Public Document Pack

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

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich dewis iaith.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please let us know if your language choice is Welsh.

Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Wednesday, 15 October 2025

Dear Councillor,

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 21 October 2025** 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 5 - 16

To receive for approval the Minutes of 23/09/2025

4 Corporate Safeguarding Policy Review 17 - 46

5 Scrutiny Recommendation from Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee 47 - 50

By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £9.72 in printing costs

6 Panel Performance Assessment

51 - 94

7 Self Assessment 2024/25

95 - 172

8 Bridgend Town Centre Access

173 - 382

9 Reinstatement of Bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig pool

383 - 400

10 Budget Monitoring 2025-26 - Quarter 2 Revenue Forecast

401 - 438

11 Empty Homes Strategy 2025-2030

439 - 478

12 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.

13 Exclusion of the Public

The following items are not for publication as they contain exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended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 these items in private, the public will be excluded from the meeting during such consideration.

14 School Modernisation Programme - Welsh-Medium Secondary Provision

479 - 486

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 would like to view this meeting live, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yours faithfully
K Watson
Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:
E L P Caparros
P Davies
M J Evans
N Farr

J Gebbie
M Jones
JC Spanswick
HM Williams

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB / REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor JC Spanswick – Chairperson

N Farr	J Gebbie	HM Williams	E L P Caparros
P Davies	M Jones		

Officers:

Jake Morgan	Chief Executive
Nimi Chandrasena	Democratic Services Officer - Support
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Jonathan Parsons	Group Manager Development
Adam Provoost	Senior Development Planning Officer

517. Apologies for Absence

Decision Made	Cllr Melanie Evans
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

518. Declarations of Interest

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

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

519. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 22/07/2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

520. Bridgend Town Centre Access

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Communities presented a report which provided Cabinet with an update on the Bridgend Town Centre Access project and sought approval to introduce an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) comprising of measures as set out in 1.1 of the report. The following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • How will success be measured • What would cause the ETRO to be revoked or adjusted? • If there's an increase in cyclist/pedestrian interactions, would bikes be banned? • Why was the town center pedestrianized in 2004? • What would officers look for in safety risk assessments for cycling in pedestrian areas? • Will the trial hinder access for emergency vehicles or impact special events? All questions were answered by Officers. The Corporate Director Communities added that any changes to the ETRO would be in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member

	RESOLVED: That Cabinet: 1. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities to:- (i) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the extension of loading and unloading hours to 11:00 and recommence it after 16:00, with additional flexibility allowed for emergency situations and events; (ii) pursue an 18-month ETRO to permit cycling within the pedestrianised area, subject to the satisfactory completion of the safety risk assessments; (iii) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the conversion of under-utilised taxi bays on Derwen Road to Blue-badge parking bays. 2. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities to establish monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) and to modify, suspend or revoke the Order if required, during the experimental period. With the amendment to add "in consultation with the appropriate cabinet member." 3. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing & Change and Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Electoral, to submit and accept external funding, award and enter into contracts, agreements and other legal documentation on behalf of the Council which is necessary to deliver the measures. 4. Noted that a further report will be presented to Cabinet proposing a permanent position in respect of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO); 5. Noted that a further report will be presented to Cabinet on Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan projects.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

521. Draft Outdoor Recreation Facilities Supplementary Planning Guidance

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Communities presented a report which sought approval to submit the final SPG to Council for adoption. She outlined the key changes made to the SPG following a 6 week public consultation as set out in section 3 of the report.

	The following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • How will the quality of facilities and equipment be ensured? • the low allocation for allotments (4.6 m² per house) and its impact on food sustainability and future generations • Does the guidance give the council powers to compel developers to hand over play areas to the authority for adoption? The Leader expressed his disagreement with private management companies maintaining open spaces on estates, as it adds extra cost to residents already paying council tax. However, he acknowledged that the Council was limited legally in what it could do. The Cabinet Member Finance highlighted an error in Table 2 of the report and suggested an amendment which stated to 'start contributions for allotments and local areas for play (LAP) for developments of 11 to 50 dwellings.' All Cabinet Members were in agreement with this amendment. RESOLVED: That Cabinet: 1. Noted the contents of this report and the consultation responses received on the draft Outdoor Recreation Facilities SPG, together with resultant amendments attached as Appendix 2. 2. Approved presenting the final form Outdoor Recreation Facilities SPG (Appendix 1) to Council to seek its adoption. 3. Amended Table 2 of the report, to start contributions for allotments and local areas for play (LAP) for developments of 11 to 50 dwellings.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

522. Draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Communities presented a report which sought Cabinet approval to consult publicly on the draft 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' (HMO) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document (Appendix 1). She highlighted the guidance that the SPG provides which were set out in section 3.2 of the report. The following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • Does the authority offer support for residents complaining about antisocial behavior from HMOs, or should this go to the police? • How are HMOs policed after planning consent, especially concerning changes to internal structure? Also, queried why residential care homes are mentioned under HMOs • Will the consultation address the lack of regulation on smaller HMOs (3-5 people) regarding fire doors, sprinklers, etc.? Are these rules retrospective? What is the rationale for the 50-meter rule? The questions were answered by Officers. RESOLVED: That Cabinet: 1. Approved the draft HMO SPG (Appendix 1) as the basis for a public consultation period of 6 weeks; 2. Authorised the Corporate Director - Communities and Group Manager - Planning and Development Services to make minor presentational changes, typographical or factual corrections as necessary prior to public consultation; and 3. Authorised the Corporate Director - Communities and Group Manager - Planning and Development Services to undertake the public consultation for a period of 6 weeks and to report the results of the public consultation back to Cabinet for approval and then to send the report to Council and seek adoption of the final HMO SPG.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

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

523. Treasury Management Quarter 1 Report 2025-26

Decision Made	The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report which updated the Cabinet on the treasury management activities for the quarter ending 30 June 2025. She summarised the treasury management activities is shown in the Treasury Management Quarterly report to 30 June 2025 at Appendix A and advised that no long term borrowing had been taken out in the first quarter of 2025-26. The following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • How will rising inflation (above CPI, for local authorities) affect the council's financial position going forward? • How will rising inflation (above CPI, for local authorities) affect the council's financial position going forward? • How is long-term borrowing affected by the liability benchmarking guide? • How does the council's debt compare with other Welsh authorities? • Why is ethical investment not explicitly mentioned in the treasury management strategy? All questions were answered by the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change RESOLVED: That Cabinet: 1. Noted the treasury management activities for the quarter ending 30 June 2025. 2. Noted the Treasury Management Indicators for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025 against those approved in the Treasury Management Strategy 2025-26.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

524. Anti-Money Laundering Policy

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

Decision Made	The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report on the Anti-Money Laundering Policy (Appendix A) to Cabinet for approval. She advised that the current review makes a number of minor amendments and updates for the UK's exit from the European Union, to require enhanced due diligence for organisations outside of the UK. The report was also approved by the Governance and Audit Committee on 19th June 2025 with no amendments. The Following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • Sought confirmation that the policy review is in line with financial regulations and Brexit's impact. • How many money laundering referrals have been made over the years in Bridgend? All questions were answered by the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change. RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the updated Anti-Money Laundering Policy at Appendix A.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

525. Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2024/25

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report which sought Cabinet approval for the 2024/25 Annual Report on Social Services Representations and Complaints. She provided an overview of the figures as set out in the table at 3.2 of the report and noted a decline in overall number of the complaints received the last year. She further provided a breakdown of the types of complaints and how they were resolved. The following question was asked by a Cabinet Member: • What were the support mechanisms for vulnerable people?

	The question was answered by the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing. RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the Annual Report on Social Services Representations and Complaints for 2024/25.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

526. Delegated Authority Policy

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report which sought approval for the proposed Social Services and Wellbeing Delegated Authority Policy. She explained that the proposed policy at Appendix 1 replaced all previous versions of a Delegated Authority policy used previously by Bridgend County Borough Council's Children and Family Services. The policy set out the areas in which Delegated Authority may apply for children and young people, and the different levels and reasons for those. The following question was asked by Cabinet Member: • Does this Delegated Authority Policy also apply to private foster care providers and could BCBC enforce it An answer was provided by the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing. RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the implementation of the Delegated Authority policy into the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate (Appendix 1).
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

527. Outcomes Of Estyn Inspections Of Schools In Bridgend During Spring Term 2025

Decision Made	The Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People presented a report which informed Cabinet of the outcomes of the ESTYN core inspection visits during spring term 2025 to the following schools and pupil referral unit (PRU). He advised that during the spring term 2025, ESTYN visited three primary schools, two secondary schools and one PRU in Bridgend, who received a core inspection using the new approach. The full text of these reports is available on the ESTYN website. The following questions were asked by Cabinet Members: • frequency of school inspections in Bridgend compared to the rest of Wales and the stated six-year cycle. • communication methods with parents regarding both positive and negative inspection reports. • support available to staff and governors during the stressful inspection process. All questions were answered by the Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People. RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the content of this report.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

528. Cabinet, Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committees Forward Work Programmes

Decision Made	The Chief Officer Legal & Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which sought Cabinet approval for items to be included on the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period 1 September 2025 to 28 February 2026 and for Cabinet to note the Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Forward Work Programmes for the same period.

	The following points were raised by Cabinet Members: • A recent peer assessment which indicated a need for amendments to the schedule to cover different required areas. • The fact that the "Bridgend Town Centre Master Plan" had been deferred and would be presented later in the year, requiring adjustments to the program Due to the points raised, it was therefore proposed to amend the recommendations from approve to note, to allow further changes as and when they arise. RESOLVED: That Cabinet amended the recommendation from Approve to Note, and therefor 1. Noted the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period 1 September 2025 to 28 February 2026 at Appendix 1; 2. Noted the Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Forward Work Programmes for the same period, as shown at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of the report, respectively.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

529. Information Report for Noting

Decision Made	The Chief Officer Legal & Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which advised Cabinet on reports published since the last meeting of Cabinet. RESOLVED: That Cabinet acknowledged the publication of the report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the report.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

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

530. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

531. Exclusion of the Public

Decision Made	RESOLVED: The following items were not for publication as it contained exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 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. Following the application of the public interest test the committee resolved pursuant to the Act to consider these items in private, with the public being excluded from the meeting during such consideration.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

532. Approval of Exempt Minutes

Decision Made	RESOLVED: That the exempt minutes of the 22/07/2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	23 September 2025

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this link

The meeting finished at 4:55pm

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

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW**
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	**CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING** **CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING**
Responsible Officer:	**ALIAH AWAN-WILLIAMS** **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.**
Executive Summary:	**This report presents a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Cabinet approval. The updated policy includes enhanced information relating to training requirements and procurement following an internal audit review of corporate safeguarding arrangements in Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC). The policy sets out how the Council corporately meets the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in safeguarding children and adults at risk. The previous policy was approved in November 2023.** **This policy seeks to ensure that the Council has effective Council-wide arrangements in place for safeguarding. It provides a framework for every directorate and service area within and across the Council. It sets out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and protecting children and adults. It lays out the methods by which the Council will be assured that it is fulfilling its duties and that effective practices are in place to support individuals to live their life free from harm, abuse, and neglect, in a wide range of settings.**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy at **Appendix 1**.

2. Background

2.1 It is a requirement of the Council to have a Corporate Safeguarding Policy which sets out how it will fulfil its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children and adults at risk in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

2.2 The policy provides a framework for safeguarding children and adults at risk and that all policies and practices within the Council should operate consistently within this corporate policy. The intention of the policy is to support a safe workforce, quality service delivery, promote good practice and ensure services are delivered in a way that children, young people and adults at risk are safe from harm and are allowed to fulfil their potential and live the lives they want to live.

2.3 The policy is intended to be enabling; to ensure that all parts of the Council understand how to put effective safeguarding practices in place. This is a policy for a positive, preventative and proactive approach to safeguarding, as well as ensuring that people are protected when serious concerns arise. To be effective, the policy must be owned and implemented across the whole Council and promoted with partners and in wider communities.

2.4 The policy is intended as an enabler of a positive culture, of proactively identifying, mitigating, managing, and minimising risks to safety and wellbeing, whilst ensuring decisive and timely action to address serious concerns.

3. Current situation/ proposal

3.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy was last revised in June 2021 and updated in November 2023 to align with the implementation of Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

3.2 An internal audit of Corporate Safeguarding identified that there was a need for development of the information contained within the policy regarding training. Staff must complete safeguarding training that is relevant to their role as a part of their induction, and then complete refresher training every three years or sooner if required. In the original policy, there was no specified timeline for staff to complete refresher training. This has now been included.

3.3 A regional internal audit was also undertaken regarding safeguarding in Council contracts which included an action to create and implement a Safeguarding Protocol for Contractors who are engaged by the Council.

3.4 The protocol provides guidance to Contractors so that they understand their role in supporting the Council to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse, neglect or harm. The protocol should be used in conjunction with contractors' own safeguarding policies and procedures along with relevant codes of conduct for the organisation or their professional/regulatory bodies.

3.5 These strengthened areas of the policy reflect areas highlighted in the Internal Audit Report Corporate safeguarding 2024/25 management action plan and Regional Internal Audit Service - Safeguarding in Contracts 2023/2024 - Recommendation Implementation.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 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:-

Involvement	Representatives from varying levels of the Social Services and Wellbeing directorate, along with colleagues from Corporate Safeguarding group, have been engaged in the revision of this policy.
Long term	There will be a positive long-term impact of this policy due to meeting regulatory requirements as well as providing a safe and effective framework for corporate safeguarding.
Prevention	Prevention of risk and harm is at the heart of effective safeguarding practice. Ensuring that safeguarding is understood by the whole Council workforce should prevent the occurrence of serious harm through a well-trained, competent workforce who understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
Integration	This policy will be implemented and used across the Council and promoted to key partners.
Collaboration	Effective safeguarding requires multi-agency working. This requirement is reflected in this policy.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no sustainability or climate change implications arising directly from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 The Council's existing Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and strengthened to ensure it is robust and provides clear standards for all directorates and services.

7.2 The reviewed Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been strengthened through inclusion of additional requirements with regards to risk assessments, self-evaluation and quality assurance.

7.3 The implementation of this revised policy will further enable the Council to robustly fulfil its corporate safeguarding responsibilities.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications from implementing this reviewed policy.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy at **Appendix 1** to this report.

Background documents

None

Appendix 1

Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
www.bridgend.gov.uk

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

Keeping People Safe



October 2025

Updates, Revisions and Amendments		
Version	**Details of Change**	**Date**
1	**Policy Review**	**May 2021**
2	**Policy Review**	**November 2023**
3	**Policy update**	**October 2025**

Table of Contents

Section	Details	Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Legal and Regulatory Framework	3
3	Scope	4
4	Policy Statement	4
5	Objectives	5
6	Governance Arrangements	6
7	Recognising and raising concerns about an adult or child where abuse or neglect is suspected.	10
8	Domestic Abuse and Employment	11
9	Information sharing and confidentiality	12
10	Quality assurance	12
11	Safe workforce	14
12	Safeguarding children in education	17
13	Safe services	18
14	Communication and Media	18
15	Review	18
	Appendices	20
A	Responsibilities of the Bridgend Corporate Safeguarding Group	20
B	Bridgend County Borough Council – Contractor Safeguarding Protocol	21

1. Introduction

"Safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers" (Wales Safeguarding Procedures).

Safeguarding children and adults at risk is everyone's responsibility whether they work for, with, or on behalf of the Bridgend County Borough Council (the Council). The Council is committed to ensuring that people living in the county borough are safe and protected and that its statutory duties to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively discharged.

The Council's workforce shares a responsibility, both collectively and individually, to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from harm. Council employees, Councillors, volunteers, contractors, and partners who encounter children or adults at risk in the course of their duties are expected to understand their responsibility and where necessary take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of people so everyone can live their life free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The following set of legislation and policies have been considered in developing the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy. This list is not exhaustive, and the Council will ensure that it complies with all statutory requirements placed on it through national and regional legislation and guidance.

- Social Services and Well- being (Wales) Act 2014
- Wales Safeguarding procedures.
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives 2024 – 2028
- Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Sexual Violence Protocol
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018



The Corporate Safeguarding Policy incorporates responsibilities set out in applicable legislation, policy and guidance pertaining to safeguarding.

3. Scope

This policy is in respect of the Council's responsibility towards children and adults at risk. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 states that:

An **adult at risk** is an adult (aged 18 or over) who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support (whether, or not, the authority is meeting any of those needs); and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

A **child at risk** is a child (aged under 18) who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect, or other kinds of harm; and has needs for care and support (whether, or not, the local authority is meeting any of those needs).

For the purposes of this policy 'workforce' is defined as those engaged by the Council, permanent and temporary employees (including school-based staff), students, volunteers, workers employed by employment agencies, contractors, and consultants**.** This policy covers the whole Council workforce and applies to Councillors, foster carers, and connected person carers. Whilst all have varied levels of contact with children and adults at risk everybody should be aware of potential indicators of neglect and abuse and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.

This policy makes explicit the expectation that all settings require their own safeguarding policies and procedures which are in keeping with this Council policy and other local, regional, and national procedures and guidance. This includes all school governing bodies. The Council has a duty to ensure that other organisations commissioned to provide services on their behalf have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults and children.

Whilst the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate lead the Council's safeguarding services, working with partners to respond to concerns regarding people who may be at risk of harm, all directorates and the whole Council workforce has a responsibility to understand their specific roles and personal accountability for safeguarding the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.

4. Policy Statement

The Council is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity through all our services and dedicated to treating all citizens, employees, and visitors with respect, while providing services which respond to people's individual needs.

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives 2024 – 2028 ensures that equality and fairness remain firmly at the heart of how the council plans, provides and delivers important services to the people of Bridgend County Borough.

One of our equality objectives is to ensure that people within our communities have

access to services that support them to live without fear of violence or abuse, and to be treated with respect.

The Council is committed to embedding the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into all its service delivery and activities making sure that when we make decisions we take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

The Council's Corporate Plan for 2023-28 sets out the Council's priorities and how we will work alongside local people and partners to provide services over the five year period. Called 'Delivering Together,' the plan is designed to be easier for people to engage with. Each year, we develop a one-year plan to deliver the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The 2025/26 Corporate Plan Delivery Plan was agreed at Cabinet on 8 April 2025.

5. Objectives

This policy provides a framework for safeguarding that all policies and practices within the Council consistently adhere to. The intention of this policy is to support quality service delivery, promote good practice and ensure services are delivered in a way that children, young people, and adults at risk are safe from harm, are allowed to fulfil their potential and live the lives they want to live.

This policy is intended to be enabling; to ensure that all parts of the Council understand how to implement effective safeguards . This is a policy for a positive, preventative, and proactive approach to safeguarding. The policy must be owned and implemented across the Council and promoted with partners and in wider communities. The policy is intended as an enabler of a positive culture of proactively identifying, mitigating, managing, and minimising risks to safety and wellbeing, whilst ensuing decisive and timely action to address serious concerns.

There is an expectation that all the Council's workforce, commissioned services, Councillors, and partners share an objective to help keep children, young people, and adults at risk safe by contributing to:

- Creating and maintaining a safe environment
- Identifying where there are concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with other agencies.
- Preventing unsuitable people from working with children, young people, and adults at risk
- Ensuring the whole workforce understands safeguarding and their accountabilities and responsibilities.
- Promoting safe practice and challenging poor and unsafe practice.

The policy requires effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children, young people, and adults at risk.

6. Governance Arrangements

The Council has clear lines of accountability in relation to its work in safeguarding children and adults at risk. This following describes the governance arrangements, accountabilities, and responsibilities:

(a) The **Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board** has the statutory responsibility to provide the strategic leadership in the region in relation to the safeguarding of citizens and the promotion of their well-being. The Board's purpose is to lead, co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding practice. All statutory safeguarding partners are members of, and accountable to, the Regional Safeguarding Board. The Regional Safeguarding Board commissions Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSRs) and oversees the implementation of action plans arising from reviews. The Council is accountable to the Regional Safeguarding Board as a statutory partner and as such must contribute fully to Board's sub-groups, the work streams of the Board and ensure good alignment with the Council's work programs.

(b) The Council's **Corporate Safeguarding Board**

The responsibility for setting safeguarding direction and monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Council is undertaken by the Corporate Safeguarding Board which reports to the Cabinet Corporate Management Board (CCMB) on at least a quarterly basis.

The Corporate Safeguarding Board will produce a report annually for , Cabinet and Scrutiny. This report will provide an overview of the Council's safeguarding performance.

The Corporate Safeguarding Board is chaired by the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing and all directorates will commit to senior membership of the Board. All directorates will proactively bring key safeguarding issues to the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

Every Service in the Council will report on their safeguarding performance to the Corporate Safeguarding Board through their Board member who should be a member of their Directorate Management Team. A written record of Corporate Safeguarding Board meetings will be maintained.

