between public transport was an issue for many residents. This was a concern particularly in enabling those who do not drive/cannot afford a car to access essential services. Demographic data shows we have over 20% of people who rely on public transport, which is higher than the All-Wales average of approximately 19%.

A critical building block of long-term planning is the Local Development Plan (LDP), which sets out the Council's policies and proposals to control the use of land within the county borough for a 15-year period. This provides the basis by which planning applications are determined and gives a clear indication of where development will be encouraged and resisted and is the basis for determining future development and conservation needs.

The LDP aims to ensure that the needs of all the county borough's residents and visitors are met and the regeneration of our towns, villages, employment centres and the surrounding countryside is delivered in a well-balanced and sustainable manner. In planning for vital new development, the work of the LDP is to balance this against the need to protect what is valuable about our environment.

The LDP was adopted in 2010 and ran up to 2021, therefore a 2nd Replacement Caerphilly County Borough LDP (2RLDP) will need to be prepared. The 2RLDP will run up to 2035, beyond the period of this Corporate Plan. Preparation is complex and there are several statutory steps that need to be followed. The 2RLDP Delivery Agreement comprises the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) which sets out who will be consulted on the RLDP and when, and the timetable for its delivery.

Consultation at the Gwent Public Service Board's community assessment planning level clearly indicated that residents wanted us to build on strengths in the community and wanted young people to have opportunities. Support was high for both young and old people to have things to do and especially for young people to have places to socialise.

Looking at our Town Centres our Caerphilly Conversation, and follow-up surveys, identified that "thriving" and "vibrant" town centres with no empty properties, and with leisure venues/restaurants to encourage people to visit the area were important.

Building on the Caerphilly Consultation results from January 2022, in Autumn 2022 we asked residents to tell us whether they still felt these things are important. 83% of respondents believed sustainable travel was *more important* or *the same* as in the previous year and 75% believe Town Centre improvements are either more important or the same.

The Welsh Government (WG) 'Valleys Taskforce 2016-21 Final Report' concluded that it is a timely opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and what could be carried forward to support future work with Valleys Towns. Through numerous consultation channels, they identified that the communities wanted the following issues to be addressed:

- Create more quality job opportunities locally and address temporary and zero-hours work.
- Improve public services, particularly transport and affordable housing.
- Maintain and make greater use of the local natural environment and cultural heritage.

In response WG has set up its Transforming Towns Programme. Transforming Towns is committed to addressing the decline in town centres and seeks to ensure they not only survive but thrive. Transforming Towns is focussed on improved biodiversity and green infrastructure; reuse of derelict buildings; increasing the variety of services on offer in towns with an emphasis on flexible working and living space; and access to services and leisure. The priority is securing the long-term sustainability of our town centres by driving footfall and making them attractive places to spend time. In order

to access the Transforming Towns funding WG requires a Placemaking Plan to be developed by the Council and its partners to guide investment decisions.

Caerphilly town centre is an established tourism destination, has excellent connectivity to Cardiff and the wider region and is a gateway to the county borough from the south. The town is designated by Welsh Government (WG) as a town of strategic importance and in 2019 in recognition of this, we identified a need for a placemaking plan to harness and focus this investment in a coherent manner.

This placemaking plan, branded “Caerphilly Town 2035”, provides a bold vision for the town centre and identifies a series of projects/interventions that will help to achieve its goals over a 15-year period. The vision is ambitious and long term and includes a number of “corner stone” projects that have the potential to transform Caerphilly town centre and the role it performs in the Cardiff Capital Region.

Whilst there is a current Placemaking Plan in place for Caerphilly Town Centre (Caerphilly Town 2035), we are committed to refresh and update the existing 2009 Blackwood Masterplan and Regeneration Strategy with a comprehensive Placemaking Plan, to identify investment opportunities to ensure the High Street maintains its vibrancy and diversity in a post Covid-19 environment. Blackwood Town Centre is specifically highlighted as a key regeneration opportunity within the Cardiff Capital Region Metro Impact Study.

The Placemaking Plan for Blackwood Town Centre will set out a strategic vision for the future following an unprecedented period of economic instability over recent times and will look at how Blackwood can prosper without an over reliance on retail, including town centre housing need; consideration of physical interventions such as street widening, cycling and walking routes; identifying ways of improving and expanding the night-time economy offer; and exploring ways in which the town centre can contribute to achieving Net Zero Carbon commitments, such as ‘greening’ the town centre.

