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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr  
Bridgend County Borough Council



Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

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**Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief  
Executive's Directorate**

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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Wednesday, 1 February 2023

Dear Councillor,

**CABINET**

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held as Hybrid in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB on **Tuesday, 7 February 2023 at 14:30**.

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 6  
To receive for approval the Minutes of 12/01/23
4. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27 and Draft Budget Consultation Process 7 - 28
5. Treasury Management - Quarter 3 Report 2022-23 29 - 46
6. Outcome of the Consultation 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2022 47 - 90
7. Code of Corporate Governance 91 - 128
8. National Empty Properties Scheme 129 - 132
9. Review of the Social Services and Wellbeing Supervision Policy 133 - 168
10. Renewal of Section 33 Agreement for Community Equipment 169 - 174
11. Managed Service - Children's Services 175 - 180
12. Appointment of Local Authority Governors 181 - 188

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13. School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 189 - 254

14. Urgent items

To consider any items of business that by reason of special circumstances the chairperson is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with paragraph 2.4 (e) of the Cabinet Procedure Rules within the Constitution.

15. Exclusion of the Public

The following item is not for publication as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

If following the application of the public interest test Cabinet resolves pursuant to the Act to consider this item in private, the public will be excluded from the meeting during such consideration.

16. Porthcawl Metrolink 255 - 262

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend/Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet\_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

JC Spanswick  
N Farr  
W R Goode

Councillors

J Gebbie  
HJ David  
HM Williams

Councillors

JPD Blundell

CABINET - THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB / REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

JC Spanswick  
HM Williams

N Farr  
JPD Blundell

W R Goode

J Gebbie

Officers:

Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory, HR and Corporate Policy

Invitees:

Cllr Paul Davies

103. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

104. CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION: BRIDGEND 2030 NET ZERO CARBON STRATEGY

The Subject Overview and Scrutiny 3 Chairperson presented a report to Cabinet on the recommendations of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 (SOSC 3) from their meeting held on 4 January 2023, following the decision of 3 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and a Scrutiny Chair to Call-In the decision of the Executive in relation to Bridgend 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy.

The Scrutiny Chair explained that Members of the committee discussed the decision at this meeting and highlighted the points as set out in section 4 of the report. Following this, the committee recommended that the decision be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration for the reasons set out in section 4.5 of the report.

The Corporate Director Communities explained that a report was presented to Cabinet on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 on Bridgend's 2030 Net Zero strategy following Welsh Governments mandate for all Local Authorities in Wales to have an appropriate strategy in place. Bridgend's 2030 strategy was attached at Appendix C of the report.

She added that while this was not a fully funded initiative, Welsh Government did set out the requirements of this strategy and the scopes that they wanted included. Bridgend's strategy was the culmination of 18 months work and it was subject to assistance from Carbon Trust, who were industry experts in this field. She added that the 2030 Strategy went to a Scrutiny Committee in 2021, was subject to two Cabinet reports, and also went out to public consultation for 12 weeks.

The Corporate Director Communities explained that the Bridgend 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy was a corporate strategy that set out aspirations to get our Council operations to a net zero carbon position by 2030. This was based on a calculation of 90,000 tonnes of carbon emissions, this calculation was provided by Carbon Trust.

She explained that the Strategy in line with the original Cabinet report would be reviewed every three years in line with the corporate plan and will evolve as part of the net zero carbon national agenda and so with further guidance from Welsh government is provided, the strategy will evolve and mature. She added that the strategy also had a supporting action plan that would be reviewed annually in line with the MTFS and Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol as set out by Welsh Government.

The Corporate Director Communities highlighted the call in notice at Appendix B of the report. The call in reasons given were asking clarification on a number of points as highlighted below:

1. the financial implications of the strategy
2. performance and monitoring
3. oversight and governance
4. resources

The Corporate Director Communities explained that the financial implications were going to be significant for all of the public sector, particularly in the current financial climate. Whilst all 21 local authorities have produced a 2030 strategy, none of them have included detailed costings in their strategies. She added that the reasons for this was that it would be impossible to determine accurate costings for implementation over the next 7 years due to the advancing technology in this arena, the change in national agenda by Welsh Government and cost inflations.

The Corporate Director Communities stated that the action plan as previously mentioned would include costings, both revenue and capital implications for that ensuing year. BCBC were not starting from a standstill as there had already been many environmental initiatives over the last 3 years. The action plan would be made up of external grant funded projects we already have in play and it will include internal corporate initiatives who's business plans will be approved by the 2030 programme board.

The Corporate Director Communities highlighted a number of secured funding which included Welsh Government grants, Welsh Government Energy Service as well as the City Region which will aid in changing our fleet to electric and implement charging infrastructure.

BCBC also have the Bridgend district Heat Network initiative which is currently seeing work undertaken with the brand new Bridgend College building. The Health Board have also expressed interest in Princess of Wales hospital joining the heat network in subsequent phases.

The Corporate Director Communities explained that with regards to other local authorities, Swansea Council recently estimated their cost of implementing their own 2030 strategy as £187 Million. However, they have stated that this was a ballpark indication only. It was only intended as an indicative figure to demonstrate how challenging funding 203 would be as they only have £4m currently budgeted.

She advised that with regards to the call in meeting and the point made regarding costings for the achievement of the milestones by 2024, she explained that all budgets were corporate and held across all directorates and monitored through the MTFS and Capital Programme.

She further highlighted a range of budget allocations that were already in place. She detailed the route map to a Net Zero Bridgend as set out in Appendix C of the report which highlighted the targets that must be achieved on the way to 2030. Each year the action plan will look at these milestones and adjust accordingly.

The Cabinet Member Communities explained that there were lots of work going on behind the scenes and it was unfortunate that the hard work was not always recognised. He added that it was disappointing that as this had been to scrutiny previously, they had not used the opportunity to ask these questions. He added that it would be irresponsible and impossible to form a budget for 2030 and so as an authority it was important to be responsible and form a 12–18 month plan and do this as and when new guidance is provided, costs change as well as the financial situation of Wales changes.

The Cabinet Member Education agreed with these comments and added that he chaired the Scrutiny committee when this was initially looked at but appreciated that there were new Members who wished to look at this, however with regards to costing it was impossible to look past 18 months with any real accuracy.

The Corporate Director Communities stated that it was important to note that schemes were becoming more affordable as time goes on and they become more mainstream, for example, the UK Government had recently stated that they expect the cost of electric vehicles to drop significantly over the next two years and so the more supply and demand there is, the easier it will be to provide longer term costings.

Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations explained that these schemes and technologies involved were often new and very complex and this added to the difficulty in costings. He added that Scrutiny's input was valuable and much needed to ensure as a Council we were making the right decisions. He asked what can be done to prepare for further along the process around the 2026-28.

The Corporate Director Communities explained that the industry was aware that public sector have a net zero carbon target and so it was important for us as a council to look at sustainable procurement in order to facilitate this. The aim was to look at more companies who are local and support the local environment and economy as well as cut down on carbon miles. It was also important to look at the energy we buy and ensure that we buy green and switch sources from to renewable where possible.

The Leader added in respect to the targets and action plan, he noted that if we were not on track to meet targets that it was important we got back on track.

The Chief Executive mentioned one of the points that was raised at the call in meeting around the corporate focus and why this did not sit within the Chief Executives Directorate. He explained that not all corporate issues would sit within this directorate but made clear that the Corporate management Board was responsible for escalating issues.

The Leader asked the Scrutiny Chair if he would be happy, along with the scrutiny committee, to assist in the review of the strategy. The Scrutiny Chair stated that he would be happy with this but would welcome the views of other Scrutiny chairs to discuss which Committee it would be best suited to sit within. He recalled a discussion about this at the call in meeting whereby an Officer believed SOSC 3 to be the suitable committee for this to sit under. The Leader highlighted that in future years, many aspects of carbon reduction savings may be suitable for other Scrutiny committees as the strategy changes and the way Scrutiny wishes to look at it.

The Deputy Leader stressed that as Members Scrutiny Committees it was important to exercise the powers available to that committee and bring reports to meetings and review any strategies or policies at the earliest opportunities.

The Leader asked the Scrutiny Chair in relation to the strategy itself was the committee happy with it or did they have anything they wished to change. The Scrutiny Chair stated there was nothing specific about the strategy itself. The comments made by the Committee were that Cabinet did not ask enough questions in relation to the wider financial costs. The Leader had stated that the long term costs were unknown and that it would be challenge in terms of funding, but as these costs were unknown and other local authorities were in a similar position, the best way forward was to establish an action plan that dealt with the costs for each ensuing year.

The Deputy Leader added that for each cabinet and scrutiny committee report, there were sections at the end that looked at the wellbeing and future generations, policy, framework and procedural rules and the EIA also. She stressed that as much detail had been provided as could be. Carbon Net zero by 2030 is a mandated requirement by Welsh Government and so Cabinet must look to deliver good service at the best price with the best socioeconomic values for residents of BCBC.

The Scrutiny Chair asked for clarification on a point raised by a Member of the scrutiny committee at the call in meeting. He raised a point that as costings were provided up to 2024, could costings be provided further. The Corporate Director Communities explained that the budgets in relation to the action plan were held within each directorate, for instance there was work being done around ULEV for social care, there were budgets to replace boilers in schools with ground source heat pumps and this sat within the education directorate etc. She believed that it would require a large amount of officer work to collate each individual budget and costing and would not provide any further benefit to Members for reasons previously mentioned.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet agreed to confirm the decision made at its meeting on 13 December 2022 and formally adopt the Bridgend 2030 Net Zero Carbon Strategy, with it noted that costings up to the period of 2024 will be outlined in the Action Plan that supports the strategy.

105. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 3:45

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24 TO 2026-27 AND DRAFT BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with the findings and recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) in relation to:
- a) the report of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS);
  - b) the comments and recommendations from the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees in relation to the draft MTFS including the proposed budget pressures and budget reduction proposals, as part of the budget consultation process.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 In considering the challenges associated with continued budget reductions, Members previously recognised the need for a 'whole Council' response to be adopted in managing anticipated reductions to services against a backdrop of increasing demand and the challenging financial outlook.
- 3.2 It was therefore recommended in 2017, that a Budget Research and Evaluation Panel be established to engage Members on budget proposals as well as to enable members to feed in community intelligence gained from their representative role and to engage in shaping future service provision.
- 3.3 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the overall responsibility of scrutinising budget monitoring reports throughout the year. As such, it was agreed at a meeting of Council in September 2017 that it would continue this role and appoint BREP members from within the COSC membership.
- 3.4 The purpose of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel was subsequently agreed as the following:
- To achieve consensus on the direction of the budget over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
  - To achieve a detailed overview and assessment of the budget proposals where the expertise and knowledge of each Committee contributes to a Corporate understanding and appreciation of the draft budget proposals;
  - To assist the Council to develop a budget for the forthcoming year that aims to meet the needs of the communities of Bridgend County Borough;
  - To facilitate firmer understanding of the budget setting process and the draft proposals in order to assist the Committees in making informed comments, constructive challenge or recommendations to Cabinet as part of the budget consultation process.
- 3.5 The Panel would be presented with the budget reduction proposals and budget pressures and have the opportunity to discuss these with the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors and be asked to consider the information contained in these reports to determine whether they wish to make comments or recommendations for consolidation and inclusion in the report to Cabinet, as part of the budget consultation process.

#### **BREP**

- 3.6 The Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) met on four occasions to consider draft budget proposals for the year 2023-24 and were supported by the Scrutiny Team, the Democratic Services Manager, the Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change and Section 151 Officer, Deputy Head of Finance and Cabinet Member Resources.



- 3.7 The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change set out the financial position for the MTFS 2023-24 to 2026-27 detailing the in-year pressures for 2022-23 and the budget 2023-24 onwards. The Panel were advised that in terms of available funding, 1% of Welsh Government funding equated to £2.3m and 1% of Council tax was £870,000. Officers stressed that significant budget pressures had been identified for 2023-24 which produced a funding gap of potentially £15-£20M.
- 3.8 The Panel were also presented with an early report on the 'Budget Consultation 2022 – Shaping Bridgend's Future' which illustrated the plans for engagement and a potential timeframe.
- 3.9 The Panel considered early draft budget reduction proposals as well as budget pressures and both Officers and Cabinet Members highlighted the significant pressures that were on the Authority, particularly in relation to Social Services and there was therefore a need to consider each budget and where the priorities lie.
- 3.10 The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change identified some of the key Council wide issues including the pay awards, difficulties in recruiting to vacant posts and inflationary pressures, which were impacting on both the Capital and Revenue budgets. It was emphasised that the difficult budget situation for this year was not unique to Bridgend but was a national issue impacting all Local Authorities in Wales.
- 3.11 It was reported that there was more demand than ever on services including, but not exclusive to, Social Care, Housing, Legal, Human Resources, and the Council could simply not continue to operate the same as it has done previously.
- 3.12 The Panel focused their detailed consideration on particular areas including the following:
- School Delegated Budgets and the impact of any proposed reduction;
  - Council Tax options as well as Income tax
  - Council Reserves
  - Viability of the proposed budget reductions
  - Discretionary Services versus Statutory services
  - Risk of deliverability of proposed budget reductions
  - Consultation and engagement
- 3.13 An Interim Report of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel was submitted to COSC by the Chair of BREP on 15 December 2022 presenting an initial series of comments, recommendations and requests. These were approved by the Committee, and subsequently submitted informally to Cabinet and Senior Officers to inform their development of the draft budget proposals for 2023-24.
- 3.14 Following a further meeting of the Panel in January 2023 the Panel made additional comments, recommendations, and requests. The final BREP report was presented to COSC on 31 January 2023 and can be viewed [here](#).

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

- 3.15 Following the BREP's consideration, each of the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees were presented with the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24

to 2026-27 and asked to consider the information contained in the report relevant to their individual remits and determine whether they wish to make comments or recommendations for consolidation and inclusion in the report to Cabinet on the MTFS as part of the budget consultation process.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

4.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the findings of the BREP and all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees on 31 January 2023 and agreed to submit them to Cabinet, as part of the budget consultation process 2023-24, together with the addition of Recommendation 9 in **Appendix B**.

4.2 For ease of reference the Recommendations are split into the following separate appendices:

**Appendix A** - All final comments, recommendations and requests from BREP and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27.

**Appendix B** - A table of all recommendations for Cabinet's response.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 This item relates to the role of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees as consultees in respect of the budget setting process.

#### **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the budget setting process for both the short-term and in the long-term.
- Prevention - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the budget setting process by approving and shaping preventative measures provided by Directorates to generate savings.
- Integration - The report supports all the well-being objectives.

- Collaboration - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the budget setting process by approving and shaping collaboration and integrated working to generate savings.
- Involvement - Publication of the report ensures that the public and stakeholders can view the work that has been undertaken by Scrutiny members.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 The report relates to the budget setting process and the financial implications associated with that.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 Cabinet is requested to consider and respond to the Recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in response to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27 and the Draft Budget Consultation Process.

**K Watson**

**Chief Officer - Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy**

**1 February 2023**

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**Background documents:** None

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**BREP and Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Recommendations, Comments and Requests on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27**

**Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP)**

**BREP Recommended:**

National Legislative Commitments

1. That Cabinet raise with Welsh Government, the Panel's expectation that all national legislative commitments must be fully funded to allow the Council to have the capacity to deliver them in an efficient manner.

RNLI Support

2. In relation to COM5, the Budget Reduction Proposal of £38,000 by removal of support to RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, discussions be held with Porthcawl Town Council regarding potential funding and consideration also be given to decreasing the proposed budget reduction.

Strategic Regeneration Fund

3. The Panel reiterated the fact that whilst discretionary, the Strategic Regeneration Fund was a clear 'invest to save' fund (for every £1 invested, the Council received £9 back) and that the quantum of the proposed budget reduction of 93% be reviewed to a more palatable level.
4. The ability for the Strategic Regeneration Fund to lever other external funding, to invest in feasibility and development studies and help secure private investment outweighs the saving achieved by reducing this budget. The Panel therefore recommend that any potential reduction to this fund be revisited.

Waste Enforcement Team

5. The Panel considered the proposed removal of the waste enforcement team would be counterproductive and lead to increased costs in the areas of waste and fly tipped waste removal. The Panel recommended that alternatives to a complete removal of the team be explored and supported the proposal of possibly merging teams to provide a reduced service rather than a complete removal of the waste enforcement team.

Council Tax

6. That it was essential that the public be informed of the proposed increased level of Council Tax as soon as possible with clear reasons and rationale for the increase.

7. In light of the cost of living crisis, the Panel recommend that when determining any change to Council Tax, Cabinet consider the impact of any potential increase in Income Tax by Welsh Government.

### Consultation and Engagement

8. The Panel acknowledged the difficult situation the Council found itself in and the tough decisions that would have to be made on the budget which could have quite serious implications for services and residents of the borough. It was therefore felt communication and engagement with the public was vital to get this message across and to be open and transparent about the challenges the Council faced. The Panel noted that similar concerns had been raised at a COSC meeting on 27 October 2022 where Members had requested that any press release regarding the upcoming budget consultation be mindful of improving communication to residents and improving understanding of the budget and purpose of reserves held.
  - a) The Panel therefore endorse this and further recommend that the Authority, as a matter of urgency, start preparing its residents for the possibility of difficult reductions to services and communicating the potential impact of these to ensure transparency and openness.
  - b) Further to this, following any future budget or resulting service reductions, the Authority work with the community or communities involved to establish how the Council can assist in enabling them to take up the service provision, thereby reducing the potential negative impact.
  - c) Given the fact that other Local Authorities are experiencing similar budgetary issues, the Panel recommend that Officers look at how other Local Authorities are communicating this to their residents to ensure they are well informed and aware of the potential impact on services received.
9. In light of the majority of responses to the public budget consultation indicating that respondents supported Council Tax remaining the same, that a response be provided to respondents who engaged to ensure they understand the rationale behind the budget and the reason for decisions taken to ensure they feel that their views are valued and have been taken into consideration.
10. That targeted consultation, focusing on particular groups and representative organisations be developed and rolled out in the future.

### BREP Process 2023/24

11. That the BREP process in 2023/24 commence as soon as possible in the financial year to allow for more detailed discussions on the budget to enable the Panel to provide more meaningful Recommendations. The Panel requested that they be presented with:

- a) the full budget book breakdown to include all the various options being considered by Cabinet;
  - b) greater narrative by cost centre; and
  - c) information about discretionary and statutory services, a cost breakdown of what is statutory and what is discretionary and the impact of any potential budget reductions on each.
12. Concerns were expressed over the high risk of deliverability of the proposed budget reductions given that the risk status for the majority of the proposals are marked red and have not been worked up yet. The Panel would have liked more narrative from Corporate Directors/Officers setting out how they were to achieve the proposed reductions and recommended that this information be provided to future Meetings of BREP.
13. That when the Panel considers school budget reduction proposals in future, the Panel be provided with feedback from the School Budget Forum (subject to the timing of their meetings) and input from Head teachers and Chairs of Governors.

### **BREP Comments:**

#### Budget Reduction Proposals and Council Tax

14. The Panel expressed the view that without the final budget settlement information and the additional list of services, Members could not have full oversight of potential options and therefore could not make informed recommendations over Council Tax levels, or the need for further proposed budget reductions or less budget pressures.
15. In relation to the proposed 6% increase in Council Tax, the Panel expressed concern about how it would be received by the public but noted the early indications from the public budget consultation were that 34% of respondents were in favour of a slight increase to Council Tax to protect the most vulnerable services. Whilst it did not actively support the proposed 6% increase in Council Tax, the Panel acknowledged the pressures and rationale for the proposed increase.

#### General

16. The Panel agreed with the principles behind the budget and the way it was balanced, protecting social services and vulnerable people. However, strong concerns were expressed regarding the impact of further cuts on other services and Directorates in the future due to the continued protection of social services.

## Schools Delegated Budgets

17. In relation to the proposed 2% efficiency in school budgets, the Panel did not actively support the proposal, but appreciated the difficulties and pressures within this year's budget and also acknowledged the generosity of the Council in fully funding the pay uplift and increase in energy costs.
18. The Panel agreed that the impact and implications of the 2% efficiency in school budgets be closely monitored by Scrutiny. The Panel expressed concerns about the achievability of the efficiency, particularly in schools already in a deficit and if it were to result in redundancies.

### **BREP Request:**

19. Resulting from their discussions with Cabinet Members and Officers, the Panel requested that they receive further information to a future Scrutiny meeting on School surplus budgets as well as the funding formula for schools in order to examine these budgets in further detail.

## **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) Chief Executive's Directorate and Council Wide**

### **COSC Recommends:**

#### Waste Enforcement Team

1. That Cabinet carefully considers the impact and cost of any necessary intervention by statutory services due to the removal of discretionary services, such as the Waste Enforcement Team in the Communities Directorate.

#### National Legislative Commitments

2. The Committee endorsed the recommendation made by BREP that *Cabinet raise with Welsh Government, the Panel's expectation that all national legislative commitments must be fully funded to allow the Council to have the capacity to deliver them in an efficient manner.*

That the Committee continue to lend their weight to lobbying of Welsh Government and central Government that has already taken place so that the Revenue Support Grant is not affected by any policy changes.

#### Joint Working

3. That consideration be given to more joint working across Directorates and more collaboration within the authority and external partners; working towards a 'One Council' approach.



## Council Tax

4. The Committee endorsed the recommendation made by BREP *that it was essential that the public be informed of the proposed increased level of Council Tax as soon as possible with clear reasons and rationale for the increase.* The Committee also felt that it should be appropriately communicated to the public that for every £1 spent on services provided by the Council, only around 27 pence is funded from Council Tax.

## RNLI Support

5. In relation to COM5, the Budget Reduction Proposal of £38,000 by removal of support to RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, the Committee expressed concerns about funding provided to a golf tournament to actively encourage the public to visit Porthcawl and that this Budget Reduction Proposal would put the public at risk. It endorsed BREP's recommendation that *discussions be held with Porthcawl Town Council and Trecco Bay regarding potential funding and consideration also be given to decreasing the proposed budget reduction.*

## Deliverability of Budget Reduction Proposals

6. Given that the risk status for the majority of the budget reduction proposals are marked red and have not fully developed, it is imperative that Cabinet consider the deliverability of the proposed budget reductions and the implication on setting a balanced budget.

## Schools Delegated Budgets

7. Given the proposed 2% reduction on schools delegated budgets and the indicative 1% reduction every year thereafter for the MTF5 period, that Cabinet provides more detail on how they are going to deliver the proposal and consider what impact that would have on individual schools and whether it would push any individual schools into a deficit position.

## Legal Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development

8. The Committee acknowledged the importance of back-office services such as, HR and legal and that emphasis should be on the necessity to ensure operational delivery is not compromised.
9. In order to meet the recommendations and conclusions from the Care Inspectorate Wales Inspections, the authority must have an adequate legal team and paralegals in place, rather than a reliance on agency staff. The Committee noted that whilst these roles were not entirely visible to the public, they had a crucial role in ensuring services are improved and recommended that Cabinet be mindful of that when considering the budget in areas of human resources and organisational development.

## Communication of Reserves

10. That there be a communication to residents to improve understanding of the purpose of reserves and earmarked reserves held by the Council.

### **COSC requests:**

11. The feedback following the discussions between the Cabinet and the Welsh Government Minister regarding support for Ukrainian Refugees and their hosts.
12. With regard to the CEX1 Budget Pressure of £700,000 in homelessness support, whether there are any specific grants available to the Council in this area and, when a Ukrainian host placement comes to an end, whether the monthly payments that would have been made to hosts, could instead be paid to the Council to help fund temporary accommodation.
13. That the occupation and prospect of letting wings of Ravenscourt and Civic Offices be kept under review to identify any additional income that may be generated and any future savings.

## **Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (SOSC 1) Education and Family Support Directorate and Schools**

### **SOSC 1 Recommendations:**

#### Collaboration and Value for Money

1. Having queried with Officers whether the Authority were utilising our partners to their full potential, Members did not feel 100% reassured of this, using the example of the Central South Consortium. Members therefore recommended that Cabinet and Officers consider evidence of collaboration with partners, as part of their deliberations over the budget proposals, to ensure value for money for the full MTF period 2023-2027.

#### School Delegated Budgets

2. The Committee acknowledged that the Education directorate needed to play its role in balancing the budget. However, following the grave concerns highlighted by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Budget Forum regarding the feasibility of the 2% budget reduction proposal and the fact that these proposals have not yet been fully developed and are high risk in terms of delivery, the Committee recommend that:
  - a) Cabinet reduce the proposed budget efficiency against School Delegated Budgets to 1%.

- b) that Cabinet consider all discretionary options available to them across the Corporate wide budgets and other Directorates, to comprise the remaining £1,059,000 required as a result of reducing the proposed education budget reduction by 1% in order to balance the Council's budget.

#### Discretionary and Statutory Services

- 3. Whilst acknowledging the benefits of discretionary services in terms of their potential to prevent further issues and expenditure for the future, given the overall current financial situation the Committee recommend:
  - a) that Cabinet give greater consider to all discretionary options available to them for budget reductions proposals and that they be presented to full Council for consideration of the MTFs.
  - b) that a greater proportion of budget reductions should be as a result of policy changes.
- 4. The Committee further recommend that a review of all discretionary services within the Education Directorate be undertaken to evaluate the costs of delivering them and the value they provide to the Local Authority and its residents, to inform the future MTFs with a view to protecting school delegated budgets as much as possible.

#### National Legislative Commitments

- 5. The Committee recommend that Cabinet raise with Welsh Government, the need to ensure that all National Legislative commitments are fully funded to allow the Council to have the capacity to deliver them in an efficient manner.

#### School Agency staff

- 6. The Committee queried the use of agency staff in schools and recommend that it be explored whether schools could adopt a cohesive approach across the County Borough that could potentially assist with staff cover costs for such things as sickness.

#### **SOSC 1 Comments:**

#### Schools Delegated Budgets

- 7. The Committee had grave concerns about the impact of a 2% efficiency saving against School Delegated Budgets and the resulting impact this could have. Of particular concern was the impact this could have on vulnerable children as information presented at the meeting implied that this budget reduction could lead to potential compulsory redundancies likely to affect school support staff who, for example, assist pupils with Additional Learning Needs, behavioural difficulties, attendance, safeguarding and wellbeing issues. The Committee commented that this could lead to potential increased

costs for the Local Authority further down the line if this support was not provided sufficiently and early enough in schools.

8. Concerns were also expressed regarding the possible cost of compulsory redundancy packages outweighing the proposed 2% efficiency and the risk of losing experienced teaching staff.
9. In addition to redundancies, the Committee expressed strong concerns over the possibility of more schools ending up with a deficit budget as a result of the 2% budget reduction, and potentially worsening the situation for those who were already in deficit. Members highlighted particular concern for new schools and their budgets, given that they cannot balance their budget for some time due to not being at full capacity.

### Free School Meal Provision

10. The Committee expressed concern over the future free school meal provision to primary schools in that it required not just extra staff and kitchen equipment, but also extra space for pupils due to the likely increase in take up of provision. Extensions for schools were already under discussion but Members expressed concern over the potential budget implications this service could have for the future, both revenue and capital budgets.

## **Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 (SOSC 2) Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate**

### **SOSC 2 Recommendations:**

#### Social Care Workers

1. The Committee recognised the physical and emotional demand on social care workers and recommended that Cabinet review the wages for social care workers, in light of external pressures and consider how to ensure that these staff feel appropriately supported and valued.

#### Budget Pressures

2. The Committee noted that the majority of the budget pressures were within the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and, following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee were content that they are sufficient and necessary.

## **Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 Communities Directorate**

### **SOSC 3 Recommendations:**

#### Collaboration with Town and Community Councils (TCCs)

1. The Committee highlighted the potential benefits of working collaboratively with TCCs to alleviate future budgetary pressures and maintain services. It was therefore recommended that the Authority utilise the TCC Forum more effectively and efficiently to develop this, commencing with the creation of an Action Plan to demonstrate the various collaborative work that is currently being undertaken by the Authority with TCCs. Members requested that this be presented alongside guidance and explanation on what the Authority can offer and how collaborative work with TCCs can be expanded further. Additionally, the Committee stressed that it was essential that these discussions take place as soon as possible in the new financial year so as to inform the TCC precept. The Committee agreed that this work would be monitored by the Scrutiny Committee as it advanced.

#### RNLI Support

- 2a. The Committee expressed concern over the proposed reduction to support to the RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, particularly given that Officers reported that this was focused primarily at support to Rest Bay. Given the dangerous Rip tides at Rest Bay, the increased popularity of water sports at this beach and the number of visitors each summer, Members were alarmed at the risk any reduction to support for the RNLI would pose. The Committee therefore recommend that the reduction not be progressed.
- 2b. The Committee recommended that discussion be held with Town and Community Councils within the County Borough regarding potential funding for the RNLI.
- 2c. There was also a minority view from some Members of the Committee recommending that the reported £35,000 funding to Kier for biodiesel be considered as an alternative to the RNLI budget reduction as it was felt that the use of biodiesel would not have an immediate benefit or contribute to the Council's 2030 net zero carbon target.

#### Waste Enforcement Team

3. The Committee expressed concern over the removal of the Waste Enforcement Team and the impact this could have on tackling waste management issues such as fly-tipping, and particularly given the potential counterproductive nature of the reduction where it could result in an increase in costs. The Committee therefore recommend that this budget reduction not be progressed.
4. The Committee supported education in terms of tackling waste management, however, recommend that the Local Authority look towards its partner organisations to assist with this rather than relying on Council staff, who could

then look more towards their enforcement role, thus utilising all resources to their full potential.

### Council Reserves

5. Whilst appreciating that the Council Fund should be maintained at a level of 5% of the Council's net budget, Members queried the size and use of the Authority's reserve budgets, given the difficult financial situation this year and future budget forecast. The Committee recommend that a review be undertaken of the Council's reserves, particularly historical reserves, with consideration and explanation of how they are managed and operated.

### Consultation

6. The Committee expressed disappointment at being unable to receive any outcome of the public consultation of the MTFS 2023-27 and recommended that this be sought for next year's annual scrutiny budget meetings to apprise the Committee of the views of the public to enable them to make more informed and effective recommendations.

### **SOSC 3 Comments:**

7. The Committee endorsed the following COSC Recommendation:  
In relation to COM5, the Budget Reduction Proposal of £38,000 by removal of support to RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, the Committee expressed concerns about funding provided to a golf tournament to actively encourage the public to visit Porthcawl and that this Budget Reduction Proposal would put the public at risk.

### **SOSC 3 Requests:**

8. That going forward they receive performance measures in order to scrutinise effectively and make more informed decisions.
9. Information in relation to the interest paid on the Council's borrowing as well as interest earned on investments.

**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
<b>National Legislative Commitments</b>	
1	That Cabinet raise with Welsh Government, the Panel's expectation that all national legislative commitments must be fully funded to allow the Council to have the capacity to deliver them in an efficient manner.  <b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by SOSC 1)</b>
2	That the Committee continue to lend their weight to lobbying of Welsh Government and central Government that has already taken place so that the Revenue Support Grant is not affected by any policy changes. <b>(COSC)</b>
<b>Council Tax</b>	
3	That it was essential that the public be informed of the proposed increased level of Council Tax as soon as possible with clear reasons and rationale for the increase. <b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by COSC)</b>
4	In light of the cost of living crisis, the Panel recommend that when determining any change to Council Tax, Cabinet consider the impact of any potential increase in Income Tax by Welsh Government. <b>(BREP)</b>
5	The Committee also felt that it should be appropriately communicated to the public that for every £1 spent on services provided by the Council, only around 27 pence is funded from Council Tax. <b>(COSC)</b>
<b>Consultation and Engagement</b>	
6	<p>The Panel acknowledged the difficult situation the Council found itself in and the tough decisions that would have to be made on the budget which could have quite serious implications for services and residents of the borough. It was therefore felt communication and engagement with the public was vital to get this message across and to be open and transparent about the challenges the Council faced. The Panel noted that similar concerns had been raised at a COSC meeting on 27 October 2022 where Members had requested that any press release regarding the upcoming budget consultation be mindful of improving communication to residents and improving understanding of the budget and purpose of reserves held.</p> <p>a) The Panel therefore endorse this and further recommend that the Authority, as a matter of urgency, start preparing its residents for the possibility of difficult reductions to services and communicating the potential impact of these to ensure transparency and openness.</p> <p>b) Further to this, following any future budget or resulting service reductions, the Authority work with the community or communities involved to establish how the Council can assist in enabling them to take up the service provision, thereby reducing the potential negative impact.</p> <p>c) Given the fact that other Local Authorities are experiencing similar budgetary issues, the Panel recommend that Officers look at how other Local Authorities are communicating this to their residents to ensure they are well informed and aware of the potential impact on services received.</p> <p><b>(BREP)</b></p>

**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
7	In light of the majority of responses to the public budget consultation indicating that respondents supported Council Tax remaining the same, that a response be provided to respondents who engaged to ensure they understand the rationale behind the budget and the reason for decisions taken to ensure they feel that their views are valued and have been taken into consideration.  <b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by COSC)</b>
8	That targeted consultation, focusing on particular groups and representative organisations be developed and rolled out in the future. <b>(BREP)</b>
9	That there be a communication to residents to improve understanding of the purpose of reserves and earmarked reserves held by the Council. <b>(COSC)</b>
10	The Committee expressed disappointment at being unable to receive any outcome of the public consultation of the MTFFS 2023-27 and recommended that this be sought for next year's annual scrutiny budget meetings to apprise the Committee of the views of the public to enable them to make more informed and effective recommendations. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
<b><u>Council Reserves</u></b>	
11	Whilst appreciating that the Council Fund should be maintained at a level of 5% of the Council's net budget, Members queried the size and use of the Authority's reserve budgets, given the difficult financial situation this year and future budget forecast. The Committee recommend that a review be undertaken of the Council's reserves, particularly historical reserves, with consideration and explanation of how they are managed and operated. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
<b><u>Deliverability of budget reduction proposals</u></b>	
12	Given that the risk status for the majority of the budget reduction proposals are marked red and have not fully developed, it is imperative that Cabinet consider the deliverability of the proposed budget reductions and the implication on setting a balanced budget. <b>(BREP)</b>
<b><u>Legal Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development</u></b>	
13	The Committee acknowledged the importance of back-office services such as, HR and legal and that emphasis should be on the necessity to ensure operational delivery is not compromised. <b>(COSC)</b>
14	In order to meet the recommendations and conclusions from the Care Inspectorate Wales Inspections, the authority must have an adequate legal team and paralegals in place, rather than a reliance on agency staff. The Committee noted that whilst these roles were not entirely visible to the public, they had a crucial role in ensuring services are improved and recommended that Cabinet be mindful of that when considering the budget in areas of human resources and organisational development. <b>(COSC)</b>
<b><u>Discretionary and Statutory Services</u></b>	
15	Whilst acknowledging the benefits of discretionary services in terms of their potential to prevent further issues and expenditure for the future, given the overall current financial situation the Committee recommend:



**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
	<p>a) that Cabinet give greater consider to all discretionary options available to them for budget reductions proposals and that they be presented to full Council for consideration of the MTFS.</p> <p>b) that a greater proportion of budget reductions should be as a result of policy changes.</p> <p><b>(SOSC 1)</b></p>
16	<p>The Committee further recommend that a review of all discretionary services within the Education Directorate be undertaken to evaluate the costs of delivering them and the value they provide to the Local Authority and its residents, to inform the future MTFS with a view to protecting school delegated budgets as much as possible.</p> <p><b>(SOSC 1)</b></p>
<b>Schools Delegated Budgets</b>	
17	<p>Given the proposed 2% reduction on schools delegated budgets and the indicative 1% reduction every year thereafter for the MTFS period, that Cabinet provides more detail on how they are going to deliver the proposal and consider what impact that would have on individual schools and whether it would push any individual schools into a deficit position.</p> <p><b>(COSC)</b></p>
18	<p>The Committee acknowledged that the Education directorate needed to play its role in balancing the budget. However, following the grave concerns highlighted by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Budget Forum regarding the feasibility of the 2% budget reduction proposal and the fact that these proposals have not yet been fully developed and are high risk in terms of delivery, the Committee recommend that:</p> <p>a) Cabinet reduce the proposed budget efficiency against School Delegated Budgets to 1%.</p> <p>b) That Cabinet consider all discretionary options available to them across the Corporate wide budgets and other Directorates, to comprise the remaining £1,059,000 required as a result of reducing the proposed education budget reduction by 1% in order to balance the Council's budget.</p> <p><b>(SOSC 1)</b></p>
<b>School Agency staff</b>	
19	<p>The Committee queried the use of agency staff in schools and recommend that it be explored whether schools could adopt a cohesive approach across the County Borough that could potentially assist with staff cover costs for such things as sickness.</p> <p><b>(SOSC 1)</b></p>
<b>Collaboration and Value for Money / Joint Working</b>	
20	<p>That consideration be given to more joint working across Directorates and more collaboration within the authority and external partners; working towards a 'One Council' approach.</p> <p><b>(COSC)</b></p>
21	<p>Having queried with Officers whether the Authority were utilising our partners to their full potential, Members did not feel 100% reassured of this, using the example of the Central South Consortium. Members therefore recommended that Cabinet and Officers consider evidence of collaboration with partners, as part of their deliberations</p>

**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
	over the budget proposals, to ensure value for money for the full MTFS period 2023-2027. <b>(SOSC 1)</b>
<b>Social Care Workers</b>	
22	The Committee recognised the physical and emotional demand on social care workers and recommended that Cabinet review the wages for social care workers, in light of external pressures and consider how to ensure that these staff feel appropriately supported and valued. <b>(SOSC 2)</b>
<b>Budget Pressures</b>	
23	The Committee noted that the majority of the budget pressures were within the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and, following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee were content that they are sufficient and necessary. <b>(SOSC 2)</b>
<b>RNLI Support (COM 5)</b>	
24	In relation to COM5, the Budget Reduction Proposal of £38,000 by removal of support to RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, discussions be held with Porthcawl Town Council and the operators of Trecco Bay regarding potential funding and consideration also be given to decreasing the proposed budget reduction. <b>(BREP &amp; COSC)</b>
25	The Committee also expressed concerns about funding provided to a golf tournament to actively encourage the public to visit Porthcawl and that this Budget Reduction Proposal would put the public at risk. <b>(COSC)</b>
26	A) The Committee expressed concern over the proposed reduction to support to the RNLI for Lifeguards at Porthcawl Beaches, particularly given that Officers reported that this was focused primarily at support to Rest Bay. Given the dangerous Rip tides at Rest Bay, the increased popularity of water sports at this beach and the number of visitors each summer, Members were alarmed at the risk any reduction to support for the RNLI would pose. The Committee therefore recommend that the reduction not be progressed. B) The Committee recommended that discussion be held with Town and Community Councils within the County Borough regarding potential funding for the RNLI. C) There was also a minority view from some Members of the Committee recommending that the reported £35,000 funding to Kier for biodiesel be considered as an alternative to the RNLI budget reduction as it was felt that the use of biodiesel would not have an immediate benefit or contribute to the Council's 2030 net zero carbon target. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
<b>Strategic Regeneration Fund</b>	
27	The Committee reiterated the fact that whilst discretionary, the Strategic Regeneration Fund was a clear 'invest to save' fund (for every £1 invested, the Council received £9 back) and that the quantum of the proposed budget reduction of 93% be reviewed to a more palatable level. <b>(BREP)</b>
28	The ability for the Strategic Regeneration Fund to lever other external funding, to invest in feasibility and development studies and help secure private investment outweighs

**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
	the saving achieved by reducing this budget. The Committee therefore recommend that any potential reduction to this fund be revisited. <b>(BREP)</b>
<b><u>Waste Enforcement Team</u></b>	
29	The Panel considered the proposed removal of the waste enforcement team would be counterproductive and lead to increased costs in the areas of waste and fly tipped waste removal. The Panel recommended that alternatives to a complete removal of the team be explored and supported the proposal of possibly merging teams to provide a reduced service rather than a complete removal of the waste enforcement team. <b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by COSC)</b>
30	That Cabinet carefully considers the impact and cost of any necessary intervention by statutory services due to the removal of discretionary services, such as the Waste Enforcement Team in the Communities Directorate. <b>(COSC)</b>
31	The Committee expressed concern over the removal of the Waste Enforcement Team and the impact this could have on tackling waste management issues such as fly-tipping, and particularly given the potential counterproductive nature of the reduction where it could result in an increase in costs. The Committee therefore recommend that this budget reduction not be progressed. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
32	The Committee supported education in terms of tackling waste management, however, recommend that the Local Authority look towards its partner organisations to assist with this rather than relying on Council staff, who could then look more towards their enforcement role, thus utilising all resources to their full potential. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
<b><u>Collaboration with Town and Community Councils (TCCs)</u></b>	
33	The Committee highlighted the potential benefits of working collaboratively with TCCs to alleviate future budgetary pressures and maintain services. It was therefore recommended that the Authority utilise the TCC Forum more effectively and efficiently to develop this, commencing with the creation of an Action Plan to demonstrate the various collaborative work that is currently being undertaken by the Authority with TCCs. Members requested that this be presented alongside guidance and explanation on what the Authority can offer and how collaborative work with TCCs can be expanded further. Additionally, the Committee stressed that it was essential that these discussions take place as soon as possible in the new financial year so as to inform the TCC precept. The Committee agreed that this work would be monitored by the Scrutiny Committee as it advanced. <b>(SOSC 3)</b>
<b><u>BREP Process 2023/24</u></b>	
34	That the BREP process in 2023/24 commence as soon as possible in the financial year to allow for more detailed discussions on the budget to enable the Panel to provide more meaningful Recommendations. The Panel requested that they be presented with: a) the full budget book breakdown to include all the various options being considered by Cabinet;

**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24  
TO 2026-27**

<b>Scrutiny Recommendation:</b>	
	<p>b) greater narrative by cost centre; and</p> <p>c) information about discretionary and statutory services, a cost breakdown of what is statutory and what is discretionary and the impact of any potential budget reductions on each.</p> <p><b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by COSC)</b></p>
35	<p>Concerns were expressed over the high risk of deliverability of the proposed budget reductions given that the risk status for the majority of the proposals are marked red and have not been worked up yet. The Panel would have liked more narrative from Corporate Directors/Officers setting out how they were to achieve the proposed reductions and recommended that this information be provided to future Meetings of BREP.</p> <p><b>(BREP &amp; Endorsed by COSC)</b></p>
36	<p>That when the BREP considers school budget reduction proposals in future, the Panel be provided with feedback from the School Budget Forum (subject to the timing of their meetings) and input from Head teachers and Chairs of Governors.</p> <p><b>(BREP)</b></p>

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

##### TREASURY MANAGEMENT – QUARTER 3 REPORT 2022-23

### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- update Cabinet on the Quarter 3 position for treasury management activities and treasury management indicators for 2022-23.
- highlight compliance with the Council's policies and practices.

### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

2.2 Treasury Management is integral to the delivery of all of the Council's well-being objectives as the allocation of resources determines the extent to which the well-being objectives can be delivered. Prudent Treasury Management arrangements will ensure that investment and borrowing decisions made by officers on behalf of the Council contribute to smarter use of financial resources and hence assist in the achievement of the Council's well-being objectives.

### 3. Background

3.1 Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council is exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management. Scrutiny of the Council's Treasury management Strategy (TMS) and policies is delegated to the Governance and Audit Committee.

- 3.2 Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) 'Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice' 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) before the start of each financial year. The CIPFA Code also requires the Council to set a number of Treasury Management Indicators, which are forward looking parameters and enable the Council to measure and manage its exposure to treasury management risks, and these are included throughout this report. CIPFA issued a revised Code in December 2021, which will be implemented from 1 April 2023. In addition, the Welsh Government (WG) issued revised Guidance on Local Authority Investments in November 2019 that requires the Council to approve an Investment Strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Welsh Government Guidance.
- 3.3 The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) requires Local Authorities to determine a Capital Strategy, which is a summary document approved by full Council covering capital expenditure and financing, treasury management and non-treasury investments. The definition of investments covers all the financial assets of the Council as well as other non-financial assets which the authority holds primarily for financial return. As has been previously reported, in order to comply with the Code an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. The Code does not require existing commercial investments, including property, to be sold, however it does set out that authorities who have a need to borrow should review options for exiting their existing financial investments for commercial purposes. The Council's Capital Strategy 2022-23, complying with CIPFA's requirement, includes the Prudential Indicators along with details regarding the Council's non-treasury investments. The Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy should be read in conjunction with each other as they are interlinked as borrowing and investments are directly impacted upon by capital plans and were approved together by Council on 23 February 2022.
- 3.4 The Council's treasury management advisors are Arlingclose Ltd. The current services provided to the Council include:
- advice and guidance on relevant policies, strategies and reports
  - advice on investment decisions
  - notification of credit ratings and changes
  - other information on credit quality
  - advice on debt management decisions
  - accounting advice
  - reports on treasury performance
  - forecasts of interest rates
  - training courses

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 The Council has complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements during the period 1 April to 31 December 2022.
- 4.2 A summary of the treasury management activities for April 2022 – December 2022 is shown at Table 1 in **Appendix A**. Since the start of the financial year the Council has had surplus funds for investment. The balance on investments at 31 December 2022 has decreased from £98.45 million at the half year position, to £94.05 million as a result of day to day cash movements, with an average rate of interest of 0.95%.
- 4.3 Other than Salix interest free borrowing for specific energy saving schemes the Council has not taken long-term borrowing since March 2012. The TMS 2022-23 included an assumption that the Council would need to borrow £9.36 million during the year, based on the Council holding £76 million usable reserves that it could use in the short term to finance expenditure. These figures were based on the assumption that the Council's reserves would reduce by £11.04 million from balances held at 31 March 2021. However, as a result of slippage in the Capital Programme 2021-22, the amount of reserves needed to be drawn down to fund capital expenditure in 2021-22 was significantly lower than anticipated. In addition, the Council received £20.6 million from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund during 2021-22, which was more than had been anticipated during the year, as well as further additional grants from Welsh Government in the final quarter of 2021-22 which enabled the Council to set aside £27.62 million in additional reserves in 2021-22. However, it is important to note that while the use of usable reserves in lieu of new borrowing is prudent, it is a short-term position and as the reserves are used for specific projects it will become necessary to borrow in the future to finance capital expenditure. Based on the current capital programme and the expected use of reserves allocated therein, it is expected that there will not be a requirement for new long-term borrowing in 2022-23. Details on forecast capital spend is provided in the Capital Programme Update report presented to Council 18 January 2023.
- 4.4 Restructuring of the debt portfolio, and in particular the Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans has been previously considered. The Public Works Loan Board allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate early redemption terms. The LOBOs have two trigger points during the year at which point the lender may consider offering the Council the option to repay the loan without penalty. The Council may take advantage of early repayment and replace some of the loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk. Whilst interest rates were low the lender is not likely to exercise the option to repay the loan, however the recent rise in interest rates means that more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities may arise than in previous years.
- 4.5 Table 4 in section 4 of **Appendix A** details the movement of the investments by counterparty types and shows the average balances, investment income received, average original duration and weighted average interest rates from April 2022 to December 2022.

4.6 The TM Code requires the Council to set and report on a variety of Treasury Management Indicators. The indicators either summarise the expected activity or introduce limits upon the activity. Details of the estimates for 2022-23 set out in the Council's TMS, against current projections, are shown in **Appendix A** and these show that the Council is operating in line with the approved limits.

4.7 The Council defines high credit quality as organisations and securities having a credit rating of A- or higher and **Appendix B** shows the equivalence table for credit ratings for Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's and explains the different investment grades.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 As required by Financial Procedure Rule 22.3 within the Council's Constitution, all investments and borrowing transactions have been undertaken in accordance with the TMS 2022-23 as approved by Council with due regard to the requirements of CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of the report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. As the report is for information only and is retrospective in nature it is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 The financial implications are reflected within the report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- note the Council's treasury management activities for 2022-23 for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 December 2022 and the projected Treasury Management Indicators for 2022-23.



**Carys Lord**  
**Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change**  
**February 2023**

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**Background documents:**

None

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## APPENDIX A

### SUMMARY OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2022-23 1 APRIL TO 31 DECEMBER 2022

#### 1. External Debt and Investment Position

On 31 December 2022, the Council held £99.80 million of external long-term borrowing and £94.05 million of investments. The Council's external debt and investment position for 1 April to 31 December 2022 is shown below in Table 1; more detail is provided in section 3 - Borrowing Strategy and Outturn and section 4 - Investment Strategy and Outturn:

**Table 1: External debt and investment position 1 April 2022 to 31 December 2022**

	Principal 01/04/2022 £m	Average Rate 01/04/2022 %	Principal 30/12/2022 £m	Average Rate 30/12/2022 %
<b>External Long Term Borrowing:</b>				
Public Works Loan Board	77.62	4.70	77.62	4.70
Lender's Option Borrower's Option	19.25	4.65	19.25	4.65
Salix Loans	2.68	0.00	2.93	0.00
<b>Total External Borrowing</b>	<b>99.55</b>		<b>99.80</b>	<b>4.55</b>
<b>Other Long Term Liabilities (LTL):</b>				
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)*	14.77		14.12	
Other LTL	0.39		0.27	
<b>Total Other Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>15.16</b>		<b>14.39</b>	
<b>Total Gross External Debt</b>	<b>114.71</b>		<b>114.19</b>	
<b>Treasury Investments:</b>				
Debt Management Office	30.20	0.54	29.50	1.40
Local Authorities	45.50	0.37	33.00	0.61
Banks	8.37	0.53	11.05	1.27
Money Market Fund***	0.00	0.00	20.50	1.66
<b>Total Treasury Investments</b>	<b>84.07</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>94.05</b>	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Net Debt</b>	<b>30.64</b>		<b>20.14</b>	

\* (PFI) arrangement for the provision of a Secondary School in Maesteg 11.25 years remaining term

\*\* these funds provide instant access

Where a Council finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside revenue resources to repay that debt in later years and this amount charged to revenue is called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The Local Authority (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2008 requires the Council to produce and approve an annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement before the start of the financial year that details the methodology for the MRP charge, and this is detailed in the Council's Capital Strategy. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Council's current strategy is to delay the need to borrow externally by temporarily using cash it holds for other purposes such as earmarked reserves. This is known as internal borrowing. This strategy is prudent whilst interest rates and investment returns are low.. The CFR is forecast to increase from 2021-22 levels due to the amount of prudential borrowing in the capital programme in future years. The Loans CFR (which excludes PFI & Other Long Term Liabilities) at the quarter three position is estimated to be £162.31 million as shown in Table 2 below.

The liability benchmark measures the Council's projected net debt requirement plus a short-term liquidity allowance in the form of minimum cash and investment balances. The purpose of the benchmark is to set the level of risk which the Council regards as its balanced or normal position. The forecast liability benchmark, or level of debt estimated for 31 March 2023 is £67.37 million, which is lower than the estimate within the Treasury Management Strategy. The current level of long-term borrowing is £99.80 million. As the Council has available reserves it can use them to fund capital expenditure in the short term, which is a prudent approach to managing its cash resources. Table 2 below has been produced using estimates of capital spend and forecasts on usable reserves for the current financial year. The Loans CFR ignores cash balances and may be too high if the authority benefits from long term positive cash flows which is this Council's position. The benchmark assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10 million to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

**Table 2: Liability benchmark**

	2021-22 Actual £m	2022-23 Estimate TMS £m	2022-23 Projection £m
Loans Capital Financing Requirement	158.21	180.02	162.31
Less: Usable reserves	(119.91)	(76.29)	(94.94)
Plus: actual/minimum investments	10	10	10
<b>Liability Benchmark</b>	<b>48.30</b>	<b>113.73</b>	<b>77.37</b>

## 2. External Context

The ongoing impact on the UK from the war in Ukraine, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, uncertain government policy, and a deteriorating economic outlook, set the scene for the immediate future.

The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate by 0.5% to 3.5% in December 2022. This followed a 0.75% rise in November which was the largest single rate hike since 1989 and the ninth successive rise since December 2021. The December decision was voted for by a 6-3 majority of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), with two dissenters voting for a no-change at 3% and one for a larger rise of 0.75%.

The November quarterly Monetary Policy Report forecast a prolonged but shallow recession in the UK with Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation remaining elevated at over 10% in the near-term. While the projected peak of inflation is lower than in the August report, due in part to the government's support package for household energy costs, inflation is expected remain higher for longer over the forecast horizon and the economic outlook remains weak, with unemployment projected to start rising.

The UK economy contracted by 0.3% between July and September 2022 according to the Office for National Statistics, and the BoE forecasts Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will decline 0.75% in the second half of the calendar year due to the squeeze on household income from higher energy costs and goods prices. Growth is then expected to continue to fall throughout 2023 and the first half of 2024.

CPI inflation was 10.5% in the 12 months to 31 December 2022. It is expected to fall sharply to 1.4%, below the 2% target, in two years' time and to 0% in three years' time if Bank Rate follows the path implied by financial markets at the time of the November Monetary Policy Report (a peak of 5.25%). However, the Bank of England stated it considered this path to be too high, suggesting that the peak in interest rates will be lower, reducing the risk of inflation falling too far below target. Market rates have fallen since the time of the November Monetary Policy Report.

The most recent statistics showed the unemployment rate was 3.7%. Earnings were up strongly in nominal terms by 6.1% for both total pay and for regular pay but factoring in inflation means real pay for both measures was -2.7%. Looking forward, the November Monetary Policy Report shows the labour market weakening in response to the deteriorating outlook for growth, leading to the unemployment rate rising to around 6.5% in 2025.

### **3. Borrowing Strategy and Outturn for 1 April to 30 December 2022**

At 31 December 2022, the Council held £99.80 million of long-term loans as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The TMS 2022-23 forecast that the Council would need to borrow £9.36 million in 2022-23. Currently however it is anticipated that the Council will not need to take out new borrowing during 2022-23, though this will be dependent on the progress of the Capital Programme expenditure and the use of available earmarked reserves during the remainder of the year. More detail on forecast capital

spend is provided in the Capital Strategy 2022-23 which was approved by Council on 23 February 2022 and the Quarter 3 Capital Monitoring 2022-23 reported to Council on 18 January 2023.

The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans, should the Council's long-term plans change, is a secondary objective. Therefore the major objectives to be followed in 2022-23 are:

- to minimise the revenue costs of debt
- to manage the Council's debt maturity profile i.e. to leave no one future year with a high level of repayments that could cause problems in re-borrowing
- to effect funding in any one year at the cheapest cost commensurate with future risk
- to monitor and review the level of variable interest rate loans in order to take greater advantage of interest rate movement
- to reschedule debt if appropriate, in order to take advantage of potential savings as interest rates change
- to optimise the use of all capital resources including borrowing, both supported and unsupported, usable capital receipts, revenue contributions to capital and grants and contributions

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine and high inflation still continue to make a defined imprint on the economy, public finances in general, as well as on local government funding in particular. Although there is much uncertainty about the future, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. The ever-increasing uncertainty over future interest rates increases the risks associated with treasury activity. As a result, the Council will take a cautious approach to its treasury management strategy. At present it is thought interest rates will continue to rise however there is some uncertainty at when the rates will level out. It is therefore likely to be more beneficial to either use internal resources or take out short term loans if necessary.

The Council's primary objective for the management of its debt is to ensure its long-term affordability. The majority of its loans have therefore been borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) at long term fixed rates of interest, but we will also investigate other sources of finance, such as Welsh Government and local authority loans and bank loans that may be available at more favourable rates. Following the increase in the numbers of local authorities taking out PWLB loans to buy commercial properties for yield, a UK government consultation by HM Treasury issued revised lending terms for PWLB borrowing by local authorities in November 2020. As a condition of accessing the PWLB, local authorities will be asked to confirm that there is no intention to buy investment assets primarily for yield in the current or next two financial years. Local authorities' Section 151 Officers, or equivalent, will be required to confirm that capital expenditure plans are current and that the plans

are within acceptable use of the PWLB. Whilst this in itself does not preclude the Council from investing in commercial activities, investing in assets for yield would preclude the Council from accessing PWLB borrowing. In December 2021, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) published a new edition of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. A significant change to the Code is that, in order to comply with the Code, an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. It goes further to clarify that *“it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending that will increase the capital financing requirement, and so lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the authority and where any financial returns are either related to the financial viability of the project in question or otherwise incidental to the primary purpose”*.

The Council has a number of energy schemes which are funded via Salix interest free loans. These loans are repayable for up to 10 years. Excluding these loans the last time the Council took out long term borrowing was £5 million from the PWLB in March 2012. Should the need to borrow materialise as expected it is likely that we would look to borrow from the PWLB. For estimate purposes it has been assumed that this would be over 30 years. The Council may also take out short term loans (normally for up to one month) to cover unexpected cash flow shortages. Market conditions have meant that there has been no rescheduling of the Council’s long term borrowing so far this year however, in conjunction with the Council’s Treasury Management advisors Arlingclose Ltd, the loan portfolio will continue to be reviewed for any potential savings as a result of any loan rescheduling.

The £19.25 million in Table 1 above relates to Lender’s Option Borrower’s Option (LOBO) loans which have a maturity date of 2054, however these may be re-scheduled in advance of this maturity date. The LOBO rate and term may vary in the future depending upon the prevailing market rates, the lender exercising their option to increase rates at one of the bi-annual trigger points (the trigger dates being July and January) and therefore, the Council being given the option to accept the increase or to repay the loan without incurring a penalty. The lender did not exercise their option on 22 July 2022, the next trigger point is 22 January 2023. It is thought that the lender is unlikely to exercise their option during low interest rate environments, however, an element of refinancing risk remains given the current economic climate and increasing interest rates. The Council would likely take the option to repay these loans at no cost if it has the opportunity to do so in the future. The current average interest rate for these LOBO’s is 4.65% and for the PWLB Loans is 4.70%. The premiums payable to renegotiate the Council’s Lender’s Option Borrower’s Option (LOBO) continues to be cost prohibitive at present.

The Treasury Management indicator shown in Table 3 below is for the Maturity Structure of Borrowing and is set for the forthcoming financial year to control the Council’s exposure to refinancing risk with respect to the maturity of the Council’s external borrowing and has been set to allow for the possible

restructuring of long-term debt where this is expected to lead to an overall saving or reduction in risk. It is the amount of projected borrowing maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing set out in the TMS 2022-23 and the projections for 2022-23 are:

**Table 3: Treasury Management Indicator Maturity Structure of Borrowing 2022-23**

Refinancing rate risk indicator Maturity structure of borrowing	TMS 2022-23 Upper limit %	TMS 2022-23 Lower limit %	Projection 31-3-23 %
Under 12 months	50	-	19.87
12 months and within 24 months	25	-	-
24 months and within 5 years	25	-	12.47
5 years and within 10 years	40	-	13.45
10 years and within 20 years	50	-	16.64
20 years and above	60	25	37.57

The 19.87% shown in Table 3 above relates to the £19.25 million LOBO loans which may be re-scheduled in advance of their maturity date of 2054, as detailed in the paragraph above. The CIPFA Code requires the maturity of LOBO loans to be shown as the earliest date on which the lender can require payment, i.e. the option/call dates in 2022-23, so the maturity date is actually uncertain but is shown in the “Under 12 months” category as per the Code.

#### 4. Investment Strategy and Position 1 April to 31 December 2022

Both the CIPFA Code and the Welsh Government (WG) guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council’s objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, balancing the risk of incurring losses from defaults against receiving unsuitably low investment income.

The major objectives during 2022-23 are to:

- Maintain capital **security**
- Maintain **liquidity** so funds are available when expenditure is needed
- Achieve a **yield** on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity

The Annual Investment Strategy incorporated in the Council’s TMS 2022-23 includes the credit ratings defined for each category of investments and the liquidity of investments. The Council’s investments have historically been placed in mainly short-term bank and building society unsecured deposits and local and central government. Investments, however may be made with any



public or private sector organisations that meet the minimum credit criteria and investment limits specified in the Investment Strategy. The majority of the Council's surplus cash is currently invested with other Local Authorities, Central Government (DMO) and in Money Market Funds, but the Council will continue to look at investment options in line with the limits detailed in the Investment Strategy. Arlingclose Ltd constantly stress tests the financial institutions on its recommended counterparty list and as a result, removing or in some cases adding back some previously removed on its recommended list for unsecured deposits and revising the credit rating, outlook and recommended deposit period for a number of others. The Council takes into account updated advice from its advisors before making any investment decisions.

The Council holds surplus funds representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves and, as shown in Table 1 above, the balance on investments at 31 December 2022 was £94.05 million. Table 4 below details these investments by counterparty type. The average investment rate in the period 1 April to 31 December 2022 was 1.03%.

**Table 4: Investments Profile 1 April to 31 December 2022**

Investment Counterparty Category	Balance 01 April 2022 (A) £m	Investments raised (B) £m	Investments Repaid (C) £m	Balance 31 December 2022 (A+B-C) £m	Investment income received** Apr-Dec 2022 £'000	Average original duration of the Investment Days	Weighted average investment balance Apr-Dec 2022 £m	Weighted average interest rate Apr-Dec 22 %
Government DMO	30.20	571.30	572.00	29.50	323.98	25	54.04	1.14
Local Authorities	45.50	116.50	129.00	33.00	93.74	293	90.46	0.54
Banks (Fixed Maturity)	3.00	30.00	30.00	3.00	30.19	50	5.11	1.34
Banks Instant Access/Notice Period Account	5.38	69.15	66.48	8.05	46.58	-	7.61	0.76
Building Societies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Money Market Fund (Instant Access)	-	40.50	20.00	20.50	215.54	-	22.01	1.17
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>84.08</b>	<b>827.45</b>	<b>817.48</b>	<b>94.05</b>	<b>710.02</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>179.23</b>	<b>1.03</b>

\*actual income received in year excluding accruals

The Treasury Management indicator shown below in Table 5 is for Principal Sums Invested for periods longer than a year. Where the Council invests, or plans to invest, for periods longer than a year, an upper limit is set for each forward financial year period for the maturing of such investments. The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of long-term investments. The limit on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end are set out in the TMS 2022-23.

**Table 5: Treasury Management Indicator Principal Sums Invested for periods longer than a year**

Price risk indicator	TMS 2022-23 £m	Projection 31-3-23 £m
Limit on principal invested beyond financial year end	15	5

All investments longer than 365 days (non-specified) will be made with a cautious approach to cash flow requirements and advice from Arlingclose Ltd will be sought as necessary.

There is only one long-term investment (original duration of 12 months or more) outstanding at 31 December 2022. This is with Medway Council and is repayable on 25 July 2024. All other investments at 31 December 2022 were short term deposits including Government Debt Management Office (DMO), Money Market Funds, Local Authorities, instant access and notice accounts. Table 6 below details these investments by counterparty type based on the remaining maturity period at 31 December 2022:

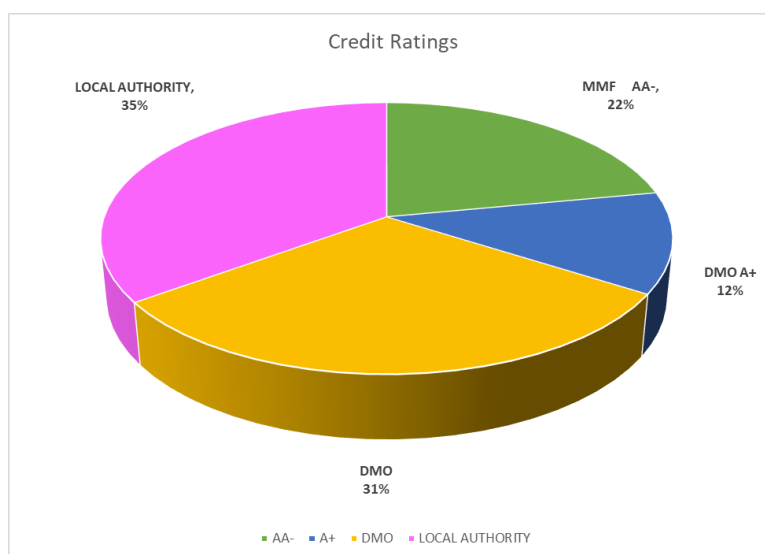
**Table 6: Investments Outstanding Maturity Profile 31 December 2022**

Counterparty Category	Instant Access  £m	Deposits Maturing Within 1 Month £m	Deposits Maturing Within 2-3 Months £m	Deposits Maturing Within 4-12 Months £m	Deposits Maturing Over 12 Months £m	Total  £m
Government DMO	0.00	21.00	8.50	0.00	0.00	29.50
Local Authorities	0.00	0.00	3.00	25.00	5.00	33.00
Banks	5.05	3.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	11.05
Building Societies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Money Market Fund	20.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.55</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>14.50</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>94.05</b>

Investment decisions are made by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from a selection of external rating agencies to ensure that this lies within the Council's agreed minimum credit rating. Where available the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account. **Appendix B** shows the equivalence table for credit ratings for three of the main rating agencies: Fitch, Moody's, and Standard & Poor's, and explains the different investment grades. The Council defines high credit quality as organisations and securities having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.

The pie chart below summarises Table 6 by credit ratings and shows the £94.05 million investments at 31 December 2022 by percentage. Most Local Authorities do not have credit ratings and the £20.5 million invested with AA- rated MMF's

were on an approved counterparty by Arlingclose Ltd, whilst the remainder of the investments all had a credit rating of A or above.



## 5. Interest Rate Exposures – Borrowing and Investments

The Council is exposed to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. Short term and variable rate loans expose the Council to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the Treasury Management indicator in Table 7 below to manage Interest Rate Exposures.

**Table 7: Treasury Management Indicator Interest Rate Exposures**

Interest rate risk indicator	Indicator £'000	As at 31-12- 22 £'000
One year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	(537)	(732)
One year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	726	924

This has been set as an **indicator** (not a limit) to measure the net impact over one year on the revenue account of both a 1% rise and a 1% fall in all interest rates for borrowing net of treasury investments. This is calculated at a point in time on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at rates 1% higher or lower than they would otherwise have been on their maturity dates and that the treasury investment and borrowing portfolios remain unchanged over the coming year. Interest rates can move by more than 1% over the course of a year and since April 2022 interest rates have increased by 2.75% with further increases anticipated.

The figures for the 1% fall in interest rates indicator are not the same figures as the 1% rise in interest rates (but reversed) as the borrowing relates to variable LOBO loans where it is assumed that the lender would not exercise their option if there was a fall in interest rates. All other borrowing does not have a rate reset in the next year and is with the PWLB at fixed rates

**Table 8: Interest expenditure & Receipts**

A comparison of interest expenditure against income for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022 on an accrual basis is shown below:

	<b>£'000</b>
Interest expenditure payable on long term borrowing*	3,406
Interest income receivable in period 1 April – 31 December*	(1,665)
<b>Net interest cost</b>	<b>1,741</b>

\* Estimated as at 31 December 2022. Actual payments may occur after this date.

## APPENDIX B

**Credit Rating Equivalence Table**

	Description	Fitch		Moody's		Standard & Poor's	
		Long	Short	Long	Short	Long	Short
<b>INVESTMENT GRADE</b>	Extremely strong	AAA		Aaa		AAA	
	Very strong	AA+	F1+	Aa1	P-1	AA+	A-1+
		AA		Aa2		AA	
		AA-		Aa3		AA-	
	Strong	A+	F1	A1	P-2	A+	A-1
		A		A2		A	
	Adequate	A-	F2	A3	P-3	A-	A-2
		BBB+		Baa1		BBB+	
		BBB		Baa2		BBB	
	<b>SPECULATIVE GRADE</b>	Speculative	BBB-	F3	Baa3	Not Prime (NP)	BBB-
BB+			Ba1		BB+		
BB			Ba2		BB		
Very speculative		BB-	B	Ba3	B		
		B+		B1			B+
		B		B2			B
Vulnerable		B-	C	B3	C		
		CCC+		Caa1			CCC+
		CCC		Caa2			CCC
		CCC-		Caa3			CCC-
	CC	Ca		CC			
Defaulting	C				C		
	D	D	C		D	D	

Standard & Poor's (S&P), Moody's and Fitch are the three most significant rating agencies in the world. These agencies rate the creditworthiness of countries and private enterprises.

"AAA" or "Aaa" is the highest rating across all three rating agencies and indicates the highest level of creditworthiness. A "D" rating ("C" rating from Moody's) indicates poor creditworthiness of a company or government. A difference is made between short-term and long-term ratings.

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

#### OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION 'SHAPING BRIDGEND'S FUTURE' 2022

### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2022 budget consultation which asked citizens their views on what they consider should be the priority areas for allocating the budget for the forthcoming financial year, and to examine those views against funding provided by the Welsh Government.

### 2 Connections to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- 2.1 **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- 2.2 **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- 2.3 **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 Budget planning for the financial year 2023-24 is more uncertain than ever before. As well as the ongoing impact of the covid-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine has contributed to the rise of energy and other prices globally, leading to the current cost-of-living crisis which will also have a significant impact on the Council's overall costs.
- 3.2 The Council faces an unprecedented financial challenge over the coming years, which estimates a funding gap of up to £20m in the 2023/24 financial period.

- 3.3 The Council is facing even more cost pressures going forward than have been experienced in previous years, and it will likely become more challenging to continue providing the same level of services whilst attempting to continue supporting our older and more vulnerable members of society.
- 3.4 The Council is dependent on funding from Welsh Government to provide vital services. The financial settlement from Welsh Government for 2022/23 was significantly better than anticipated but the projections for 2023/24 onwards are not as favourable, particularly as national economic circumstances have significantly changed in recent months.
- 3.5 The consultation set out that the cost-of-living pressures that all residents are experiencing are also being felt by the local authority and that to support services going forward the Council will have to consider an increase in council tax in the coming financial year and therefore input to the survey would assist in identifying those council services that are most valued and that we should continue to fund.
- 3.6 A public consultation exercise was undertaken over a five-week period from 19 December 2022 to 22 January 2023. Respondents were asked to share their views and priorities across the following areas:
- prioritising council services
  - council tax levels
  - digitalisation of council services
  - How the council has performed over the past 12 months
- 3.7 Budget consultation exercises have been undertaken annually since 2013-14. The 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2022 consultation exercise has built on the knowledge gained from the previous consultations as well as utilising a new digital engagement platform to drive new ways for people to participate and engage with the Council. A wide variety of methods of communication were used including surveys, quick poll, social media, face-to-face drop-in sessions, as well as an explainer video, radio adverts and media releases.
- 3.8 The Council wanted to make sure that as many people as possible could get involved in the consultation and ensured that accessible versions of the survey were available – large print, easy read and youth, as well as standard. An advert was also placed in the Glamorgan Gazette notifying non-domestic rates payers of the consultation, and inviting them to participate, as required by Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 3.9 In order to encourage participation of young people within Bridgend secondary schools and Bridgend College the consultation team wrote to all governing bodies and headteachers as well as Bridgend College to promote the consultation amongst their learners as well as school staff and parents/carers.
- 3.10 The budget consultation was live between 19 December 2022 and 22 January 2023. The surveys were available on the Council's website and paper copies were available to residents upon request.
- 3.11 The consultation aimed to reach the following key stakeholders: general public/residents, Citizens' Panel members, elected members, Bridgend County



Borough Council (BCBC) employees, businesses, Bridgend Business Forum members, local media, town councillors, school governors, Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) members.

- 3.12 The consultation was supported by a full communications and promotional plan. The main activities included media releases, a BCBC budget explainer video, various press release/editorials in the media, a social media/web campaign, radio campaign, direct marketing to key target audiences e.g., businesses, schools, youth council and internal communications for staff and elected members.
- 3.13 The Shaping Bridgend's Future 2022 consultation was included in twelve govDelivery bulletins, including one stand-alone bulletin during the live period. govDelivery is a digital communications platform that was introduced by the local authority in June 2020 to issue council updates directly to residents' email inboxes in the language of their choice. There are currently 39,596 English language subscribers and 251 Welsh language subscribers from Bridgend County Borough to the weekly news update emails. Overall, govDelivery generated 2,381 link clicks through to the budget consultation.

#### **4 Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 The attached consultation report (**Appendix A**) sets out in detail the views expressed by those who participated.
- 4.2 Overall the consultation received **1,441** interactions from a combination of survey completions, attendance at engagement events (face-to-face drop-in sessions), social media engagement and via the Council's Citizens' Panel.

In total, there were 1,079 responses to the online survey: from our standard, Citizen Panel, Easy read, large print and youth versions.

#### **4.3 Marketing and engagement methods**

Details of the consultation were shared with the following stakeholders: general public/residents, Citizens' Panel members, elected members, Council employees, businesses, Bridgend Business Forum members, local media, town councils, school governors, Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) members.

#### **4.4 Social Media**

The Council currently has 14,666 followers on its English Twitter account and 364 on its Welsh Twitter account, 18,876 followers on its English Facebook page and 220 on the Welsh Facebook page, 3,155 followers on Instagram and 6,105 followers on LinkedIn and 171 subscribers on YouTube. While content is most likely to be seen by these users, it is also displayed to users who are not connected to the accounts.

Details of the success of the social media and website campaigns can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**.

#### **4.5 govDelivery**

govDelivery is a digital communications platform that was introduced by the local authority in June 2020 to improve communication. It is currently used to issue Council updates directly to residents' email inboxes in the language of their choice.

There are currently 35,630 English language and 252 Welsh language users who have subscribed to receive the Council's weekly update emails.

Shaping Bridgend's Future Budget consultation was included in the following bulletins and details on these bulletins can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**.

#### 4.6 **Media and publicity**

4.6.1 A media release was issued on 19 October 2022 to flag up the upcoming budget consultation. The release was featured on Wales Online on 21 October 2022.

A second media release was issued on 6 January 2023 on Wales Online to highlight that the budget consultation was open and to encourage people to have their say.

The Glamorgan Gazette featured a full media release on the budget consultation. The coverage was over half a page and was featured in the week's edition of 12 January 2023.

4.6.2 Internal communications – messages were included in staff bulletins to encourage staff to complete the budget consultation.

4.6.3 The business@bridgend monthly e-news is issued to 2,898 business subscribers in Bridgend County Borough and features top ten articles aimed at businesses. Two articles tailored specifically to the business community on the budget consultation were featured in the monthly business e-news during the consultation period. Details of these bulletins, including the email opens and link click stats can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**.

#### 4.7 **Promotional materials**

4.7.1 An explainer video was produced to help people understand what was being asked of them, with examples of questions that were included in the consultation. The video was featured on the webpage for the consultation.

4.7.2 Posters promoting the consultation including a QR code to take people to the landing page of the website were circulated at engagement drop in events. The poster included the topic areas of the budget consultation and the closing date, in both English and Welsh Language.

4.7.3 Three Infographics were produced including: 'How is my council tax spent', 'Breakdown of council funding' and 'The Council's budget'. These infographics were displayed at drop in events to provide people with further information and background of the Council's Budget consultation.

4.7.4 Targeted letters and emails were sent to school governing bodies, Halo, equality groups, elected members and Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum members.

4.7.5 Details of the consultation were sent to Halo who were asked to help raise the profile through their own organisations and social media channels.

## 4.8 **Headline figures**

It is important to note that whilst some results are shown below in this section of the report, not all results are listed in this covering report. However, all results of the consultation can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**.

### 4.8.1 **Prioritising council services**

The top three responses to what services are important to our residents are: Street cleaning (768), Care for Older people and Disabled Adults (755) and Street/Road repairs (659).

The top three services that were viewed to not be a priority were: Improvements to council buildings (741), improving the council's website and online services (614), and Making the Council more commercial (573).

### 4.8.2 **Council Tax Levels**

There were a total of 1,046 responses on setting the council tax for 2023/24:

481 responses (46%) chose to keep council tax at the same level, which would result in a reduction in the level of services provided.

This was followed by 432 responses (41%) to increase council tax a bit to help protect the most important services, and 76 responses (7%) voted to increase council tax more significantly to protect more services.

57 responses were received (5%) in relation to increasing council tax by as much as is needed to maintain all council services at existing levels.

As well as the survey question, a quick poll was also included in the digital engagement platform to ask residents their opinion on the setting of council tax for 2023/2024. This generated 309 responses, with 54% choosing to "Keep council tax at the same level, which would result in a reduction in the level of services provided (because costs and demand are rising). Full details of this poll can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**. 36% chose to 'Increase council tax a bit to help protect the most important services where possible'.

### 4.8.3 **Performance over the past 12 months**

A total of 956 responses were received as to how the Council has performed over the past 12 months. The majority of respondents (52%) chose "OK", when asked their thoughts on how BCBC have helped to support communities and individuals to create their own solutions and reduce dependence on the council. 38% chose "badly" or "very badly", with the remaining 95 (10%) respondents choosing "well" or "very well".

433 respondents (45%) selected either "badly" or "very badly" to how they think BCBC has worked as one Council in delivering services that they value in a timely and easy manner without the need to contact the council multiple times.

387 respondents (40%) chose 'OK', with the remaining 139 (15%) choosing 'well' or 'very well'.

#### **4.8.4 Meeting our Fair, Ambitious, Citizen-focused and Efficient (FACE) Values**

Out of a total of 990 responses, 428 (43%) respondents chose 'OK' as to how effective we have been in meeting the fairness element of the FACE values over the last 12 months, whilst only 13 (1%) responded 'very effective' to the efficient value. Full details of the responses against each of the FACE values can be found in the full consultation report, **Appendix A**.

#### **4.8.5 Well-being Objectives**

Out of a total of 1,028 responses, the majority of respondents (76%) stated that the council has not improved our town centres that make Bridgend County a great place to live, work and visit, improving the quality of life for citizens. This compared to 83 (8%) respondents who stated the council had improved our town centres with the remaining respondents being unsure.

Out of a total of 1,023 responses, 59% of respondents stated that the council has not helped to create conditions for growth and enterprise to make Bridgend County an attractive place to do business. This compared to 9% who stated the council had helped, with the remaining respondents (32%) being unsure.

#### **4.8.6 Digitalisation of council services**

Out of a total 1009 responses, 80% responded "Yes" to agreeing with the ongoing development of our online services. Out of a total of 985 responses 88% agreed that they intend to continue accessing services online.

Out of 989 responses, 80% would support the development of community hubs so those residents who choose not to access council services digitally can access these services within their local communities.

### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

### **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of the Budget Consultation. Officers have considered the importance of balancing short-term needs in terms of meeting savings targets, while safeguarding the ability to meet longer-term objectives and maintain sustainable services, when proposals were

devised. A full Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment will be completed for the final Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to Council in March 2023.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 The consultation report seeks to inform and aid Cabinet Members' decisions on the future direction of the Council and how to meet the challenging budget constraints in the years ahead.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the outcome of the consultation with interested parties as detailed in the attached consultation report.

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**Background Documents:** None

# Shaping Bridgend's Future 2022

## Consultation Report

**Date of issue: January 2023**

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## 1. Overview

A public consultation was undertaken over a five-week period from **19<sup>th</sup> December 2022** to **22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023**. The consultation received **1,441** interactions from a combination of survey completions, engagements at drop in events, poll responses and ideas. This paper details the analysis associated with the consultation.