The responsibilities of the Corporate Safeguarding Board are set out in **Appendix A** of this policy.

(c) The **Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing**

The postholder fulfils the role of Statutory Director of Social Services and is accountable for ensuring the Council has effective safeguarding measures in place to protect children and adults at risk. The Corporate Director must establish effective arrangements across the Council to ensure that safeguarding is robust, at a local and regional partnership level. This includes ensuring there is co-operation regarding safeguarding children and adults at risk. The Corporate

Director is required to advise Council of the resources required to effectively safeguarding children and adults at risk from harm. The role of the Corporate Director of Social Services is set out in the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of the director of Social Services (Social services functions). The Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing is responsible for ensuring appropriate action is taken including reporting to the Chief Executive and Lead Cabinet Member as necessary.

(d) The **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive has responsibility for ensuring arrangements for safeguarding of children and adults at risk are effective across the Council, integrated into the overall strategic planning of the authority, and for providing leadership in developing, monitoring, and reviewing partnership arrangements for improving outcomes for adults and children. The Chief Executive is kept informed of all relevant safeguarding issues through one-to-one meetings with the Corporate Director for Social Services and Well-being.

(e) The **Leader**

The Leader of the Council is overall responsible for providing political leadership to ensure the Council fulfils its duties and responsibilities for safeguarding. The Leader will receive confidential briefing on significant safeguarding issues from statutory officers.

(f) **Lead Cabinet Member for Safeguarding**

The Lead Cabinet Member for Safeguarding will have regular one-to-one meetings with the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing and will be kept informed and updated on relevant safeguarding matters. The Lead Member will be confidentially briefed on any sensitive cases that may be considered for Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSRs). The Cabinet Member Social Services, Health and Wellbeing is the Lead Member for safeguarding. The lead member will:

- Make sure safeguarding implications are considered when developing policy or making decisions.
- Provide policy leadership on performance and resourcing for safeguarding activity.
- Raise the profile of the area and make the authority aware of good practice.
- Engage with external bodies who work within the county borough.
- Engage with other officers, partners and Councillors in relation to the role.
- Engage with community groups with an interest/stake in related areas.
- Report action to the Council

(g) **Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB)**

All Cabinet Members and Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring there are effective safeguarding arrangements in the areas they are accountable for, which

meet the standards set out in this policy. Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding implications, positive or negative, of any policy recommended are fully understood and explained in reports brought forward for decision to Cabinet and Council. Safeguarding is a standard agenda item at CCMB meetings and all members of CCMB are responsible for bringing forward safeguarding matters for consideration at CCMB meetings. Any report brought forward for consideration by a member of CCMB must clearly set out the safeguarding implications of the proposal.

(h) **Chief Officers**

Chief Officers comprise the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Chief Officers who are members of the CCMB. Chief Officers are responsible for advising of any serious safeguarding concerns that may arise in their service area to the Corporate Safeguarding Board and ensuring these are appropriately reported in a timely way. Chief Officers will brief their respective Cabinet Members on any safeguarding issues and on the general effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in their area of responsibilities. Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring the workforce within their directorates are appropriately trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns and that safeguarding matters are regularly discussed in their senior management teams. Chief officers will also ensure that safeguarding is effectively reflected in contracts with commissioned services.

Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that they have safeguarding operational procedures in place. Chief Officers will ensure that Directorate Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are nominated for any service areas where there is direct contact with the public and the DSL has a direct link to them to ensure that a robust reporting mechanism is in place for reporting any safeguarding concerns.

(i) **Councillors**

All Councillors must familiarise themselves with this policy and seek advice from the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing if they are unclear about their responsibility for safeguarding. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy will be communicated as part of the induction and ongoing training program for all Councillors and they are all expected to complete safeguarding training.

(j) **Scrutiny Committees**

The role of the Scrutiny Committees is to review and scrutinise decisions and make reports or recommendations in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions whether by the Cabinet or another part of the Council. Their role is to provide constructive challenge to the Council about its safeguarding activity in an impartial and independent manner.

(k) **Heads of Service**

All Heads of Service are responsible, through their Management Teams, for ensuring that the workforce is aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, service operational procedures and that people receive training at a level appropriate to

their role and responsibility. Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding standards are met within their service area and be in a position to report on the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements to the Corporate Safeguarding Board. They must ensure that safeguarding is effectively reflected and monitored in services which are procured from third parties.

All Heads of Service must ensure that safe recruitment practices are adopted particularly in relation to reference checks and where relevant, checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

(l) **Line Managers and Supervisors**

Every line manager / supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the workforce for whom they are responsible (including agency workers, consultants, and volunteers) are a safe workforce. Managers must follow the Recruitment and Selection Protocol and Disclosure and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy to ensure safe recruitment. They are accountable for understanding the training needs of their workforce and ensuring there are appropriate operational arrangements for people to access the right training. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all their workforce are aware of how to report safeguarding concerns and to whom. Managers must ensure that all employees/volunteers/agency workers are aware of the key policies such as the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.

All Council job descriptions section refer to safeguarding. The Council specifies job adverts posts that require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Managers must proactively analyse where risks to safeguarding are most likely to arise in their service(s) and ensure they have appropriate operational procedures and supporting systems in place to manage these well.

(m) **Workforce**

Each member of the workforce must:

- Be constantly alert to the possibility of abuse and neglect and report any concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or adult at risk.
- Participate in relevant safeguarding training and multi-agency partnership working to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- Be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding children and adults at risk and how to report concerns.
- Follow the employer's and any relevant professional codes of conduct.
- Undertake safeguarding training that has been identified for their job role.
- Behave in a way that is safe and appropriate for their role and following policies, procedures and guidance from the Authority or other organisations or bodies that apply to them.
- Help promote safeguarding within their team and to members of the public.
- Undertake any roles and responsibilities related to safeguarding and

protection that are specific to their job role.

7. Recognising and raising concerns about an adult or child where abuse or neglect is suspected.

Everyone should be alert to the possibility of abuse. An individual may become concerned about the safety or wellbeing of an individual in several ways:

- The person may tell you.
- The person may say something that worries you.
- A third party may voice concerns.
- You may see something – an incident or an injury or other sign.

Whilst BCBC Councillors and workforce will have varied levels of contact with children and adults at risk as part of their engagement with the Council, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have any concerns.

It is not the responsibility of any one individual to determine whether abuse has taken place or if an individual is at risk of harm; however, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns.

Reporting concerns about adults at risk

Immediate action should be taken to protect the adult at risk if required, which could involve contacting the emergency services. If no immediate action is required to protect the adult, the employee should inform their line manager or other designated person and also, complete an **Adult at Risk Referral Form** which can be found on the CTMSB website**.** Referrals should be emailed to adultsafeguardingmash@bridgend.gov.uk

PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR BRIDGEND mash
HWB • DIOGELU • AML • ASIANTAETH
MULTI • AGENCY • SAFEGUARDING • HUB

The Adult Safeguarding Team can be contacted to discuss concerns with individuals and will give advice on any actions that should then be taken.

Phone: 01656 642477

Reporting Concerns about Children and Young People at risk

Immediate action should be taken to protect the child if required, which could involve contacting the emergency services. Any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people should be referred to the **Initial Assessment and Advice**

PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR BRIDGEND mash
HWB • DIOGELU • AML • ASIANTAETH
MULTI • AGENCY • SAFEGUARDING • HUB

(IAA) Team (Children's Safeguarding) MASH

Phone: 01656 642320

Email: mashcentra@bridgend.gov.uk

The information can be passed verbally and must be followed up in writing using the request for help referral form found on the CTMSB website**.**

Out of Hours Referrals and Concerns
Where additional advice is sought and/or a referral is needed about an emergency situation regarding a vulnerable adult, child or young person outside of normal working hours, then an urgent referral or additional advice must be sought from the out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on:

Phone: 01443 743665

Where the referrer is also instructed by EDT to complete a referral form, they must complete this action and email it to the relevant Adults or Children's services email address as stated above. The referral form should include details of the conversation held with the EDT social worker, including date and time of the conversation, as well as the name of the social worker who they spoke with.

8. Domestic abuse and employment

Gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence can include all kinds of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and can occur within relationships.

Domestic abuse is not a private matter and can impact greatly on an individual's working life.

The Council's protocol on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, found at Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Sexual Violence Protocol details its commitment to providing a workplace response to domestic abuse and violence.

This protocol together with the Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Sexual Violence - Manager and Employer Guidelines set out the actions that can be taken in the workplace to support employees and help them feel safe at work. It also raises awareness and understanding of risks and consequences in the workplace.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 places duties on Local Authorities and Health Boards to prepare and publish strategies aimed at ending violence against women, gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Accompanying this Act is a national training framework, which requires that all local authority employees receive training, appropriate to their role, that meets the requirements specified. For most staff this will mean the completion of an e-learning

awareness level module.

9. Information sharing and confidentiality.

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults and children at risk.

Employees should seek advice from their line manager if they are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.

There are seven golden rules for sharing information developed by HM Government, 2018. These are

1. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately and lawfully.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where an individual's safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record.

Extracted from Wales Safeguarding Procedures

10. Quality Assurance

(a) Reporting and Monitoring

The Council has comprehensive mechanisms in place for officers and Councillors

which provide a governance framework supported by a performance reporting system that is transparent, online and capable of providing information for challenging scrutiny by Officers, Councillors and Regulators.

At a corporate level, the responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of corporate safeguarding arrangements across the Council is undertaken by the Corporate Safeguarding Board which reports to the Corporate Management Board (CMB) and CCMB.

A report on the effectiveness of corporate safeguarding will be produced at least annually for Cabinet and Scrutiny. This report will provide an overview of the Council's safeguarding performance. This will provide an opportunity for Councillors to scrutinise and challenge the Council's safeguarding activity.

Any safeguarding implications of reports prepared for Elected Members should be clear in reports to Scrutiny, Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Council.

(b) Self Evaluation

In accordance with the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy, all directorates are expected to carry out a self evaluation of their safeguarding practices,. Self-evaluation should give each directorate an understanding of safeguarding in their own service area/ establishment and how these might be developed. In addition to this, the self-evaluations completed provide the Council with an overview of safeguarding practices across the county.

(c) Risk Management, Internal Audit and External Regulators

Risk management and internal audit processes can provide assurance that local arrangements are working effectively and as intended, identify areas for improvement and whether there are risks that need to be mitigated. Taken together, risk management and internal audit are essential and integral parts of a Council's assurance framework. They can also:

- provide assurance that procedures and activities are tested robustly and confirm that systems are fit for purpose.
- ensure that the Council has effective governance arrangements in place.
- provide reassurance that the Council is complying with its statutory obligations.

Internal Audit will review safeguarding on a cyclical basis in accordance with their normal planning and risk assessment process along with all other services of the Council which could be subject to an audit review.

Where there are matters of concern or significant non-compliance with Council policy, discussions will take place with Internal Audit to assess whether they are the appropriate mechanism to investigate the matter further. If both parties confirm that this is appropriate Internal Audit will undertake a special investigation.

The Council will address any issues identified by respective external regulators and it

is incumbent on CCMB to ensure that coherent and comprehensive self-evaluation and consequential action is taken where required to oversee improvements.

11. Safe workforce

a) Recruitment, selection, and management of the workforce

The Council is committed to safe recruitment practices and recognises that this fits into an overall corporate approach to safeguarding across a range of functions that need to operate together to be effective.

The Recruitment and Selection Protocol and Managers' Guidelines set out the principles and procedures that should be followed when undertaking any recruitment and selection activity. This includes pre-employment vetting which involves establishing full employment histories; proof of identity; satisfactory references; health assessment; checks of qualifications; asylum and immigration checks; and criminal record checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service. For more information see 11 (b).

Any person responsible for, or working with, children or adults at risk in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered to have a duty of care towards them both legally and contractually and as a responsible moral citizen. This is an essential requirement in every job description. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.

Every member of the workforce has a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or adults at risk.

All members of the workforce should:

- Be alert to the possibility of harm, abuse and neglect
- Participate in relevant safeguarding training and multi-agency working to safeguard children and adults at risk
- Be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding and follow the Council's Code of Conduct and other professional codes relevant to them
- Report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or adult at risk. The duty to report is a legal requirement.

Should a staff member wish to appoint a volunteer, where appropriate, they will follow the Recruitment Procedure found on the Bridgend County Borough Council – Volunteer engagement policy and procedure (2023).

All supervisors must ensure that volunteers are aware of and have access to the BCBC's Corporate Safeguarding Policy

b) DBS Certifications and checks

DBS disclosures will be carried out, by the Council, on any volunteer who, during their appointment, will have substantial, unsupervised access to children and young people under the age of 16 and adults at risk on a regular basis.

The Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of those accessing our services through the effective use of the DBS and has a statutory duty of care towards vulnerable members of society. Criminal record checks are one part of robust recruitment practice and undertaken with other pre-employment checks, to assess the suitability of an individual.

The DBS Policy applies to employees, volunteers, work placements and elected members. In addition, foster carers and prospective adoptive parents, student placements, licensing and school transport arrangements and any other regulated positions also come under the provisions of this policy. Additionally, it applies to those directly employed by governing bodies.

The Council measures performance in respect of DBS check compliance and mandatory safeguarding training to enhance the performance information that goes to scrutiny and aid transparency as follows:

- Improved staff awareness of safeguarding policy, and safeguarding leads.
- Safeguarding procedures in place and understood across the organisation.
- Number of concerns and referrals generated by non-specialist council teams.
- All job descriptions to include safeguarding as a key responsibility for all staff posts.
- Mandatory safeguarding training completed by staff and Elected Members.

The DBS policy provides further information with regard to arrangements that apply to those who are not directly employed or engaged by the Council.

c) Training

The Council recognises that it has a commitment to ensure that all Councillors and members of staff understand their roles and responsibilities when working with adults or children at risk and the requirement for reporting concerns.

All line mangers are responsible for ensuring that their staff, volunteers, and individuals undertaking work placements have appropriate safeguarding training. All members of the workforce, including the volunteer workforce, whether permanent or temporary.

Democratic services will keep a report of Member safeguarding training which will be run on an annual basis.

All the workforce will be expected to undertake all training relevant to the position that they hold and to renew their qualifications or professional registrations as required by their role. The Council will ensure training is accessible to the whole workforce where all employees will be required to undertake the Safeguarding Childrens and Adults E-Learning and a refresher every 3 years for employees who do not work in the safeguarding arena.

All members of the workforce are responsible for their own Continuous Professional Development and to ensure that their safeguarding training is current and up to date. Compliance with safeguarding training standards will be monitored by the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

More specialist single and inter-agency training opportunities are available for those who work routinely with children or adults at risk at a level appropriate to their role and responsibilities. Information on training can be found on the Social Care Workforce Development Pages (SCWDP) of the Corporate Learning and Development Website. http://bridgend.learningpool.com/.

(d) Allegations or concerns about employees.

There are a range of policies and guidance in place that encourage and support staff to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of adults and children at risk. These include:

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- The Council's Whistle Blowing Policy and Whistle Blowing Policy for (Schools) which provides guidance for staff to report concerns about other employees/contractors or about the way the Council operates.

The Council's Disciplinary Policy (Disciplinary Managers' Guidelines) recognises that in certain situations the breach in discipline may require the implementation of specific departmental procedures to deal with issues of a specific nature e.g. safeguarding adults and children at risk etc.

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 there is a legal duty to refer information to the DBS if an individual is dismissed or removed from working with children and/or adults (in what is legally defined as Regulated Activity) because they meet the referral criteria. The Council has a duty to refer information to the DBS as both a regulated activity provider and as a local authority. Equally, the Council has an obligation to refer certain information about employees' conduct and matters relating to safeguarding to professional regulatory bodies such as Social Care Wales and the General Teaching Council for Wales.

(e) Safeguarding Allegations/ Concerns about Practitioners and Those in Positions of Trust.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures set out arrangements for responding to safeguarding concerns about those whose work, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, which brings them into contact with children or adults at risk. It also includes individuals who have caring responsibilities for adults or children in need of care and support and their employment or voluntary work brings them into contact with adults or children at risk.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures provide guidance to deal appropriately with any concerns or allegations of professional abuse, neglect, or harm. The procedures aim to ensure that all allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk are dealt with in a fair, consistent, and timely manner.

The main factors that are considered when applying these procedures is whether the individual subject to the allegation or concern, occupies a position of trust; this is where

a member of the workforce is in a position of power or influence over a child or adult at risk by virtue of the work or nature of activity being undertaken, whether the individual presents a risk to a child or an adult at risk and the transferability of a risk from an individual's personal life to their professional conduct.

The Council has a duty to manage allegations and concerns about any person who works with children and young people and adults at risk in the Council area. This includes Council workforce and workforce of partner agencies and volunteers. The Council must appoint a senior manager who is accountable for allegations against professionals and those in position of trust, to become the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Managing cases under these procedures applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child or adult at risk is suffering or is likely to suffer harm. It also applies to concerns that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children or adults at risk in their present position or in any capacity. It should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children or adults at risk has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk
- May have committed a criminal offence against a child or adult at risk or that has a direct impact on the child or adult at risk
- Behaved towards a child, children or adults at risk in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with both children and adults
- There is transferable risk from an individual's personal to their professional life

Consideration of professional concerns may trigger action under the Council's human resource policies including in some cases the Council's disciplinary policy and procedures.

12. Safeguarding children in education

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires Local Authorities and Governing Bodies of maintained schools to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Governing Bodies and school staff must comply with the guidance when fulfilling their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

As included in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 there is a duty to report all safeguarding concerns to the designated Lead Officer for Safeguarding in the Local Authority.

Schools must have a Safeguarding Policy which is formally adopted by the school's governing body. A policy has been developed and approved for use by schools across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg regional Safeguarding Board in 2025 which can found on the CTMSB website.

A school's safeguarding policy must comply with the Welsh Government Guidance no. 272/2021, Keeping Learners Safe, which sets out the role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act

2002.

13. Safe Services

(a) Commissioning Arrangements

As an essential in procurement arrangements, service providers commissioned to provide services where there is potential contact with children or adults at risk will be required to provide details of their safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that the service is fit for purpose and has the necessary arrangements in place to safeguard people.

Contract monitoring activity, either planned or unplanned, will include satisfying the Council that the provider is managing their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and are operating in line with legislation, policy and procedures. Where required, confirmation will be sought of the services performance regarding safe recruitment practices, DBS checking and safeguarding referrals.

(b) Lettings and Hiring

With almost all casual lettings the Council will not be contracting the services of hirers. The Council nonetheless will allow its premises to be used for activities that may involve children, young people, or adults at risk. Therefore, building managers have a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonable, that these activities also comply with safeguarding responsibilities. Members of the public may reasonably assume that because an activity is taking place within a Council setting, the Council has had due regard to safeguarding in entering the arrangement. In allowing use of Council premises, the onus must remain upon the hirer to ensure that safeguarding measures are maintained throughout. This is something that organisations will be made aware of in lettings agreements entered into with the Council.

14. Communication and media

Decisions about the release of information relating to safeguarding matters for example messages to staff, press statements etc. will be taken by the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officer in consultation with the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing. The communications team should be involved. No member of staff should contact the press directly or post information via the internet.

Use of social media

As per the Protocol for the use of social media employees have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children, young people, or adults at risk. The protocol is in place and covers employee responsibilities when using social media either for personal or professional use.

15. Review

This policy will be subject to review to ensure that it takes account of any changes to

and/or the introduction of new relevant regulation, guidance and legislation, and guidance and procedures adopted by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

APPENDIX A –

RESPONSIBILITES OF THE BRIDGEND CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING GROUP

1. Ensure the compliance of all Council Directorates with safeguarding requirements in relation to children and adults.

2. Ensure that all directorates within the Council are aware of their contribution to keeping children, young people and adults at risk safe and free from harm or abuse.

4. Support the Statutory Director of Social Services in the discharge of their safeguarding duties.

5. Review and develop relevant corporate safeguarding standards and policy.

6. Provide assurance there is compliance with the standards in this Corporate Safeguarding policy through contribution to a corporate safeguarding performance dashboard and safeguarding self-evaluation process.

7. Exercise oversight of significant safeguarding issues in directorates through overseeing the development and implementation of associated action plans.

8. Support HR in the delivery of a robust Safer Recruitment process (including volunteer workforce) to include key vetting and barring requirements and workforce development.

9. Provide an Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report, setting out the performance of all Directorates, in relation to vetting and barring, staff safeguarding training, and the operation of front-line services in terms of their effectiveness in identifying and referring safeguarding concerns.