The Heads of the Valleys Masterplan, which includes Bargoed, emphasises the town’s role as a service centre for the north of the county borough, was adopted by the Council in November 2020 following public consultation, however it is recognised that a specific Placemaking Plan is also necessary for Bargoed Town Centre.

Bargoed Town Centre is a historic town that has a mix of Victorian buildings, 1960’s infill and contemporary commercial units. The town has experienced fluctuating fortunes over the years and currently the town centre is struggling to maintain a coherent direction for its future. Parts of the existing high street are underused and afflicted by vacant commercial premises. There is recognition that the redevelopment, re-evaluation and rehabilitation of the town centre can help to maximize the vibrancy of the night-time economy by returning liveable residential units to the area and encouraging businesses to stay open past traditional closing times. Further investment to the Town Centre is required to ensure that the town becomes more attractive, competitive, and welcoming.

The Placemaking Plans will help the Council develop programmes and policy to support the regeneration of Bargoed and Blackwood Town Centres through place-based solutions, good placemaking principles, the return of residential living to the town centre and positive public spaces.

Additional priorities from consultation activities 2023 showed that over 90% of respondents considered jobs and employment and opportunities to be *more important*,

whilst 80% considered support for businesses *more important* than in the previous year. Our population data shows that 24% of our population are made up of economically inactive people. There are a range of reasons for this, and we have actions in place to help people such as upskill, fund childcare and other barriers to employment.

In the county borough the number of active businesses per working 10,000 working age population was 435 in 2021. This made us 5th place in Wales, the Wales figure was 559. Whilst this is better than in 2020 when the figure was 410, it is less than the 459 reported in 2018.

There were 63 new active businesses (per 10,000 working age population) in 2021 making us 10th in Wales, this was lower than the Wales figure of 74. The percentage of active businesses that were new in 2021 was 14%.

The number of active business closures (per 10,000 per working age population) increased in 2021 to 52, although this is lower than the Wales figure of 64. We want to help and work with business to support them and the local economy and bring in opportunities that our survey respondents identified were important*

** Source Information from the Data Cymru Self-assessment data set*

3. What steps will we take to achieve this?

In order to achieve the outcomes, we will prioritise:

- Safeguarding appropriate land for employment purposes and releasing additional land, where appropriate, to facilitate business growth and encourage inward investment.
- Delivery of the Metro rail improvements as part of the wider Welsh Government and Cardiff Capital City Regional partnership programme.
- Using our town centre place plans, maximise opportunities to re-energise our towns, through a mix of retail, small business retention, new business start-ups, leisure and housing.
- Maximising the job opportunities for residents through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and identify upcoming growth sectors and labour market demand across the county borough and the wider Cardiff City Region.
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities via targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies, and techniques, and start or grow their exports.
- Jointly commissioning Further Education and Adult Learning Courses and locally procured bespoke courses to address skills gaps, address recruitment issues linked to skills gaps, and focus on growth areas in the local labour market for those in employment.
- Supporting residents with barriers to employment including Economically Inactive People, Short Term Unemployed, Long Term Unemployed and Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (aged 16-24 years old).
- Preparing and delivering a new 10-year Economic Regeneration Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders to guide decision making and investment and boost productivity and competitiveness.

- Creating social value across the county borough through the use of our third party spend.

4. What evidence will we use to monitor progress?

A wide range of quantitative and qualitative data will be used to monitor our progress against this objective. From this we have chosen a set of priority indicators. We will also use the Marmot indicators were relevant as noted below:

Priority indicators

1. Increase the number of jobs created (net impact across the region)
2. Reduce the number of economically inactive people
3. Increase the number of people supported to engage in job-searching and receiving support to gain employment
4. Improve our economic performance as defined through the UK competitiveness index
5. Increase the proportion of the working age population with an NVQ Level 4 or equivalent qualification
6. Improve the average wage across the county borough relative to Wales/UK

Marmot Indicators

1. Percentage of all employees earning below Living Wage Foundation rates. *Source: ONS*
2. Percentage unemployed (16-64 years) (females, males). *Source: Welsh Government*
3. Percentage of 0–7-year-olds living in households in receipt of income-related benefits, or tax credits with income less than 60% of the Wales median *

** This indicator is currently under development*

Once adopted the objectives of the Local Development Plan will be monitored by an Annual Monitoring Report.

5. What resources will we use to deliver these outcomes to meet the objective?

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda. The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.