## 2. Introduction

The public survey was available to complete online through a link on the consultation page of the council's website or by visiting [www.bridgend.gov.uk/future](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/future). Paper copies of the consultation were also made available which could be sent directly to residents upon request. Surveys were available in several formats, including easy-read, large print, standard and a youth version. All were available in Welsh and English.

Respondents could choose to answer all or some questions. All survey responses offered the option of anonymity. The council's standard set of equality monitoring questions were also included within the survey, in line with recommended good practice for all public-facing surveys carried out by the council.

## 3. Marketing and engagement methods

Details of the consultation were shared with the following stakeholders: general public/residents, Citizens' Panel members, elected members, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) employees, businesses, Bridgend Business Forum members, local media, town councils, school governors, Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) members.

### 3.1. Promotional tools

This section details the methods used to raise the profile of the consultation and encourage participation.

#### 3.1.1. Social Media

The council runs the following social media accounts: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Budget consultation information was posted bilingually to the council's corporate social media channels throughout the consultation period to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage citizens to share their views on the proposals.

The council currently has 14,666 followers on its English Twitter account and 364 on its Welsh Twitter account, 18,876 followers on its English Facebook page and 220 on the Welsh Facebook page, 3,155 followers on Instagram and 6,105 followers on LinkedIn and 171 subscribers on YouTube. While content is most likely to be seen by these users, it is also displayed to users who are not connected to the accounts.

## Twitter Impressions

Impressions on Twitter is a total number of the times a tweet has been seen.

## Facebook Impressions: (Adverts)

The number of times that our adverts were on-screen.

An impression is counted as the number of times an instance of an advert is on screen for the first time. (Example: If an advert is on screen and someone scrolls down, and then scrolls back up to the same advert, that counts as one impression. If an advert is on screen for someone two different times in a day, that counts as two impressions.) This method of counting video impressions differs from industry standards for video adverts. With the exception of adverts on Audience Network, impressions are counted the same way for adverts that contain either images or video. This means that a video is not required to start playing for the impression to be counted.

In a few cases when it can't be determined whether adverts are on screen, such as on feature mobile phones, impressions are counted when adverts are delivered to devices.

Impressions aren't counted if they come from invalid traffic, we detect such as from non-human sources

## Facebook Reach

The number of Accounts Centre accounts that saw our adverts at least once. Reach is different from impressions, which may include multiple views of our adverts by the same people.

- No. posts shared: 29
- Advert: 1

Platform	Reach	Impressions
Twitter		6973
Facebook	6,895	
FB Advert	44,360	188,262
Instagram	850	
Welsh Twitter		74
Welsh Facebook	40	

### 3.1.2. Website

#### Views

The number of app screens or web pages our users saw. Repeated views of a single screen or page are counted.

#### Users

Total number of unique users who logged an event

Page	Views	Users	Clicks
/my-council/consultations/budget-consultation-2022/	2442	1856	951
/fy-nghyngor/Ymgynghoriadau/Ymgynghoriad ar y gyllideb 2022	74	16	10

### 3.1.3. govDelivery

govDelivery is a digital communications platform that was introduced by the council in June 2020 to improve communication. It is currently used to issue council updates directly to residents' email inboxes in the language of their choice.

There are currently 35,630 English language and 252 Welsh language users who have subscribed to receive the council's weekly update emails.

Shaping Bridgend's Future Budget consultation was included in the following bulletins:

#### English:

Bulletin Subject	Date Sent	Unique clicks	Total clicks
Latest news: Get your New Year off to a healthy start in Bridgend County Borough!	05/01/2023	51	60
Budget Consultation 2022	09/01/2023	215	266
Last chance to have your say on council's budget for 2023 -24	17/01/2023	1074	1232
Latest news: Last chance- residents urged to have their say on budget proposals!	19/01/2023	79	90
Latest news: Last chance- residents urged to have their say on budget proposals!	19/01/2023	167	188
Latest news: Have your say- budget consultation begins!	22/12/2022	425	495

#### Welsh:

Bulleting Subject	Date sent	Unique clicks	Total clicks
Y newyddion diweddaraf: Rhowch ddechrau iach i'ch Blwyddyn Newydd ym Mwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr!	05/01/2023	0	0
Ymgynghoriad ar y gyllideb 2022	09/01/2023	0	0

Bulleting Subject	Date sent	Unique clicks	Total clicks
Cyfle olaf i gael dweud eich dweud ar flaenoriaethau gwariant y cyngor 2023 - 24	17/01/2023	3	3
Y newyddion diweddaraf: Cyfle olaf - annog y trigolion i leisio eu barn ar gynigion y gyllideb	10/01/2023	0	0

#### 3.1.4. Media and Publicity

A media release was issued on 19/10/22 to flag up the upcoming budget consultation.

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/council-leader-issues-stark-warning-ahead-of-budget-planning-process/>

The release was featured on Wales Online on the 21/10/22

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/we-inevitably-make-cuts-important-25321049>

A second media release was issued on 06/01/23 to highlight that the budget consultation was open and to encourage people to have their say.



MR 06 01 23 NF  
FINAL Public urged to

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/public-urged-to-have-a-say-on-council-spending-priorities/>

The Glamorgan Gazette featured the full media release on page five, of the weekly printed newspaper on 12 January 2023.

#### 3.1.5. Internal communications

Messages were included in staff bulletins to encourage staff to complete the budget consultation.



#### 3.1.3 Bridgend Business Forum Monthly e-news

The business@bridgend monthly e-news is issued to **2898 business** subscribers in Bridgend County Borough. The digital newsletter features top ten articles aimed at businesses. Two articles tailored specifically to the business community, on the budget consultation were featured in the monthly e-news during the consultation period.

English

Date	Total email opens	Unique link clicks	Total link clicks
06/10/2021	1764	39	56
10/11/2021	1001	6	18

Welsh

Date	Total email opens	Unique link clicks	Total link clicks
06/10/2021	1764	37	52
10/11/2021	1001	10	27

Overall, the business@bridgend e-news generated **74 link clicks** through to the English budget consultation webpage and **79 links clicks** through to the Welsh budget consultation webpage.

A standalone e-shot promoting the budget survey was also issued to **2,898** businesses listed on the Bridgend business directory.

### 3.1.6. Promotional Materials

An explainer video was produced to help people understand what was being asked of them, with examples of questions that were included in the consultation. The video was featured on the webpage for the consultation.



An awareness campaign was run on Bridge FM from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2023, to promote the consultation. The radio campaign incorporated a total of 240 spots over a two-week intensive promotion post-Christmas.

Posters promoting the consultation including a QR code to take people to the landing page of the website were circulated at engagement drop in events. The poster included the topic areas of the budget consultation and the closing date, in both English and Welsh Language.

Three Infographics were produced including: 'How is my council tax spent', Breakdown of council funding and the council's budget. These infographics were displayed at drop

in events to provide people with further information and background of the council's Budget consultation.

## LLUNIO DYFODOL PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR

## SHAPING BRIDGEND'S FUTURE

**Dyddiad cau: 22 Ionawr 2023**

Bob blwyddyn, fel rhan o'r broses pennu cyllidebau, mae'r cyngor yn ymgynghori gyda'r cyhoedd i ganfod eu barn ar beth ddylai fod yn feysydd o flaenoriaeth yn eu barn nhw wrth ddyranu'r gyllideb ar gyfer y flwyddyn ariannol newydd, ac i archwilio'r farn honno yn erbyn cyllid a ddarperir gan Lywodraeth Cymru.

Bydd y cyngor y wynebu her ariannol na welwyd ei thebyg dros y blynyddoedd nesaf, sy'n amcangyfrif bwlch hyd at £20m yn ystod y cyfnod ariannol 2023-2024.

Mae'r arolwg yn ymdrin â'r meysydd canlynol:

- Blaenoriaethu gwasanaethau'r cyngor
- Lefelau'r Dreth Gyngor
- Sut mae'r cyngor wedi perfformio dros y 12 mis diwethaf
- Digitalaiddio gwasanaethau'r cyngor

**Dweud eich dweud:**  
[www.bridgend.gov.uk/dyfodol](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/dyfodol)

**Closing date: 22nd January 2023**

Every year, as part of the budget setting process, the council consults with the public to seek their views on what they consider should be the priority areas for allocating the budget for the forthcoming financial year, and to examine those views against funding provided by the Welsh Government.

The council faces an unprecedented financial challenge over the coming years, which estimates a funding gap of up to £20m in the 2023 - 2024 financial period.

The survey covers the following areas:

- Prioritising council services
- Council tax levels
- How the council has performed over the past 12 months
- Digitalisation of council services

**Have your say:**  
[www.bridgend.gov.uk/future](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/future)

## The council's budget

The council delivers or enables many hundreds of services across all the diverse communities within the county borough. These services are grouped together into four directorates.

### EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT

- School improvement
- Statutory Advice & Psychology
- School music service
- Support for children and learners with additional learning needs
- Youth offending service
- Inclusion
- Emotional Health & Behaviour
- Schools including teachers, maintenance, etc.

### SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

- Adult Social Care
- Adult Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment
- Adults Learning Disabilities
- Adult Services Management & Admin
- Adults Mental Health Needs
- Other Adult Services
- Prevention and wellbeing
- Recreation and sport
- Children's services

### COMMUNITIES

- Regeneration and development
- Streetworks
- Highways And Fleet
- Transport & Engineering
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Street Scene Management & Admin
- Facilities management
- Strategic Asset Management
- Capital Design & Delivery

### CHIEF EXECUTIVES

- Finance
- Internal Audit
- HR and Organisational Development
- IT
- Housing and Community Regeneration
- Legal Services
- Democratic Services
- Procurement
- Regulatory Services
- Registrars
- Equities
- Welsh language
- Council Tax and Benefits

## How is my council tax spent?

<p><b>43%</b></p> <p><b>Education &amp; Family Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools</li> <li>School Transport</li> <li>Education Support Services</li> </ul>	<p><b>27%</b></p> <p><b>Social Services &amp; Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's Social Care</li> <li>Adult Social Care</li> <li>Healthy Living Service</li> </ul>
<p><b>10%</b></p> <p><b>Communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste and recycling</li> <li>Street Cleaning</li> <li>Highways</li> </ul>	<p><b>7%</b></p> <p><b>Chief Executives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer Services</li> <li>Finance/Legal Services</li> <li>Housing</li> </ul>
<p><b>13%</b></p> <p><b>Council Wide Budgets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital Finance &amp; costs</li> <li>Precepts and Levies</li> <li>Legal &amp; Insurance costs</li> </ul>	

## SHAPING BRIDGEND'S FUTURE

### Breakdown of council funding

**£459M**

- Other Grants and Contributions: £20M
- Specific Grants: £11M
- Wales Government Revenue Support Grant: £10M
- Fees Charges and Other Income: £6M
- Council Tax: £37M
- Non-Domestic Rates: £23M

### 3.1.7. Other promotional activities

Targeted letters and emails were sent to school governing bodies and leisure centres, equality groups, elected members and Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum members.

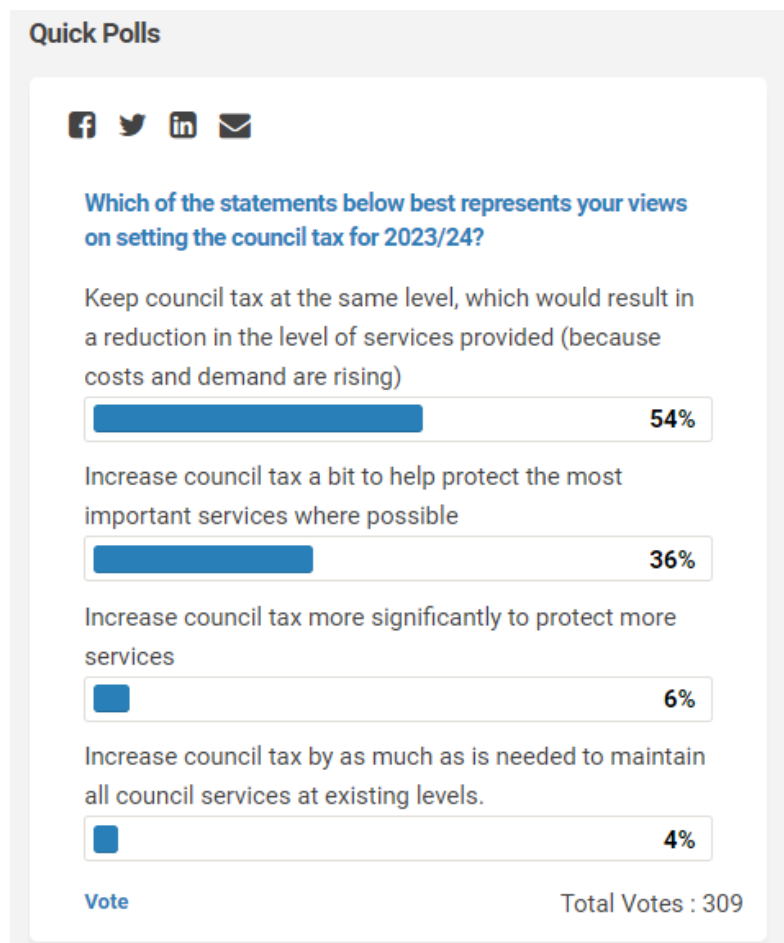
Details of the consultation were also sent to Halo who were asked to help raise the profile through their own organisation and its social media channels.

### 3.1.8. Other engagement tools

#### Quick Poll:

Our online engagement platform included a quick poll tool, where we asked residents their opinion on the setting of council tax for 2023/2024. This generated 309 quick responses, allowing people to engage quickly, if they did not want to participate in the survey.

The responses to the poll are shown below:



#### Idea tool:

An idea section was available on our engagement platform to encourage residents to contribute any ideas for Shaping Bridgend's future. This functionality also allowed other residents to like other people's ideas. There were 79 ideas posted in total. Below are the top five ideas - the full list of ideas can be found as Appendix 1 of this report.

Contribution	Likes	Comments
Idea: How about the Council getting owners to sort the dilapidated buildings out! York Tavern? Ranch? Or do we just have to watch the Town fall.	11	0
Idea: I understand Bridgend council tax is one of the highest in Wales but most of the area is in disrepair, please explain this	11	0
Idea: Bike lanes Description: Stop building bike lanes that nobody uses	10	5
Idea: Public toilets Description: All toilets should be open and FREE.	9	0
Idea: Rewire the Christmas Street lighting so it switches on/off with the street lights. Having it on 24 hours a day is a waste of power.	8	1

## 4. Response Rate

In total, there were 1079 responses to the online survey: from our standard, Citizen Panel, Easy read, large print and youth versions. This is an increase on the previous year's consultation, despite the period being only for five weeks.

## 5. How effective was the consultation?

The data collection methods, which include the online survey and a paper survey were developed using plain English to maximise understanding. These response methods were designed to give a consistency to the survey across multiple platforms.

## 6. Consultation Survey

### 6.1. Language used to complete the survey

Respondents to the consultation survey were initially asked in which language they would like to complete the survey. Overall, 99.5% of respondents selected English with 0.5% selecting Welsh.

Language	#	%
English	1073	99.5%
Welsh	6	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1079</b>	<b>100.0</b>

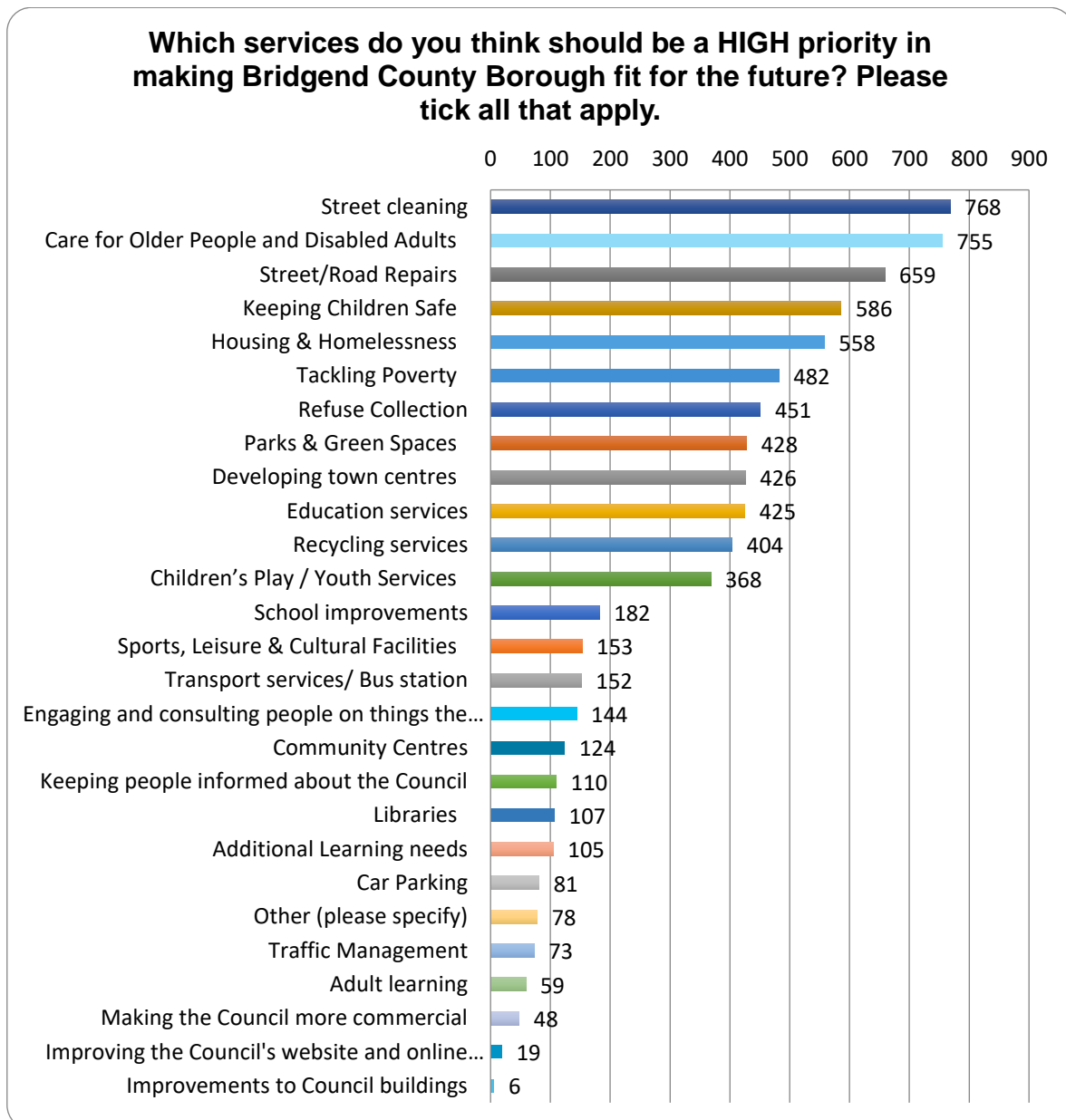


## 7. Survey Questions and Analysis

This section outlines and analyses all questions asked in the online survey. The survey was split into 5 sections:

### 7.1. Prioritising council services.

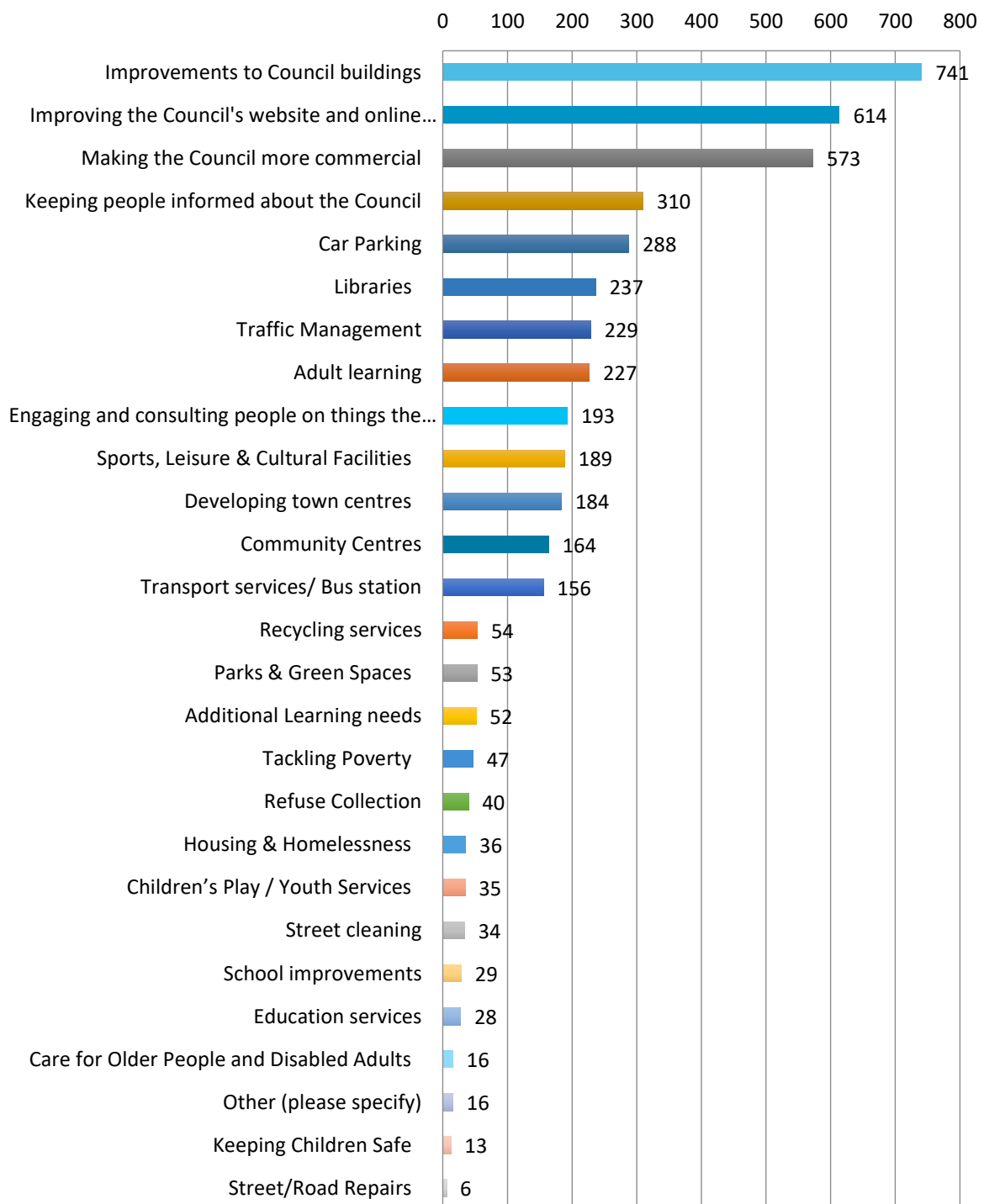
**Due to the significant funding pressures in 2023-2024, it's unlikely that we will be able to provide the same number or level of services in the future. We want your views to help us understand what services are important to our residents.**



As shown above, the top 3 services ranked as a high priority are: Street cleaning (768), Care for Older people and Disabled Adults (755) and Street/Road repairs (659).

There were 78 respondents that selected other.

**Which services do you think should be a NOT be a priority in making Bridgend County Borough fit for the future? Please tick all that apply.**



The top three services that were viewed to not be a priority were: Improvements to council buildings (741), improving the council's website and online services (614), and Making the Council more commercial (573).

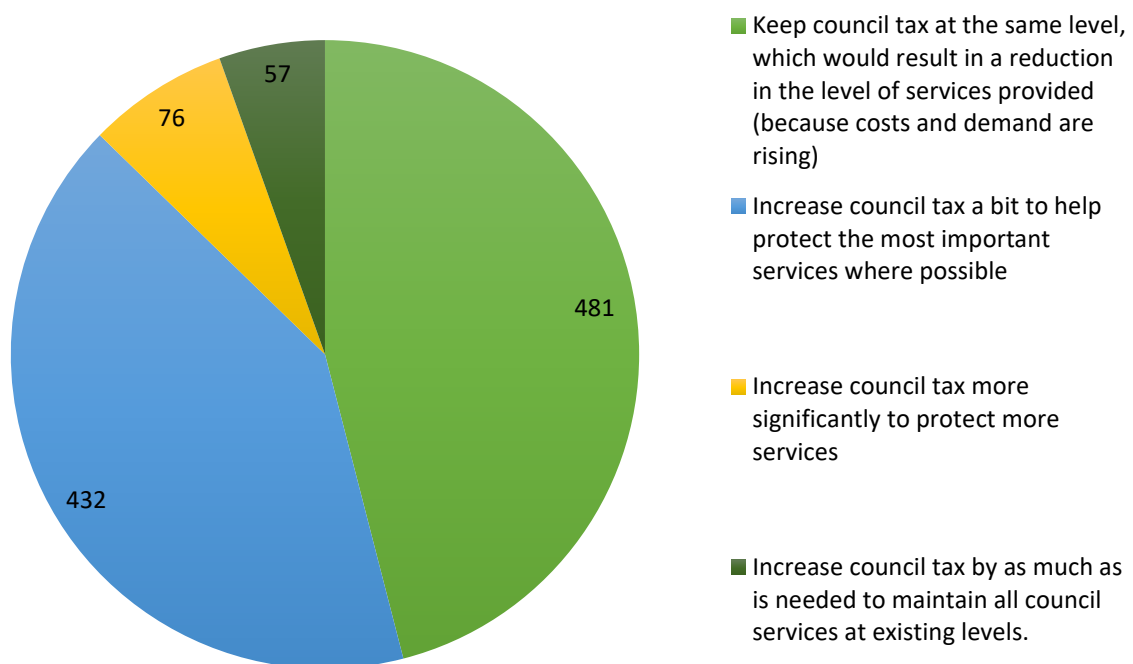
There were 16 respondents that selected other.

## 7.2. Council Tax levels:

Council tax raises around £87 million a year. In 2022/23, council tax income represents 27% of the Council's net revenue expenditure.

We are facing significant budget challenges over the next few years and may need to increase council tax to enable us to continue providing services

Which of the statements below best represents your views on setting the council tax for 2023/24?  
(Please put a tick in one of the boxes below).

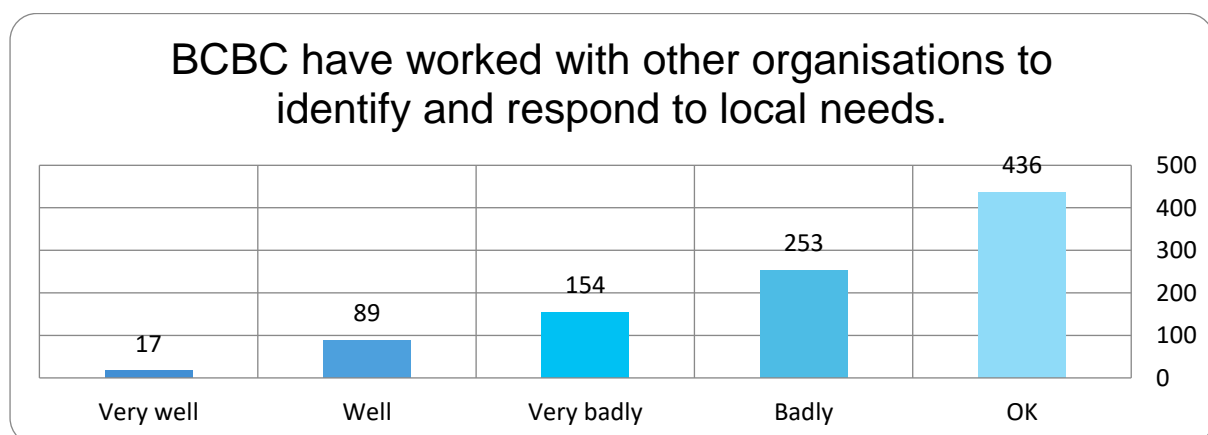
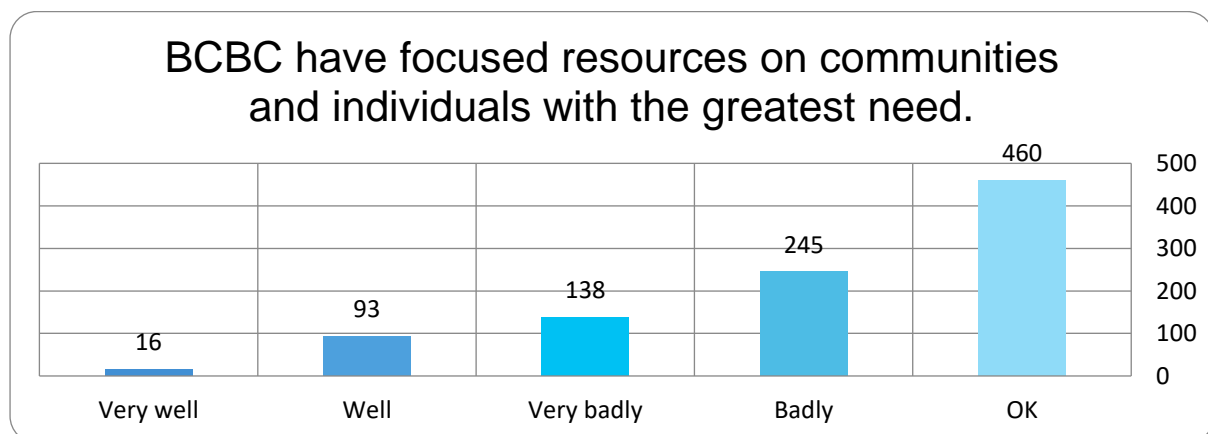
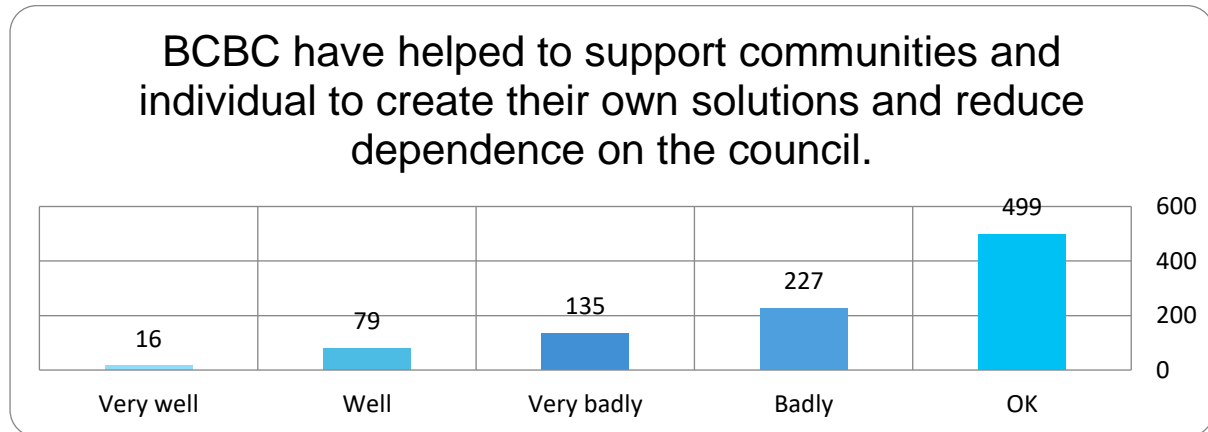


The highest number of responses were to keep council tax at the same levels (481) and reducing the level of services provided. Followed by 432 responses to increase council tax a bit to help protect the most important services, and 76 responses voted to increase council tax more significantly to protect more services. The lowest responses were for increasing council tax by as much as is needed to maintain all council services at existing levels.

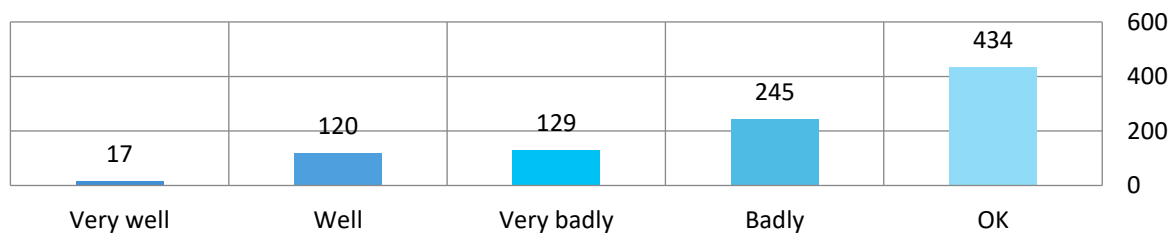
### 7.3. Performance over the past 12 months

A number of key principles underpin how Bridgend County Borough Council works. We aim to identify and meet local needs as best as we can.

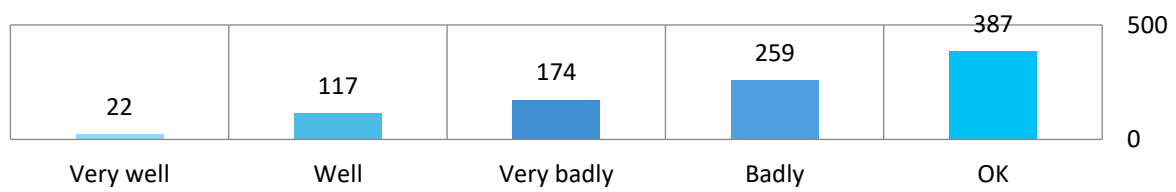
How do you think we have performed over the past 12 months in meeting the following aims?



Despite being unsure about the future of public services BCBC have collaborated with others to provide services.



BCBC have worked as one Council in delivering services that you value in a timely and easy manner without the need to contact the council multiple times.



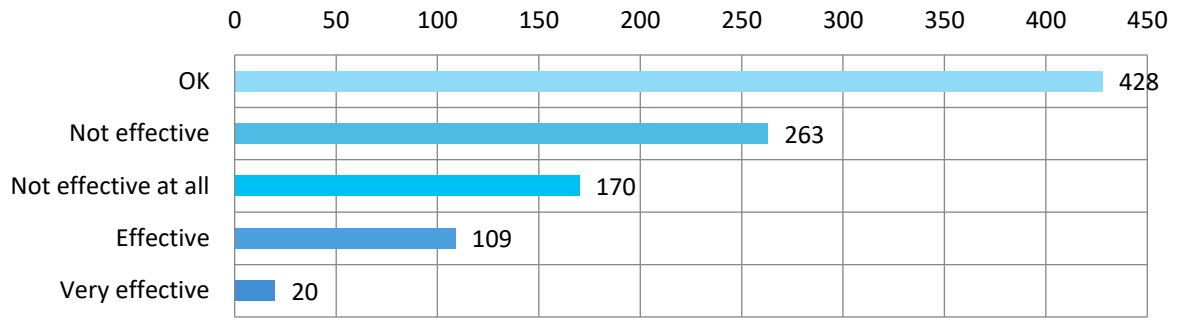
Our Values represent what we stand for and shape how we work.

Our Values are to be:

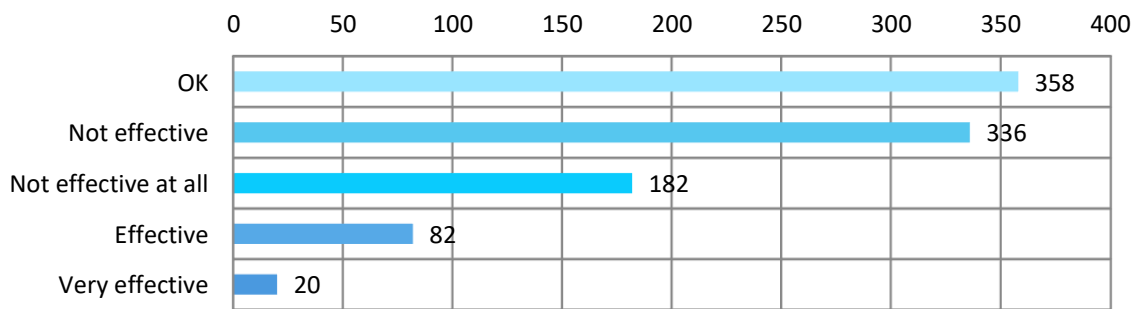
- **Fair** - considering everyone's needs and situation.
- **Ambitious** - always trying to improve what we do and aiming for excellence
- **Citizen-focused** - remembering that we are here to serve our local communities
- **Efficient** - delivering services that are value for money

How effective do you think we have been in meeting our values over the last 12 months?

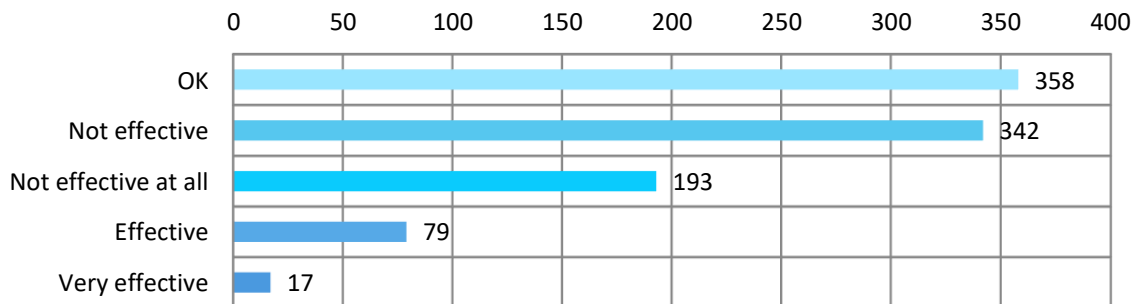
## Fair

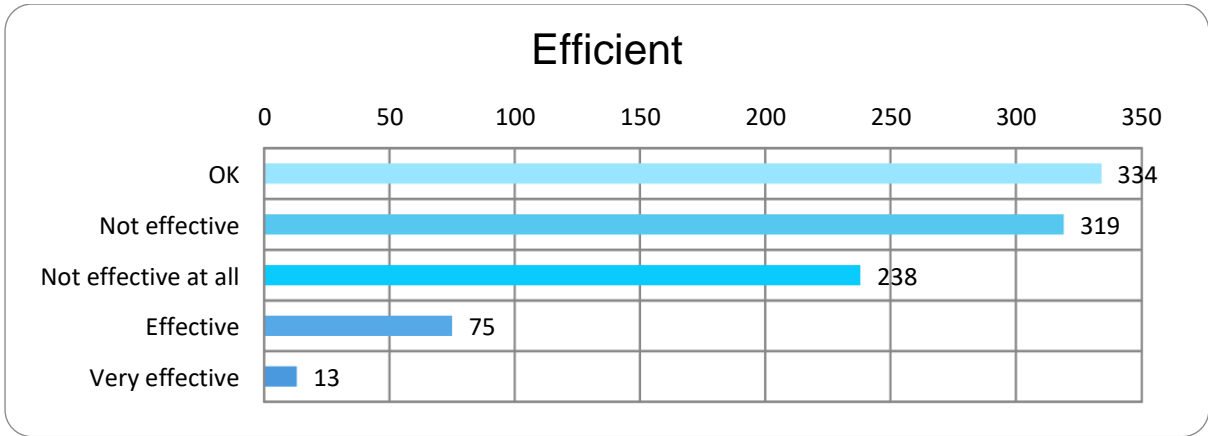


## Ambitious



## Citizen-focused



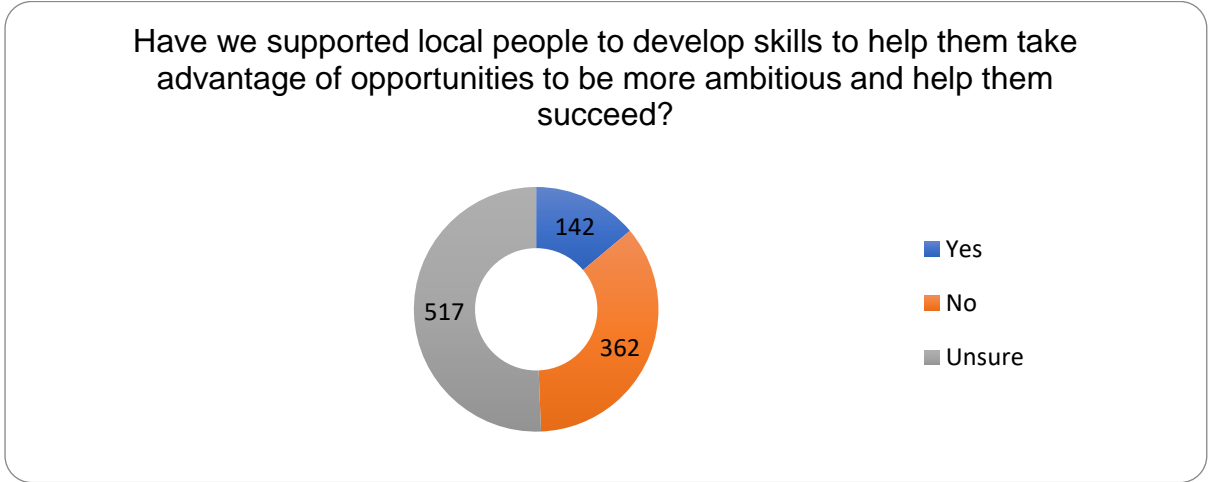


**The council has three well-being objectives. We would like to hear your views on how you think the council have performed against each of these objectives.**

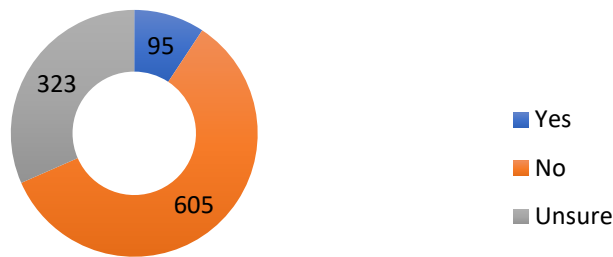
**Objective one: Supporting a successful sustainable economy.**

This means we will take steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.