10. To develop and a maintain a safeguarding risk register, identifying clear areas of safeguarding risk, and agree how the risks will be managed within the authority and by whom.

11. Review, develop and monitor corporate safeguarding performance measures.

12. Ensure that safeguarding training is promoted and mandated across all Directorates within the authority.

13. Advise Cabinet Corporate Management Board and recommend relevant action in relation to corporate safeguarding standards and policy.

14. Promote effective cross Directorate safeguarding practice particularly in terms of information sharing and data collection, front-line operational awareness, staff training and wider partnership engagement.

15. Receive and consider recommendations and learning from Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews and associated action plans.

Appendix B :- Bridgend County Borough Council – Contractor Safeguarding Protocol

Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
www.bridgend.gov.uk

Introduction

Safeguarding vulnerable people is one of Bridgend Council's (the 'Council') main corporate priorities. The Council's *Corporate Safeguarding Policy* makes clear **that safeguarding children and adults at risk from harm is everybody's responsibility.**

As a Contractor providing goods, services or works on behalf of the Council you are required to play your role in ensuring the Council meets its safeguarding commitments.

Objectives

This Protocol provides guidance to Contractors so that they understand their role in supporting the Council to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse, neglect or harm. It is about ensuring that Council contractors' workforce know:

- What Safeguarding is;
- What abuse/harm looks like, and;
- What to do if they think somebody is being abused or at risk of being abused.

This Protocol should be used in conjunction with any of the contractors own safeguarding policies, procedures along with relevant codes of conduct for the organisation or their professional/regulatory bodies. Safeguarding training identified by contractor as an organisation and/or required by relevant bodies should also be undertaken by all relevant employees.

Who is covered by this Protocol?

All contractors, sub-contractors or other organisations funded by the Council are responsible for arranging checks through the safe recruitment process and for ensuring that their 'workforce' comply with regulatory and contractual arrangements relating to their safeguarding responsibilities. All contractors, sub-contractors and other organisations are responsible for informing relevant Managers within the Council of any safeguarding concerns they may have.

For this Protocol 'workforce' is defined as those engaged by any Contractor funded by the Council, including permanent and temporary employees, students, volunteers, workers employed by employment agencies, sub-contractors and consultants.

All the 'workforce' undertaking duties on behalf of a Contractor who come into contact with children or adults at risk are expected to understand their responsibility and where necessary take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people.

Definitions of Children and Adults at Risk

Children and Young People at Risk - is defined in law as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. An extension of this age exists in terms of some statutory provision for children who have been in the care of the Council. Section 130(4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a "child at risk" is a child who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the Council is meeting any of those needs).

Adult at Risk— is defined as anyone aged 18 or over whose ability to protect themselves is limited. This might be because of age and frailty, mental or physical illness, sensory loss or physical or learning disability. It might be someone who is usually able to manage but is temporarily unable to do so because of an accident or illness. An "adult at risk" is an adult who: -

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the Council is meeting any of those needs); and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

What do we mean by safeguarding?

Everybody has the right to be safe no matter who they are or what their circumstances are. Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and adults at risk from harm. All Council contractors have a responsibility to ensure that they are doing all they can to protect the most vulnerable members in our society; safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding includes:

- Preventing abuse, neglect and harm
- Recognising the different types of abuse, neglect and harm
- Reporting abuse, neglect and harm
- Having arrangements in place within organisations to ensure that children and adults are protected for example – DBS policies, codes of conduct.

What does abuse look like?

Abuse can be the result of an action or the failure to act in an appropriate manner. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts and can occur across all social groups. Abuse and neglect can be described in the following five categories:

Physical Abuse
May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult.

Sexual Abuse
Forcing or enticing a child or adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. This may involve:

- physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts;
- non-contact, such as involving a child or adult in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; or
- encouraging children or adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development.
- It may involve a parent, family member or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child or adult from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or adult's basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse

- The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional and behavioural development.
- It may involve telling the child or adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may involve causing children or adults to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or by exploitation or corruption.

Financial Abuse

- Money or property stolen
- Being defrauded e.g., scams
- Being put under pressure to pay for things for someone else's benefit
- Someone else using their money as their own
- Children who earn money via entertainment events not having the money placed in trust
- There are other forms of abuse that could take place such as bullying, forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), modern slavery, sexual exploitation and radicalisation

Abuse can occur in any relationship – personal, professional or institutional. An abuser might be a family member, friend or neighbour. It could be someone who is paid to deliver care or other professional services, a health worker or someone working as a volunteer. There are also people who befriend vulnerable adults and gain their trust in order to exploit or abuse them. In an institutional setting, such as a care home or day service, the abuse could be by someone working there or someone else living in or using the service.

Contractors' roles and responsibilities

It is not the Contractor's responsibility to determine whether abuse/harm is taking place, however, it is the Contractor's responsibility to pass on concerns raised by workforce. Contractors need to make sure that their workforce are aware of the types of abuse.

Contractors must raise any concern or allegation, without delay in accordance with this Protocol. Concerns must not be ignored and must be reported to the Council without delay. Indications of abuse or neglect include but are not limited to:

- unexplained injuries;
- being withdrawn;
- signs of fear or distress;
- personal belongings missing;
- poor living conditions and appearance.

If you believe that a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm you must **phone the Police on 999**. You should never assume that someone else will report the concerns and if it is agreed that someone else will report the concerns, it is your responsibility to check that they have done this.

It is the responsibility of Contractors to ensure that their workforce undertake their duties in a manner which safeguards and promotes the wellbeing of children and adults. The workforce must behave in a way which protects them from false allegations of abuse as far as is possible and in accordance with this Protocol, the Council's Safeguarding Code of Conduct but additional training and information is the responsibility of the Contractor.

How to raise concerns or report allegations of abuse

A person may see or hear something which causes them to have a concern or someone may tell an employee that they or someone else is being allegedly abused. **The Contactor has a responsibility to provide the following information to its workforce so that they have basic information about how to respond and who to contact**.

If a child, young person or adult alleges that they are being abused, Contractors should:

- reassure them they were right to tell you;
- do not ask leading questions;

- as soon as is possible after being told make a written record of what they said in their own words
- Do not promise a child, young person or adult that something they have said or done will be kept confidential.

Children
If you think a child is at risk, not being looked after properly, or you have concerns about their welfare, please contact us on: **01656 815808/01656 642320.**
Alternatively email**: mashcentra@bridgend.gov.uk**

Adults
If you think or believe and adult is being abused, please contact the Adult Safeguarding Team on: **01656 642477**. Alternatively email: **AdultsafeguardingMASH@bridgend.gov.uk**

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Emergency Duty Team
If any concerns are outside of office hours after 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and on weekends and Bank Holidays then call the Emergency Duty Team on **01443 743665.**

What will happen if I report a concern to Social Services?

When you contact Social Services, the staff member will take as many details as needed to see whether the referral needs to go through the safeguarding process or how the person can be helped which might involve another service.

Social services will assess whether the referral needs to go through the safeguarding process and will follow national policy and procedures.

The action following the assessment will depend on individual circumstances, but it might be the person getting a different kind of service or support or in exceptional circumstances a court taking legal action. Action will be taken to ensure the person is protected immediately and in the future. In the interests of confidentiality, it is highly unlikely you will be notified of the outcome of the assessment.

If you are not sure, it is better to have discussed your concerns with somebody who has experience and responsibility to make an informed decision than to ignore a situation which may result in someone vulnerable being harmed.

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	**REPORT OF COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
Responsible Officer:	**MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**This report has no effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.**
Executive Summary:	**The report presents Cabinet with the recommendation of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee from their meeting held on 14 July 2025, during consideration of a report on Community Asset Transfers.** **Cabinet is requested to consider and respond to the recommendation of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with the recommendation of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee from their meeting held on 14 July 2025, during consideration of a report on Community Asset Transfers.

2. Background

2.1 At its meeting on 14 July 2025, the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a Community Asset Transfers report, when Members referred to previously proposed increases in charges for the use of pitches and sports facilities and expressed concern regarding the impact of such increased charges would have on community groups and residents, for facilities where individuals or organisations do not have capacity to undertake a Community Asset Transfer.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member and Senior Officers, the Committee made the following recommendation:

The Committee discussed the previously proposed significant increase in charges for the use of Council-owned pitches and sporting facilities and **recommended** that Cabinet consider whether the policy is still accurate and fit for purpose in the current financial climate and that the Deep Dive Group for the Communities Directorate explore the charging policy.

3.2 Cabinet is requested to consider and respond to the recommendation above.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. 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.

5.2 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 scrutiny function contributes to the 5 Ways of Working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and how they contribute to the Council developing its own five ways of working, driving and measuring those ways of working.

5.3 The scrutiny arrangements assists in the achievement of the Council's 4 Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, listed below:

1. A prosperous place with thriving communities
2. Creating modern, seamless public services
3. Enabling people to meet their potential
4. Supporting our most vulnerable

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report although any changes to the Council's charging policy may have wider implications on the Council's budget.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Cabinet is requested to consider and respond to the recommendation of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Background documents

None.

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	**CHIEF EXECUTIVE** **LEADER**
Responsible Officer:	**ALEX RAWLIN** **POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**The Corporate Plan and Performance Framework (on which Self-Assessment and Panel Performance Assessments (PPA) are based) form part of the Policy Framework.**
Executive Summary:	**This report informs Cabinet of the findings of the Panel Performance Assessment that took place between 16-19 September 2025. It seeks Cabinet approval of the next steps in terms of -** • **Writing a formal, Council response to the PPA** • **Communicating the findings more widely** • **Developing actions to address the findings**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the findings of the Panel Performance Assessment that took place between 16-19 September 2025. It seeks Cabinet approval of the next steps.

2. Background

2.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 set out a new local government improvement regime. One of the requirements of the Act is for the Council to undertake a Panel Performance Assessment, or PPA, between each local government election. The PPA has to set out conclusions on whether the Council met the 'performance requirements' during that financial year, and actions needed to improve. The 'performance requirements' focus on –

- Are we exercising our functions effectively?
- Are we using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively?
- Is our governance strong?

2.2 In addition to the three statutory areas, CMB and Cabinet agreed three further areas for the peers' consideration which were -

- **Transformation** – The development of a transformation strategy that meets political and key stakeholder aspirations that is underpinned by effective arrangements for delivery, performance management and a culture of constructive challenge. A clear need to focus on mechanisms and capacity for transformation that will improve citizens experience and create an organisation that is sustainable in the medium and long term.
- **Addressing workforce challenges** – Building on strengthened workforce planning, address challenges in recruitment in key areas, and improve succession planning, to help the Council create a long-term workforce strategy.
- **Improving engagement** – Building on improvements to strategic communication, improve the Council's engagement and relationships internally with councillors and externally with local communities and town and community councils to help it become more citizen focused.

2.3 The panel were on site between 16-19 September 2025 and consisted of –

Role	Name	Details
Independent Chair	Sally Loudon	Former Chief Executive of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), former Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council.
Senior Elected Member	Cllr. Andrew Stevens	Serving Councillor and Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure at Swansea Council.
Serving Local Government Senior Officer	Gareth Newell	Head of Performance and Partnerships, Cardiff Council
Associate Peer from the Wider Public, Private or Voluntary Sectors	Anne-Louise Clark	Former Executive Director – Communication and Change for Audit Wales & Chair of the Board of Trustees for Platform for Change Ltd.

2.4 During the onsite week, the Panel undertook 1-2-1 interviews with a range of elected members, council officers and partners. They also held focus groups with users of council services and community representatives including:

- Trade Unions
- Town & Community Councils
- Business community
- Youth Council
- Older people
- Citizens
- Headteachers

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 At the end of the peers' week on site, they gave a presentation on their findings which addressed the three performance requirements and the three areas of focus we provided. Since then, their final report has been received by the Council. The report is included at **Appendix 1** and presentation at **Appendix 2.**

3.2 The headline findings of the PPA are –

- Bridgend is a good Council with untapped potential.
- A political and managerial leadership that is ambitious for Bridgend.
- Workforce that is enthusiastic, committed, cares deeply about the Council and the communities it serves.
- High levels of self-awareness - clear and shared assessment of strengths and the challenges ahead.
- Ready for change and positive about the future.

Despite these positives it describes the council as now being at '*a crossroads in terms of its development and now is the time to act at pace. By making the necessary changes now, the council can make sure it can sustain services and continues to deliver for its communities for years to come.'* This description aligns strongly with most officers and elected members' assessment of the council, its services and the imperative and desire to change.

3.3 For each of the three performance requirements, the peers outlined strengths and areas for improvement. These are -

Exercise of functions / council performance

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Good performance in services and consistent performance narrative across members and officers.	Unnecessary bureaucracy and procedures are stifling empowerment and delaying decision making.
Dedicated and committed members and staff.	Corporate and strategic capacity required.
A real eagerness for change.	
Some examples of cross-Council working, but not evident across the whole authority.	

Use of resources

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Good financial management and monitoring.	Looking forward, ensure the budget and MTFS is closely aligned with the new vision and change programme.
Wider member involvement in the budget setting process.	The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation.

Good relationships with partners and wider stakeholders, who are eager to be more strategically involved.	An opportunity for greater cross-service and partner working and culture – 'Team Bridgend.'
	Whole Council approach to communications needed.

Governance

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Overall, the Council has good governance arrangements and systems in place.	Continuing to build a cohesive leadership team and culture.
Good performance management framework in place.	Performance management framework needs to be embedded across the Council and culture needs to be developed to ensure ownership and accountability.
Good engagement and relationships with Trade Unions.	Responsiveness to members, scrutiny, stakeholders and citizens is not consistent across the Council.
Good scrutiny arrangements which are valued by members.	Scrutiny papers could be more concise, with greater evidence of impact of scrutiny also needed.

3.4 For each of the three focus areas provided by the Council, the peers outlined strengths and areas for improvement. These are –

Transformation

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Alignment of ambition for change.	Develop and agree a new transformation plan, involving staff, members, partners and communities.
Excitement and appetite for change.	Strategic and corporate capacity required to deliver change.
It's the right thing to do at the right time.	Transformation programme needs to be based on data and insight.
Evidence of innovation in some areas.	Review approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including funding, systems, skills and culture.

Workforce challenges

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Staff feel appreciated – it's a good and caring culture.	Move to a more strategic and future focussed workforce plan, linked to new vision and transformation plan – including

	succession planning, workforce of the future, digital and data.
Proud of Bridgend County and the impact the Council has.	Consider a corporate grow your own programme, developing links with local higher and further education.
Good relationships with Trade Unions.	Consider approach to staff celebration/appreciation.

Engagement

Strengths	Areas for improvement
Strong desire and commitment from Cabinet to hear and listen to citizens and communities.	The Council should consider a whole-Council approach to promoting the work of the Council and the county of Bridgend.
Evidence of engagement with stakeholders across the organisation.	Responsiveness to members, scrutiny, town and community councils and citizens is not consistent across the Council.
Town and Community Council liaison officer now in place.	Improve consultation and engagement practice, including greater use of local members, community groups and infrastructure to promote engagement and closing 'the feedback loop'.
Citizen panel in place and innovative plan to use citizen focus groups	Forward-looking corporate communications needed which reaches all staff – especially at a time of change.
Corporate communications in place.	

3.5 Finally, the peers provided eight recommendations which are –

1. **The Council has appointed a Chief Executive to lead and deliver change. The Council should now support him to develop an inspiring vision, a transformation strategy, underpinning corporate strategies and the cultural shift required to produce both sustainability of services, greater cross-Council working and innovation – which involves staff, communities and partners.**

2. **The Council should put in place leadership development for senior staff and Members to support this change.**

3. **The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation with a focus on the future and delivery of outcomes, supporting staff and Members to do that. This should involve reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to release capacity and empower managers**.

4. **The Council should rapidly review corporate and strategic capacity to ensure both sustainability of service delivery and supporting the overall emerging change programme. In addition, the Council should consider bringing together key corporate enablers to unlock the potential of the organisation: e.g. Human Resources, performance and communications**.

5. **The Council should review and refresh its approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including: funding, systems, skills, and culture.**

6. **The Council should consider a whole Council approach to promoting the work of the Council and the county of Bridgend – with pride.**

7. **The Council should consider building on its good relations with partners in the public, private, community and voluntary sector to deliver Bridgend's vision and priorities.**

8. **As an immediate priority, the Council should improve its responsiveness to Members, stakeholders and citizens as part of building a culture of mutual respect for all.**

Next steps

3.6 Following the Council's receipt of the PPA report, it is required to produce a response, and to test the response through the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC). Corporate Management Board and Cabinet will work together to develop this response throughout October. It will be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee and Full council for their consideration, alongside an action plan that is already in development.

3.7 The Council will communicate the findings of PPA through -

- Town and Community Council Forum
- Trade Unions through the regular monthly meeting
- Staff Forums

3.8 It is evident from the report that there is an urgency to act '*at pace'.* Any delays will pose potential risks to the authority's sustainability. There is a widespread acceptance of the report's main findings. The next step is to develop an action plan and the capacity and skills to manage the change. A full action plan will be developed to allow the Council to meet these expectations by the end of November.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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.

5. Wellbeing of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Wellbeing Objectives

5.1 This report reviews the following corporate wellbeing objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that form part of the Council's Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2025/26:-

1. THRIVING - A prosperous place with thriving communities,
2. EMPOWERING - Supporting our most vulnerable,
3. ACHIEVING - Enabling people to meet their potential,
4. MODERNISING - Creating modern, seamless public services

5.2 The 5 ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act have also been included in the Council's wellbeing objectives. The ways of driving and measuring them is also contained in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no specific implications of this report on climate change or nature..

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no specific implications of this report on safeguarding or corporate parenting.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- Consider the findings of the PPA in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2.**
- Endorse the next steps in responding to PPA in Paragraphs 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8.

Background documents

None

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Bridgend County Borough Council
Panel Performance Assessment (PPA)
Report
September 2025



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

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 In accordance with the performance duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Bridgend County Borough Council (Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-Y-Bont ar Ogwr) commissioned a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

1.2 The onsite assessment was completed over a four-day period concluding on 19th September 2025 with a feedback presentation provided to the Council outlining the key findings detailed within this report.

1.3 The assessment was undertaken based on the Council's agreed scoping document and the WLGA's PPA methodology, which was developed with the sector. The PPA methodology provides an overarching framework: the lines of enquiry are not prescriptive but provide guidance to the Panel on the areas that could be explored to meet the statutory duty. However, the extent to which the Panel explores those areas should be proportionate to the Council's scope but sufficient to enable the Panel to form a conclusion.

1.4 In accordance with the statutory guidance the PPA is not an audit or an inspection and does not seek to duplicate work undertaken by regulators and other bodies. Whilst the Panel has undertaken a corporate assessment, this assessment was not in-depth and should be considered alongside other sources of assurance such as the Council's own self-assessment, internal audit reviews, external audit, and regulatory reviews.

1.5 In preparing for the PPA, the Council scoped their requirements to maximise the value and impact of the assessment to the Council. The specific areas of focus identified by the Council are reflected in paragraph 3.2.

1.6 This report provides a summary overview of the conclusions of the Panel reported by exception.

2. Peer Team

2.1 The following Peers were commissioned by the WLGA to undertake the assessment. Selection of the Peers was agreed and at the discretion of the Council, based on suitability of skills and experience:

- Independent Chair: Sally Loudon - Former Chief Executive of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), former Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council.
- Senior Member Peer: Cllr Andrew Stevens - Serving Councillor and Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure at Swansea Council.
- Senior Officer Peer: Gareth Newell - Head of Performance and Partnerships, Cardiff Council.
- Wider Public, Private, or Voluntary Sector Peer: Anne-Louise Clark, former Executive Director – Communication and Change for Audit Wales & Chair of the Board of Trustees for Platform for Change Ltd.

2.2 The Panel was supported by, Cerith Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Improvement – Democratic Services) and Lyndon Puddy (Panel Performance Assessment Manager, both from the WLGA's Improvement Team.

3. Scope and Approach

3.1 The Panel is required to assess the extent to which the Council:

- Is exercising its functions effectively.
- Is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and
- Has effective governance in place for securing the above.

3.2 The Council identified the following three areas where peer insight would be valued as part of the Panel assessment: **Transformation, Addressing Workforce Challenges and Improving Engagement**. The Council welcomed the Panel's support in providing high-level insights on these priority areas which encompass the whole Council and involve all directorates.

- **Transformation** – The development of the Council's approach to transformation that meets political and key stakeholder aspirations, including how effective arrangements are for delivery, performance management and the culture underpinning transformation. The Council had identified a clear need to focus on mechanisms and capacity for transformation that would improve citizens experience and create an organisation that is sustainable in the medium and long term.
- **Addressing Workforce Challenges** – Building on strengthened workforce planning, consider the Council's approach to address challenges in recruitment in key areas, and improve succession planning, to help create a long-term workforce strategy.
- **Improving Engagement** – Building on improvements to strategic communication, identify what further the Council can do to improve engagement and relationships internally with Councillors and externally with local communities and Town and Community Councils to help it become more citizen focused.