Caerphilly Town 2035 has a dedicated Programme Manager and a multidisciplinary consultant team for the delivery of the plan. Council, Welsh Government (WG) Transforming Towns Grant Support, together with Cadw and Transport for Wales and the CCR City Deal resources will be used where appropriate.

We will deploy Caerphilly Enterprise Fund and Transforming Towns funding in relation to empty properties and provide appropriate grant support for visible

improvements to local retail, hospitality, and leisure sector facilities throughout the county borough.

There is the Transforming Towns Acquisition Fund for Site Assembly together with Compulsory Purchase Powers and any other enforcement powers that may be required.

In addition to the Council budget, we will be collaborating with partners in the public sector, UK Government, Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, Cadw, the private sector and the third sector to deliver on a range of investment opportunities.

Bargoed Placemaking and Blackwood Placemaking Plan will be funded by Welsh Government and the Council, using Transforming Towns Grant Support and the Council's own funding. Expansion of the Community Enterprise Fund (CEF) programme through Shared Prosperity Fund Investment to town centre retail and service sector with wrap around business support for small businesses.

There is a funding programme to support start-up businesses/entrepreneurial support and we want to increase business start-up grants through the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

SPF and Communities for Work Plus plus funds will be used to deliver Employment support through the Caerphilly Employment Programme for residents with barriers to employment including Economically Inactive People, Short Term Unemployed, Long Term Unemployed and Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (aged 16–24-year-old).

The Metro Plus Road Traffic Authority Programme will see each Local Authority within Southeast Wales receive a £3million share to implement a scheme. Funding is being provided from Welsh Government (£15million) and from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) (£15million) to implement this programme, with a further £20m being funded by Council and private investments. The specific Metro Plus proposal for Caerphilly is for the provision of a new transport interchange for Caerphilly Town, on the site of the current bus and rail stations. The interchange will include high quality passenger facilities including electronic information and EV charging for buses. Local Transport Plan publication will have Annual Progress Reports.

Well-being Objective 5 - Enabling Our Environment to be Greener

1. What will this look like?

- We will have worked with our residents to meet our statutory targets in relation to waste reduction, reuse and recycling
- We will have reduced our operational carbon emissions to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030
- We will have helped our communities transition to low carbon transport
- We will have promoted and explored green energy opportunities for the council, communities and businesses
- We will have protected and enhanced our natural environment to improve biodiversity and make us more resilient to climate changes
- We will have set climate standards for new build Council Homes and worked to improve the green energy credentials and energy efficiency of our housing stock.

2. Why we chose this (our Well-being Statement)?

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing future generations. A landmark report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published in 2018 warned us that we had less than 12 years (now 10) to avoid climate breakdown. We need to reduce our emissions in Wales by at least 95% by 2050, but preferably sooner; progress to date has not been fast enough, which means we need to reduce our emissions dramatically in the next decade to achieve the target of 45% reduction by 2030.

Our residents agree, 85% of those who responded to the Caerphilly Conversation consultation were concerned about 'climate change', this came through stronger in the council survey than in the overall Gwent Public Services Board Well-Being Assessment consultation.

The Council has declared a climate change emergency and produced a Decarbonisation Strategy, with associated action plan and energy prospectus. Decarbonisation is more than acting on the impacts of climate change and can progress commercial opportunities, health benefits and opportunities for green jobs and skills, so improvements in this aspect support improvements in the other objectives.

Our consultation work also showed that residents thought waste collection and ability to recycle is the most important operational service and this has been a key finding over many years of engagement.

In the ongoing Caerphilly Conversation consultation on Budget Setting for 2023/24, 93% of respondents to our survey, said waste and recycling should continue to be prioritised in the budget for 2023.

We have faced some challenges in reaching the national recycling targets over the last 3 years compared to the rest of Wales, so increasing recycling but also reducing waste at source, is a critical part of this objective with a separate strategy and an associated action plan being developed to improve this.

An analysis of our complaints for 2022 highlighted concerns around refuse, recycling, green waste, missed collections and civic amenity sites. Trees, general weed control, grounds maintenance, grass cutting, illicit tipping and street cleansing also featured.

Turning to the natural environment and biodiversity, these are two different but interconnected topics. Biodiversity is about the habitat and species that live in the natural environment and so we need to protect and build on both. This is an area of significant collaboration across Gwent and is a focus of the Gwent Public Services Board's Well-being Plan 2023-2028.