Do you think we've achieved these aims?



Have we helped to create conditions for growth and enterprise to make Bridgend County an attractive place to do business?



Have we improved our town centres that make Bridgend County a great place to live, work and visit, improving the quality of life for citizens?

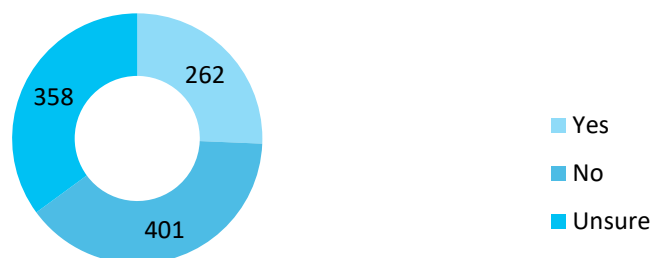


**Objective two: Helping people and communities to be healthier and more resilient.**

This means we will work with our partners, including the people who use our services, to take steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. We will support individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.

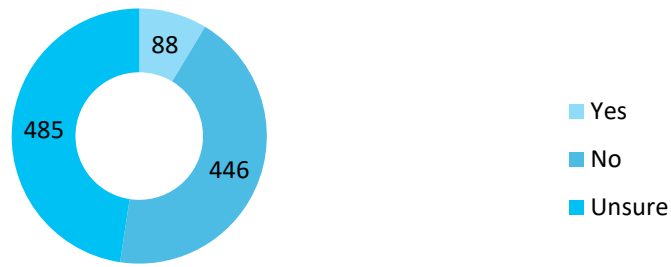
Do you think the council has achieved these aims?

Have we given people more choice about how and when to access services, and provided access to information and advice?

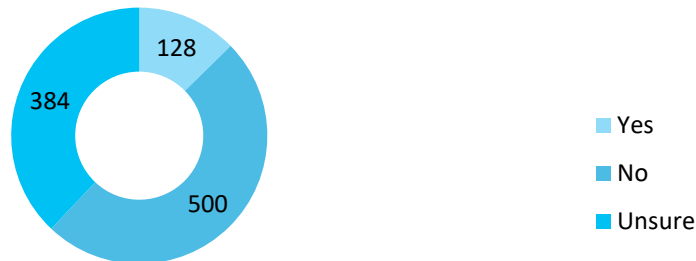




Have we been able to reduce demand on services by helping the right people at the right time?



Have we developed active, healthy and resilient communities by working in partnership with the third sector, town and community councils and community groups?



### Objective three – Smarter use of resources.

This means we will ensure that all of our resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

Do you think the council has achieved these aims?

Have we used finances well?



Have we improved efficiency and access to services by developing and promoting online services?



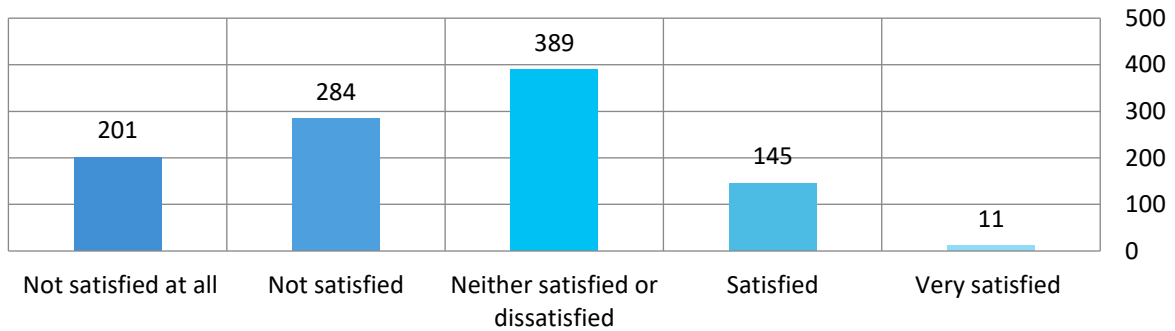
Have we improved the community by being more environmentally aware (creating active travel routes, electric vehicle charging points, recycling etc)?



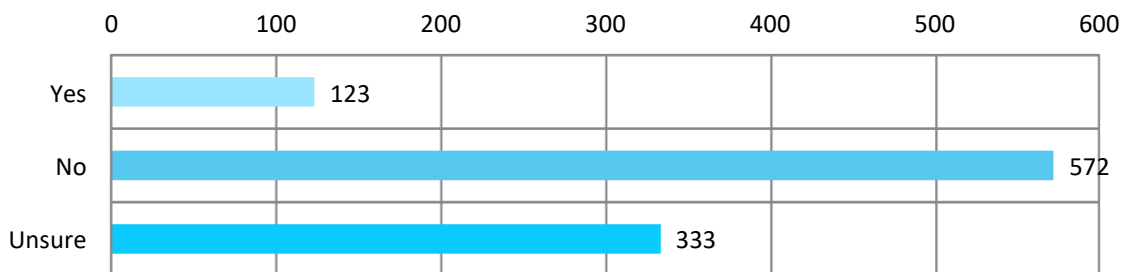
Have we developed a culture that is good at responding to change?



Overall, how satisfied are you that the council have worked to improve services offered to its residents and visitors over the past 12 months?



Do you think the council has responded well to the needs of the residents over the past 12 months?

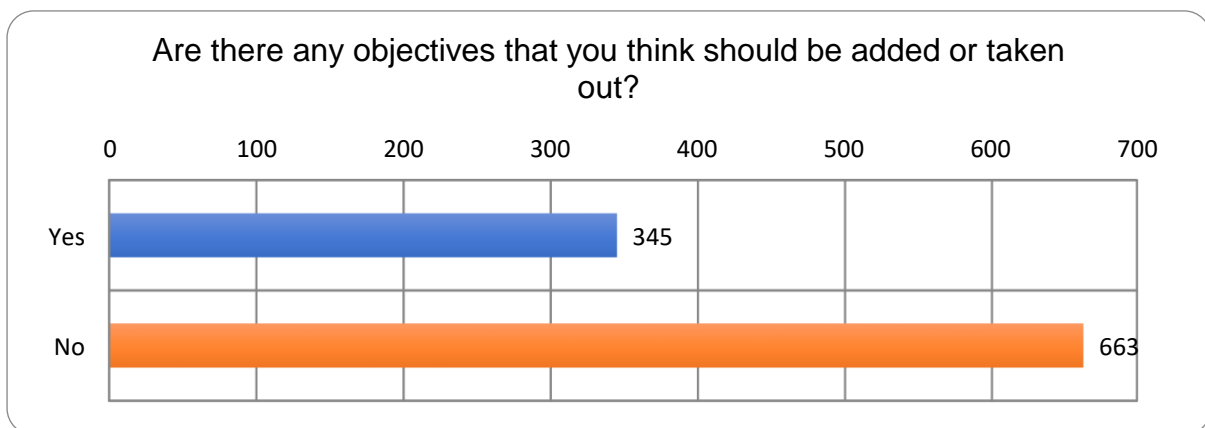
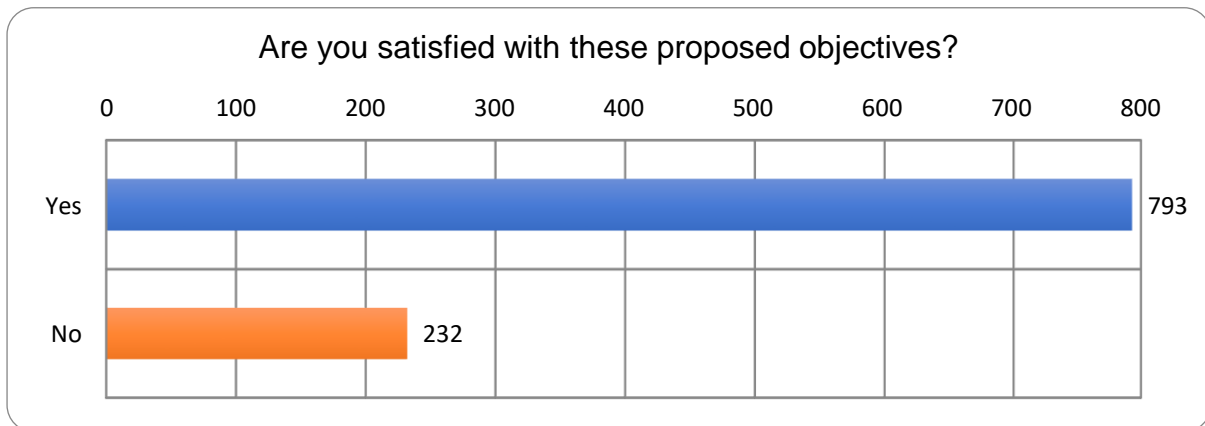


270 respondents provided a reason for their response to the above.

## 7.4. Future Council Objectives

The Council has reviewed performance and funding, looked at what is going on in the world and the priorities of partner organisations. For 2023-2028, we propose a larger number of narrower objectives. This would better reflect what we are doing as a Council and help us measure and communicate progress more effectively. These are:

1. A Borough where we protect our most vulnerable
2. A Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A Borough where we help people meet their potential
4. A Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
5. A Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
6. A Borough where we support people to be healthy and happy
7. A Borough with thriving Valleys communities

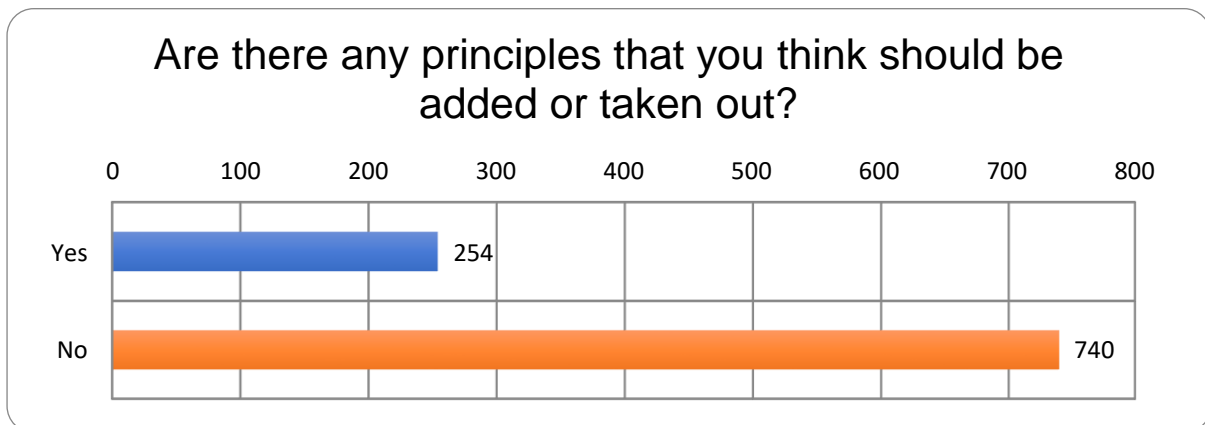
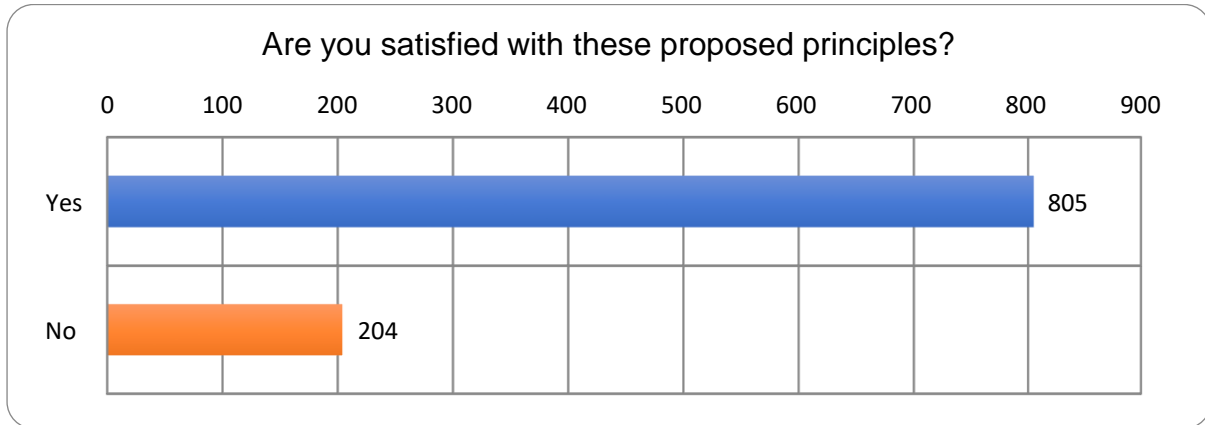


133 respondents that selected yes, provided a reason for their views.

**We are also proposing some new principles to support these objectives. In the next 5 years, we will work with staff, trade unions, residents & businesses to transform the way we work, including:**

1. Improving responsiveness to residents, making communication faster, more honest, and accessible

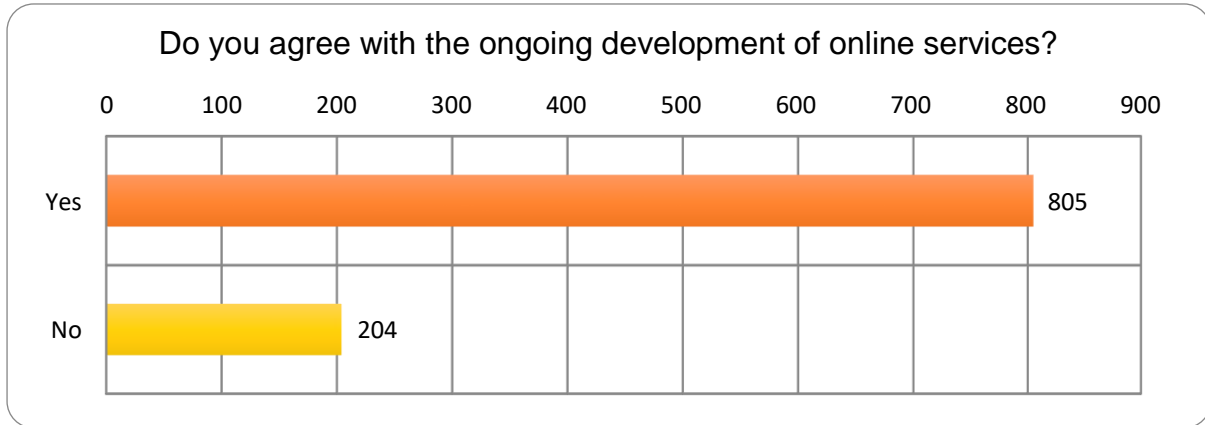
2. Supporting communities to create their own solutions & reduce dependence on the Council
3. Stopping or reducing services that aren't highly valued or well used
4. Using resources in more planned and efficient ways, focusing them on those in the greatest need
5. Acting as one council working with partner organisations for the good of communities



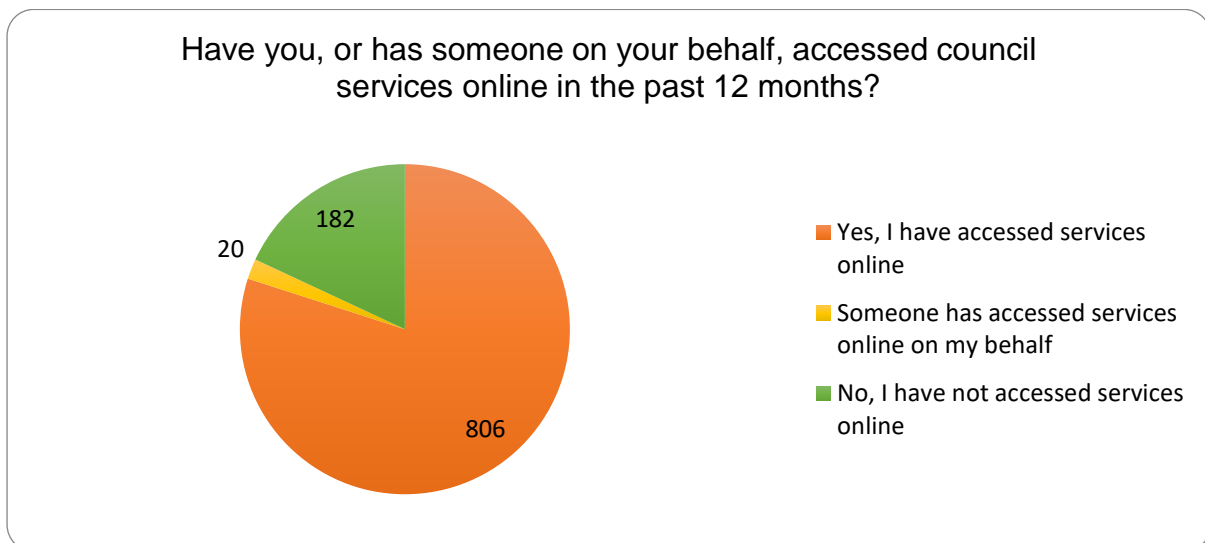
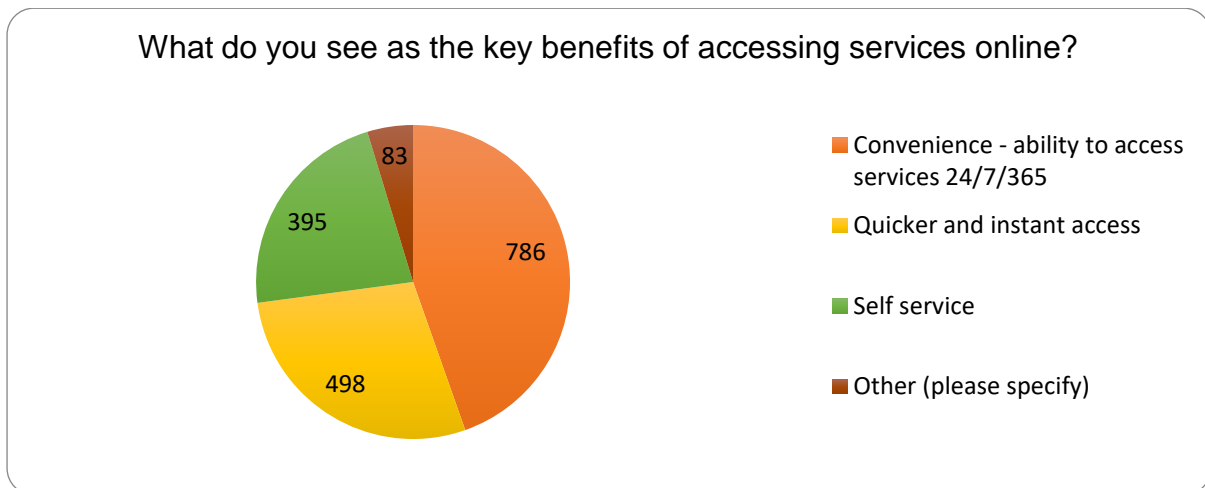
92 of the respondents that selected yes, provided a reason for their response.

## 7.5. Digitalisation of council services

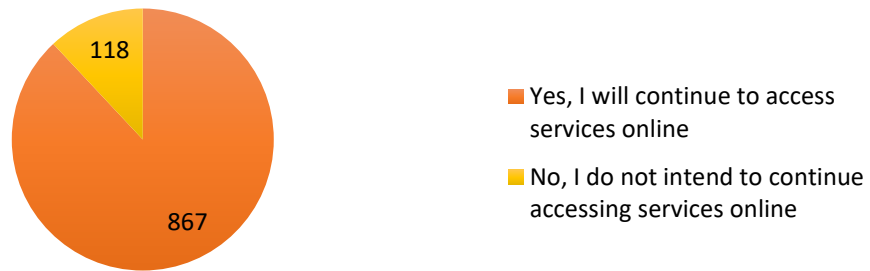
We have spent time over the past year developing more online services. We want to know your views on our digitalisation developments.



80 respondents that selected no, provided a reason for their choice.

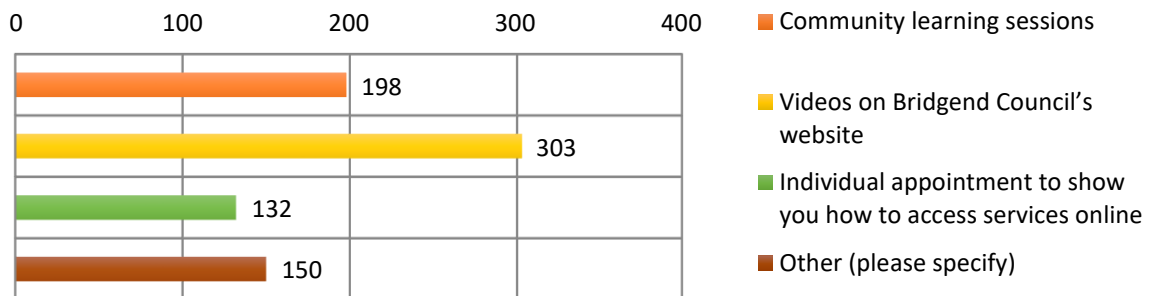


## Do you intend to continue accessing services online?



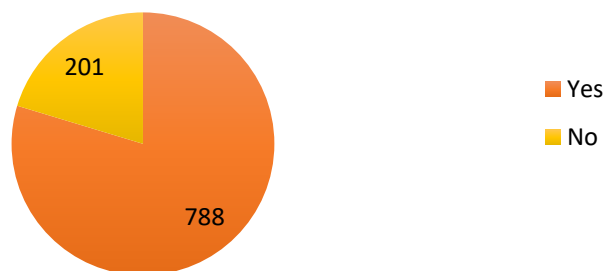
42 respondents that selected no, left a further response.

## What support would help you, or someone you know, to access more services online?



118 respondents stated other council services they would like to access online.

## Would you support the development of community hubs so those residents who choose not to access council services digitally, can access these services within their local communities?



What key services do you think would be beneficial to offer support and guidance with in community hubs?



As shown, the top three services ranked are: Council Tax and Housing benefits, Social Services and Housing and Homelessness.

119 respondents left a further response for this question.



## 8. Equalities Monitoring

**How would these proposals affect you because of your: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Disability, Sexuality, Religion / belief, Gender identity, Relationship status, Pregnancy, Preferred language?**

Responses to this question are themed into the table below.

Theme	Number of responses
No impact	145
N/a	20
Unsure of relevance / question	18
Everyone should be treated equal	17
Disability	12
Age	10
Gender	5
Accessibility	4
Pressure of speaking Welsh / too forced	4
Too much emphasis on minorities	3
Rights need to be protected	3
Sexuality	2
Religion /belief	2
No mental health provisions	2
Prefer not to say	2
Make communities more inclusive	2
Council tax too high	2
Medical conditions	2
Welsh Language should be encouraged	2
Individual circumstances/beliefs not covered by the act	2
Ethnicity	1
Need more support	1
Not having adequate parks affects children	1
Unpaid carers	1
Marital status	1
Maternity	1
No other options of the survey	1
Re-introduction of Shopmobility Scheme	1

**Question: We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?**

Responses to this question are themed into the table below.

Theme	Number of responses
Welsh Language is important / should be supported and protected	36
Should have choice to opt into one language for correspondence to save printing / money	31
No impact	27
Welsh Language has high expense	21
Too much emphasis on the Language / forced	19
Welsh Language is a waste of time / resources	18
Encourage and more support for Welsh Language in education	16
Not sure of proposals / question	16
No comment / N/A	15
Little of the population in Bridgend speak Welsh	15
Offer free Welsh courses / easy access	13
No interest in Welsh Language	8
Not a priority area	7
The council offers welsh language platforms	6
Non-Welsh speakers do not get the same opportunities / Treated less favourably	5
Proposals have no significance for the Welsh language	4
People are not interested in learning the Welsh Language	4
More Welsh speaking staff	2
Negative impact	2
Digitalisation can help with Welsh Language	2
School transport to Welsh Schools are not supportive	2
It is a legal obligation	2
Proposal must be inclusive	1
Reduce Council Tax	1
Do not receive clear communication in either Languages	1
All languages should be respected	1
Prefer not to say	1
Welsh Language should be used for cultural and artistic purposes only	1
Use Welsh key words in public spaces to help people use the language	1
No access to Welsh Survey	1
Street names should remain in Welsh	1

**Question: Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language and ensure there are no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.**

Responses to this question are themed into the table below.

Theme	Number of responses
Not a priority	27
Protect and promote Welsh language	22
Waste of money	20
Personal choice	19
No comment	18
Not sure	18
Previously answered	14
Capture language choice	9
Pressured to use Welsh	8
Make learning more accessible	8
Improvements needed on current Welsh options	8
Needs to be optional	8
Creates Barriers & division	7
Free Welsh lessons	6
Visibility of Welsh speakers	4
Working well currently	3
Teach as first language in schools	3
Basic learning	2
Opportunities to learn Welsh in workplace	2
Subtitles should be available	2
Other foreign languages should be considered	1

## 9. Conclusion

The consultation has previously run for 8-12 weeks. Despite this year's consultation period being five weeks (over the Christmas period), we had a good overall response.

A total of 1079 survey responses were received, demonstrating an increase of 44% on last year's survey completions.

The consultation received a total of 1,441 interactions from a combination of survey completions, engagement at various meetings, social media engagement and via the authority's Citizens' Panel. This represents an increase of 29% on last year's overall interactions.

Using statistical analysis, based on a confidence level of 95% a sample of 1079 survey completions is considered to be robust to a maximum standard error of  $\pm 2.97\%$ . Therefore, we can be 95% confident that the responses are representative of those that would be given by the total adult population, to within  $\pm 2.97\%$  of the percentages reported.

Due to the short consultation period, face to face meetings were reduced. The consultation and engagement team attended 3 drop-in sessions in Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg.

The consultation document was available in a variety of formats: standard; easy-read; large print and youth in Welsh and English. Respondents were able to select online or paper surveys in all formats.

The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

This report is to be shared with Cabinet in order to inform the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2023-2024 onwards.

## Appendix 1 – Ideas submitted by citizens as part of the 2022 budget consultation

Contribution	Likes	Comments
Idea: How about the Council getting owners to sort the dilapidated buildings out! York Tavern? Ranch? Or do we just have to watch the Town fall.	11	0
Idea: I understand Bridgend council tax is one of the highest in Wales but most of the area is in disrepair, please explain this	11	0
Idea: Bike lanes Description: Stop building bike lanes that nobody uses	10	5
Idea: Public toilets Description: All toilets should be open and FREE.	9	0
Idea: Rewire the Christmas Street lighting so it switches on/off with the street lights. Having it on 24 hours a day is a waste of power.	8	1
Idea: Give residents a choice to receive communication in English or Welsh. What a waste of our tax money.	7	2
Idea: Reduce wastage first eg superfluous expenses for councillors, overseas trips etc and pinpointing obvious local government wastage.	7	0
Idea: Review the funding spent on promoting the Welsh Language Description: Look at duplication involved in doubling paperwork in English and Welsh.	6	1
Idea: Turn off the lights in the multi storey car park during the day. The stairs obviously need lighting but not the car parking areas.	6	0
Idea: Allow cars to enter and park for a short time in Bridgend town centre to use local shops and support small businesses.	5	1
Idea: Please listen to those who have voted	5	0
Idea: Complete a thorough survey of your residents' thoughts	5	0
Idea: Change back to wheely bins. They are a greener choice to continuous use of blue plastic bags which cost more, rip easily cause rats and litter Description: Change back to wheely bins!	5	0
Idea: 58% in this survey have voted NO to a rise in council tax this year. BCBC should NOT be raising council this year. Don't ignore this result! Description: Follow the results of this survey on council tax!	3	2
Idea: Bridgend bus station Description: The time table need to be added to the station, all seats should be replaced so people with arthritis can sit on them in the winter. Smoking at the station should be banned.	3	0
Idea: Welsh language Description: Offer free Welsh courses in Bridgend instead all we can learn is Spanish or German neither are useful.	3	0

Contribution	Likes	Comments
Idea: Bring Youth Clubs Back Description: It would be great to see more youth clubs around the valleys for teens ages 11+ not all kids are into sports so it would be nice to have somewhere to go for the kids to just hang out in a safe environment, where they can be themselves and also gain invaluable social skills to guide them into adulthood. I loved the youth club we had in Maesteg Comp around 2000/2002	3	0
Idea: Do not allow new housing/ tennis development on island farm. We do not have enough GPs/ schools or dentists for this development Description: Stop new housing development at Island Farm .	3	0
Idea: End free bus passes Description: Implementation of a nominal charge per journey. £1.00	2	4
Idea: Major upgrades to roads, in valleys and not just Bridgend	2	1
Idea: End free NHS prescriptions Description: To help contribute towards funding the NHS, introduce a nominal fee per prescription.	2	1
Idea: Stop holding onto so much money in reserve. Look at good practice in other councils in Wales - Cleaner, better maintained authorities.	2	1
Idea: Buses Description: Bridgend needs a new bus company, the current company refuses to operate a normal service.	2	0
Idea: Cut at least half of Christmas lights and street lights	2	0
Idea: Create adventure tourism Description: Benchmark against Neath Port Talbot's Mountain bike scene near Glyncorwg and promote exciting adventures etc. I have just googled the MTB scene within BCBC and note a couple of trails... Why do i know more about NPTH's MTB scene than what is in my own county. NPT is now having a forest holiday village. What does BCBC have...a few caravan parks. Can BCBC get with the times. I wish BCBC had more dynamic leaders.	2	0
Idea: Stop Giving cash to the Cardiff City deal!	2	0
Idea: Celebrate culture, language and heritage of Bridgend better Description: Do more to celebrate the culture, heritage and language of Bridgend. Offer free Welsh language activities and events. The council should also remain fully bilingual - and all communications should be produced equally in both languages. After all, what else do we have going for us if we lived in a dire, cultureless, monolingual society?	2	0
Idea: Maesteg to Bridgend cycle path needs to be built, Garw and Ogmor valleys both have a path that leads straight to Bridgend. Why not Llynfi?	2	0
Idea: Encourage more children into sport instead of roaming the streets Description: More needs to be done to offer high quality sporting	2	0

Contribution	Likes	Comments
facilities and to encourage our youngsters into team sports and achieving through sporting excellence		
<p>Idea: Design a better survey and reveal how much it actually cost 'the public' to conduct it.</p> <p>Description: As it is nonsense. I can complete/submit it multiple times if I want. You also use coercive tactics to manipulate answers (Q3) and ask us to rate your performance at Q4/Q5 but give no option to indicate that we have absolutely no idea (i.e. your comms are bad and so we don't know)! This will skew response data so how does this realistically help to shape 'our' future? I'm sorry, but if you are going to send out news emails continuously telling us how broke BCBC are (like it's our fault) then expect some backlash.</p> <p>Transparency in terms of where your millions go exactly and clear, directional aims and objectives to tackle this are what we need (a well thought out plan, backed up by the evidence). We're all doing more with way less now; why not BCBC too?</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Invest more in clean renewable energy; Plastic roads; turning every other street light off between hours such as 5pm-7pm;</p> <p>Description: Protected green spaces with planting more trees and encouraging biodiversity; free local transport; greener houses and infrastructure.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Set up a fraud investigation team</p> <p>Description: Set up a team to claw back money from people fraudulently claiming benefits and covid loans this would also provide extra income for the council and gain back taxpayers money for use in the local area.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Accessible changing facilities for adults and young people</p> <p>Description: Bridgend and Porthcawl both need accessible changing facilities for adults and young people not just for babies, the one in McArthur Glenn is great for everyone who needs it, there isn't one anywhere else. Make places accessible for everyone.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Switch the traffic lights off on some of the borough roundabouts such as the one's by Dunelm, B&amp;Q and the M4 between 9pm and 6am.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Switch off the lights</p> <p>Description: Why not switch off the lights in the unused multistorey car park next to Asda and the lights off at the Rhiw multistorey when not in use.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Solar panels</p> <p>Description: Add solar panels to every existing council owned property to reduce the carbon footprint and insist that all new builds (irrespective of residential or commercial) have solar panels fitted as part of the building control requirements.</p>	1	0
<p>Idea: Increase formal learning opportunities for people in their communities, recognising that its hard for people to afford transport costs</p> <p>Description: Learn where you live</p>	1	0

<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Likes</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Comment: I do think that eligibility for a bus pass should be linked to your state pension age. Would help target resources more effectively.	0	0
Comment: I think the eligibility criteria is already linked to the state pension as it is now. By introducing a nominal charge to those eligible would surely help reduce or contribute towards the subsidy paid to the bus companies hence reducing the burden on the tax payer.	0	0
Comment: I agree. The money would be better spent on road repairs.	0	0
Comment: Build them and people will use them, but they have to be built properly, in appropriate areas and looked after	0	0
Idea: Community Service, Description: What happens to the people who are punished by the courts to do community service, surely, they could be used by the council or charities to pick up litter, cut grass, paint etc. Use them to actually help the community.	0	1
Comment: have heard of some that are assigned to work in charity shops for no pay - enforced volunteering - for their set number of hours	0	0
Comment: What your saying is disabled people have to pay and yet again OAP's get everything for free.	0	0
Comment: What a silly remark. There's so much more of other things we could do to save money. Having everything bilingual would save us money.	0	0
Comment: I'm a Welsh speaker and I pay council tax and contribute to Bridgend's economy - why shouldn't I receive correspondence in Welsh by my council?	0	0
Comment: A more appropriate cycle lane scheme would be from Maesteg to Tondy. Currently there is no footpath along the only road yet there are several bus stops.	0	0
Comment: I would say to just maintain roads and paths to a sufficient standard should be the minimum we should expect.	0	0
Comment: I'd love to see safer routes for cyclists.	0	0
Comment: With a three-mile distance to be eligible for school transport, safe cycle routes would help.	0	0
Comment: The cost of sending everything out in English and Welsh is extortionate. This idea of choice should be put into practice. At least use one sheet of paper and print on the back instead of doubling up and sending different sheets of paper in English and Welsh- it is an appalling waste of paper.	0	0
Comment: Isn't there free parking in the multi storey - or was that just for Christmas.	0	0
Comment: I agree but would suggest the exceptions are children up to 16, pregnant women and those over 65 and on benefits, as I believe is the case in England.	0	0
Comment: Perhaps consider using small solar panels.	0	0
Comment: We're lucky in Wales, we get a pass at 60 and it covers the country. Not the case in England. I tend to agree that a small charge would help things.	0	0



<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Likes</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Comment: Agree broadly speaking. I've just moved from Rhondda and find services very different in Bridgend, some better, some worse.	0	0
Comment: I'm not one of the 58%. If you want better services, I think there has to be a small increase.	0	0
Comment: Many other councils across Wales and the UK charge far less council tax and seem to manage. BCBC council tax is one of the highest in Wales and across UK. Anyone who requests a hike in council tax is likely exempt or gets a discount. BCBC residents can't go on like this -massive rises year on year. Having experienced living in council areas elsewhere in Wales and in England Bridgend has ridiculously high council tax charges and for what? RCT still give out wheely bins instead of spending a fortune on useless blue bags as has been mentioned in another comment and as for council tax the whole rebranding system across Wales caused a massive hike in council tax compared to England. There is no need for the extortionate rate BCBC residents are paying! Finally council tax pays for street lighting, bins etc. Everyone gets the same service whether you are 4 people living in a 2 bed terrace or 4 people in a 4 bed detached so I have never understood why rates are different .	0	0
Idea: sell off surplus office space, (not to Auction), scrutinise procurement, more charging points for E vehicles, reinstate bus subsidies, Description: The Council needs to be more efficient in its procurement, and in its development of greener options, Merge with another council, increase shared services	0	0
Idea: Repair and upgrade pavements in North Cornelly Description: Remove the grass verges on pavements in the whole area. If they were tarmacked and repaired instead of turning to a sea of mud when cars are parked on them. This would avoid having to pay contractors to mow them and would therefore eventually save a lot of money. It would also enhance the area by having decent pavements to walk on as a lot of them are in a terrible state of repair.	0	0
Idea: After Bank Holiday and subsequent delay for refuse and recycle collections simply adopt the new day for subsequent collections.	0	0
Idea: Connect villages with reliable public transport that runs in sync with workforce needs Description: Public transport for working people	0	0
Idea: Garw valley cycle path is in poor state, impacting our ability to use it safely year-round as both leisure and transport route Description: Renovate and improve cycle paths that are in disrepair to increase active travel opportunities	0	0
Idea: Environmental Health Description: Provide an appointment service for those that are employed	0	0

Contribution	Likes	Comments
<p>Idea: Remove car parking charges in Bridgend and Porthcawl Town Council car parks, reinstate the Tourist information centres to Towns and Pines</p> <p>Description: Remove parking charges and reinstate Tourist information Centres In Bridgend , Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Pines!!</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: Exec bonus/salary to be scaled based on performance and effectiveness</p> <p>Description: For an exec to receive full salary/bonus they need to deliver on targets, initiatives and service improvements. Poor performance followed by a golden handshake is costly.</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: Increase use of digital services and modernise legacy and manual systems</p> <p>Description: Chatbots, AI, data analysis for example mean we can do more with less. Look to reduce technical debt and increase use of digital capability to extend and optimise services.</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: Porthcawl resident</p> <p>Description: Parking space zones in and around town centre like Suffolk place park avenue examples of free parking for the people who walk 5min than part with a pound</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: FREE Mental health counselling</p> <p>Description: Mental health counselling is hard to get and long waiting times when you have a breakdown you need help quickly if not it can end in Suicide.</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: We need to get back to face to face communication</p> <p>Description: everything having to be done online is very very difficult for people with learning disabilities and dyslexia. My son had an in-depth mental health assessment over the phone they can't see the body language given the signs of distress.</p>	0	0
<p>Idea: Don't rely on online communication not everyone has a mobile or email especially the elderly who are used to face to face communication</p>	0	0

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE & CHANGE

##### CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the Council's updated Code of Corporate Governance (**Appendix A**) for approval and adoption.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

- 2.2 Achievement of the corporate well-being objectives and other corporate priorities is underpinned by ensuring that effective governance arrangements are in place.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Regulation 5 (2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires an authority to undertake, as part of its arrangements for corporate governance, an annual review of governance and report on internal control.