3.3 To prepare for the onsite assessment, the Panel first conducted a desktop review of Council documentation, data, external reports, and other relevant intelligence. The Peers also participated in preliminary online meetings.

3.4 The Panel spent approximately 240 hours plus, during onsite stage of the review involving a series of individual meetings and focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Leader of the Council
- Chief Executive
- The Cabinet – Focus Group
- Cabinet Member for Health & Social Services and Deputy Leader
- Cabinet Members for Resources (Job Share)
- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
- Focus Group, Elected Members - non-executive
- Leaders of the Opposition Groups (Bridgend County Independents & Democratic Alliance)
- Focus Group - Scrutiny Chairs
- Chair of Democratic Services Committee
- Independent Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee
- Independent Chair of the Standards Committee

- Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy
- Chief Officer Finance Housing & Change (Section 151 Officer)
- Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing
- Corporate Director, Communities
- Corporate Director, Education, Early Years and Young People
- Interim Head of Operations - Community Services (recently seconded from Head of Partnerships and Housing)
- Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Group Manager for Communications and Public Affairs, Marketing, Consultation and Engagement
- Deputy Head of Finance and Deputy Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager and Corporate Performance Manager
- Group Manager Economy, Natural Resources & Sustainability
- Group Manager Planning & Development (Head of Planning)
- Staff Focus Group - Heads of Service and Deputy Heads of Service
- Staff Focus Group (Group Managers)
- Staff Focus Group – (Frontline staff)
- Headteachers - Focus Group
- Youth Council Representatives – Focus Group
- Leader and Chief Executive of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
- Leader and Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Chief Executive of Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
- South Wales Police – Chief Superintendent
- Town and Community Councils – Focus Group
- Trade Unions – Focus Group
- Business Community – Focus Group
- Citizens Panel Focus Group
- Stakeholder Focus Group - Older people
- Chief Executive of Halo Leisure – Community focussed social enterprise

4. Overall Conclusion

4.1 Bridgend is a good Council with untapped potential. The political and managerial leadership is ambitious for the whole County and they have the full support of a dedicated and enthusiastic workforce. The staff are deeply committed to the Council and the communities it serves, demonstrating a high level of self-awareness and a shared understanding of both the Council's strengths and the challenges ahead.

4.2 The Council has already demonstrated its capability with impressive turnarounds in key areas, particularly Children's Services, and is well positioned to build on this success for the benefit of the wider Council. The assessment findings show that Bridgend is ready and ambitious for change and has a positive outlook on its future.

4.3 The Council is, however, at a "crossroads" in terms of its development and now is the time to act at pace. By making the necessary changes now, the Council can ensure it can sustain services and continue to deliver for its communities for years to come.

5. Local Context *(source PPA scoping document)*

5.1 Bridgend County Borough Council covers around 110 square miles, stretching from the Ogmore, Garw, and Llynfi valleys in the north to the Bristol Channel coastline in the south. The main commercial centres are Bridgend, Maesteg, and the seaside resort of Porthcawl. The county borough is divided by the M4 and boasts main-line rail links going east to London and west to Swansea.

Population and Community Demographics

5.2 Bridgend had a population of 145,760 at the 2021 census, a 4.5% increase from 2011. The population is projected to grow by 7.5% in the next 20 years. In its population:

- 50.6% are female and 49.4% are male.
- 96.78% identify as white. 1.48% of people identify as Asian. 1.16% identify as mixed race. 0.29% identify as black. 0.29% identify as other ethnic group
- 22.64% have disabilities that limit their day-to-day activities a little or a lot.

5.3 Similar to the rest of Wales, the borough has an aging population with the fastest growing age category being over 65 which increased by 21.5% between 2011 and 2021. During the same time, under 15s only increased by 2.6%. This can present challenges to the Council's services including health, social care and housing.

Health and Deprivation

5.4 In 2021, 46.3% of residents described their health as “very good,” up from 45.1% in 2011. However, there are significant health disparities.
Bridgend has 7 areas identified as having ‘Deep Rooted Deprivation’. These are areas that have remained within the top 50 most deprived areas in Wales for the last five publications of Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks.
In Bridgend 70% of people aged 16+ are in “good or very good” general health, which is the national average. Physical activity uptake and healthy eating rates are below the national average and Bridgend is home to some of the most materially deprived places in Wales. Bridgend has an obesity rate above the national average. The healthy weight in under 25s is also slightly below the Wales average. 18% of adults in Bridgend smoke, slightly above the national average (17%). Mental wellbeing is slightly better than the Wales average.

Employment and Skills

5.5 Bridgend has around 3,770 enterprises, with a significant number of micro-enterprises (up to nine employees). Key employers include Bridgend County Borough Council, which employs around 6,000 people, and major public and private sector employers in manufacturing and medical device engineering.
The employment rate (ages 16 to 64) is 67.1% and employment in Bridgend has decreased compared with the previous year. Bridgend's employment rate was lower than Wales as a whole in the year ending December 2023.

Skills and Unemployment Welfare

5.6 As of May 2024, Bridgend has an unemployment rate of 3.5%, though people looking for work has risen since a year earlier. The most recent unemployment rate for Bridgend was lower than Wales as a whole. Economic inactivity has increased since the previous year; these are people who are neither employed nor seeking work. The Claimant Count measures the number of people who are claiming unemployment-related benefits between the ages of 16-64 is 2.8%. Claimant Count was lower in March 2024 compared with a year earlier.

Infrastructure and Transport Links

5.7 The county benefits from excellent transport infrastructure, including the M4 motorway, which provides quick access to Cardiff and Swansea. There are also high-speed rail services and proximity to Cardiff Airport. Active travel routes are being developed to improve walking and cycling infrastructure. The Council has recently adopted a new Local Development Plan (LDP), which will shape development up to 2033.

Housing and Affordability

5.8 The average house price in Bridgend is approximately £187,812. 71% of households in Bridgend County either own their home outright or via a mortgage. A further 15% rented privately, while 14% rented socially. Porthcawl has the highest levels of home ownership and the Pyle/Kenfig Hill area the lowest. The Ogmore Valley had the highest proportion of private tenants (21%). The Council manages a common housing register to allocate social housing and offers various support services to prevent homelessness. The Council’s Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26 sets out six new priorities and associated objectives.

The proportion of properties liable for council tax that are second homes (0.1%) is well below the all-Wales average (1.8%).

Local Climate Challenges

5.9 Bridgend has committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Council has a comprehensive strategy to address climate change, including decarbonising its operations and promoting sustainable practices. Achievements to date include LED street lighting, retrofit programme for energy efficiency, the expansion of local nature reserves, tree planting and a sustainable procurement strategy.

The Council

5.10 **Political Leadership**

At the last local elections in May 2022, there were 51 seats contested in the election, 3 fewer than in 2017. The next Bridgend County Borough Council elections are due to take place in May 2027.

5.11 The current administration is a Labour majority with 26 Councillors, 23 independents (13 Bridgend County Independents, 8 Democratic Alliance and 2 Independent), 1 Conservative and 1 Reform.

5.12 The Leader of the Council is Councillor John Spanswick and Councillor Jane Gebbie is the Deputy Leader.

5.13 **Senior Management**

The Council's senior management comprises the Chief Executive, Jake Morgan, who started in post in July 2025. He is supported by three Corporate Directors who are responsible for services delivery. There are two Chief Officers in the Chief Executives' directorate, and a Head of Internal Audit.

6. Strengths and Areas of Innovation

6.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrated a consistent alignment of ambition for the area. The Panel noted that Cabinet, Officers, backbench Members, opposition Members and stakeholders were positive and ambitious for the County, promoting a positive, welcoming and friendly culture. This is supported by enthusiastic, committed and caring staff who are optimistic about the future. The Council shows a tangible appetite for change that was evident to the peer panel members.

6.2 A prime example of this is the successful turnaround in children's services. This achievement highlights strong political and officer leadership and remarkable resilience, providing valuable lessons that can be shared throughout the organisation to drive future success.

6.3 The Council also exhibits a high level of self-awareness with a clear and shared understanding of both its strengths and its areas for improvement. This is further reinforced by the establishment of a new **budget working group** which demonstrates a proactive and collaborative approach to financial management and strategic planning that involves a substantial number of elected members from across the Administration and Opposition parties.

6.4 The Panel noted that Bridgend Council has the highest recycling rate in Wales, 73% in 2023-24. That exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory target for all Councils to reach a recycling rate of 70% by 2024-25, a target that Bridgend and a few other Councils have already exceeded.

6.5 Schools in Bridgend are rated as strong in inspections, with only one school currently requiring follow up by Estyn. There have been 18 spotlights of effective practice were identified by Estyn from the 15 core inspections in the 2024-2025 school year.

7. Local and National Challenges

7.1 Bridgend County Borough Council, like all Councils in Wales, is facing significant financial sustainability challenges with a Q1 projection of £898k overspend for 2025/26.

7.2 The Council highlighted exceptional demands across some of its key service areas including support for children with Additional Learning Needs, older people's care, complex children's placements and homelessness. There are changing patterns of need in other service areas, for example behaviour in schools and attendance. Some services have worked hard to meet expectations but have limited capacity and resilience following years of budget cuts.

7.3 **Financial Performance:**

- In 2024/25 Bridgend underspent by £300,000 against its £361 million budget, which is around 0.1% of the budget. However, the overall position masks significant pressure in some areas of the budget as well as a significant contribution to reserves.
- Schools' balances fell from £2.4m on 31st March 2024 to a negative balance of £619,000 on 31st March 2025
- The Council reported that 88% of the 2024/25 budget savings were achieved in full.

7.4 **Strategic Financial Planning:**

- The total budget gap over the four-year period from 2025/26 is approximately £39.5m using a most likely scenario. After identified savings (25/26) a gap of £27.265m remains.
- The Council reports work will now be undertaken to identify the mitigations required in order to bridge the gap and allow for any required investment over and above the unavoidable pressures already identified.

7.5 **Budget Setting:**

- The 2025/26 budget includes a Council Tax increase of 4.5%.
- The 2025/26 Local Government Funding Settlement was better than the Council's initial assumptions.
- The budget required £8.379m of savings. It would have been higher but for the better-than-expected financial settlement from Welsh Government

7.6 **Other Issues:**

- The August 2024 Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Assessment review of Bridgend County Borough Council found *'the Council understands its financial position with good arrangements to support its financial sustainability which it flexes and adapts but is at the early stage of developing its long-term approach'.*
- The Council does not have its own housing stock so does not have a Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- Bridgend has a ten-year rolling capital programme that has been set for 2025-26, and on an indicative basis for the nine years thereafter. It has been profiled in accordance with technical advice relating to regulatory processes, timetables and work plans.

7.7 **Performance Against its 2024/25 Budget**

7.7.1 The net revenue budget for 2024-25 was £360.671 million. The overall outturn at 31st March 2025 was a net under spend of £300,000 which was transferred to the Council's General Fund.

7.7.2 This takes into account the setting up of a net £13.063 million of new earmarked reserves in 2024-25 to enable service investment, to mitigate future risks and expenditure commitments. Total Directorate budgets had a net over spend of £2.376 million and Council Wide budgets a net underspend of £15.128 million. The outturn position includes additional council tax income collected over budget of £611,000 during the financial year.

7.7.3 The Council states *'the overall under spend on the Council budget significantly masks underlying budget pressures in Additional Learning Needs services, Home to School Transport, and Children's social care'.*

7.7.4 The main reasons for the overall under spend in 2024-25 are: -

- Unanticipated Welsh Government grant of £3.290 million towards the teachers' pay award for 2024 25 and NJC pay pressures.
- A £2.044 million saving from Council agreeing a change in the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy on 23 October 2024.
- Unanticipated Welsh Government grant of £2.024 million towards revenue cost pressures.
- Not needing to utilise the £1.558 million that was built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 towards emerging budget pressures and as a contingency against non-deliverability of budget reduction proposals.

7.7.5 The budget approved for 2024-25 included budget savings of £13.045 million. At 31st March 2025 there was a shortfall on the savings target of £1.569 million, or 12.03% of the overall reduction target.

7.7.6 During 2024-25 Directorates drew down funding from specific earmarked reserves. The final draw down of revenue reserves was £5.397 million.

8. Overview of Findings.

Local areas, as identified by the Council, where peer insight would be valued as part of the Panel assessment

8.1 Transformation

8.1.1 There is a clear alignment of ambition for change, with a strong appetite and excitement for transformation across the organisation. This shared belief that it is the right thing to do at the right time, coupled with evidence of innovation in some areas, provides a powerful foundation. To fully capitalise on this momentum, the following areas require focussed attention:

8.1.2 **Develop a new Transformation Plan**: The Council should create a clear, comprehensive transformation plan. This process must be highly collaborative, actively involving staff, Members, partners, and communities to ensure buy-in and a shared vision.

8.1.3 **Strengthen Strategic Capacity**: Delivering on this level of change requires greater strategic and corporate capacity within the organisation. The Council should address any gaps to ensure its ability to manage and implement a large-scale transformation programme, maintain or improve its performance and the ability to measure impact.

8.1.4 **Transformation based on Data and Insight:** To be truly effective, the Council's transformation efforts must be grounded in robust data and insight. This will ensure its decisions are evidence based and its efforts are focussed on the area that will deliver the greatest impact.

8.1.5 **Review Digital and Data Approach:** A critical component of the emerging transformation plan is the Council's approach to digital and data. It should review its current funding, systems, skills and culture to ensure the digital function can be an enabler to the changes it aims to achieve.

8.2 Addressing Workforce Challenges

8.2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council has a strong and positive organisational culture, staff feel appreciated and the culture is perceived as caring. This is further reinforced by the strong working relationships with Trade Unions. Officers are also proud of the impact the Council has on communities across the County.

8.2.2 While the Council has a firm foundation, there are opportunities to become more strategic and forward-thinking. The current workforce plan needs to evolve to be more aligned with a new vision and transformation plan for the organisation. This includes addressing key areas such as succession planning, developing the workforce for the future to meet changing demands, and integrating digital and data capabilities into the workforce strategy.

8.2.3 To support this the Council should consider implementing a corporate “grow your own” programme. This would involve strengthening links with local higher and further education institutions to create a pipeline of talent that is specifically developed to meet the Council’s needs.

8.2.4 Finally, while staff already feel appreciated, the Council should consider a more formal and corporate approach to staff celebration and appreciation. This could further embed positive feelings across all departments and initiatives.

8.3 Improving Engagement

8.3.1 The Council demonstrates a clear commitment to improving engagement with its citizens and communities. This commitment is evidenced by the appointment of a Town and Community Council Liaison Officer and the refreshing of the Citizens Panel – recruiting new members and utilising citizen focus groups. The plan to utilise citizen focus groups is a positive step towards gaining deeper insights into community perspectives. Furthermore, the organisation has a corporate communications function in place and shows evidence of engagement across various departments.

8.3.2 However, several areas require attention to ensure a consistent and effective approach to engagement. While there are pockets of good practice, responsiveness to key stakeholders, including Members, scrutiny bodies, Town and Community Councils, and the general public, is not consistent across all parts of the organisation and was frequently reported as being slow and frustrating to those involved. The Council should focus on improving responsiveness to Members and the public as a short-term priority.

8.3.3 The Council should consider a more holistic, “whole Council approach” to promoting its work and the wider county of Bridgend. This would help to create a unified message and ensure that all departments are aligned in their communication efforts. While corporate communications are in place, they need to become more forward looking and proactive, especially in a period of change. It is vital that these communications effectively reach all staff, as internal communication is a key element of a successful and responsive organisation.

8.3.4 Additionally, there is a need to improve existing consultation and engagement practices. This includes making greater use of local Members, community groups, and other existing or established engagement or community infrastructure to promote engagement initiatives.

8.3.5 A critical component of effective engagement is “closing the feedback loop,” in a timely manner and this needs to be strengthened to ensure that members, citizens and wider stakeholders are informed of the results of engagement and how it has been used to inform decision making.

Statutory performance requirements considered by the Panel.

8.4 The extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively.

8.4.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrates a robust framework in the effective use of its resources, shown by good performance across its services and a consistent performance narrative shared by both Members and Officers. This success is underpinned by the dedication and commitment of its staff and elected Members, who share a genuine eagerness for positive change.

8.4.2 While there are commendable examples of cross-Council collaboration, this practice is not yet evident across the entire Authority, suggesting an area for future development. The Council’s self-assessment also identifies key areas for improvement. Specifically, there is a need to strengthen corporate and strategic capacity.

8.4.3 The Panel notes from a number of different meetings that unnecessary bureaucracy and procedures are currently stifling empowerment and delaying decision-making, which hinders the agile and efficient use of resources including staff time. The panel heard, for example ‘having to have a business case for all spend’, ‘committee reports having multiple versions as it went through the different layers of the Council’ and that this took significant time and led to frustration. Addressing systematic and potentially unnecessary procedural delays will be crucial for unlocking the full potential of the Council’s workforce.

8.5 The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively.

8.5.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrates strong financial stewardship, characterised by effective financial management and robust monitoring. This is further enhanced by greater involvement from a wider range of Members in the budget setting process, promoting a more collaborative approach to financial planning. The Council also benefits from good relationships with its partners and stakeholders, who have expressed a strong desire to be more strategically involved in future activities.

8.5.2 Looking ahead, there are key opportunities for improvement. It is essential to ensure that the budget and Medium-Term financial Strategy (MTFS) are more closely aligned with the new vision and change programme, providing a clear financial roadmap for the Council’s strategic direction. The Council as a whole should also encourage a greater appetite for innovation moving beyond traditional approaches to find new and innovative ways of working.

8.5.3 A significant area for development is cultivating a unified “Team Bridgend” culture. This involves promoting greater cross-service and partner working to break down silos and encourage a more collaborative environment. To support this a whole Council approach to communication is needed, moving beyond the sole responsibility of the Communications Team to ensure a consistent and cohesive message is shared by everyone.

8.6 The extent to which the Council has effective Governance in place.

8.6.1 Overall, the Council demonstrates strong governance arrangements and systems, with a robust performance management framework already in place. The organisation’s engagement with Trade Unions is effective, supporting positive relationships that contribute to a collaborative environment. Furthermore, the existing scrutiny arrangements are well-regarded by the majority of Members, highlighting their value overseeing the Council’s work.

8.6.2 While there are clear strengths, the Panel identified several key areas for improvement to enhance overall effectiveness:

8.6.3 **Leadership and Culture:** There is a continuing need to build a more cohesive leadership team and develop a culture that promotes unity and shared purpose.

8.6.4 **Performance Management:** Although a good framework is in place, it needs to be more deeply embedded across the Council to ensure consistent ownership and accountability for performance goals.

8.6.5 **Stakeholder responsiveness:** The Council’s responsiveness to Members, Scrutiny committees, stakeholders and citizens is inconsistent. Efforts should be made to ensure that communication and action are uniform and reliable across all services.

8.6.6 **Scrutiny Processes:** Scrutiny papers should be more concise, the panel heard of some papers being over 600 pages and lengthy Scrutiny Committees. Additionally, there is a need for greater evidence demonstrating the impact of outcomes of the scrutiny process.

9. Opportunities for Improvement – Recommendations

9.1 We have carefully considered the three required performance areas and the additional three areas identified by the Council for local consideration as part of the assessment process. This report contains a number of observations and comments about the Council's performance in each of these areas. They should be considered along with the recommendations set out below.

9.2 Overall, the Panel has concluded that Bridgend is a good Council at a crossroads. Without effective change, service delivery will be impacted; however, this can be avoided and for the Council to take its performance to the next level we recommend it should implement the following recommendations:

1.	The Council has appointed a Chief Executive to lead and deliver change. The Council should now support him to develop an inspiring vision, a Transformation Strategy, underpinning corporate strategies and the cultural shift required to produce both sustainability of services, greater cross-Council working and innovation – which involves staff, communities and partners.
2.	Put in place leadership development for senior staff and Members to support this change.
3.	The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation with a focus on the future and delivery of outcomes; supporting staff and Members to do that. This should involve reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to release capacity and empower managers.
4.	Rapidly review corporate and strategic capacity to ensure both sustainability of service delivery and supporting the overall emerging change programme. In addition, the Council should consider bringing together key corporate enablers to unlock the potential of the organisation: e.g. Human Resources, Performance and Communications**.**
5.	Review and refresh its approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including: • Funding • Systems • Skills • Culture
6.	Consider a whole Authority approach to promoting the work of the Council and the County of Bridgend – with pride.
7.	Consider building on its good relations with partners in the public, private, community and voluntary sector in order to deliver Bridgend's vision and priorities.
8.	As an immediate priority, the Council should improve its responsiveness to Members, stakeholders and citizens as part of building a culture of mutual respect for all.