The Gwent Green Grid Partnership, a Welsh Government funded Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) Scheme, is a consortium of key partners (including the 5 Gwent local authorities working with National Resources Wales, Forest Research and Severn Wye Energy Agency) and stakeholders, including other interested organisations. They will deliver a consistent approach to Green Infrastructure management across Gwent and a collaborative framework that will inform the delivery of the Southeast Wales Area Statement, a key document for collaboration produced by Natural Resources Wales. It will act as a key delivery mechanism that enables strategic planning, ecosystem service assessment, eco-connectivity and mechanisms that create healthier citizens, stimulates business opportunities and provides community benefits (cohesion, skills development and volunteering).

Working with volunteers, partners, community projects and involving specialists in the community makes such a difference to improving our environment and biodiversity and this will form part of our new Biodiversity Action Plan. You can read more about the ground breaking projects from the partnership work here [Gwent Green Grid Partnership](#)

The Gwent Green Corridors work is establishing an Access Group to deliver practical on-the-ground improvements locally and at a regional scale by identifying missing links in the access network. This collaborative way of delivery demonstrates one of the strengths of the partnership enabling people across the Gwent region to lead active healthy lifestyles, provide economic opportunities and expand, where possible, the network available to cyclists and horse riders.

We will continue with 'Nature Isn't Neat' which is an approach that encourages us all to alter the way we manage grassland on our verges, open spaces and parks to benefit nature. Grasslands and green spaces are allowed to grow in the spring and summer to create meadow areas and space for nature.

The 'Nature isn't Neat' project is establishing joined-up green space management to create wildflower-rich pollinator habitats across Gwent local authority areas including Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and ourselves, you can read more about this here [Nature Isn't Neat](#)

This objective supports many other goals and in particular our key partners, Natural Resource Wales whose objectives for 'Nature and People Thriving Together' (to 2030), include assisting a Wales where:

- Nature is recovering,
- Communities are resilient to climate change, and
- Pollution is minimised.

3. What steps will we take to achieve this?

In order to achieve the outcomes, we will prioritise:

- The development and implementation of a Waste Strategy that will set out how we will work with our residents to reduce, reuse and recycle household waste.
- Delivering the interventions set out within the Councils Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan.
- Exploring options to use Modern Methods of Construction to help develop at scale and pace, reduce energy consumption, mitigate the effects of climate change, and support the foundational and circular economies.
- Providing electric vehicle infrastructure across the Caerphilly county borough incorporating electric vehicles into our fleet and trial new technologies as they evolve.
- The use of various engagement and information tools to ensure housing contract holders are equipped with the knowledge to make more efficient use of energy, to reduce carbon output and energy costs within their homes
- Invest in Council homes, over the next 5 years to maintain the housing stock including the Planned Asset Maintenance Strategy (PAMS) programme, sheltered housing remodelling, large scale voids, adaptations, and one-off projects.
- Continuing our work to develop renewable energy projects that contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions such as the proposed Solar Farm and the generation and use of Hydrogen.
- A review of our local flood risk strategy to ensure we continue to respond to the needs of the areas prone to flooding.
- Developing a community benefits policy for the county borough to maximise funding to our communities that experience significant levels of development and particularly those of national significance.
- Working with partners to unlock former industrial or other brownfield sites where financially viable.

4. What evidence will we use to monitor progress?

A wide range of quantitative and qualitative data will be used to monitor our progress against this objective. From this we have chosen a set of priority indicators. We will also use the Marmot indicators were relevant as noted below:

Priority indicators

1. Increase the percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way
2. Increased the number of net zero homes built by Caerphilly Homes and its RSL partners
3. Increase the number of trees planted across the county borough to meet the targets set out within our Decarbonisation Strategy
4. Reduce our CO2 operational emissions

Marmot Indicators

1. Average annual micrograms of NO2 pollution exposure at residential dwelling locations *Source: DEFRA*
2. Percentage (£) spent in local supply chain through contracts *

** This indicator is currently under development*

5. What resources will we use to help meet outcomes of the objective?

In addition to the base budget, there are project specific grants and existing planned capital and revenue budgets, for designated programmes and projects to deliver this objective. Existing staffing structures will be used to deliver all works required within this objective, with occasional, specialist staff, contractors, and partnerships appointed where necessary.

Asset rationalisation will be used to secure fit-for-purpose properties, and appropriate access to sites and locations, as needed for local services delivery and community accessibility, well-being benefits and improvement, for both residents and biodiversity.