- 3.2 In 2016, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) published '*Delivering good governance in Local Government: Framework*' which positions the attainment of sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes as a key focus of governance processes and structures. The associated guidance

notes considered the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and embedded the five ways of working into the CIPFA framework.

- 3.3 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom notes that the preparation and publication of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in accordance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework' would fulfil the statutory requirement regarding the requirement to review at least once in each financial year the effectiveness of its system of internal control, and to include a statement reporting on the review within its Statement of Accounts.
- 3.4 The Council has a Code of Corporate Governance that follows the seven core principles of CIPFA's Framework, and the Council's Annual Governance Statement is produced in accordance with this. The Council's Code of Corporate Governance was last updated in 2017.

#### 4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Code of Corporate Governance has been reviewed and updated to include actions that demonstrate good governance and evidence that supports those actions. These can be found at section 6.4 and 6.5 of **Appendix A**.
- 4.2 The Code of Corporate Governance is based on the following seven core principles as set out in the CIPFA Framework:

<b>Core Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
E	Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
G	Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Below the core principles there are 21 sub-principles and, to achieve good governance, the Council should be able to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and sub-principles contained in the Framework. Details of the sub-principles are set out in **Appendix A** at paragraph 6.4. To demonstrate the

Council's good governance, each Core and sub-principle has been identified, with actions and evidence to support those actions identified.

4.3 The updated Code of Corporate Governance at **Appendix A** has been reviewed by the Corporate Management Board.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 The Code, once approved by Cabinet will form part of the policy framework.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

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

7.1 The Act requires public bodies, including local government, to consider the longer term in making their decisions and to work collaboratively with other public bodies to improve well-being in Wales. The Act sets out seven well-being goals for public bodies and requires them to act in a sustainable way. It also sets out five ways of working that public bodies are required to take into account when applying the sustainable development principle. The Act is central to the Welsh Government's long-term policy for the public services and its themes tie in with the *Delivering Governance in Local Governments: Framework* (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016). This framework, on which the Council's Code of Corporate Governance is based, identifies the Core Principles and the Sub-Principles that underpin these and the Code demonstrates how the Council will meet the requirements of these Core and Sub-Principles required of the Act.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 That Cabinet consider and approve the revised Code of Corporate Governance.

Carys Lord

**CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE**

February 2023

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**Background documents:**

None



# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE



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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and recognises it is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted within the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. It has a duty to make proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are discharged and have robust arrangements in place for the management of risk. The development, adoption and continued implementation and monitoring of a Code of Corporate Governance confirms this commitment.
- 1.2 Good governance is about doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.
- 1.3 This Code describes the Council's understanding of corporate governance, and outlines the framework it has put in place to ensure that these arrangements are effective. The Code reflects a joint commitment by Members and senior managers to the principles it contains. This helps to ensure that the principles of corporate governance are not only fully embedded and cascaded throughout the Authority, but that they have the support of the Council, the Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Board.

## **2. What is Corporate Governance?**

- 2.1 The Council has a key role in governing and leading our community. Effective local government relies on public confidence in Elected Members and Council Officers.
- 2.2 Corporate governance is a phrase used to describe how organisations direct and control what they do. Effective systems of corporate governance provide confidence in public services. For local authorities this also includes how a council relates to the communities that it serves. Good corporate governance requires local authorities to carry out their services in a way that demonstrates accountability, openness and honesty.

## **3. Why adopt a Code of Corporate Governance?**

- 3.1 Adopting a Code of Corporate Governance is another way in which the Council shows its recognition of the fact that effective local government relies upon establishing and maintaining the confidence of local people in both elected members and Council officials. Good corporate governance underpins credibility and confidence in the leadership and forms the foundation from which all Council services are provided.
- 3.2 Adopting, monitoring and complying with a Code of Corporate Governance helps enhance the Council's legitimacy and acknowledges the trust placed in the Council by local people.

- 3.3 Strong, transparent and responsive governance enables the Council to put citizens first by pursuing its aims and priorities effectively, and by underpinning them with appropriate mechanisms for managing performance and risk. In order to maintain citizens' confidence, these mechanisms must not only be sound, but also be seen to be sound.
- 3.4 Corporate governance comprises the framework within which the Council manages its business; this includes the Council's constitution and the various procedure rules, codes and protocols contained therein. It also includes the systems and processes, and the culture and values by which the activities of the Council are directed and controlled, and how it accounts to and engages with its citizens. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.
- 3.5 Overall, adopting and committing to this Code of Corporate Governance provides a basis for a Council wide commitment to the way in which it intends fulfilling its role in leading and representing the community, providing opportunities for all and ensuring that there is a strong customer focus underpinning everything that the Council does.

#### **4. Why do we need a Code of Corporate Governance?**

- 4.1 Corporate governance is important because it supports:

- Provision of high quality public services

Within the UK, governance weaknesses have sometimes led to significant failures in public services. High performing organisations on the other hand, generally, have effective governance arrangements.

- Raising public trust

The public's trust is increased when they perceive the quality of services that they and their families experience to be sound and when organisations are seen to be open and honest in communicating their performance and learning from their mistakes.

- 4.2 The Code of Corporate Governance is based upon the "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework" (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016). The Framework positions the attainment of sustainable economic, societal, and environmental outcomes as a key focus of governance processes and structures. Outcomes give the role of local government its meaning and importance, and it is fitting that they have this central role in the sector's governance. Furthermore, the focus on sustainability and the links between governance and public financial management are crucial – local authorities must recognise the need to focus on the long term as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Local authorities have responsibilities to more than their current electors as they must take account of the impact of current decisions and actions on future generations.

4.3 The Framework defines the principles that should underpin the governance of each local government organisation. It provides a structure to help individual authorities with their approach to governance. Whatever forms of arrangements are in place, authorities should therefore test their governance structures and partnerships against the principles contained in the Framework by:

- reviewing existing governance arrangements;
- developing and maintaining an up-to-date local code of governance, including arrangements for ensuring ongoing effectiveness;
- reporting publicly on compliance with their own code on an annual basis and on how they have monitored the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year and on planned changes.

## 5. The Corporate Governance Principles as adopted in Bridgend

5.1 The Framework is based on the following seven Core Principles:

<b>Core Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
B	Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
C	Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
D	Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
E	Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
F	Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
G	Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

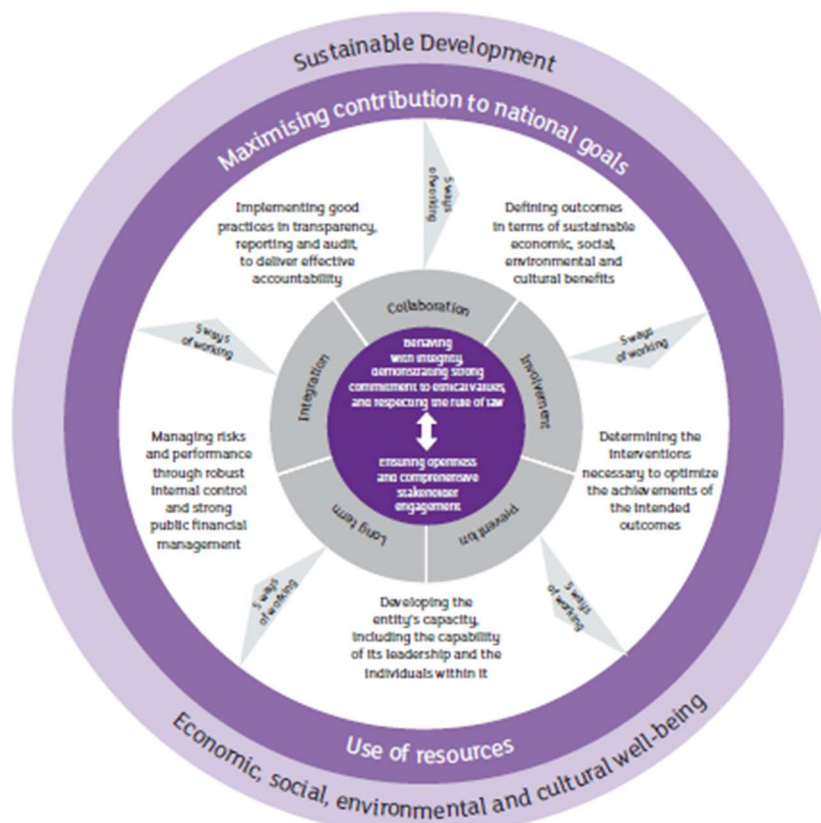
5.2 There are also a number of sub-principles below the seven core principles. To achieve good governance, each local authority should be able to demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and sub-principles contained in the Framework. It should therefore develop and maintain a local code of governance/governance arrangements reflecting the principles set out. It is also crucial that the Framework is applied in a way that demonstrates the spirit and ethos of good governance which cannot be achieved by rules and procedures alone. Shared values that are integrated

into the culture of an organisation, and are reflected in behaviour and policy, are hallmarks of good governance.

## 6. The Corporate Governance Principles and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 6.1 The Act requires public bodies covered by the Act, including local government, to consider the longer term in making their decisions and to work collaboratively with other public bodies to improve well-being in Wales. The Act sets out seven well-being goals for public bodies and requires them to act in a sustainable way. It also sets out five ways of working that public bodies are required to take into account when applying the sustainable development principle.
- 6.2 The Act is central to the Welsh Government's long-term policy for the public services and its themes tie in with the *Delivering Governance in Local Government: Framework* (CIPFA/SOLACE, 2016). The Auditor General for Wales has set out a diagram (below) which brings together the International Framework with the requirements of the 2015 Act.

**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the International Framework**



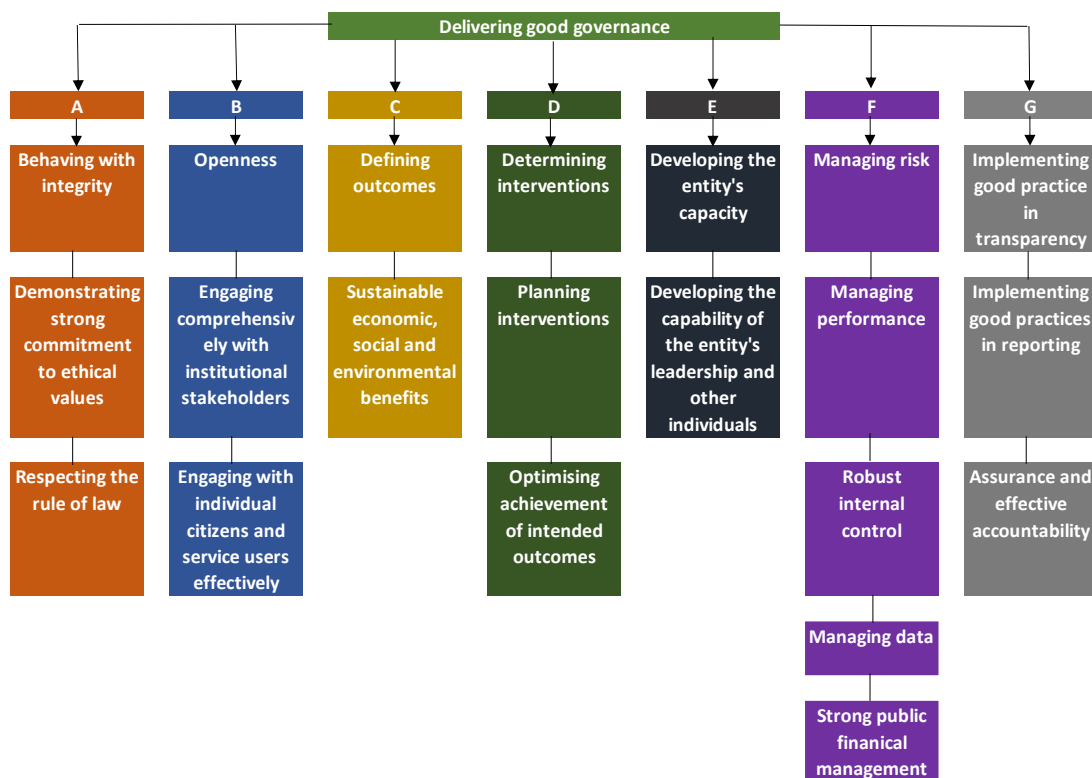
Source: CIPFA *Delivering Good Governance Guidance Notes 2016*

- 6.3 The diagram shows sustainable development as all encompassing. The core behaviours of:

- behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law
- ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

need to be applied to the five ways of working. The five ways of working (underpinned by the core behaviours) have to be at the heart of delivering outcomes, which in turn should ensure effective use of resources as public bodies maximise their contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

6.4 CIPFA's Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016 Edition) identifies the Core Principles A-G as set out in paragraph 5.1 and the Sub-Principles that underpin these.



6.5 In demonstrating good governance the Council will meet the requirements of the core and sub-principles as set out below.

<b>Core Principle A Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law</b>		
<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Behaving with integrity	Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation	Council's values – Fair, Ambitious, Citizen-focussed, Efficient Codes of Conduct for both Members and Officers Regulatory Committees Modern.gov paperless meeting app with In-App voting, and system of publishing reports and decisions in open and transparent manner Register of Members' Interests
	Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)	Council's Constitution, including procedure rules Contract Procedure Rules Financial Procedure Rules
	Leading by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions	Employee Code of Conduct Member Code of Conduct
	Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively	Council's Constitution
Demonstrating strong	Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance	Council's Vision & values Standards Committee

commitment to ethical values	Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation	Members Register of Interests Declaration of Members' Interests at each meeting Resolution Policy
	Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values	Members Code of Conduct Employee Code of Conduct Whistleblowing Policy Equality Impact Assessment processes
	Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy
Respecting the rule of law	Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	Anti- Fraud and Bribery Policy Anti Money Laundering Policy Anti-Tax Evasion Policy Financial Procedure Rules Contract Procedure Rules Whistleblowing Policy Annual Corporate Fraud Report Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy
	Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders, and members, are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements	Council's Constitution sets out roles of key officers and Members Scheme of Delegation for decision making Observation of all legislative requirements
	Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders	Overview & Scrutiny Committees Governance & Audit Committee Standards Committee
	Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively	Role of Monitoring Officer Whistleblowing Policy

		Referrals to Ombudsman and appropriate resolutions
	Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively	Anti- Fraud and Corruption Policy Anti-Bribery Policy Anti-Tax Evasion Policy Whistleblowing Policy



<b>Core Principle B</b>	<b>Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement</b>
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<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Openness	Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	Publication of policies, plans, meeting Agenda's, Minutes and Webcasts Publishing decisions and updates via the Council's social media accounts
	Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided	Holding meetings in public unless there is a good reason not to for confidentiality Annual Statement of Accounts Medium Term Financial Strategy Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act assessments Standard report templates
	Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear	Overview & Scrutiny Committees Standard Report templates Publication of minutes, decisions and reasons
	Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action	Council website Council publications Citizen's Panel Shaping Bridgend's Future consultation Forward Work Programmes Communications, Marketing & Engagement Strategy

Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders	Effectively engage with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably	Town and Community Councils Other local authorities Engaging with stakeholders including: Lead Local Flood Authorities Environment Agency Highways Authorities Local Community Groups and forums Emergency Services
	Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively	Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2018-23 in place Regional Partnership Boards Joint Committees Cardiff Capital Region City Deal S33 NHS Wales Act pooled fund arrangements – Integrated Community Equipment; Integrated Community Support Services; Care Home Accommodation Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations Valleys to Coast
	Ensuring that partnerships are based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trust</li> <li>- a shared commitment to change</li> <li>- a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners</li> </ul> and that the added value of partnership working is explicit	Setting Terms of Reference Joint Committee meetings Agreeing voting rights at Joint Committees – Cardiff Capital Region City Deal as an example
Engaging with individual citizens	Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other	Citizens Panel

and service users effectively	stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes	
	Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement	Communications, Marketing and Engagement Strategy Council's website Talktous
	Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference for future needs	Council's website, Facebook & Twitter accounts Talktous
	Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account	Feedback and publication of consultation outcomes, including via social media – such as budget consultations. Communications, Marketing and Engagement Strategy in place. The Council has made a commitment to endorse the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and has an authority-wide consultation and engagement toolkit to ensure engagement is consistent, robust and effective. Requirements of Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act to carry out a self-assessment of how the Council is meeting its performance requirements, and to publish a report setting out the conclusions of this every year.
	Balance feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity	Consultations shared with Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equalities Forum to ensure different stakeholder groups are included.

	Taking account of the impact of decisions on future generations of tax payers and service users	Requirement to assess decisions under Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) in key decisions of Council
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<b>Core Principle C</b>	<b>Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b>	
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<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Defining outcomes	Having a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provide the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	Council's Corporate Plan Annual Statement of Accounts Directorate Business Plans
	Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer	Directorate Business Plans Corporate Plan Annual Self-Assessment of the Council's Performance
	Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available	Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy Council's Annual Budget Book Corporate Performance Assessment Annual Self-Assessment of the Council's Performance
	Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes	Corporate Risk Register Governance & Audit Committee
	Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available	Budget Consultation Council's Corporate Plan Medium Term Financial Strategy and current year Budget Book
Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision	Equality Impact Assessments for all key decisions Equality Impact Assessment consideration required on all Council reports Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act consideration required on all key decisions/reports

	Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	Finance, Legal, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, Environmental Impact Assessment and Socia-economic duty all considered in decision making process and decision reports.
	Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	Environmental Impact Assessments
	Ensuring fair access to services	Strategic Equality Plan

<b>Core Principle D</b>	<b>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</b>	
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<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Determining interventions	Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided	Reporting templates in use to ensure all considerations taken into account All reports require legal and financial comment and approval
	Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts	Citizens Panel Complaints process Budget and other consultation outcomes
Planning interventions	Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets	Corporate Plan Corporate Performance Assessment process Local Development Plan Directorate, Service and Team Business Plans Digital Transformation Plan Schedule of Council and Cabinet meetings
	Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered	Citizens Panel Shaping Bridgend's Future consultation
	Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks	Corporate Risk Management Policy and Risk Register Monitoring and reporting of Risk to Governance & Audit Committee

	Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering goods and services can be adapted to changing circumstances	Regular Committee meetings Delegated Powers to enable appropriate decision-making
	Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured	Corporate Performance Assessment process and quarterly review Key Performance Indicators with Directorate Business and Team plans
	Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly	Business planning process, quarterly reporting on performance, self-assessment
	Preparing budgets in accordance with objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan	Medium Term Financial Strategy Annual budget setting process
	Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy	3-year rolling Medium Term Financial Strategy and 10 Year Capital Programme
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints	Medium Term Financial Strategy updated annually to reflect service pressures and efficiency savings
	Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term	Directorate engagement in Medium Term Financial planning process Overview and Scrutiny review of Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget Research and Evaluation Panel
	Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage	Effective budget monitoring during year, reported to Departmental Management Teams, Corporate Management Board, Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny



	Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning	Consideration of all Committee decisions of Well-being of Future Generations Act Outcomes of consultations Feedback from Citizen's Panel
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<b>Core Principle E Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it</b>		
<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Developing the entity's capacity	Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness	Asset Management Plan in place Council operates a Corporate Landlord model Regular budget monitoring process
	Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently	Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) delivers a robust financial plan through a rigorous budget setting process. One of the key MTFS Principles is that all services will seek to provide value for money and contribute to public value and will continuously review budgets to identify efficiency savings. On occasions external support is used to provide an independent review of service areas, which may include comparisons to other local authorities. Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Assessment report February 2020
	Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved	The Council participates in a number of collaborative working arrangements including: Shared Regulatory Service Regional Internal Audit Shared Service Pooled fund arrangements for Residential Care, day opportunities for people recovering from Mental Health problems; Community Equipment and Integrated Community Support Services

	Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources	Workforce Plan and Training & Development Plan in place
Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals	Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained	Council's Constitution sets out roles and responsibilities
	Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body	Scheme of Delegation in place
	Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority	Roles set out in Council's Constitution. Section 6 of the Council's Constitution includes information regarding the role of the Leader and Member role descriptions are set out at section 22 of the document. Job descriptions and person specifications for all roles and an appraisal panel for the Chief Executive to review performance.
	Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged</li> </ul>	Member development programme in place Standards Committee Corporate Training & Development Programme Professional job-related training eg CIPFA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis</li> <li>- ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external</li> </ul>	
	Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation	Communication, Marketing & Engagement Strategy Citizens Panel Talktous Social Media
	Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections	Annual Corporate Self-Assessment process Performance Appraisal process and system Estyn Reviews Care Inspectorate Wales reviews Audit Wales reviews and audits Peer review reports reported to appropriate Committee, eg Audit Wales reports to Governance & Audit Committee
	Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs	Annual Appraisal and 6-month appraisal review process Performance Management reporting via Performance Indicators
	Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and well-being of the workforce and support	Care-First on line staff welfare system Health & Safety Policy and Procedures

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	individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental well-being	HR policies and procedures
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<b>Core Principle F Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</b>		
<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Managing risk	Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making	Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register in place, and reviewed by CMB and Governance & Audit Committee Team plans incorporate risk assessments
	Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively	Risk Management Policy and Guidance notes published to the intranet and taken to Departmental Management Teams. E-learning module for identified staff
	Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated	Set out in Risk Management Policy
Managing performance	Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review	Corporate Performance Assessment Annual Performance report/Well-being Report Programme Management Centre of Excellence and Project Toolkit
	Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook	Corporate Report Template – ensuring all necessary aspects are considered – financial; legal; Well-being of Future Generations Act; Equalities; links to Corporate plan.
	Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which provides constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible	Overview and Scrutiny Committees in place

	Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement	Corporate Performance Assessment process Scrutiny reviews Annual Performance report/Well-being Report
	Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (eg financial statements)	Budget setting, monitoring and outturn reports all based on Council's Directorate structure
Robust internal control	Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives	Risk based audit plan in place
	Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis	Internal Audit undertakes sufficient audit work to provide an annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and controls
	Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place	Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy in place and mandatory e-learning for all staff Whistleblowing Policy Employee and Member Codes of Conduct Anti Money Laundering Policy
	Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor	Head of Regional Internal Audit Service provides an annual opinion on the effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control
	Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group/function, which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment</li> </ul>	Governance & Audit Committee in place Governance & Audit Committee receive regular updates on the control environment and risk management. The Committee scrutinises the Annual Governance Statement before presenting to Council for approval When Governance & Audit Committee make recommendations, they are acted upon

	- that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon	
Managing data	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data	Information Management Strategy in place ICT Code of Practice
	Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies	Where necessary, information sharing protocols in place
	Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring	Reports follow an approval process and require Chief Officer/Head of Service, Finance and Legal approval prior to publication. Report authors are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and quality of reports submitted.
Strong public management	Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance	The Council formally adopts an annual budget and supporting Medium Term Financial Strategy as well as a 10-year Capital Programme. Regular monitoring reports including forecasted expenditure is provided to Directors, Corporate Management Board and quarterly reports are presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny with the outturn report presented to Council.
	Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls	As set out in the Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules each Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring control of expenditure and income against approved budgets. Chief Officers are responsible for providing the Chief Finance Officer with such information as is required to facilitate



		and monitor budgetary control. The management of budgets may be delegated to senior officers within the Directorate.
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<b>Core Principle G Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability</b>		
<b>Sub Principle</b>	<b>Actions that Demonstrate Good Governance</b>	<b>Evidence that supports the Actions</b>
Implementing good practice in transparency	Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate	All reports follow an agreed template All agenda papers, minutes and supporting documents are available via the Bridgend Council website
	Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand	Meetings can be watched via the Bridgend website.
Implementing good practices in reporting	Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship or resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way	Annual Performance Report/Well-being Report External Audit (Audit Wales) audit of statement of accounts and Council performance and grants Annual Audit Letter setting out audit work undertaken by external audit and an opinion on the statement of accounts
	Ensuring members and senior management own the results reported	Cabinet and Senior Management are responsible for all aspects of service performance
	Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment, including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (the annual governance statement)	An annual review of the Governance Statement is undertaken, and an action plan of agreed improvements monitored and reported to Corporate Management Board and Governance & Audit Committee
	Ensuring that this framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate	Setting out Terms of Reference for joint committees and shared services

		Ensuring Joint Committee structures are appropriate
	Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other, similar organisations	Annual Performance Report/Well-being report prepared in line with statutory reporting requirements and on a consistent basis. Annual Statement of Accounts prepared in line with CIPFA requirements and Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and audited to give unqualified audit report
Assurance and effective accountability	Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon	Recommendations are reported to Governance & Audit Committee and acted on to ensure changes implemented Implementation of Regulatory Tracker for Governance & Audit Committee review
	Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place, providing assurance with regard to governance arrangements and that recommendations are acted upon	Governance & Audit Committee receive reports at each meeting on the progress on the Internal Audit Plan that has been previously agreed by the Committee. Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service provides an annual opinion on the effectiveness of governance and internal controls which is presented to the Committee and included in the Annual Governance Statement
	Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations	Regular cycle of inspections from Care Inspectorate Wales, Estyn, Audit Wales. Also new peer assessment requirement under Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
	Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement	Risks are contained within the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment, which is

		underpinned by the Council's Risk Management Policy
	Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met	Collaboration/Service Agreements/Heads of Terms in place for joint arrangements and partnership working, including Awen Trust, Halo Leisure Services; Shared Regulatory Services, Regional Internal Audit Service

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

- 7.1 Good corporate governance requires the active participation of Elected Members and Officers across the Council. These arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis and the findings of this work will be reported in the Annual Governance Statement. This will help ensure the continuous improvement of the Council's Corporate Governance culture.
- 7.2 The adoption and maintenance of an up-to-date Code of Corporate Governance, including arrangements for ensuring its implementation and ongoing application is an important part of the process.
- 7.3 The Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Governance arrangements as described in this Code.
- 7.4 Through that Committee, the Council will ensure that these arrangements are kept under continual review. This will include consideration of:
- the work undertaken by internal audit;
  - reports prepared by managers with responsibility for aspects of this Code;
  - reports and opinions expressed by external auditors; and
  - reports of other regulatory bodies and Inspectorates.

## **8. The Annual Governance Statement**

- 8.1 Each year the Council will publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive. It will provide an overall assessment of the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements, an appraisal of the controls in place to manage the Council's key risks and details of where improvements need to be made
- 8.2 The AGS will be reviewed by Corporate Management Board and approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 8.3 The AGS will be published as part of the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts and will be reviewed by our External Auditors.



## Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
CIPFA	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability
SOLACE	The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers
Member	Elected Councillor (including co-opted councillors)
Corporate Management Board	The Corporate Management Board is the key internal management body of the Council and comprises the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Chief Officers.
Officer	Employee of the Council (including secondees)
Constitution	The Council's rules and codes/protocols

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

#### NATIONAL EMPTY PROPERTIES SCHEME

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm participation in Welsh Government's National Empty Properties Scheme and seek approval from Cabinet to enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as lead authority for the National Empty Properties Scheme.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** – taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 On the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022, the Minister for Climate Change wrote to all local authorities to notify them that Welsh Government (WG) had granted approval for a national empty homes scheme, building on the previous empty homes scheme delivered as part of the Valleys taskforce. It confirmed that Welsh Government was committing £50million to the scheme split equally over 2 years, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) has been appointed as the lead body to administer the scheme on behalf of local authorities.

- 3.2 A notional allocation will be provided to each participating local authority based on the number of long-term empty properties in their authority for each financial year. The actual allocation for Bridgend will be dependent upon the Empty Properties in Bridgend as identified in the 2023–24 statistics when released.
- 3.3 The notional allocation at this time for 2023-24 is up to £1,243,224.93\* (\*this includes any surveyor costs incurred through applications processed within Bridgend).
- 3.4 To take part in this scheme local authorities are required to enter into a Service Level Agreement with RCT, commit to the principle of match funding on a case by case basis to the level of approximately £124,322.49, and undertake the necessary property surveying work for each case. Discussions have taken place between council officers and Welsh Government officers and an informal in principle agreement to be part of this scheme has been made, subject to approval by Cabinet.
- 3.5 The scheme will be fully operational from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, however, Welsh Government is intending to launch the scheme on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to enable applications to begin to be processed leading into 2023-24. The main terms of the scheme are set out below:
- The property would need to be empty for 12 months to qualify for the grant;
  - The applicant must live in the property as their main residence for 5 years upon completion of the works;
  - Only one application per person;
  - The maximum grant per application will be £25,000;
  - Energy efficiency improvements will be a requirement as part of the works undertaken on the property;
  - A minimum 15% applicant contribution will be required;
  - Any other costs above the grant and contribution must be met by the applicant;
- 3.6 Processes and procedures are currently being finalised by RCT.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 Members are requested to confirm participation in the scheme and agree to enter into the Service Level Agreement with RCT to take part in the scheme and ensure compliance with WG terms and conditions. Members are requested to delegate powers to the Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change and the Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services to complete negotiations and sign the necessary paperwork.
- 4.2 The ability to undertake property surveys is a potential risk to the scheme, as recruitment of surveyors has been unsuccessful over a period of many months, and as a result the service has had to rely on agency cover. To mitigate this risk, a recent agency appointment has been made with this specific scheme in mind. This is an interim arrangement put in place whilst recruitment for a permanent post is

undertaken. Welsh Government has confirmed that surveying costs are able to be claimed through the scheme and will be calculated on a case-by-case basis.

- 4.3 Regular meetings are being held with WG and RCT to progress this scheme and fuller details will be available after the conclusion of these meetings.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon policy framework and procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

- 6.2 As no change is proposed to the application of the intentionality test, there will be no impact on the Council's equality duties.

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

- 7.1 The report contributes to the following goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsive Wales

- 7.2 A summary of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment are as follows:

Long Term: This scheme will reduce the number of empty homes within communities and bring into use an empty resource for individuals and family homes. This will sustain communities and tackle properties that may have become poor quality of unattractive.

Prevention: It will reduce the number of empty properties within communities preventing them from further deterioration and neglect whilst supporting housing demand

Integration: It will allow families to live and work within communities and provide opportunities that may not otherwise been available to them

Collaboration: The project will allow individuals to access funding which will allow them to tackle poor quality and unattractive properties. The scheme will be delivered in partnership with another local authority.

Involvement: Investing in a community will support strong and resilient communities and Welsh culture.

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 The actual allocation for Bridgend will be dependent upon the Empty Properties in Bridgend as identified in the 2023–24 statistics when released. The notional allocation at this time for 2023-24 is up to £1,243,224.93\* (This includes any surveyor costs incurred through the applications processed within Bridgend)
- 8.2 There is a requirement for the Council to match fund on a case-by-case basis at a contribution level of 10% up to the value of £124,322.49. Contributions will be met from within current capital budgets. Once the actual allocation for Bridgend for 2023-24 is approved, the Capital Programme will be updated accordingly.
- 8.3 Notional allocations and contribution level for 2024-25 are not available at this time and will be dependent on available statistics.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet delegate authority to the Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change and Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services to:
- 9.1.1 negotiate and enter into a service level agreement with Rhondda Cynon Taf as lead authority for the National Empty Properties Scheme;
- 9.1.2 approve any extension or amendment to the service level agreement and to enter into any further deeds and documents which are ancillary to the service level agreement.

**Carys Lord**  
**Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change**  
January 2023

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### **Background documents:**

None

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

##### REVIEW OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING SUPERVISION POLICY

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the review of the Supervision policy and guidance that has been in place since the previous review in March 2018 and seek approval to replace the original policy established in 2010 with 2 new policies.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** – taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Regulatory requirements for supervisions are set out in the following legislations and Codes of Practice:

- Social Care Wales Codes of Practice for social workers, residential child care workers, social care managers, domiciliary care workers, and adult care home workers
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (regulations 35, 36, 38,39, 47, and 66)

- 3.2 This review has been completed following an audit of supervision activity that was completed in 2021 which established inconsistencies in practice, completion and recording.

- 3.3 The previous review in 2018 was prompted by the implementation of Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to support the main aim of having a focus and understanding of identifying and supporting outcomes of individuals we support. There is a link between the quality of supervision and the quality of service people receive and by ensuring that supervision is focused on outcomes this assists us to become a more outcome focused organisation
- 3.4 This review has been led by colleagues in the Social Care Workforce Development Team (SCWDP) but has engaged and consulted with senior managers across the directorate, team managers, and draft documents were submitted for feedback ahead of finalising the policies. The consultation also involved focus groups of front line supervisors and supervisees.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 As part of the review process, regular consultations were organised with senior management staff across the directorate. A major outcome of these consultations was the suggestion to separate the policy into two documents given the wide ranging nature of the roles covered in the directorate. It was realised that the previous version of the policy was heavily focused on social work roles, which could lead that policy to be less accessible for direct care services employees. Therefore, the decision was agreed to split the policy and create two versions, one specifically for those working in direct care services, and one for those working across the rest of the Social Services and Wellbeing directorate.
- 4.2 It must be acknowledged that these two policies are extremely similar, however certain language and details are different due to the different nature of the roles and responsibilities. For example, there is no recording on the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) for direct care services which is why these references have been removed for this policy.
- 4.3 During the initial consultation process the following areas were highlighted as requiring additional attention and became aims of this work:
- To retain focus on outcomes but incorporate a focus on reflective practice to promote staff to be more independent in their analysis and thinking and it is recognised now that this is enhanced by the insights provided by reflective practices.
  - To strengthen the policy regarding supporting staff well-being during supervision which was highlighted by the needs raised during the covid-19 pandemic.
  - To increase the quality of supervision as the resulting support can contribute to increased retention of the workforce.
  - To provide greater clarity to staff by separating two policies for direct care and assessment and case management teams.
  - To separate out policy content from guidance content.
  - Provide greater clarity in terms of expectations in terms of frequency, recording, confidentiality.
  - To increase awareness of the accountability and responsibilities of staff.
  - To increase understanding of supervision as a managerial requirement.

- To increase understanding of supervision as a vehicle for staff to discuss and identify their learning and development needs.
- To increase understanding of the link between supervisions and appraisals

4.4 Following the feedback received at the consultation meetings, the policy was separated into two, to increase the focus on both direct care services and assessment and case holding teams. Three subsequent focus groups were set up with staff to review the new policy documents. The drafts were also circulated to senior management, with a request for wider circulation for feedback should staff be unable to attend the focus groups.

4.5 Following the feedback received from these focus groups, further revisions and alterations were made to the draft policies which were then submitted to the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate Senior Management Team meeting on 5 December 2022 for final review and approval, prior to being submitted to Cabinet for approval.

4.6 Both policies have been included in the appendices for review. Appendix 1 contains the “Staff supervision policy and practice guidelines: Social Services and Wellbeing workforce” and Appendix 2 contains the “Staff supervision policy and practice guidelines: Social Services and Wellbeing Workforce Direct Care Services”

4.7 The main differences between these policies and the previous one are summarised as:

1. Separation of policy so as to be more relevant for different groups of staff.
2. Separation of practice guidance from policy content – making the document more accessible, digestible, and navigable.
3. Inclusion of greater focus on reflective style of supervision, as well as upon outcomes.
4. Provides greater clarity in terms of:
  - Frequency, confidentiality, recording responsibilities, disagreements, audit expectations
  - Provides better definition of methods of supervision
  - Morrisons 4x4x4 model of supervision retained – four functions managerial, supportive, educative, mediation
5. Overall presentation visually improved – less blocks of text.
6. Supervision Agreement – review stepped down to annually or change of supervisor, rather than after three supervisions then annually.
7. Templates improved.
8. Shared supervision template across direct care services for 1:1 supervision.

4.8 As part of the review process, following revisions made after the focus group sessions, trade unions have also been updated regarding this process. This review was met favourably by the Trade Unions.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 These two new policies replace the original Social Services and Wellbeing Supervision policy dated 2018.

- 5.2 This is a variation to previous policy and guidance. Training requirements will be met by a programme of training to ensure that this policy is implemented to its fullest potential.
- 5.3 It will also have a positive impact upon appraisals as this new structure will link and lead directly into the annual appraisal process. Supervision will be structured and booked into calendars which will allow for ease of appraisal completion.
- 5.4 There may be an impact upon Capability, Disciplinary and Resolution policies which are corporate policies. This is because supervision records can be relevant and may be called upon where these procedures are activated.

**6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

**7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

- 7.1 The review of the policy supports the five ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as follows:-

Involvement	Representatives from varying levels of the directorate, along with colleagues from Human Resources (HR), SCWDP and Finance have fed into this report.
Long term	There will be a positive long-term impact of this policy review given the link between quality of supervision and quality of performance.
Prevention	To prevent high turnover of directorate staff by providing higher quality supervision practice.
Integration	This policy will be implemented and used directorate wide. Training for supervisors commenced in January 2023.
Collaboration	Work has taken place with HR, SCWDP, Service managers Team managers, and updates provided to trade unions.

**8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 For 2022-23, associated training costs are expected to be £10,199 – this comprises of 7 x 2 day training courses for supervisors with 12 places available per course.
- 8.2 For 2023-24, associated training costs are expected to be £4,380 – this comprises of 8 x half day workshops for supervisees with 25 places available per course, plus 2 x 2 day ‘mop-up’ courses for supervisors - depending on attendance of the 2022-23 sessions.



8.3 All costs will be met by the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate from existing SCWDP budgets.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet grant approval of the two policies; Staff supervision policy and practice guidelines: Social Services and Wellbeing workforce (**appendix 1**) and Staff supervision policy and practice guidelines: Social Services and Wellbeing Workforce Direct Care Services (**appendix 2**) as replacement for the 2018 Social Services and Wellbeing Supervision policy.

**Claire Marchant**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING**  
**January 2023**

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### **Background documents:**

None

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## **SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING DIRECTORATE**

### **STAFF SUPERVISION POLICY & PRACTICE GUIDELINES Social Services and Wellbeing Workforce**



**Policy Review Date: TBA**

Revised December 2022

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy and practice guidance is to provide clarity for all Directorate staff regarding supervision. This includes permanent, full-time, part-time, casual and agency staff. For allied professional staff in integrated health and social care teams and multi-disciplinary teams, supervision will be in conjunction with and parallel to any clinical or professional supervisory requirements of each profession.

There is a separate policy for staff working in direct care services.

It will set out clear expectations to ensure that all staff within the Directorate are aware of their responsibilities in relation to delivering and actively participating in high quality, timely and reflective personal and professional supervision that balances individual well-being and effective case management oversight with the overall aim of improving outcomes for those whom we support.

This includes sharing a consistent approach to assessment, care and support planning, and service delivery for children, adults, carers and families, in line with legislative frameworks, whilst allowing for different models of practice across the directorate.

There is a significant link between quality supervision and improving the outcomes of individuals, children, carers, and families with whom we work.

In line with the ethos of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, supporting well-being, prioritising safety, and promoting independence and choice is at the heart of the work undertaken in partnership with children, adults, families, and carers. This work can only be effective and safe when supported by regular, quality supervision by those qualified and trained to do so.



While supervision is an ongoing process appraisal consists of an annual meeting between a member of staff and their line manager during which several objectives will have been agreed. Progress should be monitored during supervision.