10. Improvement Support

If you would like to discuss any further improvement support, please contact Jo Hendy, WLGA Head of Improvement.

11. Acknowledgements

11.1 The Panel and the WLGA would like to extend their thanks to the Council for its engagement throughout the PPA and we especially appreciate the support and openness from the Leader, Councillor John Spanswick and Chief Executive, Jake Morgan. Our thanks and appreciation also go to the following Council Officers for their invaluable support in coordinating documentation requests, responding to queries, arranging meetings and workshops, and providing onsite assistance:

Alex Rawlin – Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager
Kate Pask – Corporate Performance Manager
Michael Spanswick – Information and System Support Officer
Emma Griffiths – Senior CMB Support Officer
Michelle Lachetta – CMB Support Officer

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Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru
Welsh Local Government Association

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr
Bridgend County Borough Council

Asesiad Perfformiad Panel 2025

Panel Performance Assessment 2025

Adborth o'r Panel 19eg Medi 2025
Feedback from the Panel 19th September 2025

Purpose and Scope

The Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) has been undertaken in accordance with the statutory performance duties within the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The purpose: To provide an independent and objective assessment of the extent to which Bridgend County Borough Council is meeting the performance requirements:

- exercising its functions effectively;
- using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- effective governance in place for securing the above.

Additional areas identified by the council:

- Transformation
- Addressing workforce challenges
- Improving engagement

Purpose and Scope continued…

Additional local areas identified by the council:

Transformation – The **d**evelopment of a transformation strategy that meets political and key stakeholder aspirations that is underpinned by effective arrangements for delivery, performance management and a culture of constructive challenge. A clear need to focus on mechanisms and capacity for transformation that will improve citizens experience and create an organisation that is sustainable in the medium and long term.

Addressing workforce challenges – Building on strengthened workforce planning, address challenges in recruitment in key areas, and improve succession planning, to help create a long-term workforce strategy.

Improving engagement – Building on improvements to strategic communication, improve the Council's engagement and relationships internally with councillors and externally with local communities and Town and Community Councils to help the Council to become more citizen focused.

Overview of Approach

- Desktop review of council documentation.
- Observation of council meetings.
- Introductory online meetings.
- 240 hours plus spent on site speaking to members, officers, strategic partners, residents, businesses, to get a feel of what it's like in Bridgend.
- 1-2-1 meetings.
- Review of regulator findings.
- Focus groups.

Panel Membership

Independent Chair: Sally Loudon
Former Chief Executive of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), former Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council.

Senior Member Peer: Cllr. Andrew Stevens
Serving Councillor and Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure at Swansea Council.

Serving Local Government Senior Officer: Gareth Newell
Head of Performance and Partnerships, Cardiff Council.

Peer from the wider public, private, voluntary sector: Anne-Louise Clark
Executive Director – Communication and Change for Audit Wales & Chair of the Board of Trustees for Platform for Change Ltd.

Panel overall findings and conclusions

Bridgend is a good Council with untapped potential.

A political and managerial leadership that is ambitious for Bridgend.

Workforce that is enthusiastic, committed, cares deeply about the Council and the communities it serves.

High levels of self-awareness - clear and shared assessment of strengths and what needs to happen next.

Good performing services with an impressive turn-around in Children's Services.

Ready for change and positive about the future.

Bridgend is a Council at a cross-roads.

The Council understands the change needed and should act now to make sure it can sustain services now and continue to deliver for its communities over the years ahead.

Strengths and Areas of Innovation

Alignment of ambition for BCBC and it's communities
Positive, welcoming, friendly culture.

Enthusiastic, committed and caring staff, who are positive about the future.

Tangible appetite for change from all parts of the Council.

Children's Services turn-around shows strong leadership and resilience – there are lessons to be learnt and shared.

High levels of self-awareness – clear and shared assessment of strengths and areas of improvement

New budget working group.

Effective exercise of functions

Good performance in services and consistent performance narrative across members and officers.

Dedicated and committed members and staff.

A real eagerness for change.

Some examples of cross-Council working, but not evident across the whole authority.

Areas for Improvement:

Corporate and strategic capacity required.

Unnecessary bureaucracy and procedures are stifling empowerment and delaying decision making.

Economic, efficient and effective use of resources

Good financial management and monitoring.

Wider member involvement in the budget setting process.

Good relationships with partners and wider stakeholders, who are eager to be more strategically involved.

Areas for Improvement:

Looking forward, ensure the budget and MTFS is closely aligned with the new vision and change programme.

The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation.

An opportunity for greater cross-service and partner working and culture – 'Team Bridgend.'

Whole Council approach to communications needed.

Effective Governance

Overall, the Council has good governance arrangements and systems in place.

Good performance management framework in place.

Good engagement and relationships with Trade Unions.

Good scrutiny arrangements which are valued by members.

Areas for Improvement:

Continuing to build a cohesive leadership team and culture.

Performance management framework needs to be embedded across the Council and culture needs to be developed to ensure ownership and accountability.

Responsiveness to members, scrutiny, stakeholders and citizens is not consistent across the Council.

Scrutiny papers could be more concise, with greater evidence of impact of scrutiny also needed.

Additional local area(s) for consideration

Transformation

Alignment of ambition for change.

Excitement and appetite for change.

It's the right thing to do at the right time.

Evidence of innovation in some areas.

Areas for Improvement:

Develop and agree a new transformation plan, involving staff, members, partners and communities.

Strategic and corporate capacity required to deliver change.

Transformation programme needs to be based on data and insight.

Review approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including funding, systems, skills and culture.

Additional local area(s) for consideration

Addressing Workforce Challenges

Staff feel appreciated – it's a good and caring culture.
Proud of Bridgend County and the impact the Council has.
Good relationships with Trade Unions.

Areas of Improvement:

Move to a more strategic and future focussed workforce plan, linked to new vision and transformation plan – including succession planning, workforce of the future, digital and data.
Consider a corporate grow your own programme, developing links with local higher and further education.
Consider approach to staff celebration/appreciation.

Additional local area(s) for consideration

Improving Engagement

Strong desire and commitment from Cabinet to hear and listen to citizens and communities.
Evidence of engagement with stakeholders across the organisation.
Town and Community Council liaison officer now in place.
Citizen panel in place and innovative plan to use citizen focus groups
Corporate communications in place.

Areas for Improvement:

The Council should consider a whole-Council approach to promoting the work of the Council and the county of Bridgend.

Responsiveness to members, scrutiny, town and community councils and citizens is not consistent across the Council.

Improve consultation and engagement practice, including greater use of local members, community groups and infrastructure to promote engagement and closing 'the feedback loop'.

Forward-looking corporate communications needed which reaches all staff – especially at a time of change.

Opportunities for improvement - Recommendations

The Council has appointed a Chief Executive to lead and deliver change. The Council should now support him to develop an inspiring vision, a transformation strategy, underpinning corporate strategies and the cultural shift required to produce both sustainability of services, greater cross-Council working and innovation – which involves staff, communities and partners.

The Council should put in place leadership development for senior staff and Members to support this change.

The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation with a focus on the future and delivery of outcomes; supporting staff and Members to do that. This should involve reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to release capacity and empower managers.

Opportunities for improvement - Recommendations

The Council should rapidly review corporate and strategic capacity to ensure both sustainability of service delivery and supporting the overall emerging change programme. In addition, the Council should consider bringing together key corporate enablers to unlock the potential of the organisation: e.g. Human Resources, performance and communications.

The Council should review and refresh its approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including:

- **Funding**
- **Systems**
- **Skills**
- **Culture**

Opportunities for improvement - Recommendations

The Council should consider a whole Council approach to promoting the work of the Council and the county of Bridgend – with pride.

The Council should consider building on its good relations with partners in the public, private, community and voluntary sector in order to deliver Bridgend's vision and priorities.

As an immediate priority, the Council should improve its responsiveness to Members, stakeholders and citizens as part of building a culture of mutual respect for all.

Next steps

Initial feedback from the council on findings, conclusions and opportunities for improvement.

Draft and agree the report with the panel.

Draft report shared with the council for comment on factual accuracy.

Agree the final report, WLGA on behalf of the Panel to submit to the council, the Auditor General for Wales, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales; the Welsh Ministers (including Care Inspectorate Wales).

Council to respond to the panel assessment report in accordance with the statutory guidelines.

Diolch – Thank you!

Any questions?

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**SELF-ASSESSMENT 2024/25**
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	**CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY** **CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**
Responsible Officer:	**ALEX RAWLIN** **POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**The Corporate Plan and Performance Framework (on which Self-Assessment is based) form part of the Policy Framework.**
Executive Summary:	**This report seeks Cabinet endorsement and recommendation to Council for the Council's self-assessment 2024/25, particularly focusing on the draft scores and narrative. Key points are –** • **This is the second year judging performance against the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28.** • **Judgements / scores are developed based on the objective methodology agreed by Cabinet / Corporate Management Board and the Governance and Audit Committee in 2024.** • **All Wellbeing Objective scores are yellow (good) and amber (adequate).** • **Use of resources score is amber (adequate).** • **Governance score is yellow (good).**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement and recommendation to Council of the self-assessment for 2024/25 included at **Appendix 1** and the accompanying performance information at **Appendix 2**.

2. Background

2.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 set out a new local government improvement regime. One of the requirements of the Act is for the Council to make and publish a self-assessment report once each financial year. The self-assessment report has to set out conclusions on whether the Council met the 'performance requirements' during that financial year, and actions needed to improve. The 'performance requirements' focus on –

- Are we exercising our functions effectively;
- Are we using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- Is our governance strong.

2.2 The Council published its first self-assessment in October 2022 based on performance in 2021/22. The process was new, but based on existing data, reports and meeting fora where possible. Feedback on the report was generally positive in terms of the honesty and transparency of ratings, length of the report and simplicity of the language. Some members felt that annual performance data should have been published alongside the self-assessment.

2.3 The Council published its second self-assessment in December 2023 based on performance in 2022/23. Reflecting on the first self-assessment, some changes were made, including –

- Using information from the newly developed regulatory tracker,
- Publishing performance information alongside the self-assessment,
- Adding case studies to the document.

2.4 The Council published its third self-assessment in October 2024, based on performance in 2023/24. This was the first time self-assessment reviewed performance against the Council's new Corporate Plan 2023-28. Reflecting on the second self-assessment, further changes were made, notably –

- Including more comprehensive information on major consultation and engagement activity around the Council throughout the year;
- Scoring wellbeing objectives and aims using an objective and agreed process;
- Including a section on how well the Council performed against improvement activities from the previous self-assessment;
- Embedding self-assessment in the quarterly performance process so that large parts of the report write themselves and are familiar to senior officers and members.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 For 2024/25, the performance section of the self-assessment report followed the same process as in 2023/24. This section includes –

- A performance overview summarising performance against the whole corporate plan, using two graphs showing how are we doing on our commitments / projects and how are we doing on our performance indicators.
- A performance section for each wellbeing objective to include a graph showing performance, a summary of performance against each aim with a Red Amber Yellow Green (RAYG) rating for each and a short narrative section, what we will we do to improve and a case study.

3.2 The same methodology was also used for developing a RAYG rating for each of the wellbeing objectives and aims. This means that the RAYG is objective and based on performance on the commitments and performance indicators (PIs). This

would provide useful information to the public about how we are doing at a strategic level (but beyond the Wellbeing Objective level).

3.3 The approach gives a score to each commitment and performance indicator based on their RAYG rating. The individual scores are then combined to give an overall score for the aim (as a proportion of the maximum), using the approach provided in the performance framework. This methodology worked well last year, and improvements have been made to ensure it is more accurate this year. After a score for each aim is developed, a narrative for each aim has been developed pulling information on commitments and PIs directly from the end of year performance dashboards and testing this with Heads of Service and Corporate Management Board (CMB).

3.4 Since 1 April 2024 the Council has been subject to the Social Partnership duty under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 (SPPP Act). The Council's first Social Partnership Annual Report is required to be reported to Welsh Government as soon as is possible after the end of financial year, explaining action to comply with the duty in the preceding 12 months. This information has also been included in the Corporate Self-Assessment as it is so closely aligned with existing content, particularly the consideration of consultation and engagement work completed in the year. This section has therefore been extended to cover –

- Evidence of work with staff and Trade Unions on how the Council will achieve its wellbeing objectives in the year (particularly budget setting)
- Evidence of how the Council worked with staff and Trade Unions to agree last year's self-assessment
- How frequently the Council met with Trade Unions as part of its Social Partnership duty
- Any training provided to employees / trade union representatives on how the Social Partnership Duty is being implemented; and
- Any interesting case studies of work related to the Social Partnership Duty.

3.5 The Council's assessment of progress against the second performance requirement on use of resources follows the same process as last year. Firstly, the 7 use of resources templates were reviewed and updated by the lead officers. All of the 7 areas have been included in the work of Audit Wales in the past three years, and in many cases reviewed, discussed and followed-up by the Governance and Audit Committee or Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, so there is significant additional evidence to draw on. These 7 are then collated by the performance team for scrutiny and challenge.

3.6 The third performance requirement, on governance, is covered by the annual governance statement (AGS) which is scrutinised by the Governance and Audit Committee and audited by Audit Wales. This document has been summarised by the performance team as in previous years.

3.7 The draft findings from each of the three performance requirements has been brought together into a single presentation for officer scrutiny and challenge in the first instance. This was discussed and moderated by Heads of Service at their

meeting on 17 June 2025 and CMB on 18 June 2025. It was then considered by CMB / Cabinet (CCMB) on 24 June 2025.

Judgements for 2024/25

3.8 The Council's proposed self-assessment judgements for 2024/25 are –

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

3.9 The Use of Resources judgement remains at 'Adequate'.

3.10 The Governance judgement remains at 'Good'.

Next steps

3.11 The moderated findings have been brought together into a single draft self-assessment (included at **Appendix 1**).

3.12 The performance information that supports the self-assessment is included at **Appendix 2** to provide a better understanding of the Council's performance against each Wellbeing Objective, Aim, PI and Commitment that underpins the self-assessment judgements. This should give additional reassurance about the fairness and accuracy of the process.

3.13 Following its consideration at the Governance and Audit Committee and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July, and updates made as a result, the Council discussed the draft document with –

- Trade unions through the Council's regular meeting programme.
- Town and Community Council Forum (TCCF).

3.14 Following approval by Council, the self-assessment will be shared with Regulators and Welsh Government and published on the Council's website.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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.

5. Wellbeing of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Wellbeing Objectives

5.1 This report reviews the following corporate wellbeing objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that form part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28:-

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

5.2 The 5 ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act have also been included in the Council's wellbeing objectives. The ways of driving and measuring them is also contained in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no specific implications of this report on climate change or nature. However, the self-assessment considers the Council's performance on areas including climate change.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no specific implications of this report on safeguarding or corporate parenting. However, the self-assessment considers the Council's performance on areas including safeguarding and corporate parenting.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- Consider and endorse the draft Self-assessment 2024/25 report in **Appendix 1** supported by performance information in **Appendix 2** to submit to Council for approval.

Background documents

None

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Corporate Self-Assessment

Bridgend County Borough Council

2024/25



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



The purpose of this report

In January 2021, the Welsh Parliament passed a new law that changed the way councils work. Every year, we must publish a self-assessment report. This report covers 6 April 2024 to 5 April 2025.

We want the report to assure Welsh Government that we are performing well. We also want it to tell them that we are using our money and other resources properly and making decisions in a sensible, open way. Most importantly, the report must tell local residents, businesses and all stakeholders how we are doing. Welsh Government (WG) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) published guidance that told us how to develop our self-assessment and what evidence to use to judge ourselves.

Our self-assessment also acts as our annual report, our wellbeing report and for the first time this year as our social partnership duty report.



2024/25

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

The changing world for local government

The world is changing fast, and this is having a big impact on the way the Council works. Some of the hardest things we are dealing with in 2024/25 are -

- **The ongoing cost-of-living crisis causing increased energy costs, changes to the cost and availability of goods and services, and impacts on residents that add demand to our services. Long term council funding is not increasing at the same rate so our funding can't keep up with our outgoings.**
- **Political changes both at home and abroad, including a new UK Labour Government. This means a changing financial situation and changing priorities and expectations of the council, for example increases to employer National Insurance Contributions likely to add significant costs for councils and our partners.**
- **New and far-reaching legislation from UK and Welsh Governments on issues including social partnerships, immigration, elimination of profit from social care, employment rights and procurement that affect large parts of our organisation.**
- **Exceptional demands across some of our key service areas including support for children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), older people's care, complex children's placements and homelessness. Changing patterns of need in other service areas, for example behaviour in schools and attendance. And services struggling to meet expectations due to capacity / resilience issues following years of budget cuts.**

Our progress against last year's areas for improvement

In our 2023/24 Annual Self-Assessment we identified a series of areas that needed specific improvements in 2024/25. Below is an update on the work we have undertaken in these areas. More detail is provided on actions to date, and those that are still planned in each detailed section of this report.

2024/25

Wellbeing Objective One

1

- Mandatory E-Learning modules for staff have been reviewed and an updated process will be used going forward.
- We have significantly reduced the backlog of historical Disabled Facilities Grants. There are now 83 individual historic cases (2020/23) awaiting allocation, compared to 268 cases at the end of 2023/24.
- The Family Support Service has been reviewed and Integrated family support service and family group conferencing is in place.
- Prevention and wellbeing service have given support for 72 new young carers in primary school and 106 in secondary and higher education. Also provided support through 167 new young carers accessing a young carer ID card, 282 new young carers with a halo membership card (and 377 new household members).
- Brought in 'what matters' conversations and proportionate carers assessments. These can reduce the need for a full carer assessment through social workers.
- A young carers network event was held to get Young Carers meeting each other, sharing information, and getting away from responsibilities, caring and school.
- The children's services action plan is regularly reviewed, and good progress has been made on the priorities.
- The adult services 3-year strategic plan has been developed and adopted and implementation is underway.
- The future operating model for children's services is now in place and the underpinning processes / panels have been established.
- A 4-day training programme for strength-based practice to front-line social care staff has been developed and delivered. We are also working to support our partners to understand the Signs of Safety model.
- A draft Children and Families Placement Commissioning strategy has been developed and submitted to Welsh Government. There has also been a review of daytime opportunities in Bridgend which has been approved by Cabinet.
- The Corporate Safeguarding Board continues to oversee safeguarding practice across the Council. A reasonable assurance of corporate safeguarding arrangements has been given by internal audit.
- We have made good progress implementing the action plan from the housing support programme strategy, including mobilisation of Leasing Scheme Wales and development of additional accommodation models, including the Council purchasing Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO) style accommodation. A review of Social Housing Allocation is now complete.
- We have provided regular safeguarding training to school governors both online and on a face-to-face basis.
- A Regional Strategy for Safeguarding and Exploitation has been signed off and local plans developed for implementation in the Council.

Wellbeing Objective Two

2

- The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programme has been delivered successfully in 2024/25 with 37 businesses receiving funding.

- The employability offer for people with care and support needs has signed up 1,778 participants in 2024/25. We have worked with partners to support with training, volunteering and employment. The Marketing and Engagement team is well established and successful with promoting employability.

- We are helping people with support needs overcome barriers to work. Bridgend Employability Network holds monthly meetings with partner organisations to inform and develop referral pathways and collaborative opportunities.

- The Transforming Towns Programme has awarded £340,307 to five schemes which contribute towards regenerating our town centres.

- A new procurement contract (to reflect the Procurement Act 2023) has been developed, published on the Intranet for staff and shared with suppliers.

- We have run focus groups to better understand the results of the 2024 staff survey and developed plans to address the issues and run staff surveys differently in future.

- We have identified seven Real Living Wage employers in 2024/25 that were awarded contracts, taking the total to 257. We have included a question in our tender documentation to help us identify Real Living Wage employers more easily.

- Learning and development to support social workers includes an introduction to the practice model, 2-day introductory training, 5-day advanced training, partnership workshops, manager workshops, practice intensive workshops for specific teams and the development of e-learning (awareness level) package.