Our infrastructure hosts a large and diverse range of assets that requires continuous maintenance and periodic improvements, to secure and address current and future needs. These include, for example, roads, footpaths, cycleways, street lighting, signage and street furnishings, that will be operated by ourselves with some contractual partnership arrangements. We will continue the facilitation of the Caerphilly Local Access Forum, preparation of a revised Rights of Way Improvement Plan and increased partnership working including the preparation of a Regional Access Strategy.

Asset rationalisation and improvements for public spaces are required to secure fit-for-purpose applications and appropriate access to sites and locations for all generation's needs, use and enjoyment, for example Town centres, Country

Parks, Public Parks, Sports and Play Areas. Continued external funding will be important for continued multi use development of green space through the Gwent Green Grid Partnership and important for continued support of local biodiversity projects in collaboration with the Caerphilly Nature Partnership Partners.

Public accessibility will be improved through our internet to better engage with and inform our citizens of Council functions and activities. A multitude of specialist items will be purchased through an established supplier network, giving regard to its carbon footprint (deliveries), and as required for different projects and programmes of works being delivered.

Sharing resources with partner groups means we are working with a range of sector organisations including Waste and Resources Action Programme Welsh Local Government Association Welsh Government and Local Partnerships to develop a sustainable waste management service that enables the authority to achieve the higher-level recycling targets and provide a better quality of recycling feedstock for the reprocessing industries.

Some of the other funding streams are:

- Electric Vehicle Welsh Government ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicle) funding.
- UK Government – OZEV (Office for Zero Emission Vehicles) funding.
- Cardiff Capital Region EV Infrastructure Delivery Programme.
- Working with ‘Connected Kerb’ for the infrastructure delivery and operation.

6. How our Objectives contributes to other priorities - Gwent Public Services Board Objectives, National Well-being Goals and the Marmot Principles

Well-being Objective	Gwent PSB Objectives	National Well-being Goals	Marmot Principles
<p>WBO 1 - Enabling Our Children to Succeed in Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Communities • Healthier • More Equal • Prosperous • Resilient • Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give every child the best start in life • Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives • Ensure a healthy standard of living for all • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention • Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together
<p>WBO 2 - Enabling Our Residents to Thrive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all • We want a climate-ready Gwent, where our environment is valued and protected, benefitting our well-being now and for future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Communities • Healthier • More Equal • Prosperous • Resilient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give every child the best start in life • Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives • Ensure a healthy standard of living for all • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention • Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

<p>WBO 3 - Enabling Our Communities to Thrive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible • Healthier • More Equal • Prosperous • Resilient • Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give every child the best start in life • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives • Ensure a healthy standard of living for all • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together
<p>WBO 4 - Enabling Our Economy to Grow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible • Healthier • More Equal. • Prosperous • Resilient • Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create fair employment and good work for all • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together
<p>WBO 5 - Enabling Our Environment to be Greener</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want a climate-ready Gwent, where our environment is valued and protected, benefitting our well-being now and for future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible • Healthier • More Equal • Prosperous • Resilient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a healthy standard of living for all • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