### Our Commitment to Supervision – We will:

- Provide good quality, regular supervision to all staff working within the Social Services and Well-being directorate.
- Ensure supervision effectively balances caseload management, practice, and staff well-being and development and encourages reflection and analysis through appreciative enquiry.
- Ensure that all supervisors and supervisees have the necessary skills to engage in effective supervision to a consistent standard and will provide training as appropriate.
- Audit the effectiveness of supervision to ensure standards are met and take action where we fall short.
- Keep children, families, individuals, and carers at the centre of decision making.
- Keep outcomes at the heart of what we do – by monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating progress through supervision.
- Be responsive to the changing needs of individuals and families whilst recognising our responsibility for safeguarding.
- Value the importance of choice in people's lives and will seek to promote this wherever possible.
- Value the contribution made by staff and promote and support personal and professional development.

### Definitions

A broad definition of supervision states that:

"Supervision is a process by which one worker is given responsibility by the organisation to work with another worker in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives which together promote the best outcomes for those who use care and support services". (adapted from Morrison, T. (2005))

A focus on practice through reflection is important.

"Where the supervisor is "curious" and asks questions designed to assist the supervisee to think around the case but from a different perspective, this can be enormously helpful. The exploration of personal and professional values is also an essential aspect of reflective practice." From *Effective supervision*, [Hilary Lawson](#) Updated: 3 April 2017 from 2011

A focus on the wellbeing of the worker is vital:

"Quality supervision must acknowledge the emotional impact of the work and be a place where the supervisee undergoes a regular "health check". Supervisees have often expressed the relief and appreciation of a genuine "and how are you?" from their supervisors which is offered as an acknowledgement of the challenges of the work and an invitation to talk through how the person beneath the professional is bearing up."

## 2. Scope of the Framework

### The Aims of Supervision

Supervision:

- Ensures staff know what is expected of them.
- Ensures staff actively contribute to the organisations outcomes by undertaking their responsibilities and duties effectively and efficiently.
- Promotes and supports professional development.
- Promotes equality and values diversity.
- Ensures effective management oversight and gives assurances that risks are being effectively managed.
- Should encourage critical reflection and analysis whilst offering guidance and promoting a learning culture.
- Should enhance staff confidence in analysis, decision making and reflective practice.
- Provides an opportunity for celebrating good practice, offering constructive feedback, and addressing areas for development.
- Should ensure caseloads and workloads are manageable, to safeguard the wellbeing of the supervisee, so that children, families, adults, and carers receive a good quality of service to meet their identified outcomes.
- Address any concerns regarding health and safety.
- Reassures the supervisor that the supervisee is practising safely and in accordance with legal and practice frameworks.

Critically, for the maintenance of a healthy workforce Carpenter et al., 2013 stated:

“effective supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation and retention, helps reduce staff turnover, and is significantly linked to employees’ perceptions of organisational support.”

### The Principles Underpinning Supervision

- Supervision should be focussed on achieving positive outcomes for children, families, adults, and carers.
- All supervision will meet good practice guidance and be to a consistent standard, offering staff a safe and supportive space to explore, reflect and develop their practice.
- Supervision is prioritised and valued as imperative to the maintenance of a healthy and effective workforce.
- The Directorate is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as having a direct bearing on the quality of services and outcomes for individuals.

- Effective supervision is a two-way process. Supervisors should adopt an active reflector approach to supervision and the supervisee should not merely be a passive recipient.
- Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.
- Regular, planned, and competent supervision is both a right and a requirement for all members of staff working for the Directorate regardless of role or grade.
- Supervision is an authority relationship in which the dynamics of power and the recognition of difference are crucial. The good practice guidelines set out in this document value people and acknowledge and work with difference. In this way, issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities should become integral to good practice.
- Supervision supports staff to identify their practice and professional development needs.
- Supervisors should ideally not supervise more than 6 staff on a regular basis.

[The Code of Professional Practice for Social Care Workers](#) tells social care workers:

*“You must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills” and tells managers they must provide “supervision and appraisal to support and motivate staff to meet their role, responsibilities and accountabilities”.*

[The Code of Practice for Social Care Employers](#) states that employers must:

“Have effective arrangements for management and supervision of workers to promote best practice and good conduct and support workers to improve their performance. This includes making sure that workers are fit to practice.”

## The Supervision Model

This policy is based on the 4x4x4 model of supervision developed by Tony Morrison, which defines four functions of supervision:

The managerial and accountability function	the quality and quantity of our work
The developmental and learning function	how we can improve our practice
The supportive function	attending to our wellbeing
The advocacy/mediation function	our relationship with the organisation

For more details about each of the functions and what they include, see *Appendix 1*.



### 3. Types of Supervision and Related Activity

#### One to One

The standard model of supervision, which will apply to most staff in the Directorate, is that of one-to-one, with a supervisor and supervisee following an agenda for personal supervision and practice reflection/discussion. Non-qualified social work staff must be supervised by “*a registered social work or social care practitioner*” SSWBA Code of Practice, Part 3, page 12

Within one-one supervision case supervision is to ensure individual cases are discussed and reflected upon in depth to ensure that effective progress is being made towards outcomes, risk is being addressed and managed and that any barriers to progress are considered.

Whilst supervision should take place every 4 weeks for social work practitioners, 4-6 weeks for part-time practitioners, it is not possible to review every case in depth during each supervision session so the supervisor and supervisee should carefully consider which cases they want to bring for discussion.

It is important to ensure that each case is considered in proportion to the complexity and risk and monitored regularly through supervision. Other routine or non-complex cases should be identified by the supervisee, and a summary provided in supervision.

High risk cases, or those subject to Court jurisdiction will require more regular supervision and oversight to be responsive to need and support risk management.

Within supervision staff members’ ongoing understanding of relevant procedures, codes of practice, and relevant guidance must be tested through supervision. (This could also be tested within Group Supervision – see below).

Also, learning and development has a key role in effective practice and professional progression. The Code of Professional Practice says that practitioners should be “*...undertaking relevant learning and development to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills to ensure you are fit to practise, and contributing to the learning and development of others*” (6.9) This will identify learning and development needs that may be addressed by formal training, E-learning, or directed personal research and reading.

This process is supported by **annual appraisal**, which whilst a separate process is also integral to supervision as neither can be fully effective in the absence of the other. To make appraisal a live and meaningful experience, there is an expectation that actions identified are reviewed in supervision every three months.

#### Group Supervision

Group supervision involves the use of a group setting to enable members to reflect on their work. By pooling skills, experience and knowledge, the aim of the session is to improve the skills and capability of both individuals and the group.

Group supervision:

- Encourages open and professional attitudes to learning
- Uses the various abilities within the group
- Offers a range of perspectives and skills to individuals
- Supports the concept of collective practice and service delivery
- Reflects the group approach of residential and day care services
- Focuses on direct work with users and carers

***Group supervision is not:***

- ***a Team Meeting (concerned with team business).***
- ***to be used as a substitute for one-one supervision***

The principles outlined in this policy can be adapted for group supervision, Action Learning Sets, or peer mentoring as opportunities for colleagues to meet to share experiences, knowledge, and skills.

Group supervision will be necessary in some settings and can be used to support maximum learning and development alongside ensuring service quality. A record of the group session should be kept by the facilitator (*see Appendix 6*) and individual supervisees should complete a 'reflective log' following the group session (*see Appendix 7*)

The following link offers additional guidance on [group supervision](#). (Managers and team leaders should have activated their Community Care Inform licence in order to see this document)

The standard model of supervision, which will apply to most staff in the Directorate, is that of one-to-one, with a supervisor and supervisee following an agenda for personal supervision and case reflection/discussion. Non-qualified social work staff must be supervised by "*a registered social work or social care practitioner*" SSWBA *Code of Practice, Part 3, page 12*

## Joint co-worker supervision

Joint supervision may provide an opportunity to have discussions with other team members who co-work cases to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities and monitor progress outside of formal review mechanisms. The date, participants, details and what resulted from the discussion should be added by the case responsible worker to the individual's WCCIS record.

## Unplanned Supervision / Informal Supervision

Due to the complex nature of social care work, there will always be occasions where formal discussions regarding guidance and support cannot wait and take place outside of a formal supervision setting. It is important that these conversations are still viewed as supervisory activity and that any case discussions or decision making is clearly

recorded on the individuals/child's record in WCCIS usually by the case responsible worker or where the supervisor may wish to do so themselves.

These informal/unplanned discussions should not be a substitute for formal supervision and where possible, supervisees should be encouraged to reflect on the issue and more in-depth discussions can take place in formal supervision if appropriate.

## Supervision within the MASH

Due to the nature of the working arrangements within the MASH, the traditional model of one-to-one supervision may take a more fluid form, taking place more frequently and informally as cases dictate, reflecting the pace of work and nature of the role.

It is important that informal supervision and decision making is captured, evidenced, and recorded and that these impromptu sessions are in addition to and not a replacement for regular supervision.

## Adult Mental Health Practitioners Supervision

In addition to abiding by the requirements of this policy, AMHPs must attend regular 'Professional Supervision' sessions as determined by the service. These sessions provide additional specialist support for the AMHP in their role and are provided by an external mental health experienced professional and trainer.

## Management Oversight

Management oversight is different to case supervision and its function is to ensure tasks are completed on time, children/adults and carers are seen within timescales and plans are progressing without drift.

Oversight can take place during formal case supervision, discussions with others involved in the case or at legal planning meetings.

There are key trigger points where management oversight of a case is critical:

- Initial allocation – offering clarity on purpose
- On starting a new assessment – Initial checks, preparation, and analysis of presenting information
- At the end of the assessment – Making sense of the information gathered and consideration of next steps, supported by clear decision making that “shows workings”.
- Closing a case/not progressing an assessment – clear record of decision making
- Key case planning juncture e.g. Reviews, Planning meetings, Strategy discussions/meetings, Initial Child/Adult Protection Conference and Review Adult/Child Protection Conference.

- Significant decision-making points – incidents of significant harm (adult and child protection concerns), major changes in the individuals/families/child's circumstances or points of crisis,
- Case transfer and transition

## Supervision Agreements

- There should be a signed agreement between each supervisee and each supervisor taking part in one-to-one supervision using the model agreement – see *Appendix 3*
- The supervision agreement forms the basis of the supervision sessions, and should cover record keeping, confidentiality, expectations, frequency and duration of sessions, circumstances under which supervision can be cancelled, and timescales for rearranging cancelled supervision.
- Establishing a supervision agreement between supervisor and supervisee will also help make expectations and responsibilities clear. This is important for ensuring a positive and supportive working relationship is established from the start and maintained.
- The Supervision Agreement should be reviewed annually or when there is a change of supervisor.

## Frequency

- The standard for the frequency of supervision may vary in different settings, and for different staff groups, also considering complexity of work, and the experience of staff, but must be defined and agreed between managers of services, supervisors, and supervisees.
- Supervision on a one-to-one basis should take place every 4 weeks for full-time staff, and 4-6 weeks for part-time staff. This will also apply to agency staff. (where additional support is required, supervision may be provided more frequently)
- NQSW – First Year of Practice – weekly for the first four weeks, then every four weeks for the rest of their first year in practice.
- Social Work Students – 1.5 hours for every 5 working days. Alternative between practice educator and on-site supervisor (where applicable)

## Who Will Your Supervisor Be?

- \* All staff will have a named supervisor with whom they will have an explicit arrangement regarding their supervision reflected in a supervision agreement.
- \* Supervision will usually be provided by the line manager or another person with suitable status, relevant training, and experience.
- \* Supervisors of staff offering professional supervision will be registered in the same profession.

- \* All qualified Social Workers will be supervised by a Senior Practitioner / Assistant Team Manager / Team Manager and from someone who is suitably professionally qualified to offer professional oversight of practice.
- \* NQSW – as above plus additional reflective supervision from a Practice Educator.
- \* All student social workers will be supervised by their onsite and (where applicable) off-site practice educator.

## Recording

- \* A written record of the supervision session must be made by either the supervisee or supervisor (by agreement), or in line with service expectations. For example, in Services to Children, it is expected that supervisors will always record the sessions. The record must be signed and dated by both following the end of the session – see *Appendix 4a*
- \* This form can be used flexibly and may not cover all aspects in every session, depending on priorities.
- \* For recording actions/decisions and rationale on individual cases please follow WCCIS guidance and templates. This should be added to the WCCIS in real-time where possible or within 48hrs – see *Appendix 5*
- \* Where group supervision occurs, notes of the session must be taken and circulated to attendees see *Appendix 6*. Following group supervision, supervisees should complete a personal reflective log – see *Appendix 7*
- \* The recording in WCCIS of unplanned supervision of cases should usually be completed by the case responsible worker, unless the supervisor wishes to add to the WCCIS record themselves.

## Confidentiality and Access to Supervision Records

- \* Supervision is a private but not confidential process, though details of any personal issues contained within the record will only be potentially available within the line management structure (and can be redacted in respect of audit or inspection activity).
- \* Supervision agreements, records and evaluation forms may all be read by the supervisor's line manager and other appropriate stakeholders as required e.g., where there is a change of manager, audit/quality assurance/inspection staff, the coroner, serious case review investigations, Social Care Wales, and the Disclosure and Barring Service, where there may be concerns regarding conduct and registration. They may also be used as evidence to evaluate supervisees' progress at appraisal or in the event of capability, resolution (or grievance) or disciplinary procedures.
- \* The supervisor has the responsibility to share information that arises in supervision if:
  - the supervisee's works breaches agreed standards of practice – in this case, supervision records could be used in a discussion about training and development needs or when dealing with capability or disciplinary or resolution procedures. (Refer to HR policy and procedures).

- the supervisee's behaviour gives rise for concern – the supervisor might need to refer to the line manager or Human Resources.
- the supervisee's physical or emotional health requires referral to a medical or staff care professional.

Equally supervisees have a responsibility to discuss any concerns with their supervisor's manager if they cannot be resolved together. These will include concerns about such as:

- ✓ The supervisor not adhering to the supervision agreement.
- ✓ Concerns about the quality of supervision offered.
- ✓ Concerns about the supervisor's standards of practice.
- ✓ Concerns about the supervisor's attitude and behaviour.

Where a supervisee does not feel able to raise concerns with a supervisor's line manager, he/she should contact the line manager's own line manager or another senior manager.

## Cancellation

Supervision is a critical component of safe and effective practice and should be prioritised with cancellation only happening in exceptional circumstances. If cancellation must happen it should be rearranged at the earliest opportunity (preferably within 5 working days) and should not automatically wait until the following month.

## Areas Of Complaint and Disagreement

- \* If there are any disagreements between the supervisor and supervisee about what goes in the record, these should be noted. The supervisee may complete an electronic copy and send it to the supervisor within two working days. Both should provide electronic signatures.
- \* Once both signatures have been included, the copy should be 'protected' i.e. locked.

## Storage Of Records

- The supervision record remains the property of the Directorate. Both the supervisor and the supervisee are responsible for the safe storage of these records.
- Key **decisions** affecting children/families/individuals/carers must be recorded on the electronic record on WCCIS by the supervisor using the electronic document available. (*Appendix 5*) This should be printed and added to any hard copy file **only** where it is necessary for the purposes of shared hard copy files.
- Supervision records for staff within Children's Social Care are stored within the Supervision Folder on the Children's 'O' Drive. Access to this folder is restricted to the supervisor and Team Manager.
- Supervision records for staff within Adult Social Care should be stored within the Team's Folder on the Adults 'O' Drive with restricted access for the supervisor,

and Team Manager. ICT must be approached by the manager to manage who can access to this folder.

- Supervisees can save the record in their own Y drives if they wish.

## 4. Responsibilities in Supervision

### Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- \* Modelling a positive attitude to supervision, listening attentively and actively.
- \* Creating an open and 'learning' environment in supervision.
- \* Ensure that supervision is held in a private place, free of interruptions.
- \* Use a strengths-based approach to support the supervisee to analyse any presenting problems, clarifying and summarising both the content and the perceptions of the issues under discussion
- \* Celebrate and acknowledge good practice.
- \* If there are concerns about professional competence or behaviour of the supervisee address these early, giving specific and concrete examples of these concerns. There is a template held by SCWDP by which to document an Action plan in relation to managing competence.
- \* Promoting anti-discriminatory practice and behaviour and challenging unconscious bias.
- \* Ensure that supervision does not become just a checklist, look beyond caseload management, encouraging creative approaches to the discussion of work issues.
- \* Identify training and development needs and the need to consolidate practice.
- \* Assist with generating solutions and realistic action plans.
- \* Make any disagreements with the record of supervision known.

### Responsibilities of the Supervisee

- \* Accepting the requirement to be supervised and accountable.
- \* Actively and honestly participate.
- \* Maintain a competent standard of practice, seeking help and guidance to do so where required.
- \* Express opinions, disagree where appropriate to learn from mistakes and be honest if unsure of what to do.
- \* Make the supervisor aware of his or her own work and development needs.
- \* Be open to feedback both about good practice and areas of concern.
- \* Be open to challenge about anti-discriminatory practice or areas of bias in relationships with individuals or colleagues.
- \* Engage in exploring options, finding solutions, and making realistic action plans.
- \* Make any disagreements with the record of supervision known.
- \* Be honest where practice or performance is affected by personal circumstances or workload demands. Seeking health and wellbeing support should be considered.

## Shared Responsibilities in Supervision

- \* Prioritising supervision and attending on time.
- \* Abiding by the supervision agreement.
- \* Having an agreed joint agenda and participating fully
- \* Clarifying and agreeing standards of practice based on professional and Directorate guidelines
- \* To support anti-oppressive practice
- \* Identifying evidence that will demonstrate competent practice
- \* Reviewing the supervision process itself
- \* Developing action plans and timescales
- \* Agreeing who will record the supervision session.

## Breakdown Of the Supervision Relationship

- Both parties should work to establish a respectful, trusting, purposeful and effective relationship within supervision. If the supervision relationship breaks down and the problem cannot be resolved by the supervisor and supervisee, the supervisor's line manager should investigate, consider solutions or alternative options and take appropriate action. The supervisee may approach the line manager's own line manager if appropriate.

## 5. Quality Assurance, Monitoring & Review

### All Team Managers Have a Responsibility

- \* To be familiar with and follow the supervision policy and guidelines.
- \* To ensure that supervisors and supervisees are fulfilling their responsibilities and that the desired outcomes are being achieved.
- \* That supervision within their team is taking place in line with expected guidance and is of a high standard, contributing to achieving positive outcomes.

### The Directorate Management Team (Heads of Service, Deputy Heads of Service and Group Managers) have a responsibility

- \* To monitor and evaluate the standard of the supervisory process across their service area, ensuring that it is taking place regularly and meets the requirements of delivering a consistent and quality service that safeguards those that are vulnerable and promotes the attainment of personal well-being outcomes.
- \* Prioritising supervision and demonstrating their own commitment as required.
- \* For undertaking or supporting audit activity that monitors and reviews the effectiveness of supervision across their service area.

### Quality Assurance Process re Supervision in BCBC

There will be regular audit of supervision and more details will be inserted when finalised.



## 6. Training for Effective Supervision

All staff who have a responsibility to supervise staff can expect to receive appropriate training to support them in their role.

All staff who are supervisees can also expect to receive appropriate training to provide them with guidance to enable them to actively participate in the process.

Training is mandatory, with a refresher required every three years.

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## **SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING DIRECTORATE**

# **STAFF SUPERVISION POLICY & PRACTICE GUIDELINES SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING WORKFORCE DIRECT CARE SERVICES**



**Review date: TBA**  
Revised 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022



## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy and practice guidance is to provide clarity for all Directorate staff regarding supervision. This includes permanent, full-time, part-time, casual and agency staff. For allied professional staff in integrated health and social care teams and multi-disciplinary teams, supervision will be in conjunction with and parallel to any clinical or professional supervisory requirements of each profession.

It will set out clear expectations to ensure that all staff within the Directorate are aware of their responsibilities in relation to delivering and actively participating in high quality, timely and reflective personal and professional supervision that balances individual well-being and effective oversight of practice with the overall aim of improving outcomes for those whom we support.

There is a separate policy for the Social Services and Wellbeing workforce located in other services.

This includes sharing a consistent approach to assessment, care and support planning, and service delivery for children, adults, carers and families, in line with legislative frameworks, whilst allowing for different models of practice across the directorate.

There is a significant link between quality supervision and improving the outcomes of individuals, children, carers, and families with whom we work.

In line with the ethos of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, supporting well-being, prioritising safety, and promoting independence and choice is at the heart of the work undertaken in partnership with children, adults, families, and carers. This work can only be effective and safe when supported by regular, quality supervision by those qualified and trained to do so.



While supervision is an ongoing process appraisal consists of an annual meeting between a member of staff and their line manager during which several objectives will have been agreed. Progress should be monitored during supervision.

### Our Commitment to Supervision – We will:

- Provide good quality, regular supervision to all staff working within the Social Services and Well-being directorate.
- Ensure supervision effectively balances delivering care and support, practice, and staff well-being and development in a way that encourages critical reflection.
- Ensure that all supervisors and supervisees have the necessary skills to engage in effective supervision to a consistent standard and will provide training as appropriate.
- Audit the effectiveness of supervision to ensure standards are met and take action where we fall short.
- Keep outcomes at the heart of what we do – by monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating progress towards achieving them through supervision.
- Be responsive to the changing needs of individuals and families whilst recognising our responsibility for safeguarding.
- Value the importance of choice in people’s lives and will seek to promote this wherever possible.
- Value the importance of independence in people’s lives and provide support in an enabling way as possible through person centred care.
- Value the contribution made by staff and promote and support personal and professional development.

### Definitions

A broad definition of supervision states that:

"Supervision is a process by which one worker is given responsibility by the organisation to work with another worker in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives which together promote the best outcomes for those who use care and support services". (adapted from Morrison, T. (2005)

A focus on practice through reflection is important.

"Where the supervisor is "curious" and asks questions designed to assist the supervisee to think around the case but from a different perspective, this can be enormously helpful. The exploration of personal and professional values is also an essential aspect of reflective practice." From *Effective supervision*, [Hilary Lawson](#) Updated: 3 April 2017 Publication Date: 21 April 2011

A focus on the wellbeing of the worker is vital:

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## 2. Scope of the Framework

### The Aims of Supervision

Supervision:

- Ensures staff know what is expected of them.
- Ensures staff actively contribute to the organisations outcomes by undertaking their responsibilities and duties effectively and efficiently.
- Promotes and supports professional development.
- Promotes equality and values diversity.
- Ensures effective management oversight and gives assurances that risks are being effectively managed.
- Should encourage critical reflection and analysis whilst offering guidance and promoting a learning culture.
- Should enhance staff confidence in analysis, decision making and reflective practice.
- Provides an opportunity for celebrating good practice, offering constructive feedback, and addressing areas for development.
- Should ensure caseloads and workloads are manageable, to safeguard the wellbeing of the supervisee, so that children, families, adults, and carers receive a good quality of service to meet their identified outcomes
- Address any concerns regarding health and safety.
- Reassures the supervisor that the supervisee is practising safely and in accordance with legal and practice frameworks.

Critically, for the maintenance of a healthy workforce Carpenter et al., 2013 stated:

“effective supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation and retention, helps reduce staff turnover, and is significantly linked to employees’ perceptions of organisational support.”

### The Principles Underpinning Supervision

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- All supervision will meet good practice guidance and be to a consistent standard, offering staff a safe and supportive space to explore, reflect and develop their practice.
- Supervision is prioritised and valued as imperative to the maintenance of a healthy and effective workforce.
- The Directorate is committed to the supervisory process and sees the quality of supervision as having a direct bearing on the quality of services and outcomes for individuals.

- Effective supervision is a two-way process. Supervisors should adopt an active reflector approach to supervision and the supervisee should not merely be a passive recipient.
- Supervision has an essential role in the effective management of staff performance and practice and is a primary means by which staff are supported to evidence accountable practice.
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- Supervision is an authority relationship in which the dynamics of power and the recognition of difference are crucial. The good practice guidelines set out in this document value people and acknowledge and work with difference. In this way, issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities should become integral to good practice.

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*“You must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills” and tells managers they must provide “supervision and appraisal to support and motivate staff to meet their role, responsibilities and accountabilities”.*

[The Code of Practice for Social Care Employers](#) states that employers must:

“Have effective arrangements for management and supervision of workers to promote best practice and good conduct and support workers to improve their performance. This includes making sure that workers are fit to practice.”

**The Regulations state:**

“Staff receive supervision in their role to help them reflect on their practice and to make sure their professional competence is maintained. This includes feedback about their performance from individuals using the service”.

*Parts 3 to 20 of The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017, as amended. Reg 36.*

## The Supervision Model

This policy is based on the 4x4x4 model of supervision developed by Tony Morrison, which defines four functions of supervision:

The managerial and accountability function	the quality and quantity of our work
The developmental and learning function	how we can improve our practice
The supportive function	attending to our wellbeing
The advocacy/mediation function	our relationship with the organisation

For more details about each of the functions and what they include, see Appendix 1.



### 3. Types of Supervision and Related Activity

#### One to One

The standard model of supervision, which will apply to most staff in the Directorate, is that of one-to-one, with a supervisor and supervisee following an agenda for personal supervision and practice reflection/discussion. This must take place quarterly at a minimum. (Reg 36).

Within supervision staff members' ongoing understanding of relevant procedures, codes of practice, and relevant guidance must be tested through supervision. (This could also be tested within Group Supervision – see below).

Also, learning and development has a key role in effective practice and professional progression. The Code of Professional Practice says that practitioners should be “...undertaking relevant learning and development to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills to ensure you are fit to practise, and contributing to the learning and development of others” (6.9) This will identify learning and development needs that may be addressed by formal training, E-learning, or directed personal research and reading.

This process is supported by **annual appraisal**, which whilst a separate process is also integral to supervision as neither can be fully effective in the absence of the other. To make appraisal a live and meaningful experience, there is an expectation that actions identified are reviewed in supervision every three months.

#### Group Supervision

Group supervision involves the use of a group setting to enable members to reflect on their work. By pooling skills, experience and knowledge, the aim of the session is to improve the skills and capability of both individuals and the group.

Group supervision:

- Encourages open and professional attitudes to learning
- Uses the various abilities within the group
- Offers a range of perspectives and skills to individuals
- Supports the concept of collective practice and service delivery
- Reflects the group approach of residential and day care services
- Focuses on direct work with users and carers

**Group supervision is not:**

- **a Team Meeting (concerned with team business).**
- **to be used as a substitute for one-one supervision**

The principles outlined in this policy can be adapted for group supervision, Action Learning Sets, or peer mentoring as opportunities for colleagues to meet to share experiences, knowledge, and skills.

Group supervision will be necessary in some settings and can be used to support maximum learning and development alongside ensuring service quality. A record of the group session should be kept by the facilitator and individual supervisees should complete a 'reflective log' following the group session (*see Appendix 7*)

The following link offers additional guidance on [group supervision](#). (Managers and team leaders should have activated their Community Care Inform licence in order to see this document)

### Joint co-worker supervision

Joint supervision may provide an opportunity to have discussions with other team members who co-work with individuals to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities and monitor progress outside of formal review mechanisms.

### Observed practice.

In some direct care settings, the nature of the environment where people live or gather will often result in supervisors making observations of the practice of their supervisees. These are adhoc and **unplanned**, and if any issues of concern need to be raised, or staff should be praised, they can be referred to in a formal one-one session, or more immediately if necessary.

These unplanned observations are not to be confused with **planned and formal observations of practice** to establish competency. This is a specific, pre-planned activity following specific guidelines where the observer is trained in assessing competency. This is not supervision.

### Unplanned Supervision / Informal Supervision

Due to the complex nature of social care work, there will always be occasions where formal discussions regarding guidance and support cannot wait and take place outside of a formal supervision setting. It is important that these conversations are still viewed as supervisory activity and that any case discussions or decision making is clearly recorded in individuals' files held in the service or registered office.

These informal/unplanned discussions should not be a substitute for formal supervision and where possible, supervisees should be encouraged to reflect on the issue and more in-depth discussions can take place in formal supervision if appropriate.

## Supervision Agreements

- There should be a signed agreement between each supervisee and each supervisor taking part in one-to-one supervision using the model agreement – see *Appendix 3*
- The supervision agreement forms the basis of the supervision sessions, and should cover record keeping, confidentiality, expectations, frequency and duration of sessions, circumstances under which supervision can be cancelled, and timescales for rearranging cancelled supervision.
- Establishing a supervision agreement between supervisor and supervisee will also help make expectations and responsibilities clear. This is important for ensuring a positive and supportive working relationship is established from the start and maintained.

## Frequency

- The standard for the frequency of supervision may vary in different settings, and for different staff groups, also considering complexity of work, and the experience of staff, but must be defined and agreed between managers of services, supervisors, and supervisees.
- For staff subject to RISCA (Care Home Services/Domiciliary Support Services /Secure Accommodation Service and Residential Family Centres) Regulation 36 states that - Staff meet for one-to-one supervision with their line manager or equivalent officer, or a more senior member of staff, **no less than quarterly**.

## Who Will Your Supervisor Be?

- \* All staff will have a named supervisor with whom they will have an explicit arrangement regarding their supervision reflected in a supervision agreement.
- \* Supervision will usually be provided by the line manager, or another person with suitable status, relevant training, and experience.
- \* Supervisors of staff offering professional supervision will be registered in the same profession.

## Recording

- \* In Direct Care services the expectation is that the supervisor should record the one-one session using the template in *Appendix 4b*. Both parties should sign the form, and any disagreements can be highlighted.
- \* This form can be used flexibly and may not cover all aspects in every session, depending on priorities.
- \* Where group supervision occurs, notes of the session must be taken and circulated to attendees see *Appendix 6*. Following group supervision, supervisees should complete a personal reflective log – see *Appendix 7*

## Confidentiality and Access to Supervision Records

- \* Supervision is a private but not confidential process, though details of any personal issues contained within the record will only be potentially available within the line management structure (and can be redacted in respect of audit or inspection activity).
- \* Supervision agreements, records and evaluation forms may all be read by the supervisor's line manager and other appropriate stakeholders as required e.g., where there is a change of manager, audit/quality assurance/inspection staff, the coroner, serious case review investigations, Social Care Wales, and the Disclosure and Barring Service, where there may be concerns regarding conduct and registration. They may also be used as evidence to evaluate supervisees' progress at appraisal or in the event of capability, resolution (or grievance) or disciplinary procedures.
- \* The supervisor has the responsibility to share information that arises in supervision if:
  - the supervisee's works breaches agreed standards of practice – in this case, supervision records could be used in a discussion about training and development needs or when dealing with capability or disciplinary or resolution procedures. (Refer to HR policy and procedures).
  - the supervisee's behaviour gives rise for concern – the supervisor might need to refer to the line manager or Human Resources.
  - the supervisee's physical or emotional health requires referral to a medical or staff care professional.

Equally supervisees have a responsibility to discuss any concerns with their supervisor's manager if they cannot be resolved together. These will include concerns such as:

- ✓ The supervisor not adhering to the supervision agreement.
- ✓ Concerns about the quality of supervision offered.
- ✓ Concerns about the supervisor's standards of practice.
- ✓ Concerns about the supervisor's attitude and behaviour.

Where a supervisee does not feel able to raise concerns with a supervisor's line manager, he/she should contact the line manager's own line manager or another senior manager.

## Cancellation

One to one supervision is a critical component of safe and effective practice and should be prioritised with cancellation only happening in exceptional circumstances. If cancellation must happen it should be rearranged consistent with regulatory requirements at the earliest opportunity within the compliance window and should not automatically wait until the following month.

## Areas Of Complaint and Disagreement

- \* If there are any disagreements between the supervisor and supervisee about what goes in the record, these should be noted. The supervisee may complete a copy and send it to the supervisor within two working days. Both should provide signatures.
- \* Once both signatures have been included, a copy should be retained by both parties

## Storage Of Records

- The supervision record remains the property of the Directorate. Both the supervisor and the supervisee are responsible for the safe storage of these records.
- Supervision records for staff within Children's Social Care are stored within the supervisory records within each service location.
- Supervision records for staff within Adult Social Care should be stored within the personal staff files stored in the service location.

## 4. Responsibilities in Supervision

### Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- \* Modelling a positive attitude to supervision, listening attentively and actively.
- \* Creating an open and 'learning' environment in supervision.
- \* Ensure that supervision is held in a private place, free of interruptions.
- \* Use a strengths-based approach to support the supervisee to analyse any presenting problems, clarifying and summarising both the content and the perceptions of the issues under discussion
- \* Celebrate and acknowledge good practice.
- \* If there are concerns about professional competence or behaviour of the supervisee address these early, giving specific and concrete examples of these concerns.
- \* Promoting anti-discriminatory practice and behaviour and challenging unconscious bias.
- \* Ensure that supervision does not become just a checklist, encouraging creative approaches to the discussion of work issues.
- \* Identify training and development needs and the need to consolidate practice.
- \* Assist with generating solutions and realistic action plans.

### Responsibilities of the Supervisee

- \* Accepting the requirement to be supervised and accountable.
- \* Actively and honestly participate.
- \* Maintain a competent standard of practice, seeking help and guidance to do so where required.

- \* Express opinions, disagree where appropriate to learn from mistakes and be honest if unsure of what to do.
- \* Make the supervisor aware of ~~your own~~ or her own work and development needs.
- \* Be open to feedback both about good practice and areas of concern.
- \* Be open to challenge about anti-discriminatory practice or areas of bias in relationships with individuals or colleagues.
- \* Engage in exploring options, finding solutions and making realistic action plans.
- \* Make any disagreements with the record of supervision known.
- \* Be honest where practice or performance is affected by personal circumstances or workload demands. Seeking health and wellbeing support should be considered.

### Shared Responsibilities in Supervision

- \* Prioritising supervision and attending on time.
- \* Abiding by the supervision agreement.
- \* Having an agreed joint agenda and participating fully
- \* Clarifying and agreeing standards of practice based on professional and Directorate guidelines
- \* To support anti-oppressive practice.
- \* Identifying evidence that will demonstrate competent practice
- \* Developing action plans and timescales
- \* At all times, it is expected that both parties approach supervision in line with the requirements of the Code of Prof Practice.

### Breakdown Of the Supervision Relationship

- Both parties should work to establish a respectful, trusting, purposeful and effective relationship within supervision. If the supervision relationship breaks down and the problem cannot be resolved by the supervisor and supervisee, the supervisor's line manager should advise and consider solutions or alternative options and take appropriate action. The supervisee may approach the line manager's own line manager if appropriate.

## 5. Quality Assurance, Monitoring & Review

### Operational Managers of a service have a responsibility

- \* To be familiar with and follow the supervision policy and guidelines.
- \* To ensure that supervisors and supervisees are fulfilling their responsibilities and that the desired outcomes are being achieved.
- \* That supervision within their team is taking place in line with expected guidance and is of a high standard, contributing to achieving positive outcomes.

### The Directorate Management Team (Heads of Service, Deputy Heads of Service and Group Managers, R.I's) have a responsibility

- \* To monitor and evaluate the standard of the supervisory process across their service area, ensuring that it is taking place regularly and meets the requirements

of delivering a consistent and quality service that safeguards those that are vulnerable and promotes the attainment of personal well-being outcomes.

- \* Prioritising supervision and demonstrating their own commitment as required.
- \* For undertaking or supporting audit activity that monitors and review the effectiveness of supervision across their service area.

### Quality Assurance Process re Supervision in BCBC Direct Care

Quarterly QA processes are in place that monitors compliance with supervision. To be further developed.

## 6. Training for Effective Supervision

All staff who have a responsibility to supervise staff can expect to receive appropriate training to support them in their role.

The present focus is upon managers and supervisors and training plans re supervisees will be considered at the next policy review at part of the policy review.

Training is mandatory, with a refresher required every three years.

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

#### RENEWAL OF SECTION 33 AGREEMENT FOR COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- seek approval to renew the Section 33 Agreement for the supply of community equipment;
- seek authority to suspend the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of the requirement to competitively procure the services provided by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council under the agreement; and
- seek approval for the appointment of the Integrated Community Services Manager - CRT as the Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) representative for the Community Equipment Partnership Board.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

3.1 Community equipment service currently provide a wide range of equipment e.g. aids to daily living, home, nursing equipment, static seating, children's equipment, physiotherapy equipment, sensory equipment, etc to assist adults and children: -

- To live within their own home environment;
- To prevent admission to hospital and facilitate timely discharge;

- To prevent the untimely admission to residential or nursing care accommodation services;
- To support Intermediate care and rehabilitation programmes;
- To support the management of adults and children who have a long term condition

- 3.2 Bridgend County Borough Council, and the former Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust and Bridgend Local Health Board (a predecessor to the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, Bridgend Locality (ABM UHB)), first developed and established a Section 33 Agreement under the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 to deliver integrated community equipment service in the County Borough in 2008.
- 3.3 The process was facilitated by the Welsh Government's announcement in April 2006 that it was making capital funding of £12.5 million available across Wales to support the process of integrating community equipment services. To qualify for this capital grant, Bridgend County Borough Council had to demonstrate the provision of integrated community equipment services with Health partners and other key stakeholders.
- 3.4 Approval to renew to renew the Section 33 Agreement was granted by Cabinet in 2012. Through that Section 33 Agreement Bridgend County Borough Council jointly commissioned community equipment services from Vision Products, part of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council Adult Services, for Bridgend County Borough Council and what was then, Aber Bro Morgannwg Health Trust. The renewed Section 33 Agreement was for a period of 5 years. The establishment of the pooled fund commissioning agreement also enabled the Bridgend partnership to previously draw down capital grant from the Welsh Government and develop and establish the integrated demonstration assessment and teaching facility at the Community Resource Centre at Trem y Mor.
- 3.5 Since the commencement of that agreement, the Health Board boundary change meant that Aber Bro Morgannwg Health Trust ceased to exist and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board assumed all responsibilities in relation to the health board of the Section 33 Agreement for community equipment, providing their own representative for Partnership Board. The 2012 Section 33 Agreement has since expired, however the Partnership continued to operate under the Section 33 agreement while the partners worked to revise and renew the agreement. Work to review the agreement has been prolonged due to the health board boundary change, pandemic and other operational pressures across the partnership organisations.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 The current Section 33 Agreement has been satisfactory in its operation, ensuring access to equipment throughout the pandemic.