Wellbeing Objective Three

3

- Consultation on the Placemaking Plan for Maesteg has been completed and the Plan is now ready for formal approval.
- The Commercial Property Enhancement Grant paid out £168,280 against seven properties to enhance and consolidate the high street in commercial areas across our valley areas. This fund was supported by SPF.
- The Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme encountered challenges, and we only completed two transfers against a target of ten, partly due to staffing issues.
- The development of 180 new homes is continuing on the Ewenny Road site. Sale of the former Ewenny Road Industrial Estate to a housing developer is being finalised.
- The Valley Regeneration Strategy is in final draft form. Once is formally adopted, we will use this as a tool to develop potential funding bids
- The Green Spaces Enhancement Project has been completed.
- We continue to work with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Welsh Government and other partners to resolve issues affecting the delivery of new affordable housing sites in the Valleys.
- We have secured funding for a feasibility study for new facilities for people with learning disabilities at Wood-B and B-Leaf.
- Capital investment via Sport Wales and SPF has added value to Ogmore Life Centre with the extension of the studio to allow the growth of older adult's activities.
- HALO Leisure have been working with schools / community groups to promote the use of the upgraded library facilities in Ogmore Life Centre.
- Feel Good for Life wellbeing programme has supported 600 attendances. Super-Agers community wellbeing activities have supported 163 individuals (2061 attendances and 126 opportunities). The National Exercise Referral Scheme has supported 1331 new referrals.
- The tender process for the Bettws Welsh-medium childcare facility has concluded and a preferred provider has accepted the opportunity. The tender process for the Blackmill provision will run through May 2025.



Wellbeing Objective Four

4

- We have implemented the mandatory requirements of the Curriculum for Wales in all Bridgend schools.
- The Trauma Recovery Model has been implemented, and we are creating a range of trauma interventions for Bridgend services and partners, adopting the trauma-based practice model with children.
- The Prevention and Diversion Panel has input from a range of stakeholders (including South Wales Police and Bridgend College), to help plan exit strategies from the earliest point possible. It also enables allocation of referrals that may not be suitable for support from Bridgend Youth Justice Service.
- Youth Support Services held a multi-agency panel to review Year 11 pupils with less than 50% attendance and discuss support. The number of Year 11 leavers presenting as not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Bridgend remain below the Wales average.
- The 'Your Voice' digital forum has concluded and had 790 participants. Staff from the Children's Rights and Participation Team will work with Youth Councillors to identify the themes and issues raised.
- A governor skills audit was conducted in summer 2024, to collect information on the profession learning and skills training needs for school governors. Feedback has been used to identify areas of professional development needed.
- A total of 67 governors attended safeguarding training (Group A Safeguarding, Group B Safeguarding and Child Protection) between April 2024 and March 2025. Training is provided as in-person sessions or online.
- Schools have had additional digital learning training on topics such as, online safety, the use of the Digital Competence Framework 'Planning for Progression' resource, Adobe Express. Teachers and practitioners are now well-prepared to integrate these digital tools and frameworks into their curriculum.
- We are redeveloping the youth-led website. Youth Support Services are awaiting the outcome of a business proposal to trial for a corporate TikTok account.
- Our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) communication and engagement plan has been finalised, with a vision, messaging and promotion of Welsh-medium education. The 'Comms Cymraeg Schedule' is finalised, which is a plan for targeted communication over the year. We also launched a Facebook campaign to promote Welsh-medium education.
- The school design for Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr has been progressed and Council approved extra capital funding needed. Ecological issues continue to affect the Ffordd Cadfan site. This has impacted on the timing of a site investigation.
- Cabinet Secretary for Education gave approval to proceed the Heronsbridge School project to Full Business Case stage. Council approved the extra capital funding needed and a tender process is underway.
- The planning application for the replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School was submitted in November 2024. The detailed design and contract preliminaries have been progressed. Cabinet Secretary for Education gave approval to proceed to Full Business Case stage.
- Cabinet approval has been received to transition the Bridgend West scheme from Mutual Investment Model (MIM) funding to capital and the planning application has been submitted. The tender process started in February 2025.
- The Education Engagement Team have scheduled 'drop-in' sessions with the Care Experienced Children Team to ensure that our teams become aware of care-experienced children at the earliest opportunity to ensure smooth transitions into education and appropriate support is given.
- Performance framework and action plans have been developed on support for care-experienced children so the Corporate Parenting Board can hold partners to account on progress against the priorities they set.
- A Regional Accommodation Strategy for people with a Learning Disability and a Regional Report on transition for children with a Learning Disability have been completed - commissioned by the Regional Learning Disability Commissioning Group. An accommodation-based review has been completed in the Council.

Wellbeing Objective Five

5

- Work has begun on the development of a fleet transition strategy review.
- There are currently six electric vehicles in the Support at Home Service, Mobile Response Team, and at Trem-Y-Mor, the base for our integrated community resource team staff. Charging points are in operation.
- The final Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was approved by Cabinet and submitted to Welsh Government in April 2024.
- We have completed energy efficiency improvements for council buildings including installing solar panels.
- Planning have successfully updated their website to include additional information and guidance about the new Local Development Plan (LDP).
- The Local Nature Partnership (LNP) continues to be supported by the Climate Change Response Team. The team are developing projects with partners and community groups to include in our Local Places for Nature 2025/27 application. A section has also been added to the staff Corporate Induction e-learning module on the Biodiversity Duty, what it is and what it means for Council employees.
- A decision was made at Cabinet to bring waste services in house. A Waste Transition Board meets fortnightly.
- The recycling centre at Tythegston has now been decommissioned following the opening of the new centre in Pyle.

Wellbeing Objective Six

6

- The Strategic Equalities Plan (SEP) 2024-2028 Action Plan has now been completed and signed-off by Cabinet Committee Equalities. It has been published on our website.

- Three staff network groups have been established for Menopause, Disability and LGBTQ+. Terms of reference have been agreed and information on staff networks is promoted with staff. A Welsh Language Forum for staff of all proficiency levels has been established.

- A Participation and Engagement Strategy has been implemented and published.

- The National Residents Survey was actively promoted and closed with over 3,000 responses. Results are being analysed.

- A draft Net Zero Strategy was completed in March 2025, feedback from officers and Scrutiny Committee has been provided to Carbon Trust and the revised strategy anticipated to be complete in May 2025. It will then be subject to a 12 week public consultation before formal adoption.

- We undertook a pilot in 2024 in Garw and Ogmore Valley libraries to provide extra support for residents in libraries. Demand was extremely low and a decision has been made to focus on how we improve performance across all the customer channels to improve the way we deal with customer demand.

- Community Navigators are based in BAVO, supported by Regional Integrated Fund Investment (RIF). BAVO are sustaining a range of community-based networks as part of a prevention and wellbeing within communities approach.

- We work closely with Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) partners and third sector organisations, including the CTM WISE project, working on streamlining health services and social prescribing pathways. Support has been made to increase community resilience in dementia services. We celebrated Older Persons Week with free activities including art workshops, cinema screenings and a silent disco run by our cultural trust Awen.

Wellbeing Objective Seven

7

- The Metrolink bus facility was made fully operational in November 2024.
- A tender process to award the contract for the construction work for Porthcawl Grand Pavilion Redevelopment has been completed.
- 22 play area refurbishments were completed and handed back to the community
- Over £13 million was allocated through Social Housing Grant and Transitional Capital Programme Grant to deliver 108 houses.
- Active leisure membership has increased within Garw Valley Life Centre at just over 320 live members. Ogmore Valley Life Centre capital works will be finished soon allowing more structured use of facilities and extra investment to change the main entrance and upgrade the sports hall have been secured.
- External support has been commissioned to help us develop a plan for the long-term Active Bridgend Plan and leisure strategy and a lot of initial engagement has taken place. Discussions have taken place to address key policy areas including community focused schools, community asset transfer, active travel, play sufficiency and the population needs assessment.
- We have developed a draft play sufficiency assessment and action plan with a focus on policy and implementation across the whole council.
- Universal Primary Free School Meals roll out has finished so free school meals are now available for all Bridgend primary school pupils.
- There has been a small Welsh Government-funded expansion in Flying Start (26 additional places). Five new providers have been recruited to support the ongoing delivery of the Flying Start childcare programme.
- We have a new operating model for the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which includes a screening and triage function based on urgency of need.

How is the council performing in 2024/25?

Every five years the council publishes a new Corporate Plan. A new Corporate Plan was published in April 2023. It describes the council's priorities, why they are important and how progress will be measured. The priorities, or well-being objectives (WBO), show our commitments to residents and our contribution to Wales' well-being goals –

Your Council's Wellbeing Objectives

National Well-being Goal	Protecting our most vulnerable	Fair work, skilled jobs and thriving towns	Creating thriving Valleys communities	Helping people meet their potential	Responding to the climate and nature emergency	Making people feel valued, heard and connected	Supporting people to be healthy and happy
National Well-being Goal							
A resiliant Wales							
A healthier Wales							
A more equal Wales							
A Wales of cohesive communities							
Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language							
A globally responsible Wales							

In line with the Future Generations Act and the sustainable development principle, when we developed this 5-year corporate plan, we thought hard about how we could work differently to respond to short- and medium-term issues, like the financial crisis, while protecting our natural environment and helping young people meet their potential for the long-term.

Each year, we allocate resources through the development of an annual budget. This is set in line with the priorities in the Corporate Plan. Alongside this, we publish a detailed delivery plan that sets out the specific priorities for the year and how we will measure them.

We have a process for measuring how we are doing on our priorities. We use –

- performance indicators,
- evidence on delivery of our projects,
- feedback from residents, businesses, and partners, and
- the views of our regulators and auditors.

Each part of the council pulls this information together and presents it to councillors who look at the data, check it and ask questions. This was done for the year 2024-25 in June and July 2025.

We use all of this information to come to overall judgements on progress against each of our aims and wellbeing objectives using this scale -

What does this Status mean?

	Overall / self assessment performance	Commitments, projects or Improvement plans	Performance Indicators
COMPLETE (BLUE)	Not applicable	Project is completed	Not applicable
EXCELLENT (GREEN)	Very strong, sustained performance and practice	As planned - within timescales, on budget, achieving outcomes	On target and performance has improved / is at maximum
GOOD (YELLOW)	Strong features, minor aspects may need improvements	Minor issues. One of the following applies - deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	On target
ADEQUATE (AMBER)	Needs improvement. Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects need improvement	Issues - More than one of the following applies - deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	Off target (within 10% of target)
UNSATISFACTORY (RED)	Needs urgent improvement. Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Significant issues - deadlines breached, project over budget, risk score up to critical or worse	Off target (target missed by 10%+)

Performance Overview

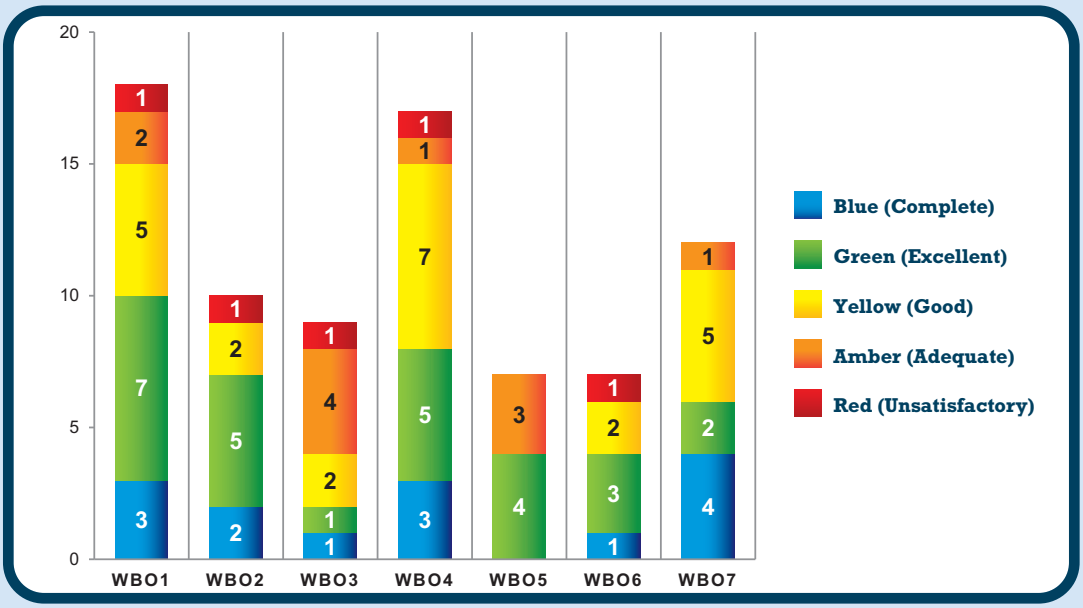
To support the new, 5-year Corporate Plan, we developed a 1-year delivery plan for 2024/25. The plan included 7 wellbeing objectives supported by 41 aims. We measure progress against these by looking at –

- 80 commitments that measure our projects and initiatives, for example, opening a new metrolink bus facility in Porthcawl.
- 108 performance indicators or PIs to measure our day-to-day activities, for example, collecting and recycling your household waste.

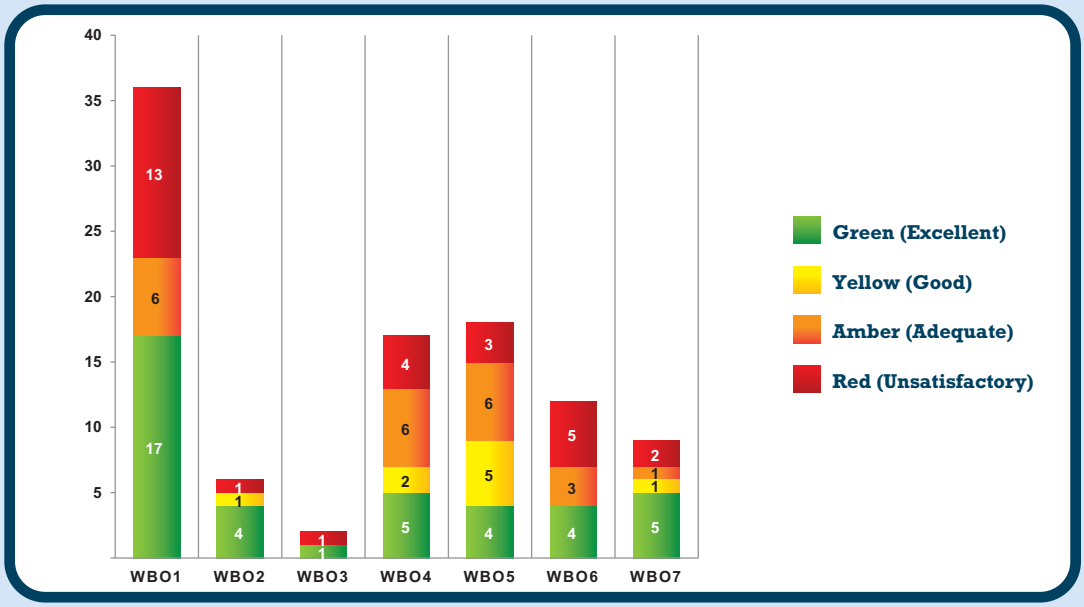
Each one of these has been given a blue, red, amber, yellow or green rating to show you whether we are doing well or struggling to achieve them, and the two graphs below summarise these.

Alongside the self-assessment, we have published a separate, short performance document that details our progress against each PI and commitment.

Graph 1 How we are doing on our commitments / projects

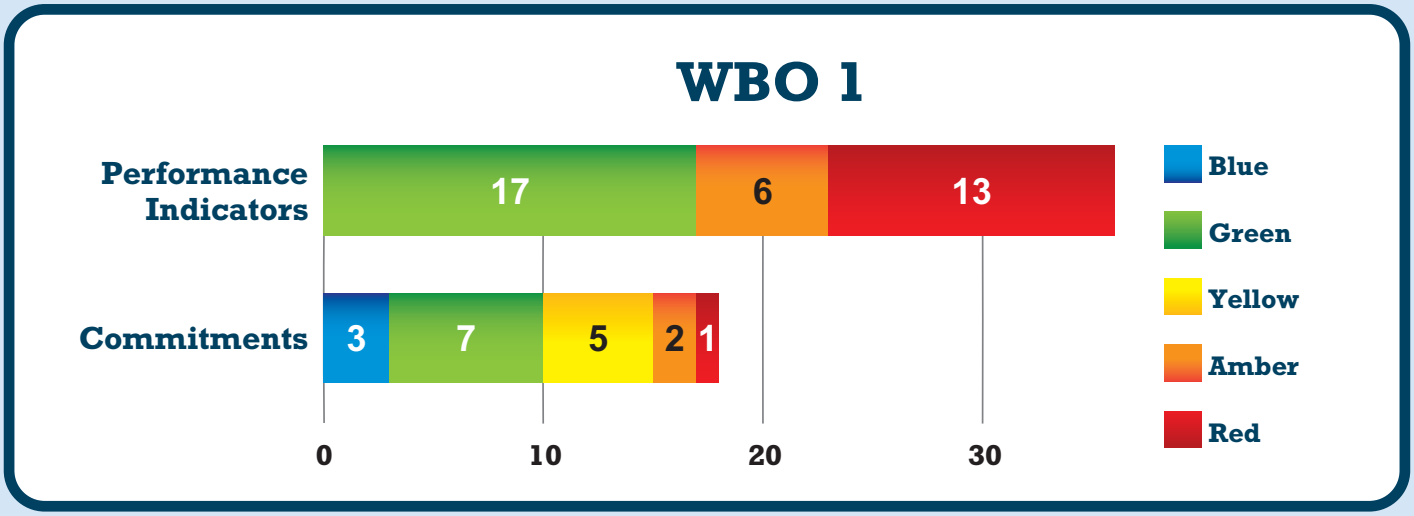


Graph 2 How we are doing on our performance indicators



Wellbeing Objective 1

A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable	SCORE
	GOOD



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective

Aim	Status	Description
Providing high-quality children's and adults social services and early help services to people who need them	GOOD	Social Services continues to make good progress in delivering our priorities and commitments. We have a clear 3-year strategic plan for Children and Family Services, a significantly improved position in the children's workforce and reduction in the agency workforce. The Signs of Safety model of practice is being embedded. The number of children on the child protection register has steadily reduced and is on target. We have achieved a safe reduction in the number of care experienced children. 100% of carers (in children's services) have been offered a carer's assessment. There have been further improvements in the timeliness of visits to children who are care-experienced and on the child protection register. We have some performance challenges with care-experienced children, placements and in-house fostering. The children's placement spend is much higher than the budget allocated for the service. There have been positive regulatory inspections of children's residential care homes. Our biggest challenge is availability of fostering and residential placements which has led to a small number of children being supported in operating without registration (OWR) arrangements. A new Placement Commissioning Strategy has been developed to address this. Adult Social Care also has a clear 3-year Strategic Plan. There have been positive regulatory inspections in adult social care. 509 reablement packages have been completed, supporting people to retain or regain their independence, although the percentage that mitigated the need for support has got worse. There are positive outcomes in tier 1 and tier 2 services but more challenges in tier 3 specialist services, particularly the community learning disability team where workforce challenges are impacting on practice and performance.

Aim	Status	Description
Providing high-quality children's and adults social services and early help services to people who need them	GOOD	There have been some improvements in performance but still higher than Welsh average delayed pathways of care. There has been good progress in the commissioning with complex care project to undertake in depth reviews of care packages and commissioning arrangements. There have been detailed service reviews of regulated accommodation (care homes, extra care and supported living) and daytime opportunities. The percentage of enquiries to the Adult Social Care front door which result in information and advice only has increased again and met our target. Numbers of people accessing independent advocacy both in Children's and Adult Social Care is well below target and we are working to improve capacity and provision. We have completed more team around the family support plans and the percentage of plans closing with a successful outcome is similar to last year at 82% There has been a 67% reduction in the number of cases stepping up to statutory services, a key outcome that highlights the effectiveness of our preventative work.
Supporting people in poverty to get the support they need / help they are entitled to	EXCELLENT	Our Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) is efficient, with applications dealt with promptly. The average time taken to process a new claim for CTR is 19 days. We provide advice and support through our financial advice and assistance service (FASS). This service provides advice and support in managing or reducing household debt to 94% of the people who have contacted it. It is also helping people access benefits and allowances, and 96% of people using the service saw an in increased income through claims for additional or increased benefits and allowances, a total of £1.7 million in income gains this year.
Supporting people facing homelessness to find a place to live	ADEQUATE	Changes to Welsh Government legislation means there is a crisis of housing supply and demand across Wales. Demand is very high for homelessness services and our supply of accommodation (particularly specific types of accommodation like large homes and accessible homes) is very low. This means we can't help people as quickly as we should, and we are relying on temporary accommodation more than we would like. But a complex housing scheme was commissioned and is now operational. We have increased the use of, and built relationships, in the private rented sector by the adoption of the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme and are proactively bringing empty properties back into use. We have purchased accommodation to use as a more suitable form of temporary accommodation for those that are homeless. There has been a further 12% increase in homeless presentations in 2024/25 compared to last year. Homelessness prevention has improved and we have met our target for the year. This is a result of the introduction of longer notice periods in the Renting Homes Act and work with RSL's to prevent homelessness by ensuring those who are facing homelessness are given priority for housing.