7. How we will monitor our progress

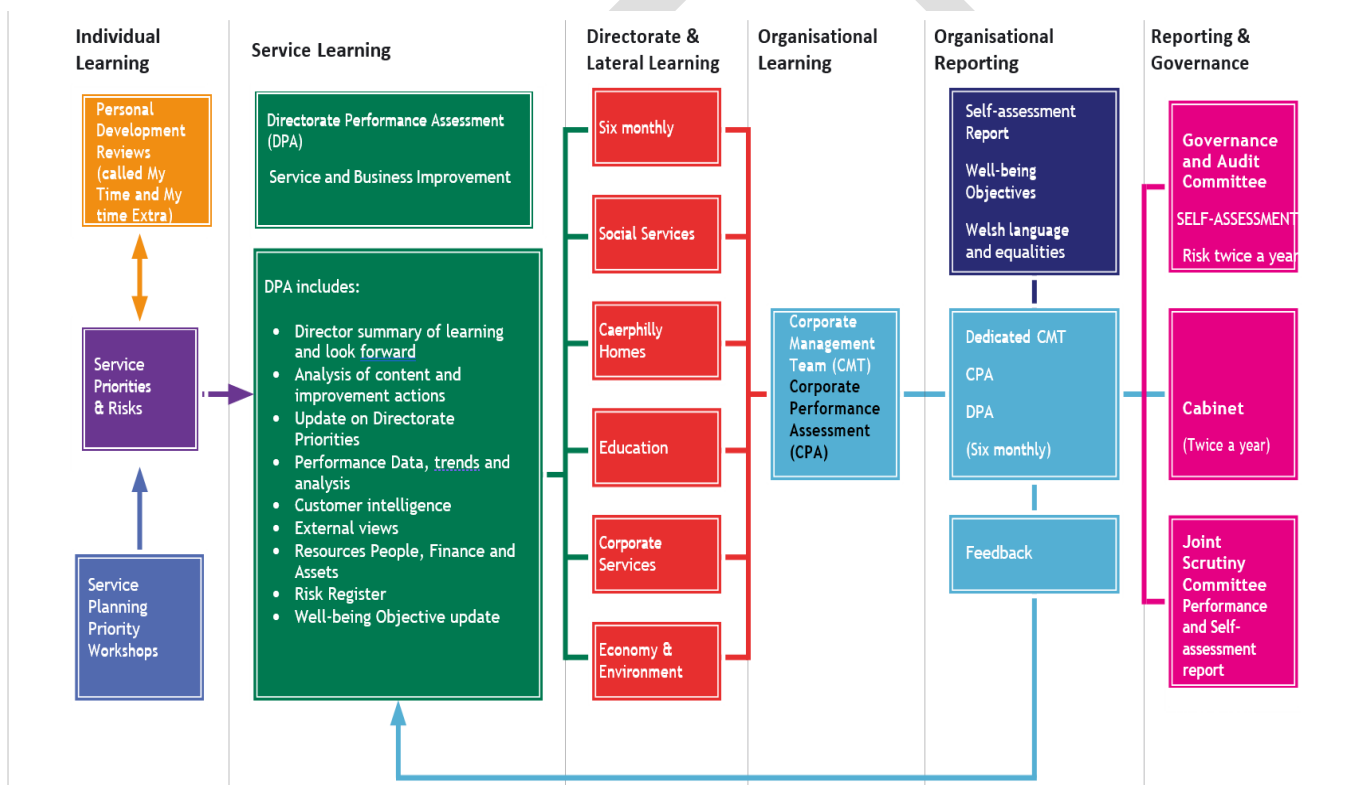
We will review our Corporate Plan every year to ensure our Well-being Objectives are still relevant and will make our updated plan available on our website:

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/my-council/strategies,-plans-and-policies/improvement-plan>

We will report our performance against the Well-being Objectives as part of our statutory annual self-assessment process which is shown below.

This process brings together the internal Council activity together with the external delivery of our Well-being Objectives as a set of organisational learning that assesses whether our external work is making a positive difference to our communities. Through this annual process our elected members have the opportunity to challenge our progress and input into future activity.

SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS



Section 8: How to Contact Us

Your views and opinions in relation to the content of our reports, plans and priorities are important to us. We welcome your active input to allow us to use meaningful information and data to inform us what services and how we deliver them to ensure that we meet the needs of our residents and our communities.

You can contact us via:

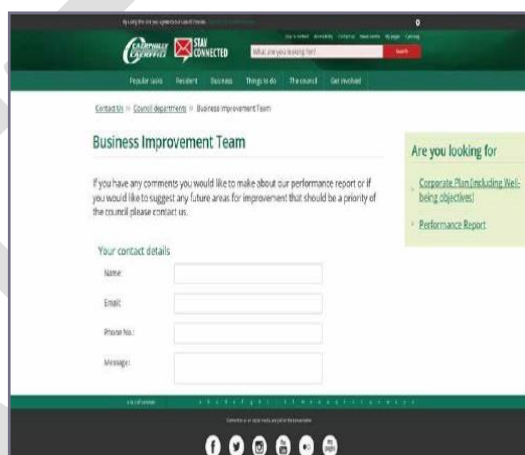
Email: BIT@caerphilly.gov.uk or via the Council Performance webpage and follow the instructions on screen.

Alternatively, please contact:

Ros Roberts
Business Improvement Manager
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Penallta House
Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed
CF82 7PG

Tel: 01443 864238

E-mail: roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk



You can also contact us via social media.



This document is also available in different languages and formats upon request.

Further information can also be found on our website: www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Appendix A National Well-Being Goals

The seven National Well-being goals show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies in the Act to work towards. The Act makes it clear the listed public bodies such as ourselves must work to achieve all of the goals.

Goal	Description of the goal
A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales	A globally responsible Wales. A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

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