- 4.2 The proposed principles within the agreement are fundamentally unchanged, although the timeframe for the new agreement being 10 years with an option to extend by a further 2 years.
- 4.3 The agreement provides that a party may terminate the agreement by giving 12 months written notice but provides that should a party do so then they will have to meet the redundancy costs incurred by any of the other parties that are a direct result of the termination.
- 4.4 Whilst this is not a new provision, it should be considered as a potentially significant liability in future decision making on any potential future termination.
- 4.5 Under the terms of the Section 33 Agreement it is necessary to appoint a BCBC partnership board representative and ensure they have the necessary delegated authority to make decisions under the agreement. Currently, the Integrated Community Services Manager for the Community Resource Team (CRT) Services within Adult Social Care undertakes this function. The governance of this function is overseen by the Joint Partnership Board, chaired by the Director of Social Services and Wellbeing and Deputy Chief Operating officer for Primary Care and Community Services.
- 4.6 Bridgend County Borough Council will continue to be required to identify an Operational Manager who will assume strategic responsibility for overseeing commissioning arrangements for the Integrated Community Equipment Service and related contract(s) including the management of the pooled fund arrangements on behalf of the Council.
- 4.7 Based on agreed operational protocols developed through workforce rotational placements between the Local Authority and the Health Board, under the Section 33 Agreement, the Council will be able to formally accept requisitions for community equipment based on an assessment of Service Users needs submitted by an appropriately qualified and authorised staff employed by Cwm Taff Morgannwg University Health Board. This will streamline requisitioning arrangements for community equipment, avoid duplication of effort and resources, and provide value for money through economies of scale.
- 4.8 Like the previous Section 33 Agreement the revised agreement entails the provision of community equipment storage and maintenance services to the partners by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council through Vision Products. Vision Products is a section of the council, just like Adult Services or Children Services. Notwithstanding, that the services are being provided by another local authority as part a public sector collaboration agreement the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 would require the open advertisement and competitive procurement of service provision. To continue with the existing arrangement of service provision from Vision Products it is proposed that Cabinet approve the suspension of the relevant parts of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules requiring a competitive procurement exercise in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in respect of the service provided by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.
- 4.9 Cabinet needs to be aware that in agreeing to the suspension of the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules the Council will be exposed to the risk of

potential challenge from other providers of such services. The Council's Contract Procedure Rules ensure that procurement exercises are lawful and carried out in compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 to satisfy principles of transparency, nondiscrimination and equal treatment. This report proposes the award of a contract without any competition. This proposal breaches the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and requires Cabinet's approval to set aside the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Legislative provisions exist to allow local authorities to collaborate to provide services to one another however they do not overrule public procurement obligations. They may reduce the overall risk of potential for a challenge, as collaboration is a commonly used tool for the provision of services.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 This report is requesting a suspension of the Council's CPRs, but no amendment to the CPR's is being sought.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

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

- 7.1 The proposal to renew the Section 33 agreement for the provision of community equipment supports the five ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as follows:

**Long Term** – In renewing the Section 33 agreement this ensures the Authority has robust arrangements in place for the provision of community equipment for its citizens who have been assessed and prescribed aids and equipment for the next 10 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years.

**Prevention** – The proposal ensures a robust arrangement to provide community equipment services that will continue to ensure individuals are supported to maintain independence and live in their own homes for as long as is possible and appropriate to do so.

**Integration** – the proposal facilitates achievement or progress towards achievement of the Well-being objectives.

**Collaboration** – the proposal is founded on close collaboration between the other Local Authority partners and the primary care, community services and secondary health services within the partnership.

**Involvement** – Key stakeholders have been involved to help shape the revised version of the Section 33 agreement that is proposed.

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 If Cabinet approve the renewal of the Section 33 Agreement it will cover all aspects of governance, operational management, finance, performance, monitoring and review etc. A Partnership Board will oversee the Pooled Fund which will be managed by the Pooled Fund Manager who will be an officer from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as the Lead Organisation.
- 8.2 There is a financial protocol as part of the Section 33 Agreement which governs the relationship between partners, the services and the Pooled Fund
- 8.3 The Council's contribution will be met from within existing Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate budgets.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- considers the contents of this report and agrees to renew the Section 33 Agreement for the provision of Community Equipment;
  - approve the suspension of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of the requirement to competitively procure the services provided by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council under the agreement;
  - delegates authority to the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Section 151 Officer, and Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy, to agree the final terms of the revised Section 33 agreement and to enter into that agreement on behalf of the Council; and
  - Approves the appointment of the Integrated Community Services Manager - CRT as the BCBC representative for the Community Equipment Partnership Board.

**Claire Marchant**  
**Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing**  
**February 2023**

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**Background documents:**

None

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

#### MANAGED SERVICE – CHILDREN'S SERVICES

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to directly award a 'managed service' contract to an independent organisation currently delivering the service in Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) Children's Services, to ensure continuity in child safeguarding arrangements. Cabinet approval is being sought to suspend the relevant parts of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) with regards to the requirement to re-tender the 'managed service' element of the contract detailed in this report.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  - **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  - **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In February 2022, a report was approved by Corporate Management Board (CMB) regarding the use of an external managed team service within the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) team, as part of a new interim structure within the service to create additional capacity to safeguard children in light of unprecedented levels of need and demand experienced by the service.
- 3.2 A team was sourced from Innovate Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) through the Council's agency provider contract with Pertemps, and the managed team service began in March 2022. The agreement was put in place for the service

to be provided for an initial 6 months, with the option to extend for an additional 6 months. This option to extend was approved, as per a paper that was presented to CMB on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The end date for this service is due to be the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

- 3.3 When the arrangement was initially entered into in March 2022, significant recruitment challenges were encountered which were not anticipated by Innovate CYPS. This emphasises there would be a lead-in time to mobilise the service given the limited supply of experienced children's social workers available to work in this part of the service and willing to relocate to Bridgend to fulfil the contractual obligations. Any change in supplier would mean a significant risk of a gap in service provision which would mean the Council could not meet statutory duties and regulators would need to be immediately advised this is the case.
- 3.4 The Institute of Public Care (independent specialist consultancy working in partnership with the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate) have advised that we need to continue to operate with the current level of capacity to ensure that the service is able to discharge its statutory duties in respect of safeguarding and child protection of children.
- 3.5 From a regulatory perspective, following a recent inspection conducted by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), feedback received acknowledged that whilst they are assured as to the stability of the IAA service at this time, retaining the structure enhanced by utilisation of a managed team was paramount for the ongoing safe practice, and subsequent assuredness from a regulatory perspective.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 Since the implementation of the Innovate managed team, advertising for permanent vacancies in IAA has been ongoing. At present, notwithstanding the additional team implemented in IAA, the vacancy rate remains high at 50%, which increases to 60% once absence is considered.
- 4.2 The market supplement application that was approved in early 2022 for specific Children's Services teams, which included IAA, has resulted in the service being able to compete with other local authorities. However, it has yet to show a benefit in increased levels of recruitment to any of these teams.
- 4.3 International recruitment of social workers has also begun. This process is ongoing and through the initial procurement agreement, is looking to bring in up to 20 social workers across social work teams, where Children's Services currently has 43.15 Full Time Equivalent vacancies in social work positions.
- 4.4 Recruitment of international social workers will be a longer-term solution, where concerns have also been raised as to whether international workers will be able to be placed within the IAA team due to information being received regarding police vetting rules stating an inability to have lived outside the UK for the previous 3 years. This is currently being investigated further. We have also increased the number of staff we support to undertake the social worker course to 8 per year, but the first 8 social workers will not qualify until 2025, where it is noted that there are also low numbers of non Local Authority-sponsored individuals on social work courses.



- 4.5 In the long-term, the fundamental outcome we are looking to achieve is for the team to be recruited and employed by BCBC, therefore negating the need for such an arrangement to be in place. However, due to the consistently challenging situation in respect of BCBC Children's Services recruiting and retaining social workers, it must be accepted that the lead-in for this longer-term plan is likely to take years as opposed to months. As such it is essential that short to medium arrangements can be entered into during this interim period, which provide sufficient stability and assurances for the team in place, and also the service area and BCBC generally, noting the precarious and sensitive situation the service is currently in.
- 4.6 Officers containing representation from a number of key areas, including Children's Services, Commissioning, Procurement and Legal have met to consider and risk-assess/appraise the short-medium term options for securing services beyond 18<sup>th</sup> March, where it is proposed that:
- The Social Worker element – which makes up over 90% of the contract value – is entered into directly with the existing service provider via a compliant national framework (ESPO 3S-22 – Strategic HR Services Lot 1E), and will be entered into in accordance with BCBC's Scheme of Delegation and CPRs
  - The Managed Service element – which provides the management oversight and quality assurance aspects of the service – is directly awarded to the incumbent provider, which requires Cabinet approval and is the basis of this report
  - Both of these arrangements are entered into for an initial 12-month period – with an option to extend by a further 12 months, and a further 12 months after that (3-year maximum term) – service requirements and funding permitting, with both arrangements having mirroring termination clauses
- 4.7 To ensure continuity and knowledge of the existing provider, it is proposed that Cabinet suspends the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs – requiring a competitive procurement exercise in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 – and agrees to the awarding of the managed service contract to the current provider for a 12 month period from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with an option for two further 12 monthly extensions, to provide maximum flexibility given the highly challenging market for permanent social work recruitment.
- 4.8 Cabinet needs to be aware that in agreeing the proposed extension of the existing contract with the current provider, the Council will be exposed to the risk of potential challenge from other providers of such services. The Council's CPRs ensure that procurement exercises are lawful and carried out in compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 to satisfy principles of transparency, nondiscrimination and equal treatment. This report proposes the award of a contract without any competition. This proposal breaches the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and requires Cabinet's approval to set aside the requirements of the Council's CPRs. However, the safeguarding risks of not being able to meet statutory duties are on the corporate risk register and consideration of the risks needs to consider the overall balance of risks to the local authority.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 This report is requesting a suspension of the Council's CPRs, but no amendment to the CPR's is being sought.

## 6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

## 7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 A summary of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment is listed below:

**Long-term** As a result of timely interventions, children and their families are enabled to take control and responsibility and live independently without intervention from BCBC. Children and young people are supported to reach their full potential.

**Prevention** The IAA service is integral to the delivery of the early intervention and prevention agenda. By ensuring that there are services in place to meet need at the earliest possible opportunity there will be a reduction in the escalation of need.

**Integration** Multi-agency services are integrated within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Integration is key to service delivery.

**Collaboration** The model of working within MASH is focused on multi-agency partners working together to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded. Services work together utilising a child centred approach that is focused in improving outcomes.

**Involvement** Engagement with those in receipt of services is central to the service delivery of the IAA service.

## 8. Financial implications

- 8.1 For the purposes of the continuance of the managed service contract to be entered into from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023, costs quoted by the provider for the Managed Service element are £97,538 per annum – which is a total contract value of £292,614 over the maximum 3-year duration.
- 8.2 Funding for the continuation of the Managed Service will come from repurposing existing directorate earmarked reserves, as well as consideration of use of the Welsh Government Social Care Workforce Grant.

## 9. Recommendations

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- approves the continuance of the managed service with the current service provider Innovate Children and Young People’s Services;
- suspend the relevant parts of the Council’s CPR’s in respect of the requirement as to re-tendering of the proposed contract; and
- delegated authority to the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Section 151 Officer, and Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy, to enter into a contract for the Managed Service for a 12 month period from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with an option to extend by a further two 12 month periods (maximum 3-year duration) provided that the exercise of any such extension option be subject to the prior approval by the Cabinet/Corporate Management Board and consultation with Scrutiny Chairs.

**Claire Marchant**  
**Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate**  
**February 2023**

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**Background documents:** None

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

##### APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet for the appointment of local authority governors to the school governing bodies listed at paragraph 4.1 and 4.2.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  - **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  - **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's 'Guidance on the appointment of local education authority governors', approved by Cabinet on 14 October 2008, officers have considered applications received for current vacancies for local authority governor positions on school governing bodies (see paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2, and Appendix A).

#### 4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 For the five current local authority governor vacancies at the five schools in the table below, all applicants met the approved criteria for appointment as a local

authority governor and there was no competition for these vacancies. Therefore, the recommended appointments are as follows:

<b>Name of applicant</b>	<b>School</b>
Cllr Martin Hughes	Plasnewydd Primary School
Mrs Marilyn Williams	Ysgol Bryn Castell
Mr Michael Simmonds	Ogmore Vale Primary School
Ms Lisa Salkeld	Pencoed Comprehensive School
Mr Robert Leek	Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School

- 4.2 There was competition for one vacancy at one school and the applicants are detailed in the table below:

<b>Name of applicant</b>	<b>School</b>
Mr Jeffrey Lewis	Bryntirion Comprehensive School
Mr Derek Davies	Bryntirion Comprehensive School

The officer panel scrutinised the applications and noted that neither applicant is currently an elected ward member or an elected councillor. While Mr Davies is a former headteacher with significant experience within the education profession, Mr Lewis is currently serving as a local authority governor and is the Vice Chairperson on the governing body of Bryntirion Comprehensive School. Therefore, in accordance with the criteria identified in the aforementioned 'Guidance on the appointment of local education authority governors', officers determined that the recommended appointment is Mr Jeffrey Lewis.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is, therefore, not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

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

- 7.1 A Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment has been completed. A summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is as follows:

### **Long-term**

While it is desirable for local authority governors to have previous or relevant experience of the role, in the short-term, the local authority may support any person for such an appointment who is interested in supporting schools, is not disqualified from being a school governor and is willing and able to dedicate the necessary time to the role.

## **Prevention**

The local authority assesses the suitability of applicants for the local authority governor vacancy/vacancies applied for. The local authority, in conjunction with the Central South Consortium, supports governors with a comprehensive programme of both mandatory and voluntary training and access to resources, to enable them to develop and maintain their knowledge and skills, and be successful in fulfilling the role.

## **Integration**

School governing bodies have a strategic role in running schools and ensuring that all pupils are supported to learn and achieve so that they can access opportunities for further learning and employment, know how to maintain their wellbeing, can play active roles in their communities and can contribute positively to society as a whole.

## **Collaboration**

School governing bodies have a strategic role in ensuring that schools safeguard the health and well-being of pupils and staff. The local authority, in conjunction with the Central South Consortium, provides training to governors to enable them to develop and maintain their relevant knowledge, skills and effectiveness in this respect.

## **Involvement**

The local authority treats all applications for local authority governor vacancies fairly, to ensure equality of opportunity. School governing bodies have a strategic role in ensuring that schools safeguard the health and well-being of pupils and staff. The local authority, in conjunction with the Central South Consortium, provides training to governors to enable them to develop and maintain their relevant knowledge, skills and effectiveness in this respect.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications regarding this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the appointments detailed at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2.

**Mr Lindsay Harvey**  
**Corporate Director – Education and Family Support**

**7 February 2023**

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**Background documents**

None



## Appendix A

The following table represents current and future local authority governor vacancies (up to the end of March 2023) subject to the approval of the recommended appointments in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2.

Name of school	Number of current and future vacancies	Latest date for submission of an application
Afon y Felin Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Brackla Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Bryntirion Infant School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Caerau Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Cefn Glas Infant School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Corneli Primary School	1 (vacant from 20 February 2023)	10 February 2023
Coychurch (Llangrallo) Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Ffaldau Primary School	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Garth Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023

Litchard Primary School	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Llangewydd Junior School	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Maes yr Haul Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Mynydd Cynffig Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Pîl Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Plasnewydd Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Tondu Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Tremains Primary School	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Tynyrheol Primary School	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	2 (current)	10 February 2023
Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	1 (current)	10 February 2023

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	1 (current)	10 February 2023
Cynffig Comprehensive School	1 (current) 1 (vacant from 20 February 2023)	10 February 2023 10 February 2023
Pencoed Comprehensive School	1 (vacant from 20 February 2023)	10 February 2023

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CABINET

7 FEBRUARY 2023

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2024-2025

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 (see Appendix A).

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

**Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Welsh Government's School Admissions Code 2013 (the Code) imposes requirements on local authorities and admission authorities, regarding the discharge of duties in respect of school admissions. The Council must act in accordance with the Code, as determined by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 3.2. As part of the statutory process, the local authority has a duty to consult with stakeholders as identified in the Code. This includes the governing bodies of all schools in Bridgend (including voluntary controlled schools) and all neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.3. The local authority is required to publish annually an admissions policy and guidance on the admission arrangements for its schools. These are published on the local authority's website. The policy and arrangements include details of the published admission number (PAN) for each school in Bridgend for which the local authority is the admission authority. The PAN for a school is the number of pupils that can be admitted to any year group for statutory-age pupils.

#### 4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Bridgend Admissions Forum agreed a draft School Admissions Policy for 2024-2025, as per the requirements under the Code, in September 2022.

- 4.2 The aforementioned consultation on the 2024-2025 policy took place with all parties between 30 November 2022 and 6 January 2023 (refer to paragraph 3.2).
- 4.3. While no formal responses to the consultation were received, a concern was expressed regarding the policy formalising an increase to the PAN of Caerau Primary School from 45 to 60.
- 4.4 As mentioned above, the PAN for a school represents the number of pupils that can be admitted to any year group for statutory school-age pupils. The PAN for each school reflects the outcome of calculations undertaken in accordance with the capacity assessment method set out in the Welsh Government guidance document 'Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales'.
- 4.5 The background to the proposed increase in the PAN for Caerau Primary School is that for the Reception year intake for September 2018, the local authority was facing multiple admission appeals by parents whose children had been refused places at the school, due to oversubscription. At the appeal hearings, the admission appeal panel was critical of the local authority's application of a PAN for the school of 45 when the capacity calculation had resulted in a higher indicated admission number. As a consequence, the panel recommended that the local authority should revisit its decision to refuse the admissions and offer places for all the children whose applications had previously been refused. The local authority acknowledged the admission appeal panel's views and decided to adopt a 'working PAN' of 60 for the school, which was supportable given the capacity calculation and the pupil projections for the school.
- 4.6 The local authority has continued to adopt the 'working PAN' of 60 in all the subsequent years as it has been justifiable given the outcomes of the annual capacity calculations. The local authority now proposes to formalise the PAN as 60 within the proposed School Admissions Policy for 2024-2025.
- 4.7 The concern expressed in writing, although not a formal consultation response, is important given its context. The concern implies that an increase in the PAN for Caerau Primary School, which is an English-medium school, contradicts the information in the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), as statistics within the WESP do not mention the possible increase of English-medium places at any schools where the capacity to increase the PAN may exist. Any increase in English-medium places in such circumstances may have a negative impact in terms of applications for Welsh-medium school places, particularly in respect of families for whom the English-medium school is the closer school, of greater capacity and, therefore, potentially the more convenient school for the parents/carers to access.
- 4.8 Even though the local authority has a very generous school transport policy offer for pupils in Bridgend wishing to pursue a Welsh-medium education, many parents/carers may not want their child to travel to access a school place and, therefore, by increasing the number of English-medium school places in an area without a corresponding number of readily accessible Welsh-medium places, this may have a detrimental impact on the take-up of Welsh-medium places and, consequently, the Welsh language.

- 4.9 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been carried out (see Appendix B). Formalising the increase in the PAN for Caerau Primary School may potentially have a negative impact on the Welsh language as parents/carers may choose to consider a Welsh-medium education for their child at one of the local authority's Welsh-language primary schools may choose Caerau Primary School instead as the number of available places has increased significantly.
- 4.10 Nevertheless, it is important to note that the 'working PAN' arrangement has been monitored annually by officers and there is no evidence that working to a PAN of 60 at Caerau Primary School since 2018 has reduced the number of pupils applying annually for places at the nearest suitable Welsh-medium primary school (that is, Ysgol Cynwyd Sant). However, neither is there evidence that if there had been no increase in the 'working PAN' from 45 to 60, that there would not have been more applications to Ysgol Cynwyd Sant for Welsh-medium school places, than to Caerau Primary School for English-medium school places.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage. However, there is potentially a negative impact on the use of the Welsh language. Therefore, although it is not considered necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy proposal, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been undertaken. A summary of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment (see Appendix B) is detailed in paragraph 4.9.
- 6.2 It is a statutory duty that admission authorities are mindful of their duties with regards to equalities legislation. The School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 adheres to these requirements.

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

- 7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment has been completed. A summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is as follows:

### **Long-term**

The school admissions policy sets out how the local authority will balance the discharge of its statutory duty in relation to parental preference, the need to safeguard the delivery of effective education and the safety of pupils, and the need to support pupils in particular circumstances (for example, learners with specific vulnerabilities), in circumstances where the applications for places at a school exceed the number of available places.

### **Prevention**

Consultation on the school admissions policy allows stakeholders to raise issues or make comments on proposals, for consideration of appropriate actions.

### **Integration**

The school admissions policy supports the provision of education in the communities in which pupils live.

### **Collaboration**

Each year, the local authority works in conjunction with key stakeholders to develop proposed school admission arrangements, for those schools for which it is the admissions authority.

### **Involvement**

In accordance with the specified requirements of the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the School Admissions Code 2013, the local authority consults each year on the proposed admission arrangements for those schools for which it is the admissions authority. Consultation for an academic year takes place two years in advance.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications regarding this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- approve the Schools Admissions Policy 2024-2025 (see Appendix A); and
- determine whether to approve the formal increase in the PAN for Caerau Primary School from 45 to 60, acknowledging the increase has been operationally implemented for a number of years and while considering the potential negative impact identified in the accompanying (Appendix B) Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

**Mr Lindsay Harvey**  
**Corporate Director – Education and Family Support**

**7 February 2023**

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**Background documents:**

None

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. / This document is available in Welsh.



# School Admissions Policy 2024-2025

(1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025)

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## 1. The admission authority

The entry of children to schools is controlled and administered by an 'admission authority'. In the case of community schools in Bridgend, the admission authority is Bridgend County Borough Council (also referred to in this document as 'the local authority').

In accordance with the Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999, the relevant area for the admission authority is the geographical area of the County Borough of Bridgend.

Where the local authority is the admission authority, the school's governing body is under a duty to implement the local authority's decisions on applications, and to act in accordance with the local authority's admission arrangements.

**The local authority continuously reviews and reserves the right to amend its admissions procedures for statutory and non-statutory education.**

The local authority has no arrangements for the provision of education at schools not maintained by the local authority.

### 1.1 Admission to voluntary controlled schools

The one voluntary controlled school in the Bridgend County Borough is Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School, which is financed by the local authority. The admissions criteria are consistent with that of the local authority, as detailed in this policy, and with the Trust Deed of the school. Appeal arrangements are managed by the local authority and are consistent with the provision of the Trust Deed.

### 1.2 Admission to voluntary aided schools

There are five voluntary aided schools in the Bridgend County Borough, which are financed largely by the local authority. These are:

1. St Mary's Catholic Primary School
2. St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
3. St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School
4. Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School
5. Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School

The governing body of each voluntary aided school is the admission authority with responsibility for all admission arrangements. Parents/carers who wish to seek admission/s to these schools will need to contact the school/s directly for further information.

### 1.3 Admissions to sixth forms

The local authority is the admitting authority for Post-16 admissions to sixth forms in the community schools within the Bridgend County Borough. However, the individual schools administer the admission arrangements on behalf of the local authority. Therefore, applications in this category should be made directly to the school.

While the local authority has a policy of open access to schools' sixth forms, the individual schools are responsible for determining and issuing entry criteria on sixth-form admissions.

Admission arrangements for other Post-16 further education institutions are determined by those institutions and applications should be made directly to the institution/s concerned.

### 1.4 Admissions to special schools

The two special schools in the Bridgend County Borough are regional centres with pupils admitted from neighbouring local authorities. Admissions to these schools are not included within, or subject to the provisions of this policy.

## 2. Parental preference

### 2.1 The duty to comply with parental preference

In relation to admissions to primary schools (excluding nursery classes), junior schools and secondary schools (including sixth-forms), the local authority has a statutory duty to have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents/carers, so far as that would be compatible with the provision of efficient education and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (S.9 Education Act 1996).

The local authority applies the same principle of parental preference to applications for non-statutory, nursery education in a local authority-maintained school.

The duty of the local authority to comply with parental preference does not apply where:

1. To admit would be incompatible with the statutory duty to meet infant class size regulations.
2. To admit the child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.
3. Where arrangements for entry to a school's sixth form are based wholly on selection by reference to ability or aptitude and compliance with the preference would be incompatible with selection under those arrangements.

4. The child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools. Where this is the case, the local authority is not required to comply with parental preference for a school place for a period of two years from the first school day of the second exclusion.

This disapplication from the requirement to comply with parental preference does not apply to:

- pupils who were below compulsory school age when they were excluded;
- pupils who were reinstated after permanent exclusion or pupils who would have been reinstated following a permanent exclusion had it been practicable to do so;
- pupils with statements of special educational need;
- pupils who are looked after (the application for admission must be made by the corporate parent), or previously looked after children (the application for admission must be accompanied by evidence of the previously looked after status).

### 2.2 Compliance with parental preference

Within the Bridgend County Borough, each school has an area it serves (its catchment); however, the local authority must allow all parents/carers the opportunity to express a positive preference for the school they wish their child to attend. While most parents/carers are happy to choose their catchment school, it is necessary for that school to be selected by parents/carers on a school admission or in-year school admission/transfer application. The application allows parents/carers to list more than one school in order of preference. The local authority will offer a place at the highest available preferred school.

The local authority is committed to the principle of providing local schools for local children and will make every effort to ensure that parents/carers are able to secure a place for their child/ren at the catchment school, where parents/carers have expressed a positive preference for that school. However, parents/carers must not automatically assume that a place will be available for their child at their catchment school, or any particular school.

The local authority will meet the preferences for admission expressed by parents/carers ahead of those who have expressed no preference. Consequently, for the admissions rounds, parents/carers must ensure they record their preference/s on the school admission application and that the application is submitted to the local authority by the stated deadline.

### 2.3 Changes to an expressed parental preference

For admission rounds, if the parent/carer wishes to make a change to the school preference/s after the application has been submitted to the local authority:



1. The change must be notified to the local authority **in writing** (email or letter).
2. If the change is notified to the local authority **before** the published closing date for the admission round, the change will be taken into consideration in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of places.
3. If the change is notified to the local authority **after** the closing date for the admission round, the school preference/s recorded on the application will be used in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of places. The parent/carer will have the option to complete and submit a late application if the allocated place is at a school that is no longer the preferred school, which would be subject to the provisions relevant to late applications (see section 13.1). However, in these circumstances, the local authority will offer the applicant the option to, instead, maintain the original application and school preference/s.

The admission application form will indicate the maximum number of school preferences that a parent/carer can express. A parent/carer may choose to express a lesser number of school preferences. However, in such a situation, if the local authority cannot offer a place at any preferred school, the local authority will take no further action in respect of the application. The parent/carer will be required to complete and submit a new application for any alternative school, which will be processed as a late application in accordance with the provisions of section 13.1.

### 3. School catchment areas

#### 3.1 Welsh-medium and voluntary aided schools

There are no catchment areas for the Welsh-medium schools within Bridgend.

#### 3.2 All other schools

[School catchment area maps](#) are published on the local authority's website.

Catchment areas are subject to change, with any changes being subject to consultation prior to implementation.

**There is no right to, or guarantee of, an offer of a place at a child's catchment area school.**

### 4. School capacity and published admission number

The capacity of a school is the number of pupil places it contains.

Welsh Government has published a capacity calculation methodology for all schools. This aims to provide a robust and consistent method of assessing the pupil capacity of all community, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and foundation schools in Wales.

A school's calculated capacity is based on existing accommodation at a school and its usage. For statutory-age year groups (Reception to Year 11) the calculated capacity informs the published admissions number for a school.

Appendix A provides the published admission numbers for all schools for which the local authority is the admitting authority.

For a normal year of entry (that is, Reception and Year 7), the local authority must admit pupils up to the published admission number (with the exception of twice-excluded pupils – see section 2).

For all other years, it is not a statutory requirement that the local authority admits pupils up to the published admission number, although the local authority will generally do so. However, in the case of infant classes (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2), infant class size legislation is relevant (see section 5). The local authority is entitled to refuse admission for places in any year other than the normal year of entry (that is, Reception), if offering a place would result in class size prejudice (for example, necessitating that the school employs an additional teacher or creates another classroom when it does not have the resources to do so). This means that the local authority may refuse admission to Year 1 and Year 2 if offering a place would result in class size prejudice, even if the admission number has not been reached in relation to these year groups.

As the published admission number reflects the school's ability to accommodate pupils, the local authority will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

### **5. Infant class size limit**

In order to improve educational standards in schools, The School Admission (Infant Class Size) (Wales) Regulations 2013 limit the number of children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes to 30 when a single qualified teacher is present.

The local authority will refuse admission to classes in these year groups if an admission would result in the infant class size limit being breached, giving rise to infant class size prejudice, unless the situation is such that an exception to the infant class size limit is permitted by the legislation.

In relation to the Reception year, infant class size prejudice does not arise if the number of pupils in the Reception year has not reached the school's published admission number.

Decisions on the structure of classes at a school are reserved to the headteacher. If a headteacher decides to operate a mixed-age class where some of the pupils in the class are Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 pupils, the infant class size limit will only apply if the majority of the pupils in the class are Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 pupils.

## 6. Welsh-medium education

There are four Welsh-medium primary schools and one Welsh-medium secondary school located within Bridgend County Borough.

Admission to the Welsh-medium schools in the Bridgend County Borough is controlled by the provisions and criteria specified within this policy.

There are no catchment areas for the Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend.

A parent/carer can make an application for a place for their child at any Welsh-medium school within the county. However, if a parent/carer chooses to apply for place at a Welsh-medium school that is not the nearest Welsh-medium school to the child's place of ordinary residence, and that application is successful, there is no entitlement to free home-to-school transport to that requested school.

Eligibility for school transport only applies where the child's place of ordinary residence is more than two miles from the nearest Welsh-medium primary school or three miles from the nearest Welsh-medium secondary school.

## 7. Arrangements with other local authorities

The local authority has made the following arrangements with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, where surplus admission places are available:

1. Parents/carers of pupils who live within the catchment area of Abercerdin Primary School may apply for a place for their child at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and, if successful, Bridgend County Borough Council will be responsible for transport.
2. Parents/carers of pupils who live in Rhondda Cynon Taf may apply for a place for their child at Pencoed Comprehensive School and, if successful, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will be responsible for transport .

## 8. Ensuring fair access

Particular considerations apply in respect of specific groups of children, as detailed below.

### 8.1 Children from overseas and UK children living abroad

The local authority will treat applications for such children on an individual basis and in accordance with all applicable Welsh Government legislation/requirements, UK legislation and Home Office rules. Also, any European Union law that may be applicable to the UK.

It should be expected that the local authority will seek information on a range of relevant factors, including but not necessarily limited to:

- when the child is expected to be resident in the UK;
- whether the parents/carers' application for leave to enter the UK has been or will be successful, or if it has been, on what terms entry has been granted.

### **8.2 Children in receipt of a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or a local authority-maintained individual development plan (IDP)**

Where a mainstream place in a community school is the named placement in a final statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP, the local authority will admit the child to that school.

### **8.3 Children with additional learning needs (but without a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP)**

Applications in respect of such children will be considered in the same way as all applications on the basis of the procedures and admission criteria set out in this policy.

If a child is currently being assessed under the ALN system and, at a later date, the local authority concludes that the child should have a local authority-maintained IDP, the appropriate school placement will be addressed as part of that statutory process.

### **8.4 Children with disabilities**

The local authority will comply with the reasonable adjustments duty owed to disabled pupils, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

### **8.5 Children with challenging behaviours**

The local authority will not refuse to admit a child on the basis of his/her behaviour. Such children will include those who are considered to be potentially disruptive, exhibiting challenging behaviours or those who may be considered as requiring assessment for special educational needs.

After admission, a school may consider such disciplinary action as appropriate, in response to challenging behaviour. However, children exhibiting challenging behaviours may be disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and require reasonable adjustments to be made for them in school.

### **8.6 Looked after and previously looked after children**

In respect of looked after children, the following provisions apply even if the corporate parent is Bridgend County Borough Council.

Applications in respect of looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised under the applicable oversubscription criteria, **subject to**:

1. The application for a looked after child is completed and submitted by the corporate parent (that is, the local authority with responsibility for looking after the child) and supporting evidence is provided (a Care Order or Interim Care Order).
2. The application for a previously looked after children is accompanied by supporting evidence from the former corporate parent.

### In-year admissions/transfers

In accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code 2013, where in-year admission/transfer of a looked after child is being sought, the corporate parent must consult with the local authority before making the application. This is to ensure the appropriateness of the preferred school in light of the child's background and circumstances. This consultation and completion of an application is also required in respect of looked after children who have been permanently excluded from two or more schools.

Additionally, in the case of a looked after child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, the corporate parent must also consult with the governing body of the identified school.

In both instances, the consultation need not be onerous.

For applications for in-year admission/transfers in respect of looked after children, a place will be offered at the agreed school and an exception to the infant class size limit (if relevant) will be applied, **subject to** the application having been completed and submitted by the corporate parent (that is, the local authority with responsibility for the child) and supporting evidence having been provided (a Care Order or Interim Care Order).

For applications for in-year admission/transfers in respect of previously looked after children, a place will be offered at the preferred school and an exception to the infant class size limit (if relevant) will be applied, **subject to** the application being accompanied by supporting evidence from the former corporate parent.

The relevant supporting evidence referred to above must be submitted with the application.

### 8.7 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children

When considering admission applications relating to Gypsy and Traveller children, the local authority will take account of Welsh Government Circular No: 003/2008 (Moving Forward – Gypsy Traveller Education) and sections 3.25 and 3.26 of the statutory School Admissions Code for Wales, 2013.

## 8.8 Children of serving UK service personnel and other serving Crown Servants (including diplomats)

'UK service personnel' refers to persons serving in the military forces. 'Crown Servants' are officers of the UK government, including diplomats.

There is no automatic right to a place at a preferred school for children of serving UK service personnel and other serving Crown Servants.

The local authority will accept a 'unit' postal address for applications from serving service personnel in the absence of a new home postal address.

For normal admissions rounds, the local authority will treat children of serving UK service personnel and serving Crown Servants as if they are already resident at a future address **provided that** the application is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date and confirmation of the new home. The local authority will allocate a school place in accordance with the applicable criteria for the relevant admission round.

In respect of in-year admission/transfer applications for children of serving UK service personnel and serving Crown Servants:

- such children will be given 'excepted status' for infant class size limit purposes (if relevant), if admitted to a preferred school;
- if the application is unsuccessful and a place at the preferred school is refused, the parents/carers may appeal against the decision and any appeal hearing would be heard as a normal prejudice appeal.

Applications for children of former UK service personnel or former Crown Servants will be treated as all other applications.

## 8.9 All vulnerable or hard-to-place children

The provisions of this policy will apply. Additionally, the local authority has a fair access protocol and a fair access panel that may consider the admissions of such children.

## 8.10 School 'managed moves'

The local authority has a separate policy for the managed moves (transfers) of pupils between schools.

Managed moves of pupils are treated differently to regular admissions. However, the local authority will apply the provisions of this policy in the identification of a suitable school or schools.

The pupil will remain on roll at the current school during the managed move period. At the end of the managed move period, if the managed move is deemed successful, the pupil will be placed on roll at the receiving school. If the managed move is deemed to have been unsuccessful, the pupil will return to the school at which they are on roll.

The Managed Move Policy does not apply in any instances where the parent/carer completes a school admission application; the School Admissions Policy applies in all such cases.

### **9. Requests for admission outside of the normal age group**

Occasionally, a parent/carer or school may seek a place outside of the chronological age group for a child who they consider to be gifted/talented or experiencing problems, or who has missed part of a school year, for example, due to ill health.

The local authority will consider each request carefully and make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. The local authority will consider what is most beneficial for the child and, in every case, will consider information from the parents/carers, the school, an educational psychologist and any other appropriate parties, to inform its decision.

If the local authority decides that an out-of-year group application is appropriate, but that application is refused due to no places being available in the requested year group at the school, the parents/carers have a statutory right of appeal. However, there is no right of appeal if the local authority has offered a place but not in the requested year group (that is, where the place offered is in the correct year group for the child's chronological age).

If the local authority decides that an out-of-year group application is appropriate and the application is for a Part-time Nursery place in the following January or April, or a Full-time Nursery, Reception, junior school Year 3 or secondary school Year 7 place from the following September, the application will be subject to, and considered in accordance with, the conditions and criteria applicable to those admissions rounds.

### **10. Information or circumstances that the local authority does not consider when making admission decisions**

The following is not an exhaustive list, but details the principal information and circumstances that have no bearing on admission decisions:

- Any school that the child has previously attended.
- Any particular school that the child might attend in the future.
- A parent/carer communicating to any school that there is an intention to apply for a place at the school. This would include any instance when a parent/carer believes that they have 'registered' their child's name for a place at the school.

- An invitation to, or attendance by a child, at a 'taster'/transition day at any school.
- Allowance by any school of a visit by the parents/carers and/or child.
- Any indication either explicitly given, or assumed by a parent/carer to have been given, by a school that there are places available at the school in any year group, with the exception of sixth form places.

## 11. Equalities

The local authority's admissions policy and arrangements seek to achieve full compliance with all relevant legislation and guidance, with regard to equal opportunities and human rights (Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011).

The local authority wants its services to be accessible to the whole community and will challenge discrimination in our communities, whether it is based on a person's transgender status, race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity marriage or civil partnership.

The local authority's Corporate Equality Scheme sets out how the local authority will comply with its Public Sector Equality Duty in the exercise of its functions, having due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the legislation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

## 12. Data protection and information sharing

The local authority complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The full [Data Protection guidance and principles](#) of the local authority may be viewed on the website.

Any information recorded by an applicant in a school admission application will be held electronically and used by the local authority for the purpose of processing the application.

The local authority will share the information provided in a school admission application with the relevant school/s in accordance with the [Fair Processing Statement – Education and Family Support](#).

The local authority will investigate any school admission applications where there is doubt about the information that has been provided. This will be to assist in the prevention and



detection of fraud for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage in the school application system and under Schedule 2, part 1, 2(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

### 13. Admissions rounds

#### 13.1 Submission of applications

##### The requirement to apply for a school place

A school admission application **must** be completed by a parent/carer.

A separate application is required for each child.

A child will not be permitted to start at a school until an application has been received and processed by the local authority, and a school place has been offered by the local authority.

##### The applicant

In respect of applications for nursery children and children of statutory school-age, the application must be made by a 'parent' of the child, as defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

Therefore, for the purposes of education law, a 'parent' is deemed to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative;
- any person who has care of a child or young person but is not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The local authority uses the term 'parent/carer' throughout this policy to reflect the legal definition of 'parent', as detailed above.

The local authority will only accept an application from a person who is not a parent/carer if it is accompanied by an appropriate written authorisation from a parent/carer.

An applicant will be required to make a declaration of the relationship to the child and provide such information as the local authority requires, including documentation, evidencing that relationship, at the time the admission application is submitted.

The local authority expects that the parents/carers of a child reach agreement about the preferred school/s and who will submit the application, before a school admission application is submitted. The local authority will not intervene in disputes between parents/carers over school applications and will expect that these are resolved privately. If parents/carers cannot agree and a Court order stating who should be making the application and what the school preference/s should be has not been obtained, the local authority will proceed to accept the application from the parent/carer in receipt of Child Benefit for the child.

Applications in respect of Post-16 admissions/transfers can be submitted by a parent/carer or the learner.

### How to apply

Applications can be completed online through sign up to 'My Account' on the Bridgend County Borough Council website.

Any parents/carers who do not have access to their own computer/laptop or smart phone, may use the computers available within the libraries in the county borough to sign up to My Account and complete a school admission application. A parent/carer who remains unable to create a My Account and access the relevant online school admission application, may contact the local authority and request a hardcopy school admission application.

If parents/carers permit completion and submission of a school admission application for their child through the My Account of a third party, the My Account holder will be deemed to be submitting the application on behalf of, and with the full authority of, the parents/carers of the child. In these circumstances, the parents/carers will be considered as accepting responsibility for the consequence of any errors or deficiencies in the completion of the application and/or the submission of the application.

**The local authority accepts no responsibility for the non-receipt of an application that is not submitted through the online facility.**

If the local authority's arrangements for submission of admission applications should change before or during the effective dates of this policy, details will be published in the Starting School Prospectus 2024-2025 and on the [local authority's website](#).

### Late applications

An application should be submitted in time for **receipt** by the local authority by the relevant published closing time and date.

The local authority will accept late applications that are received after the relevant published closing date **provided that** the application is received **before** the local authority has commenced its allocation of places in preparation for the admissions offer (this date will be determined by the local authority at the time but will be at least one month before

the published offer date for places) **and** the local authority is satisfied as to the parents/carers' reasons for the late application.