Aim	Status	Description
Supporting children with additional learning needs to get the best from their education	ADEQUATE	The number of pupils on the waiting lists for specialist provision is a lot higher than our target. This includes previous referrals where support in mainstream schools has not been successful. This has resulted in a further increase in the number of pupils needing specialist placements. We have produced a five-year plan to meet increasing demand on ALN support services, specialist provision and schools. Extra finances have been found to meet demand for ALN places, and we are developing three new learning resource centres. We are bringing in an online Individual Development Plan (IDP) system, but it has been delayed due to issues found in testing. It is likely to be in place early in 2025/26. To comply with the ALN Code for Wales, all (100%) year 9 pupils with Additional Learning Needs with a transition plan in place, should have had an annual review by 31 March of each current school year. We haven't hit this target, we have achieved 74.3% due to non-attendance of key stakeholders, rescheduling and ALN Coordinator (ALNCo) capacity. Estyn has inspected Heronsbridge School and The Bridge and both have resulted in excellent outcomes. We have used the Welsh Government ALN Capital Grant effectively to improve provision (including sensory rooms and outdoor play areas) across schools and specialist settings.
Safeguarding and protecting people who are at risk of harm	GOOD	A regional safeguarding strategy has been agreed and we have a local plan that reflects it. The Corporate Safeguarding Board continues to oversee safeguarding practice across the Council. A reasonable assurance of corporate safeguarding arrangements has been given by internal audit. Almost all children's safeguarding referrals decisions are made within the 24-hour target, but our target is 100%. 84% of child protection investigations are completed within required timescales, so we have met this year's target. Average waiting time on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) waiting list has reduced again to 10 days and we are now meeting our target. But the percentage of adult safeguarding inquiries which receive initial response within seven working days has improved but is below target. We have introduced a weekly monitoring system so we can escalate issues as needed. Not all staff are using the safeguarding e-learning module, although completion has increased to 88%, but we are changing the system to recognise prior learning.
Help people to live safely at home through changes to their homes	UNSATISFACTORY	The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process was taken in-house in 2021. Historical cases with agents have now been cleared (often after many years) so this has had an impact on the average time to complete a DFG. Demand is still higher than we can manage within existing budgets. But the DFG procurement framework is now live, the budget was fully spent and an extra £90,000 was secured from the Regional Partnership Board, which allowed us to adapt a further 15 homes. A total of 238 adaptations were completed, a 5% rise on the previous year. 99% of those receiving a service were satisfied with the adaptations to their homes and felt they helped them to remain in their own home independently and safely.

Aim	Status	Description
Support partners to keep communities safe	GOOD	The council's CCTV system and operatives have reported over 1,000 incidents to South Wales Police to help them deal with incidents and keep the public safe. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership (CTMCSP) has been established; Terms of Reference have been developed; and the partnership has met. Almost all (99%) of Assia domestic abuse service users report increased feelings of safety at their exit evaluation. 100% of high-risk domestic abuse victims and public protection notices received by the service were contacted within 48 hours, and 100% of medium risk domestic abuse victims and public protection notices were contacted within 72 hours. Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) has done presentations to schools, Early Help Teams and Pupil Support Services to raise awareness of their prevention offer. Various activities have been held and played a role in diverting children who offend from being criminalised, significantly reducing the number of first-time entrants into the criminal justice system. Around 76% of council staff have completed Violence Against Women training, which is below our target.

What will we do to improve?

- Continue implementation of the Children's and Adult Services three-year strategic plans.
- Implement the Early Help Commissioning Strategy.
- Create a strategic carers group to ensure unpaid carers' views are heard
- Take part in Welsh Government's Local Authority Benefit Take-up Pilot to identify residents who are missing out on entitlements to financial support and undertake targeted campaigns to help them.
- Develop and consult on a new social housing allocation policy
- Maximise the budget for disabled facilities grants so that we can complete as many projects as possible in 2025/26
- Identify schools to host three new learning resource centres – a Foundation Phase observation class, a Foundation Phase Nurture Class for pupils with Emotional, Social and Behavioural Difficulties (ESBD) and a secondary Communication, Autism Resource Education (CARE) base. Open these provisions in September 2025.
- We are on track to meet the additional learning needs (ALN) commencement orders (moving statements of special education needs to IDPs) by 31 August 2025.
- Host a session on the online IDP system for ALNCos at the next forum in May 2025, testing the system before rollout in schools.
- Complete actions from Day Opportunities and Accommodation Based Service reviews.
- Complete a deep dive into adult safeguarding

Case Study
Early Help



In 2024/25 we integrated our Early Help Services in our Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate. Demand and referrals for Early Help have been increasing significantly. We have worked hard to strengthen the early help offer and improve outcomes for families. New front door arrangements have helped us with early identification of risk, allowing teams to intervene before needs escalate.

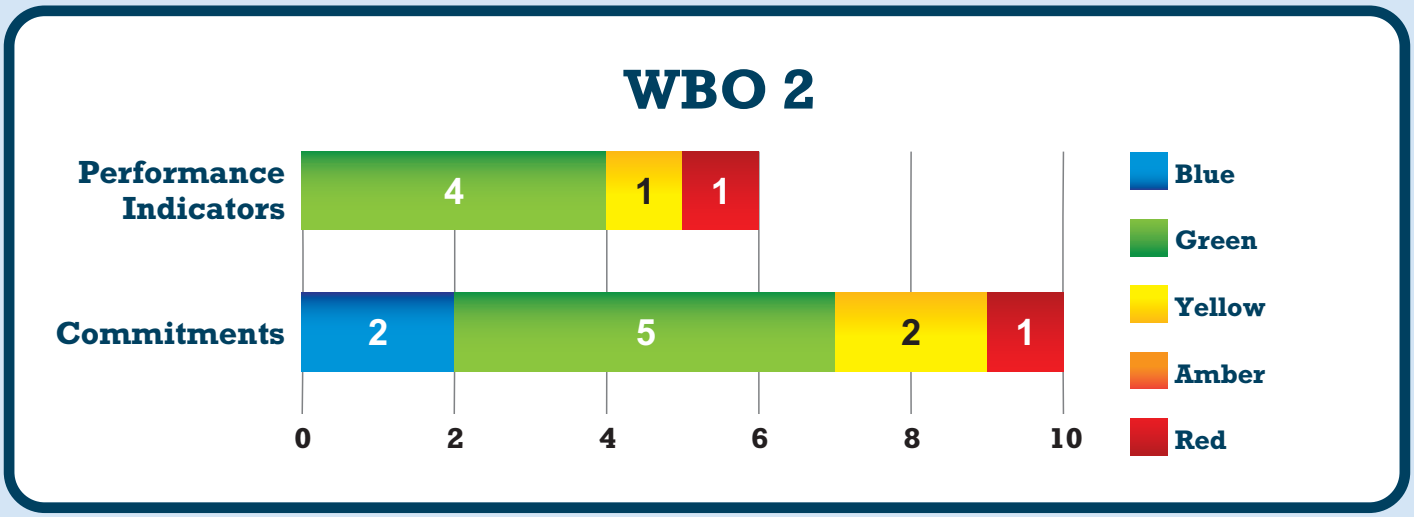
A mapping pilot in the North hub has been rolled out, helping us understand family needs and coordinating support. We have worked with partner agencies, and health services, to make sure families receive timely and appropriate support. Earlier identification has allowed teams to undertake preventative work rather than reacting to crises. As a result of all of this, there has been a 67% reduction in the number of cases stepping up to statutory services, which highlights the effectiveness of this early and preventative work. Impact measures have shown that 96% of families reported feeling more able to make positive lifestyle and behaviour changes, and 94% of families reported improved family resilience.

Wellbeing Objective 2

A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns

SCORE

GOOD



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective

Aim	RAYG	Performance this year
Helping our residents get the skills they need for work	EXCELLENT	Employability Bridgend provides support to unemployed people, and those in work but struggling with low skills or in-work poverty. This year, 453 participants (above the target of 233) of the Employability Bridgend programme went into employment. Over the course of the year 1,778 participants were signed up into the programme. We have worked with partners such as other Council departments, particularly the neurodivergence team in January for the Pathways conference, to support with training, volunteering and employment. We signpost as appropriate and collaborate with other services and projects as appropriate. The Marketing and Engagement Team is well established and successful in promoting Employability. The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programme was completed in line with funder requirements and over 95% of targets were exceeded, overseen by the Economic Programme Board. All projects finished on time, but the programme had an 11% underspend.
Making sure our young people find jobs, or are in education or training	ADEQUATE	678 participants in the Employability Bridgend programme have been supported into education or training (against a target of 409). The percentage of year 11 school leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET) is better than the Wales average, 5th in Wales, but slightly worse than last year at 1.9%. Social Services staff have attended college careers events and open days and had input in Health and Social Care Diploma programmes, giving presentations on working in social care, also provision of information on work pathways, apprenticeship programmes and careers in social care.

Aim	RAYG	Performance this year
Improving town centres, making them safer and more attractive	GOOD	The £8 million refurbishment project on Maesteg Town Hall has been completed and the building was opened in November 2024. This listed building was restored and extended to provide a community hub and arts and cultural centre for the Llynfi Valley. Five projects have been awarded grants totalling over £340,000 from Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Schemes, to contribute towards regenerating our town centres. The availability of Commercial Property Grants has been marketed, with some feasibility finance available for projects in the valley areas available throughout. Significant consultation has been undertaken on the new Placemaking Strategies and marketing continues on availability of funding.
Attracting investment and supporting new and existing local businesses	EXCELLENT	94 business start-ups (compared with a target of 53) have been supported through advice, grant bids, web material, face to face networking and event opportunities. 37 businesses (compared with a target of 21) have received support through the SPF, which is a higher demand than we expected. 68 start-up grants were awarded in 2024/25. Support has been provided from UK Steel Enterprises to enhance the Start-up Grant and it is expected that it will be of interest to former TATA, and TATA supply chain, employees. 27 Business Development Grants and 10 Business Feasibility Grants were supported in the year. The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has been formed. A draft Delivery Agreement for Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) was completed by September 2024, monitored by the Economic Directors Forum. Work with the CJC to produce a Regional Transport Plan was completed in December 2024.
Making the council an attractive place to work	GOOD	This year we have been awarded the Disability Confident - Leader status. We continue to pay the Real Living Wage and promote a range of benefits such as staff discounts, our health and wellbeing platform and flexible employment options. The number of apprentices employed across the organisation during 2024/25 was 22. A workforce planning e-learning module has been written, and a toolkit for managers is being developed. The response rate to last year's staff survey was low. We have held staff focus groups to find out why and look at their concerns. We will use these to change the way we engage with staff. New communications channels have been introduced including a Chief Executive's quarterly message, a monthly managers' briefing note and managers forum.
Making the council an attractive place to work	EXCELLENT	We have worked with our supply chain, encouraging employers to offer more training and to find out if they are Real Living Wage Employers. We have identified 257 employers in the Borough are Real Living Wage accredited. We have implemented new contract procedure rules in line with the UK Procurement Act. Social value and carbon reduction have been strengthened as a consideration in our tenders. Contractor Safeguarding Protocol has also been included to ensure suppliers are aware of their duties for safeguarding vulnerable people. We have developed an external website for tenders and procurement, including a Corporate Contracts Register and a new 'Selling to the Council' guide to support suppliers to do business with us. We have developed and implemented a Modern Slavery Statement and standard terms and conditions for use across the council.

What will we do to improve?

- Continue our comprehensive Employability Programme.
- Award grants from Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Scheme, to contribute towards regenerating our town centres.
- Further develop plans for the Porthcawl waterfront regeneration area
- We are running Business Start-up Grants and a series of engagement events through Bridgend Business Forum.
- Provide opportunities for short-term, test trading through 'For a Limited Time Only'.
- Execute the package of Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) activities for the transition year, 2025-26, as agreed by Cabinet in January 2025.
- Bridgend Music Service will further develop links with partners to broaden the learning offer including members of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales visiting Bridgend in May 2025 to deliver two concerts to pupils.
- Complete the change to a biannual staff survey supported by surveys tailored to frontline staff at different times of the year.

Case Study

Reducing our agency workforce in Social Services

In 2024/25 we have used international recruitment and 'grow our own' to reduce our agency workforce. We have promoted careers in social care through schools and colleges, Careers Wales, job centres and our own Employability Programme.



We have defined and improved progression routes, including work placements and apprenticeships, training and development opportunities, and a social work degree.

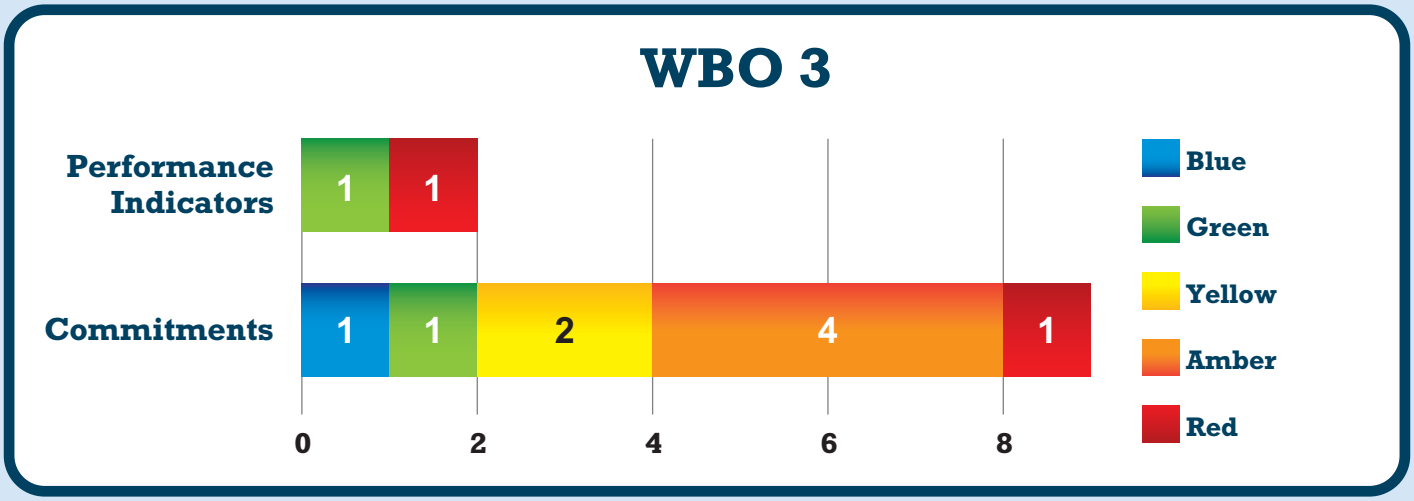
We have also recruited 13 international social workers, winning a prestigious Social Care Wales Accolade for 'Developing and inspiring the workforce'. Together this work has seen us reduce our agency social worker workforce from over 40% in March 2023 to 9% in March 2025, as well as helping us retain staff and improve the experience of our workforce.

Wellbeing Objective 3

A County Borough with thriving valleys communities

SCORE

ADEQUATE



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective

Aim	Status	Description
Investing in town centres, including Maesteg town centre	EXCELLENT	A Placemaking Plan for Maesteg has been developed and consulted on and is ready for approval. It will guide investment and policy decisions which will shape the town's future. It will support applications for project funding and demonstrate need and opportunities for activity to support the town centre. The Commercial Property Enhancement Grant is underway with over £168,000 paid out against seven properties to enhance and consolidate the high street in commercial areas across our valley areas. Grants were awarded in Ogmore Vale, Garw, Llynfi, Pencoed and Pyle. Examples include Ogmore Valley Family Dental, and Ogmore Boxing Club; where support was given to maintain active frontages on the high street and retaining health services and benefits in the valley.
Creating more jobs in the Valleys	ADEQUATE	Good progress has been made on the development of the Valley Regeneration Strategy. It is now in final draft form to be circulated for completion. Once formally adopted, we can use this as a tool to develop funding bids. Discussions are still ongoing about the Northern Valleys Gateway Initiative (NVI) nearly two years after starting. Funding still has not been released to develop much needed business units in the valleys.

Aim	Status	Description
Improving education and skills in the Valleys	ADEQUATE	Flying Start Nurseries at Pontycymmer, Nantymoel and Ogmore Vale are now operating. The tender process for the opportunity to open a Welsh-medium provision in Bettws has concluded and a preferred provider has been identified. The tender process for the Blackmill has been delayed and will run to May 2025.
Investing in green spaces and supporting tourism to the valleys	GOOD	Good progress has been made on the development of the Valley Regeneration Strategy. It is now in final draft form to be circulated for completion. Once formally adopted, we can use this as a tool to develop funding bids. We have invested in parks in the valleys with five refurbished children's play areas with accessible facilities. There has also been significant investment in refurbishing tennis courts in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association including at Maesteg Welfare Park and Caedu Park.
Encourage the development of new affordable homes in the valleys	ADEQUATE	We meet Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) regularly to encourage new social housing in the valleys. Valley areas are considered in line with the Local Housing Market Assessment; valley sites feature in the programme of development and future pipeline development. Only two (against a target of 20) additional affordable homes have been provided by RSLs in the valleys this year, although 13 have been built or acquired and will soon be ready for occupation. The development of 180 new homes on the former Ewenny Road Industrial Estate site is continuing, but progress is slower than planned. The sale of the land to a housing developer is being finalised.

What will we do to improve?

- Approve and adopt the Placemaking Plan for Maesteg.
- Continue to award Commercial Property Enhancement Grants to enhance and consolidate high street in commercial areas across our valley areas.
- Complete and adopt the Valleys Regeneration Strategy.
- Keep working on the release of funds for business units in the valleys through the Northern Valleys Initiative (NVI).
- Implement the proposed delivery plan for the universal expansion of Flying Start childcare (phase three) from April 2025.
- Complete the tender process for Welsh-medium childcare provision in Blackmill.
- Complete the sale of the Ewenny Road site to a housing developer.

Case Study
Maesteg Town Hall

On 20 November 2024 Maesteg Town Hall opened its doors to the public, following multi-million-pound redevelopment project delivered by the Council and our partners at Awen Cultural Trust.



The 140-year-old building has been returned to its former glory, but now boasts a new glass atrium, library and heritage centre, studio theatre and cinema space, café and mezzanine bar. The main auditorium is a multi-functional performing arts venue with a stage lift, dressing rooms and a bar.

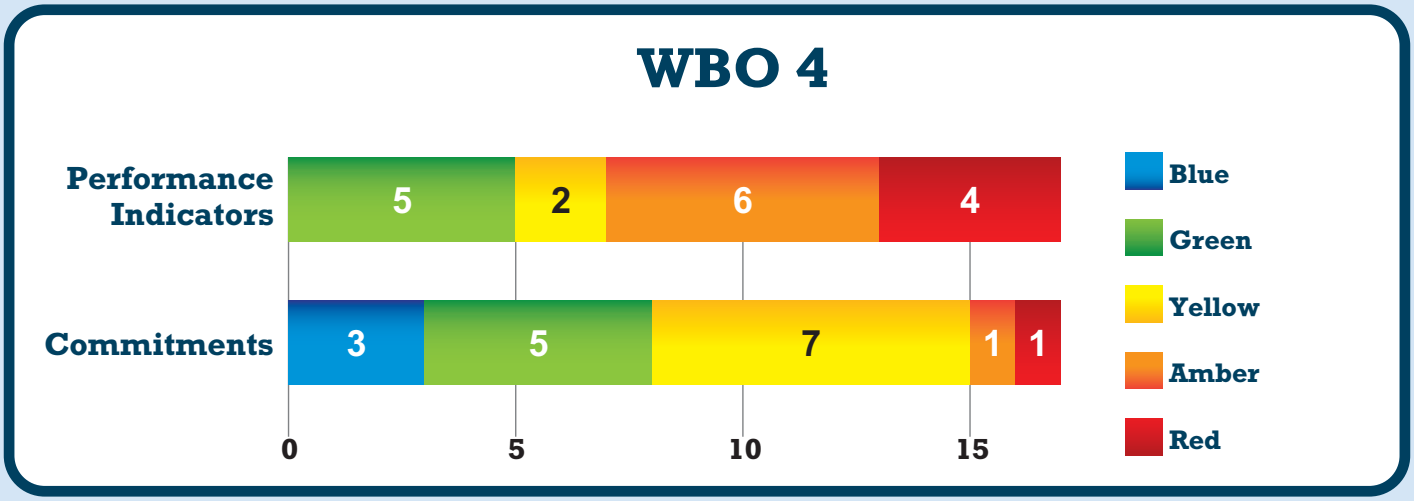
The balcony has been retained and refurbished. Historic paintings from Christopher Williams have been restored and are on display. We now have one of the finest cultural venues in Wales in the Llynfi Valley.