Applications in respect of looked after children and previously looked after children, or children with a statement of SEN or an IDP that names a specific school, will **not** be treated as late applications regardless of when the application is received.

All other late applications will not be included in the allocation of places that will be notified to applicants on the relevant published offer date.

Late applications that are not included in the allocation of places for offer day will be processed by the local authority after the relevant published offer date and in order of date and time received. Oversubscription criteria will not apply; if a place is available in the preferred school at the time the application is processed, it will be offered. Therefore, late applicants may find that their preferred school is already full, even if the school is their catchment school.

No applications for 2024-2025 admissions rounds that are received by the local authority after 31 August 2024 will be processed. After this date, an in-year admission/transfer application is required and all considerations applicable to in-year admission/transfer applications will be relevant. The local authority does not accept in-year admission/transfer applications received more than two calendar months in advance of the requested start date. Consequently, all applications for a Part-time Nursery class in April 2025 that are received after 31 August 2024 will not be processed until the spring term 2025.

### 13.2 Nursery class admissions rounds

Nursery education is non-statutory; however, in Wales, children are entitled to a free, part-time, early-years education place from the start of the term following their third birthday. The place can either be at a local authority-maintained school ('LA-maintained'), or within the non-maintained sector with a registered early year's provider.

**This policy applies only to admissions to nursery classes in LA-maintained schools for which the local authority is the admission authority.** Parents/carers who wish to apply for a nursery place at a voluntary aided school must approach that school directly.

Places are part-time for three-year-olds (Nursery Year 1) and full-time for four-year-olds (Nursery Year 2). Although nursery education is non-statutory, the local authority expects all children who are offered a Part-time Nursery place to attend for five half days per school week and all children who are offered a Full-time Nursery place to attend for five full days per school week.

A school admission (nursery) application **must** be completed by the parents/carers of eligible children for admissions to nursery classes in LA-maintained schools.

A child will only be permitted to attend a nursery class if the relevant application has been submitted **and** the local authority has formally offered a place at that school.

Children who are admitted to a Part-time Nursery class **do not have an automatic right to a Full-time Nursery place at the same school.** All parents/carers of children attending a Part-time Nursery class, whether residing within or outside the defined catchment area, must complete a school admission application for a Full-time Nursery place, at the appropriate time, indicating their school preference/s.

Children who are admitted to a Full-time Nursery class **do not have an automatic right to a Reception year place at the same school.** All parents/carers of children attending a Full-time Nursery class, whether residing within or outside the defined catchment area, must complete a school admission application for a Reception place, at the appropriate time, indicating their school preference/s.

As nursery education is non-statutory, parents/carers have **no right of appeal** in respect of decisions on nursery admissions.

Timetable for nursery admissions 2024-2025

The timetable for nursery admissions is not governed by the School Admissions Code 2013. The local authority's expected timetable for processing applications for nursery admissions for 2024-2025 is as follows:

**Full-time Nursery class admissions - pupils born between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021, starting in a Full-time Nursery class in September 2024:**

Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 8 January 2024
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 5 April 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places (the 'offer date')	Thursday, 30 May 2024

**Part-time Nursery class admissions - pupils born between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021, starting in a Part-time Nursery class in January 2025:**

Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 8 January 2024
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 30 August 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places	By 31 October 2024

**Part-time Nursery class admissions - pupils born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022, starting in a Part-Time Nursery class in April 2025:**

Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 8 January 2024
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 30 August 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places	By 31 October 2024

The local authority will normally only admit up to the equivalent of the school's published admission number when allocating Full-time Nursery places.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons
3. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

4. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### Allocation of Full-time Nursery class places in Welsh-medium schools

The local authority will normally only admit up to the equivalent of the school's published admission number when allocating Full-time Nursery places.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons
3. Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.
4. Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

## Allocation of Part-time Nursery class places in English-medium schools

In determining the number of Part-time Nursery places available for allocation in any school, the local authority will take into account the capacity of the accommodation used for nursery pupils, the published admission number and the number of Full-time Nursery pupils already on roll at the school.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025 or April 2025) who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025 or April 2025) for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025) and whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is over-subscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
4. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025) who are not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area but whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission application, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.



Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children born between 1 September 2021 and December 2021 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025) whose place of ordinary residence is outside the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

6. Children born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from April 2025) whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is over-subscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

7. Children born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from April 2025) who are not currently ordinarily resident within the

school's defined catchment area but whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission application, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

8. Children born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from April 2025) whose place of ordinary residence is outside the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is over-subscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the Reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### Allocation of Part-time Nursery class places in Welsh-medium schools

In determining the number of Part-time Nursery places available for allocation in any school, the local authority will take into account the capacity of the accommodation used for nursery pupils, the published admission number and the number of Full-time Nursery pupils already on roll at the school.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025 or April 2025) who are looked after or

previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.

2. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025 or April 2025) for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025) who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.
4. Children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from January 2025) on the basis of proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
5. Children born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from April 2025) who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the school year 2024-2025.
6. Children born between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 who will attain the age of three in the school year 2024-2025 (these children will be eligible for a Part-time Nursery place from April 2025) on the basis of proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

### **13.3 Primary/infant school admission round (Reception year)**

The relevant age group for the reception year is 4-5 years.

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term after their fifth birthday. In the Bridgend County Borough, children are normally admitted to the Reception year in the September following their fourth birthday. However, parents/carers have the option of deferring their child's entry to the Reception year until later in the same school year. The deferment cannot continue beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the original admission application was accepted by the local authority. Where the

parent/carer wishes to defer the child's entry to the Reception year as detailed, the local authority will hold a place for the child.

An application for a Reception year place must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to the Reception year at any primary or infant school, regardless of the school at which the child may be attending a nursery class.**

### Timetable for Reception year admissions for September 2024

The expected timetable for children born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020, entering a reception class in September 2024 is as follows:

Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 13 November 2023
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 16 February 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places (the 'offer date')	Tuesday, 16 April 2024
Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal	4pm Tuesday, 14 May 2024

### Allocation of Reception year places for September 2024 in English-medium schools

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons
3. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infant schools, attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
4. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infant schools, attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infant schools, attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### Allocation of Reception year places for September 2024 in Welsh-medium schools

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.
4. Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

### 13.4 Junior school admission round (Year 3)

In primary schools, the infant and junior sections are simply departments of the same school and children progress through the school from the infants to juniors without having to transfer elsewhere. Therefore, parents/carers are **not** required to complete a school admission application, since the children are already regarded as registered pupils in the primary school.

Children attending Year 2 in an infant school do not automatically transfer to Year 3 at junior school. An application for a Year 3 place at junior school must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to a junior school or any primary school regardless of the infant school or primary school that a child currently attends.**

Children normally enter Year 3 in junior school at the beginning of the school year following their seventh birthday.

In Bridgend, there is one junior school, (that is, Llangewydd Junior School), which is an English-medium school.

If parents/carers do not wish their child to attend Year 3 at junior school and instead wish for their child to attend Year 3 at a standard primary school, an in-year admission/transfer application must be submitted. Parents/carers should note that places in Year 3 in a standard primary school may be very limited or unavailable. Also, that the local authority will not make admission decisions in respect of in-year admission/transfer applications for a September 2023 start date until Easter 2023.

[Timetable for Year 3 junior school admissions for September 2024](#)

The expected timetable for children born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017, moving from infants school (Year 2) to junior school (Year 3) in September 2024 is as follows:

Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 13 November 2023
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 16 February 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places (the 'offer date')	Tuesday, 16 April 2024
Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal	4pm Tuesday , 14 May 2024

### Allocation of Year 3 junior school places for September 2024

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

4. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### 13.5 Secondary school admission round (Year 7)

Children normally enter Year 7 in secondary school at the beginning of the school year following their eleventh birthday.

An application for a Year 7 place must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to any secondary school, regardless of the primary or junior school that a child currently attends.**

In Bridgend, there is one Welsh-medium secondary school (that is, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd). There is one faith secondary school (that is, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School), for which the local authority is **not** the admission authority. All other secondary schools are English-medium.

#### Timetable for Year 7 secondary school admissions for September 2024

The expected timetable for children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013, transferring from junior/primary school (Year 6) to secondary school (Year 7) in September 2024 is as follows:



Action	Date
Opening date for submission of applications	10am Monday, 16 October 2023
Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority	4pm Friday, 19 January 2024
Notification to applicants of offer or refusal of places (the 'offer date')	Friday, 1 March 2024
Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal	4pm Friday, 29 March 2024

### Allocation of Year 7 secondary school places for September 2024 for English-medium schools

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
4. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will

be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### Allocation of Year 7 secondary school places for September 2024 for the Welsh-medium school

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after and children for whom the school is the named placement in the statement of SEN or local authority-maintained IDP.
2. Children for whom the local authority has received and accepted written evidence from a relevant professional/s that the placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
3. Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the school year 2024-2025.

4. Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

### 14. Explanations of oversubscription criteria

#### 14.1 Looked after and previously looked after children

The local authority is under a duty to prioritise looked after and previously looked after children in the oversubscription criteria.

In the case of a looked after child, the school admission application must be completed and submitted by the corporate parent (that is, the local authority with responsibility for the child) and supporting evidence must be provided (a Care Order or Interim Care Order).

In the case of previously looked after children, the school admission application must be accompanied by supporting evidence from the former corporate parent.

The relevant supporting evidence must be submitted with the application.

#### 14.2 Children in receipt of a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or a local authority-maintained individual development plan (IDP)

To satisfy this criterion, the child must have a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP and the application is in respect of a mainstream place at the school named in the statement of SEN or local authority- maintained IDP.

#### 14.3 Children for whom a placement is essential for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons

To satisfy this criterion:

1. applicants **must** provide supporting written evidence from a relevant professional/s, such as, a registered health professional and/or a social worker, that states the reasons why the preferred school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school. The evidence **must** be dated no more than three months prior to the application submission date; **and**
2. that written evidence is accepted by the local authority as sufficient to determine that placement at the preferred school is essential for the child.

**Evidence that purely confirms a child's diagnosis or circumstances does not satisfy this criterion.**

Applications in respect of young carers will be considered under this criterion subject to provision of the necessary evidence, as set out above.

The local authority expects **the applicant** to provide the required written evidence at the time the application is submitted. If this is not possible, the local authority must be advised of and satisfied as to the reasons and the required written evidence must then be provided prior to the closing time and date of the admission round. If the required written evidence is not provided to the local authority before the closing of the admission round, the application will not be considered for prioritisation under this criterion.

### 14.4 Child's address / place of ordinary residence

Applicants must record the current address at which the child is ordinarily resident on a school admission application.

When considering whether a child lives in a school's catchment area (English-medium schools) or the proximity to the school (Welsh-medium schools), it is the child's place of ordinary residence that the local authority considers to be the home address and satisfying the relevant admissions criteria.

Where the child's parents/carers are not living together but have shared responsibility for the child, and the child lives with each parent/carer for part of the periods during which the child receives education, the child will be considered as being ordinarily resident at the places where **each** of the parents/carers is ordinarily resident. Accordingly, the local authority will accept the address of either parent/carer as being the child's place of ordinary residence.

### Changes to the child's address / place of ordinary residence

If the child's place of ordinary residence changes after the school admission application has been submitted:

1. The local authority **must** be notified immediately **in writing** (email or letter).
2. If the change is notified to the local authority **before** the closing time and date for the admission round, the change (that is, the new place of ordinary residence) will be used in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of a place.
3. If the change is notified to the local authority **after** the closing time and date for the admission round, the place of ordinary residence recorded on the application (that is, the original place of ordinary residence) will be used in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of a place. The applicant will have the option to complete and submit a late application if the allocated place is at a school that is no longer the preferred school, which would be subject to the provisions relevant to late applications (see section 13.1).
4. If the applicant does not inform the local authority of a change of ordinary residence prior to the date on which the child would start school, the local authority will take the action detailed below under 'provision of false or misleading information'.

Applications made on the basis of a **future** change in the place of ordinary residence

Where the applicant is in the process of a house move at the time that the application is submitted and is expressing a preference for a school that is the catchment school for the future address (English-medium schools) or the most proximate school for the future address (Welsh-medium schools), the applicant **must** record this on the application form and **must** provide the following evidence to the local authority:

- written evidence from a solicitor that contracts have been exchanged for the purchase of the property and a date for completion of the purchase has been agreed, such that the child will be moving to the new property and be resident at the address by the start of the school term to which the application relates; or
- a written tenancy agreement evidencing that the child will be resident at the new address by the start of the school term to which the application relates.

All required evidence **must** be received by the local authority **prior to the closing time and date for the admission round** and it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the required evidence to the local authority by that deadline. If the required evidence is not received prior to the closing time and date, the application will be treated as an out of catchment application for the preferred school/s (English-medium schools), or the proximity to the preferred school (Welsh-medium schools) will be measured using the current (original) address.

If the evidence does not confirm that the child will be resident at the new address by the start of the school term to which the application relates, the application will be processed on the basis of the current (original) address.

### Provision of false or misleading information regarding the place of ordinary residence

Every parent/carer who is applying for an admission round place will be expected to record information in the application form and/or supply documentation **with the application form** that evidences the child's place of ordinary residence.

The local authority will check the child's place of ordinary residence against the records held by the child's school (if applicable). In addition, Council Tax records for the parent/s or carer/s will be checked. If the parent/s or carer/s are not registered for Council Tax, documents supplied by the applicant will be checked. If the local authority is not satisfied by any evidence provided by the applicant and there is ongoing doubt about the child's place of ordinary residence, the local authority reserves the right to undertake further checks and/or seek further verification from the applicant. This will be to assist in the prevention and detection of address fraud for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage in the school application system and under Schedule 2, part 1, 2(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

If the local authority concludes that a parent/carer has provided fraudulent or intentionally misleading information relating to the child's place of ordinary residence (this includes the failure to notify the local authority of changes to the place of ordinary residence) in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school placement to which the child would otherwise not be entitled, the local authority will act in accordance with paragraphs 3.40 and 3.41 of the School Admissions Code 2013.

If the local authority withdraws a school place, a new application will be required based on the accurate place of ordinary residence, and a right of appeal will be offered if a place at the preferred school/s is refused.

### 14.5 Siblings

A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister, a step-brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister, or a child living in the same household.

An application will be considered under the sibling criterion if the following conditions are met:

1. the full sibling details are recorded on the application; and
2. the sibling and the child who is the subject of the application **will** be attending **the same school at the same time** and the sibling is of statutory school-age.

This means:

- for Reception year applications, the sibling must be Year 1 to Year 6 in the school year for which the application is being made;
- for Year 3 junior school applications, the sibling must be in Year 4 to Year 6 in the school year for which the application is being made;

- for Year 7 secondary school applications, the sibling must be in Year 8 to Year 11 in the school year for which the application is being made;
- for Full-time Nursery and Part-time Nursery applications, the sibling must be Reception year to Year 6 in the school year for which the application is being made. As there is significant similarity in the timetables for the Reception, Full-time Nursery and Part-time Nursery admissions rounds, a parent/carer may not have been notified of the outcome of a Reception application for a child when completing a Full-time or Part-time Nursery application for another child. The parent/carer will be able to record the details of the child for whom a Reception application has been submitted but the sibling criterion will not be met if the local authority does not subsequently offer a Reception place at the relevant school to the sibling.

### Provision of false or misleading sibling information

The local authority reserves the right to undertake checks on any sibling information provided. This will be to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage in the school application system and under Schedule 2, part 1, 2(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

If the local authority concludes that a parent/carer has provided fraudulent or intentionally misleading information relating to the sibling criterion in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school placement to which the child would otherwise not be entitled, the local authority will act in accordance with paragraphs 3.40 and 3.41 of the School Admissions Code 2013.

If the local authority withdraws a school place, a new application will be required based on the accurate information, and a right of appeal will be offered if a place at the preferred school/s is refused.

### 14.6 Multiple birth children

A multiple birth is defined as the birth of more than one baby from a single pregnancy (for example, the birth of twins, triplets etc).

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other multiple birth child/ren for whom an application was received at the same time and for the same school/s.

### 14.7 Proximity to school

The measurement will be from the child's place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate through which pupils may enter the school grounds.

It will be for the local authority to determine whether any entrance at any school does or does not constitute an openly accessible school gate.

In respect of residences that are within blocks of flats, the distance will be calculated from the front entrance of each flat.

The distances will be calculated to four decimal places.

The local authority uses software to measure all distances within the Bridgend County Borough that takes into account the assessed, available walking routes to the school/s. The local authority will not take into account any other walking routes to a school that a parent/carer may choose to use.

For applications where the child's place of ordinary residence is outside the Bridgend County Borough, the distance will be measured using publicly-available web-based services.

## 15. The offer process for admissions rounds

### 15.1 Offer dates

The School Admissions Code 2013 sets out how admission authorities in Wales must identify the offer date for primary school (reception), junior school (Year 3) and secondary school (Year 7) admissions rounds, reflecting The School Admissions (Common Offer Date) (Wales) Regulations 2013. The relevant offer dates for all admissions rounds for 2024-2025 are detailed in section 13.

### 15.2 Communication of the outcome

Parents/carers who submit an application by the published closing time and date of an admission round, or parents/carers whose late application has been accepted by the local authority for inclusion in the allocation of places for the offer date, will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Parents/carers may not expect that the outcome of their application will be communicated verbally.

If the application is refused, the notification will set out the reasons for the decision and will advise parents/carers on the appeal process. As nursery education is non-statutory, **parents/carers have no right of appeal in respect of unsuccessful nursery class applications.**

### 15.3 Waiting lists

The local authority maintains waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. If a place at the preferred school is not offered, the child will be automatically included in the waiting list for the school unless the parent/carer expressly advises the local authority that this action is not required.

For the **admissions rounds**, children will remain on the waiting list, for any school at which they have been refused a place, until 30 September 2024. Children will automatically be removed from the waiting list/s after this date.



If additional places become available at a school, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria (see sections 13 and 14) and **not** the length of time a child has been on the waiting list.

## 16. In-year admissions / transfers

### 16.1 Circumstances in which an in-year admission/transfer application is required

An in-year admission/transfer application **must** be completed in any of the following circumstances:

1. If a child moves into Bridgend County Borough during the course of an school year and the parents/carers wish the child to attend a school for which the local authority is the admission authority.
2. If the parents/carers wish their child/ren to move to a different school within the Bridgend County Borough during the course of an school year and the parents/carers wish the child to move to a school for which the local authority is the admission authority.
3. If an application for an admission round has not been completed and submitted to the local authority by 31 August 2024 (that is, an application is being submitted on or after the official start date of the 2024-2025 school year).

### 16.2 School transfers

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a place at a different school for reasons other than a change of ordinary residence are advised to carefully consider the information in the Starting School Prospectus 2024-2025 and [information available on the local authority's website](#).

Parents/carers should talk to the headteacher of the pupil's current school about the reasons for a change of school being considered. There is a significant amount of research evidencing that changing schools is disruptive and can have a negative impact on a pupil's attainment. There are many reasons for this. It is particularly important that careful consideration is given to the impacts of moving pupils in Year 10 and Year 11, who would have already begun to study for their chosen GCSE subjects, as those GCSE subjects may not be available at a different school.

### 16.3 'Advance' requests

It is not fair and equitable for the local authority to hold places open for children for undue periods of time. Accordingly, the local authority will only process an 'advance' in-year school admission/transfer application (that is, for a future admission date), where the requested future admission date is **within two calendar months of the date the application is received** by the local authority, **and** the local authority is satisfied as to the reasons for the advance request.

### 16.4 Availability of places

Section 4 provides information regarding school capacities and published admission numbers, which the local authority uses to determine whether places are available.

As the number of pupils on roll in any school can change on a frequent basis, the local authority will not provide information on the availability of places in any year group at any school in advance of an in-year school admission/transfer application being submitted.

### 16.5 Consideration of applications

In-year school admission/transfer applications are considered by the local authority in order of date and time received. However, the local authority reserves the right to process any individual application in a different order where it considers this to be necessary and justified by the specific circumstances.

For in-year admissions/transfers, whether the child lives in or out of the catchment area of the requested school (English-medium schools) or the proximity to the nearest school (Welsh-medium schools), is of no relevance to the local authority's decision on whether a place at the requested school can be offered. (However, it is of relevance to the determination of whether there is eligibility or not for the provision of free home-to-school transport.)

If there is no place available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the local authority child will refuse admission to that school unless the circumstances are such that the local authority considers an exception should be made.

### 16.6 Communication of the outcome

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their in-year school admission/transfer application within 15 school days or 28 calendar days of the date of the application being received, whichever is the sooner.

Parents/carers may not expect that the outcome of their application will be communicated verbally.

If the application is refused, the notification will set out the reasons for the decision and will advise parents/carers on the appeal process. As nursery education is non-statutory, **parents/carers have no right of appeal in respect of unsuccessful nursery class applications.**

### 16.7 Offer of a place at an alternative school

If a place at the preferred school is refused, the local authority will either offer a place at the nearest alternative school that has an available place in the relevant year, or explain why such an offer cannot be made (for example, where the nearest alternative school is the child's current school). The offer of a place at the nearest alternative school will be open for 21 calendar days from the date of the local authority's letter and will automatically expire if not accepted within that period.

If the offer of a place at the nearest alternative school is not accepted, or is expressly refused, the parent/carer must submit a new application if seeking a place at any other preferred school.

### 16.8 Waiting lists

The local authority maintains waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. If a place at the preferred school is not offered, the child will be automatically included in the waiting list for the school unless the parent/carer expressly advises the local authority that this action is not required.

For all in-year admission/transfer applications, children will remain on the waiting list for any school at which they have been refused for a period of three months from the date of the refusal letter, or until 31 August 2024, whichever is the sooner. Children will automatically be removed from the waiting list/s after this period or date.

Submission of a new in-year admission/transfer application for the same school does not renew a child's place on a waiting list. If a new in-year admission/transfer application is submitted and is refused, the child will be recorded as a new entry to the waiting list from the date of the refusal letter.

Registration of an admission appeal does not extend a child's time on the waiting list, irrespective of the date for the admission appeal hearing.

If additional places become available at a school, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria (see sections 13 and 14) and **not** the length of time a child has been on the waiting list. A place cannot be allocated to a child who is not on the waiting list.

## 17. Admission appeals

### 17.1 General

School admission appeals are conducted in accordance with Welsh Government's School Admission Appeals Code 2013.

Any person who is considering an appeal is strongly recommended to read this School Admissions Policy 2024-2025, the School Admissions Code 2013 and the School Admission Appeals Code 2013 in full.

In the vast majority of cases, children are offered places in line with the expressed preference for a specific school. If, however, a child is unable to gain admission to the preferred school, parents/carers or Post-16 learners may choose to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

Parents/carers/ or Post-16 learners may accept a place offered at an alternative school while pursuing a place at the preferred school. The independent appeal panel will

consider the grounds put forward by appellant/s and determine whether the merits of the case outweigh the case presented by the local authority.

As nursery education is non-statutory, parents/carers have **no right of appeal** in respect of decisions on nursery class admissions.

### 17.2 Registering an appeal

#### Persons who may register an appeal

In respect of appeal registrations for children of statutory school-age, the appeal must be registered by the parent/carer, as defined in section 13.

The local authority will only accept an appeal registration from a person who is not a parent/carer if it is accompanied by an appropriate written authorisation from a parent/carer.

The person registering the appeal will be required to make a declaration of the relationship to the child and provide such information as the local authority requires, including documentation, evidencing that relationship, at the time the appeal registration is submitted. The person registering the appeal will not be required to submit such if it has already been submitted in support of the admission application.

Appeals in respect of Post-16 admissions/transfers can be registered by either a parent/carer or the learner.

#### Timescale for registering an appeal

In the case of appeals relating to the refusal of places in an admissions round, the appeal **must** be registered with the local authority by the closing date as detailed in section 13.

In the case of appeals relating to the refusal of a place following submission of an in-year admission/transfer application, the appeal **must** be registered with the local authority within 21 calendar days of the date of the written notification of the refusal.

#### How to register an appeal

An appeal must be registered in writing.

The notification letter from the local authority regarding the outcome of an admission application will provide information on the appeal registration process.

### 17.3 Arrangements for the appeal hearing

The local authority will refer the appeal to an independent appeal panel. The clerk to the panel will arrange a time and place for the hearing.

Appellants will have the opportunity of attending the panel hearing and making their representations (oral and/or written).

Appellants are advised that:

1. They may elect not to attend the appeal meeting and, instead, allow the appeal to be considered on a written statement.
2. The appeal will be decided on the information available if parents/carers have indicated an intention to attend the appeal but do not do so, and fail to provide a reasonable explanation.
3. If appellants cannot attend on the scheduled date and it is not reasonably practicable to offer an adjourned hearing, the appeal will be decided on the information available.
4. Appellants will be given at least 14 calendar days written notice of the meeting of the appeal panel, unless they agree to a shorter period. The appellant should confirm this in writing to the clerk to the panel.

Appellants may be accompanied at a panel hearing by a friend or adviser or an interpreter. In accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code 2013, members of the Council, Members of the Senedd, local politicians and local authority officers are not permitted to attend. Appellants are requested to inform the clerk to the independent appeal panel of any representation at least seven days before the hearing.

### 17.4 Repeat appeals

Parents/carers and Post-16 learners do not have a right to a second appeal in respect of the same school and the same school year except where:

- there were faults in the first appeal process and there is a significant possibility that the outcome might have been affected by the faults (this may be on the recommendation of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales); or
- a fresh application is accepted because there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent/carer or child and that application has also been refused. Common examples of where a fresh application is considered are where a family has moved address or there are new medical reasons pertaining to the choice of school.

Parents/carers and Post-16 learners who appeal unsuccessfully may re-apply for a place at the same school in respect of a later school year (but subject to the timescales set out in section 13). Parents/carers and Post-16 learners will have a right to appeal if that application is refused.

Any information provided by an appellant associated with a school admission appeal registration will be held electronically and used by local authority for the purpose of the admission request.

## 18. The Bridgend Admission Forum

The local authority is under a statutory duty to establish an admission forum.

The Bridgend Admission Forum is constituted in accordance with Annex D of the statutory School Admissions Code 2013.

The role of the forum is to help ensure that the school admissions system in Bridgend is fair, straightforward and easy for parents/carers to understand. The forum is responsible for monitoring the local authority's compliance with the statutory School Admissions Code 2013 and may advise the local authority on ways in which admission arrangements could be improved.

The terms of reference, meeting minutes and annual reports of the [Bridgend Admission Forum](#) are published on the local authority's website.

## 19. Additional information

In addition to the sources of information already detailed, the local authority's Starting School Prospectus for 2024-2025 provides additional information on matters associated with school admissions and starting school.

## 20. Queries

Queries in relation to this policy and the admissions or appeal registration processes may be directed to Pupil Services as follows:

E-mail: [pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk)

Tel No: 01656 642622

Address: Bridgend County Borough Council  
Education and Family Support Directorate  
Pupil Services  
Civic Offices  
Angel Street  
Bridgend  
CF31 4WB

[This policy](#) is published on the Bridgend County Borough Council website.

## Appendix A - Admission numbers

Admission numbers for those schools for which the local authority is the admission authority.

The admission number for each school does not apply in respect of nursery classes.

Admission numbers remain under review and may be subject to change prior to the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

School	Admission Number
<b>English-medium primary schools</b>	
Abercerdin Primary School	30
Afon y Felin Primary School	19
Betws Primary School	30
Blaengarw Primary School	24
Brackla Primary School	45
Bryncethin Primary School	35
Brynmenyn Primary School	60
Bryntirion Infants School	40
Caerau Primary School	60
Cefn Cribwr Primary School	20
Cefn Glas Infants School	66
Coety Primary School	60
Corneli Primary School	46
Coychurch (Llangrallo) Primary School	19
Croesty Primary School	30
Cwmfelin Primary School	30
Ffaldau Primary School	30
Garth Primary School	30
Litchard Primary School	60
Llangewydd Junior School	90
Llangynwyd Primary School	14
Maes yr Haul Primary School	75
Mynydd Cynffig Primary School	60
Nantyffyllon Primary School	40
Nantymoel Primary School	30
Newton Primary School	34
Nottage Primary School	60

## Appendix A

Ogmore Vale Primary School	53
Oldcastle Primary School	60
Pencoed Primary School	72
Penybont Primary School	45
Pîl Primary School	30
Plasnewydd Primary School	45
Porthcawl Primary School	28
Tondu Primary School	42
Trelales Primary School	30
Tremains Primary School	65
Tynyrheol Primary School	10
West Park Primary School	55
<b>English-medium voluntary controlled schools</b>	
Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School	30
<b>Welsh-medium primary schools</b>	
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr	54
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	30
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cynwyd Sant	45
Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	33
<b>English-medium secondary schools</b>	
Brynteg School	333
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	210
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	276
Cynffig Comprehensive School	180
Maesteg School	228
Pencoed Comprehensive School	214
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	246
<b>Welsh-medium secondary schools</b>	
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	165



## Proposed School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 - Welsh Language Impact Assessment

<b>Stage 1 – Information Gathering</b>	
<b>NOTE:</b> As you complete this tool you will be asked for <b>evidence to support your views</b> . Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources.	
<b>Proposal Name:</b>	School Admissions Policy 2024-2025
<b>Department</b>	Education and Family Support
<b>Service Director</b>	Mr Lindsay Harvey – Corporate Director
<b>Officer Completing the WLIA</b>	Dawn Davies, Principal Officer – Business Strategy and Performance
<b>Email</b>	Dawn.Davies@bridgend.gov.uk
<b>Phone</b>	01656 642694
<b>Brief Description</b>	The proposed school admission arrangements for the 2024-2025 school year for those schools in Bridgend for which the local authority is the admission authority (that is, all community schools maintained by the local authority with the exception of the voluntary-aided schools).
<b>Date</b>	18/01/2023
<b>Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)</b>	Learners and their families/carers. Schools. The wider community.

<p><b>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</b></p>	<p>The admission of learners to those schools, for which the local authority is the admission authority, in accordance with all relevant legislation and in a manner that is fair and timely.</p> <p>The local authority is the admission authority for all Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend.</p>
<p><b>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</b></p>	<p>All learners for whom education is sought at a school for which the local authority is the admission authority. Therefore, this includes all learners for whom education through the medium of Welsh is preferred.</p> <p>Schools for which the local authority is the admission authority.</p> <p>The wider community.</p>
<p><b>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</b></p>	<p>The ONS recently published the data for the national Census 2021 (Census date 21 March 2021). The 10-year Census provides the most complete information about the Welsh language skills of the population.</p>

	<p>The Census data identifies the following:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1133 268 2045 571"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3" data-bbox="1133 268 2045 308">Welsh Language Skills of the population (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="1133 308 1534 379"></th> <th data-bbox="1534 308 1809 379">Bridgend County Borough</th> <th data-bbox="1809 308 2045 379">Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1133 379 1534 419">Can speak Welsh</td> <td data-bbox="1534 379 1809 419">9%</td> <td data-bbox="1809 379 2045 419">17.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1133 419 1534 496">Can understand spoken Welsh</td> <td data-bbox="1534 419 1809 496">12.4%</td> <td data-bbox="1809 419 2045 496">21.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1133 496 1534 536">Can read Welsh</td> <td data-bbox="1534 496 1809 536">10%</td> <td data-bbox="1809 496 2045 536">16.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1133 536 1534 571">Can write Welsh</td> <td data-bbox="1534 536 1809 571">7.8%</td> <td data-bbox="1809 536 2045 571">14.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="1133 612 2045 756">With regards to combinations of Welsh language skills (for example, can speak Welsh but cannot read or write Welsh), 15.2% of the population of Bridgend identified as having some combination of skills, compared to 24.4% for the whole of Wales.</p> <p data-bbox="1133 798 2045 903">The data shows that there is a gap in the Welsh language skills of the population of Bridgend when compared to the whole of Wales.</p>	Welsh Language Skills of the population (%)				Bridgend County Borough	Wales	Can speak Welsh	9%	17.3%	Can understand spoken Welsh	12.4%	21.3%	Can read Welsh	10%	16.8%	Can write Welsh	7.8%	14.8%
Welsh Language Skills of the population (%)																			
	Bridgend County Borough	Wales																	
Can speak Welsh	9%	17.3%																	
Can understand spoken Welsh	12.4%	21.3%																	
Can read Welsh	10%	16.8%																	
Can write Welsh	7.8%	14.8%																	
<p><b>Other relevant data or research</b></p>	<p>None.</p>																		

**Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals. Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

**Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</b></p> <p>eg staff, residents and visitors The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Neutral	Every year, the proposed policy is published in Welsh. For the required consultation process there is opportunity for any responses to the consultation to be received and considered in Welsh. There is no change to this process for the proposed policy for 2024-2025.	<p>Proposed policy document and communications with consultees.</p> <p>Feedback received on the proposed policy for 2020-2021 was received in Welsh.</p>	None.

<b>Stage 2 – Impact Assessment</b>				
<b>Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?</b>				
	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</b></p> <p>eg Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / BCBC Five Year Welsh</p>	Negative	<p>School admissions in Wales are governed by specific legislation and a statutory code, which aim to ensure that admissions to school are fair and timely. As is the case every year, the proposed policy for 2024-2025 covers the arrangements for admission of learners to those schools in Bridgend, for which the local authority is the admission authority - this includes all Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend. The arrangements described in the proposed policy accord with the legislative requirements. The arrangements support and</p>	<p>Annual capacity calculations for Caerau Primary School.</p> <p>Pupil projections for Caerau Primary school up to 2029, completed in 2021, predict an ongoing demand for places at Caerau Primary School, which will be unmet if the PAN is not increased.</p> <p>The operational practice of working to a PAN for Caerau Primary School of 60 was first introduced in 2018-2019. In respect of the subsequent Reception admission rounds - for September 2019, 8.9% of the applications made in respect of children living</p>	None.

		<p>enable parents/carers to express their school preferences, whether those be for English-medium or Welsh - medium schools.</p> <p>Published admission numbers (PAN) for each school form an intrinsic and important part of school admission arrangements. If the PAN for any particular year group increases, this means that there is the opportunity to increase the number of pupils into that year group and school. For this admission year (2024-2025) the local authority is proposing to formally increase the PAN from 45 to 60 for Caerau Primary School, an English-medium school. The proposed increase formalises the operational practice of the local authority to admit up to 60 pupils per statutory age</p>	<p>in the catchment area of Caerau Primary School, were for places at Ysgol Cynwyd Sant and by September 2022, this had increased to 17.1%. Although this evidences that working to an increased admission number for Caerau Primary School has not had a negative impact on admission requests for Ysgol Cynwyd Sant, there is still potential for parents/carers considering a Welsh-medium education to not apply for a place due to the greater availability of English-medium places at Caerau Primary School.</p>	
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		<p>year group that was first introduced in the 2018-2019 school year. This was due to the increased demand for places at the school and a recommendation from an admission appeal panel that the local authority should review its admission number for the school based on the accommodation available at the school and the level of demand for places. Pupil projections evidence a level of demand for places at Caerau Primary School such that formalisation of the admission number at 60 is appropriate to meet demand for English-medium places.</p> <p>However, in increasing the availability of English-medium places in the catchment area without a corresponding increase in the number of Welsh-medium places available</p>		
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		<p>to parents within a reasonable distance, it is not unreasonable to assume that parents considering a Welsh-medium education for their child at one of the local authority's Welsh-language primary schools (the nearest being Ysgol Cynwyd Sant), may see the creation of additional places at Caerau Primary School as an opportunity to consider educating their child closer to home in an English-medium school. Therefore, despite this not being the intention, there is a risk that the proposal may result in parents/carers not considering a Welsh-medium education for their children and choosing an English-medium education instead.</p>		
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<p><b>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</b></p> <p>eg status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time.</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Statements above are applicable.</p>	<p>Statements above are applicable.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>Compliance with the Council's <a href="#">Statutory Welsh Language Standards</a></b></p> <p>eg increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh. Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The School Admissions Policy is made available in Welsh every year, both at the consultation stage and the determination stage. There is, and will be, no difference for the proposed policy for 2024-2025. School admission application forms are made available in Welsh every year, and this will be no different for 2024-2025.</p>	<p>Policy documents. Admission application forms. The local authority's website and 'My Account' where parents/carers can apply for a school place online, are bilingual.</p>	<p>None.</p>

<p><b>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</b></p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>As in every year, the arrangements set out in the proposed policy for 2024-2025 continue to reflect and support the fundamental right of parents/carers to express their preferences for schools, in accordance with admissions legislation in Wales.</p> <p>The proposed policy for 2024-2025 continues to set out the actions that the local authority will take if places at any school are oversubscribed. There are no changes to the dedicated oversubscription criteria applicable to Welsh-medium schools. These criteria are no less favourable than those for oversubscribed English-medium schools. The policy reflects that there are no catchment areas for Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend. However, this does not</p>	<p>For the Reception admission rounds, the percentage of the total applications received for which the expressed first preference school was a Welsh-medium school increased each from September 2019 as follows:</p> <p>September 2019 – 9.0%  September 2020 – 9.1%  September 2021 – 9.2%  September 2022 – 9.3%</p>	<p>The local authority is currently working with the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) and through the work of developing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), to identify the benefits in the development of Welsh-medium school catchment areas.</p>
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		present a disadvantage for any parent/carer applying for a Welsh-medium school, as proximity to the school is used as the alternative oversubscription criteria.		
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**Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal**

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

<b>What are you going to do?</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
The local authority will continue to promote Welsh-medium education via the WEF and through the delivery of the approved WESP	Timescales agreed in the WESP.	The local authority and partners.
Continue to offer discretionary free home-to-school transport for pupils residing over the statutory distance of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two miles for primary school pupils</li> <li>• three miles for secondary school pupils and</li> <li>• over 1.5 miles for nursery pupils</li> </ul> to their nearest Welsh-medium school, even if that school is not geographically the nearest school to their home.	Ongoing.	The local authority.

<p>Progress a strong School Modernisation Programme with a significant increase in the number and availability of Welsh-medium nursery and primary school places across Bridgend.</p>	<p>In line with the delivery of the Band B 21<sup>st</sup> century Schools Modernisation Programme outlined in the approved WESP.</p>	
<p><b>If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.</b></p>		
<p><b>What was identified?</b></p>	<p><b>Why is it not possible?</b></p>	
<p>A corresponding increase in the PAN at the nearest Welsh-medium school to Caerau (that is, Ysgol Cynwyd Sant.)</p>	<p>There is no accommodation that could be brought into beneficial use as teaching space to allow an increase in the PAN at this time.</p>	

**Stage 4 – Review**

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – [WLS@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:WLS@bridgend.gov.uk) and the Consultation and Engagement team – [consultation@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@bridgend.gov.uk) in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built-in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback

Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing
<p>How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?</p> <p>Ongoing data analysis and reporting in respect of school admissions. An annual report is required by legislation and all admission policies are sent to Welsh Government by 15 April in the determination year.</p>

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal
<p>Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts.</p> <p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language – neutral impact.            Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers – negative impact.            Opportunities to promote the Welsh language – negative impact.            The Council's compliance with the statutory Welsh Language Standards – neutral impact.            Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language – neutral impact.</p> <p>No additional actions have been taken to better contribute to more positive impacts since the consultation on the proposed arrangements (which was undertaken in accordance with the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the statutory School Admissions Code 2013).</p>

Stage 7 – Sign off			
Name of Officer completing WLIA	Dawn Davies	Service Director name:	Lindsay Harvey
Position	Principal Officer, Business Strategy and Performance	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	<b>Is implemented with no amendments</b>
			<del>Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined</del>
			<del>Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language</del>
Signature	Dawn Davies	Service Director Signature	Lindsay Harvey
Date	18/01/2023	Date	18/01/2023

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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