The project was funded by the Council, the European Regional Development Fund, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Welsh Government including CADW, Awen Cultural Trust, Maesteg Town Council, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Davies Trust, and the Pilgrim Trust.



Wellbeing Objective 4

A County Borough where we help people meet their potential	SCORE
	GOOD



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective

Aim	Status	Description
Providing safe, supportive schools with high quality teaching	ADEQUATE	One school has been removed from Estyn 'special measures' category, while another school now requires special measures after an Estyn inspection. The post-inspection action plan was submitted and approved by Estyn in February 2025. All schools have completed safeguarding audits, with 93% rated as "green". Safeguarding will be an agenda item at student council meetings and we aim to increase governor engagement with safeguarding training. Fixed-term school exclusions are increasing due to behavioural changes and an increased complexity of needs, especially in primary schools. A group has been convened to identify trends and themes including areas of best practice to address violence in school. Pupil attendance rates in primary schools continue to increase, but attendance in secondary school remains lower than that of primary pupils. We are supporting pupil attendance across all schools. The average capped 9 scores for pupils in year 11 (measuring GCSE results or equivalent) are below target but above Wales average, placing Bridgend in 9th compared to other local authorities in Wales. Throughout this year, schools have been supported with a variety of digital professional learning and skills training, and a Schools' Digital Learning Strategy 2025-2028 has been developed. The youth support social media presence is growing but we await the outcome of a proposal for a trial for a corporate TikTok account. Your Voice digital forum is completed and had 790 participants.

Aim	Status	Description
Expanding Welsh medium education opportunities	GOOD	There are a variety of groups, projects and initiatives in place to increase opportunities for children to use the Welsh language, but targets we have set have not been achieved in all areas. The percentage of year 1 learners taught through the medium of Welsh is 8.83% and continues to show an improving trend, and the percentage of learners studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4 has also improved to 7.23%, indicating a higher proportion of children studying at a Welsh medium secondary school. The number of students who were entered for an A level examination in Welsh second language has reduced since last year and the target has been missed. There has been significant progress in delivering the actions in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). These include; Cymraeg i Blant sessions in Porthcawl to support readiness for the childcare hub and seedling school. Regular groups such as baby massage, baby yoga and Welsh Rhymetime in Maesteg, Y Sarn, Bridgend Town and Pyle, with 152 groups this year, and 1460 parents attending. 100% of schools are now engaged with Siarter Iaith and Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus. A communications plan will help celebrate schools that have received awards. A press release has been published to celebrate the Siarter Iaith awards ceremony in March 2025.
Modernising our school buildings	ADEQUATE	Each of the five schemes are in design and development phases and significant progress has been made on their approvals, funding and in some cases tenders. Due to a variety of issues (including ecology issues, delays in Welsh Government reviews, planning approval and funding), the timescales for the five schemes have been impacted. The replacement Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr school design has been progressed. Cabinet Secretary for Education gave approval to proceed to Full Business Case stage. In November 2024, Council approved the extra capital funding needed for the scheme. Ecological issues continue to affect the site, and this has impacted on the site investigation. The Heronsbridge School has also received approval to proceed to Full Business Case stage. In November 2024, Council approved the extra capital funding needed for the scheme. The tender process commenced in March. A change to the school opening date will be needed. The replacement Mynydd Cynffig Primary School has also received approval to proceed to Full Business Case stage. In November 2024, Council approved the extra capital funding needed for the scheme. The planning application was submitted in November 2024. Challenges and delays mean a revised programme will be considered by Cabinet. Changes to the funding for Bridgend West (the replacement Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr and the new English-medium school) have been approved and the opening date for the school has been changed to September 2026. The planning application has been submitted and the tender process commenced in February 2025. Changes to the funding for the new two-form entry English-medium school to replace the existing Afon Y Felin and Corneli Primary Schools has been approved, and the opening date for the school has been changed to September 2026. The planning application has been submitted and tender process commenced in Feb 2025.

Aim	Status	Description
Attract and retain young people into BCBC employment	ADEQUATE	We have engaged with schools through the termly Director Reports and have attended job fairs, options and careers events to promote the apprenticeship offer, including specific roles, e.g. business admin, IT and multi-trade apprentices. Workshops have been delivered on applying for apprenticeship jobs and interview skills as well as "Dragon's Den" events and mock interviews. The number of apprentices employed by the council has reduced from 46 in 2023/24 to 22 in 2024/25, and this year only half of those concluding their apprenticeships have gone on to obtain a non-apprentice role due to budget constraints and the recruitment freeze.
Offering youth services and school holiday programmes for our young people	EXCELLENT	540 young people took part in targeted activities for people with additional or diverse needs. This is much higher than last year, and better than our target. Participation in the national free swimming initiative during school holidays and weekends was over 23,000, which was higher than last year and better than our target. The Healthy Living partnership has supported 119 vulnerable households to learn to swim based on referrals from Children and Families Services. 20 families have been referred and 63 individuals supported in our "step up and step down" approach for low level social care. The Halo Health and Wellbeing Membership Card in partnership with the Council is supporting 173 foster children, 76 carer leavers, five individuals in a residential setting, 79 youth justice participants, 63 young adults and 142 children and young adults with a disability. Six Food and Fun programmes operated in the summer holidays 2024 with 213 children benefitted from attending.
Work with people to design and develop services	EXCELLENT	The Bridgend Inclusive Network Group (BING) network has supported 20 organisations, creating over 100 community opportunities, and assisting over 211 individuals living with disabilities in the borough. Our partnership with BAVO has supported 272 third sector organisations, supported to develop or deliver prevention opportunities focusing on "what matters". 137 individuals attending network meetings. 564 people have increased knowledge of the services available to them locally. 587 people report increased social connections.
Work with people to design and develop services	GOOD	The number of care leavers who experience homelessness is higher than last year but still met our target. The number of care leavers completing 12 months consecutive employment, education or training (EET) since leaving care has reduced to 59% and is off target, but those completing 13-24 months has increased to 82% and is on target. The Corporate Parenting Board strengthens partnership work and monitors implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The Youth Forum meets regularly with support from Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru and their views are taken to Corporate Parenting Board for consideration. We are supporting 178 care-experienced individuals and their households to access health and wellbeing opportunities. We are also supporting care-experienced children to access training and development linked to leadership and volunteering with some sessions already held between services, specifically 16+ Team and Youth Support Services.

What will we do to improve?

- Work to increase governor engagement with safeguarding training.
- Support the school in 'special measures' to enact the post-inspection action plan.
- Through the 'Weapons-Related Incidents in Bridgend Educational Settings Strategy Group' look at the use of violence and weapons within schools, to identify trends and themes including areas of best practice to address violence in school.
- Support schools to complete attendance audits to identify best practice and development needs.
- Complete work to improve persistent absence levels in primary schools.
- Work with school leaders to improve capped 9 scores by sharing effective practice, the role of improvement partners, brokering support, developing leadership capacity, local authority network groups, evaluating the quality of teaching and judging the impact of teaching on the outcomes for learners.
- Continue to support and promote education through the medium of Welsh, with a variety of groups, projects and initiatives in place to increase opportunities for children to use the Welsh language.
- Continue to progress our plans for School Modernisation
- Prepare an options paper for the Food and Fun Programme to consider how barriers to schools' participation could be reduced.

Case Study

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) communications strategy

This year, we have worked hard on promoting, marketing and celebrating our Welsh in Education Strategy Plan (WESP) – developing a communication and engagement plan to support it.

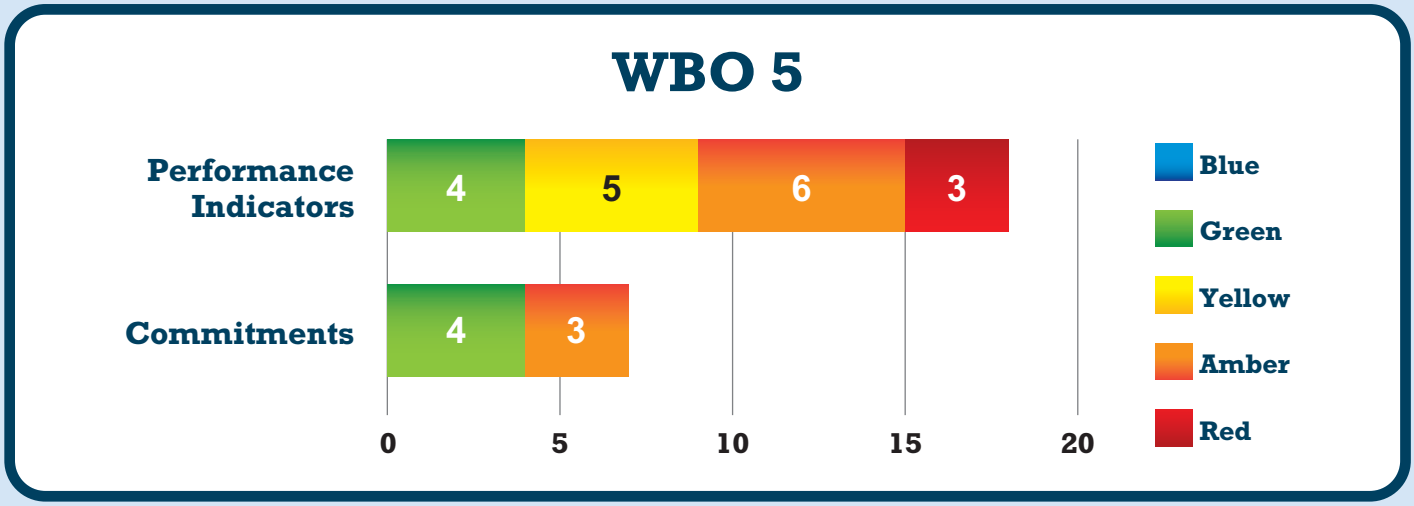


To deliver this, the WESP Co-ordinator has worked closely with the Regional Welsh-medium Education Promotion Champion and members of the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) sub-group.

This plan states our vision, messaging and promotion of Welsh-medium education. We have also finalised the 'Comms Cymraeg Schedule', which maps out targeted communication over the year to promote Welsh-medium provisions and education, the use of Welsh in English-medium schools and studying Welsh as a subject at A level. As part of this, we have developed a paid Facebook campaign using videos, posters and links to webpages.

Wellbeing Objective 5

A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency	SCORE
	GOOD



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective.

Aim	Status	Description
Moving towards net zero carbon, and improving our energy efficiency	ADEQUATE	Overall, a 1% reduction in emissions was achieved in 2024/25, less than our 5% target but a positive step in our 2030 obligations, with reductions in electricity and gas consumption and CO_2 related energy consumption across our buildings. Funding has been approved for a LED (Light Emitting Diode) replacement programme and solar PV (technology that converts sunlight directly into electricity using semiconductor materials) roll out on sites including schools. 17 buildings have had insulation levels improved and a further five have had new LED lighting to replace less efficient fittings. 220.8kWp of PV has been installed, two buildings have had gas heating systems replaced with more efficient heat pumps. Draft Net Zero Strategy delivered in March 2025, and feedback from officers and Scrutiny Committee has been provided to Carbon Trust. Air quality monitoring along Park Street in the air quality management areas (AQMA) showed reducing NO_2 levels again for 2024, but still exceed the annual average air quality objective set at (40µg/m^3). The Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was approved by cabinet in April 2024 and submitted to WG.



Aim	Status	Description
Protecting our landscapes and open spaces and planting more trees	GOOD	The Local Nature Partnership (LNP) has continued to be supported by the Climate Change Response Team. We have done work to improve awareness and understanding of the LNP through a communication plan and a dedicated LNP webpage on Visit Bridgend. All Local Places for Nature (LPfN) 2024/25 funding has been spent or committed, supporting a number of groups with equipment for surveying, nest boxes, tree planting etc. Biodiversity schemes at Coychurch Playing Fields, Tondu Post Office and Caerau Mens Shed have been developed. Guidance on the Biodiversity Duty has been added to our staff intranet, alongside links to the Bridgend Biodiversity Duty Plan and monitoring templates. A section has also been added to the Corporate Induction e-learning module on the Biodiversity Duty and what it means for staff. Three beaches at Rest Bay, Trecco Bay and Porthcawl Marina retained their Blue Flag status, and Coychurch crematorium and Maesteg Welfare Park maintained their status as Green Flag parks or green spaces.
Improve the public realm / built environment through good placemaking principles	ADEQUATE	Our percentage of planning appeals dismissed is slightly worse than last year (81% compared to 87%) but higher than in other authorities. The number of planning applications determined within eight weeks is around the same as last year (67% compared to 68%) although this is still below target. There are not enough planning officers to deal with the increase of complex and major applications which is being addressed by a restructure and agency staff in the short term, with changes to funding and recruitment in the next 12 months. We have consulted on a range of Supplementary Planning Guidance to support our Local Development Plan that was adopted in 2024. The consultations on affordable housing and retail and commercial development have now closed.
Reducing, reusing or recycling as much of our waste as possible	GOOD	Our high standards in recycling have continued, with the percentage of street cleansing waste being recycled increased to 41.22%, the percentage of municipal waste collected that is prepared for re-use, recycled, or biowaste that is composted reducing slightly to 70.93% due to issues with processing wood and green waste at the onward destination facility. The amount of residual waste generated has decreased further to 117.8 kg per person. The percentage of highways land found to be of acceptable or high level of cleanliness is around the same at 99.35%. Work is underway on our future waste services model, with a Cabinet decision to bring the Waste Service in-house in November 2024. Workstream leads are in place and are feeding into this process with project support agency on board and feeding into Waste Transition Board, which meets fortnightly.
Improving flood defences and schemes to reduce flooding of our homes and businesses	GOOD	Schemes have been completed in Adare Street, Ogmore Vale and Dinam Street, Nantymoel to repair damaged culvert and mitigate flood risk. Funding has been approved from WG FCERM (Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management) Capital Pipeline funding (feasibility) for a catchment wide study of the Nant Cefn Glas following the Bryntirion flooding event in September 2024. Improvements have been made to the statutory sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) application process, with 100% of applications being processed within seven weeks.

What will we do to improve?

- Complete and consult on the draft Net Zero Strategy.
- Commence the REFIT2 Scheme in Spring 2025.
- Make a Local Places for Nature 2025/27 application.
- Implement the catchment wide study of the Nant Cefn Glas following the Bryntirion flooding event in September 2024 with funding from WG FCERM (Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management) Capital Pipeline.
- Continue work on Supplementary Planning Guidance to support the LDP.
- Continue work to bring the Waste Service in-house.

Case Study

We are named top performing local authority in Wales for recycling



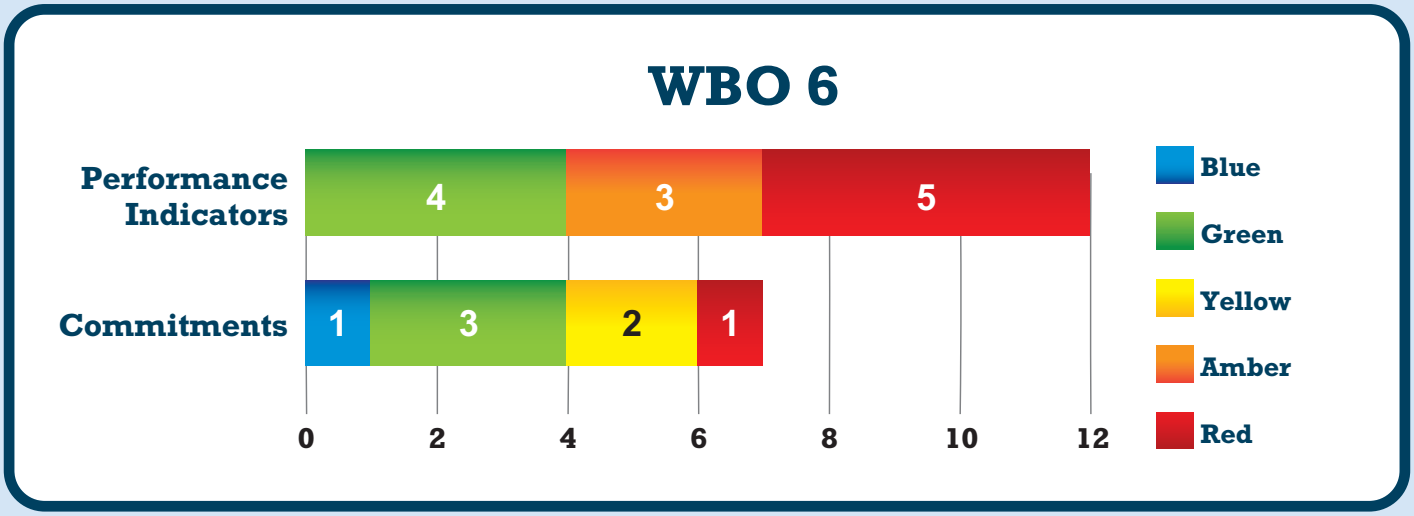
In November 2024 Bridgend County Borough was named as the best performing Local Authority in Wales for recycling (based on performance in 2023/24). The top spot with a recycling rate of 73%, statistics revealed that the County Borough increased its performance by 17% over the last decade. In the previous 12 months, we recycled 39,000 tonnes of waste including nearly 5,000 tonnes of glass, 11,000 tonnes of organic waste and 6,000 tonnes of paper, with over 9,000 tonnes of waste processed at community recycling centres, including the new recycling centre in Pyle that opened in March 2024.

Wellbeing Objective 6

A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community

SCORE

ADEQUATE



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective

Aim	Status	Description
Celebrating and supporting diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination	GOOD	A new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 (SEP) was approved in July 2024 and is published on our website. An SEP Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our aims was agreed in November 2024. 64% of council staff have completed Introduction to Equality and Diversity Training, higher than last year but below the target of 100%. There are now three staff network groups: menopause, disability and LGBTQ+. A Welsh Language Forum for staff of all proficiency levels has also been established.
Improving the way we engage with local people, including young people, listening to their views and acting on them.	ADEQUATE	The percentage of consultation participants who believe we have been effective at meeting our aim of being citizen-focused over the last 12 months has fallen slightly to 44% against a target of 50%. An easy-read version of Budget Consultation 2025 was available on the consultation webpage. Improvements have been made to the online forms for planning consultations. The Participation and Engagement Strategy has been implemented and published. A National Residents Survey was carried out in Autumn 2024. The results of the survey will now be analysed. The level of engagement with residents using the digital communications platform has increased, and the targets have been achieved. But engagement across corporate social media accounts has fallen and the targets have been missed. The level of engagement on corporate consultations has increased but the target has been missed.

Aim	Status	Description
Offering more information and advice online, and at local level, and making sure you can talk to us and hear from us in Welsh	GOOD	We have not quite achieved our targets for first call resolutions but performance has increased compared to last year, to 73%. This shows the number of phone calls handled by the Customer Services Team at the first point of contact without having to transfer the caller on. The number of online transactions using the digital platform has increased and we have achieved our target. The number of hits or views on the council website has dropped compared to 2023/24 and we have missed the target. The percentage of staff with Welsh language speaking skills has increased to 28.36% which achieves our target. 63% of council staff have completed Welsh Language Awareness E-Learning, more than last year but still below target.
Helping clubs and community groups take control of and improve their facilities and protect them for the future	UNSATISFACTORY	The Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme has encountered numerous challenges in the 2024/25, and we have only completed two CATs this year against a target of ten, partly due to capacity issues. The two successful CAT completions were in Coytrahen Community Centre and Evanstown Welfare Park Bowling Green. Capacity has been addressed and we have made good progress, with three new leases signed and awaiting completion, 23 needing more work within the council, seven awaiting planning outcomes and 13 awaiting club decisions. 566 people have been supported to have their needs met in their communities by Local Community Co-ordinators. This is well above target for the new roles.
Becoming an age friendly council	GOOD	Bridgend is participating in an all-Wales programme supported by Welsh Government. We work closely with Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) partners and third sector organisations, working on streamlining health services and the social prescribing pathways, including National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) and the 60+ Active Leisure Scheme. Support has been made to increase community resilience in dementia services. Over ten voluntary organisations have been supported through grant applications for community projects active in dementia prevention. We celebrated Older Persons Week with cultural and artistic opportunities including art workshops, cinema screenings and a silent disco run by our cultural trust Awen.



What will we do to improve?

- Implement the action plan for the Strategic Equalities Plan.
- Approve and implement our new Digital Strategy.
- Review and improve the corporate front door.
- Reflect on findings from the National Residents Survey and take action to address issues.
- Start tracking Community Asset Transfers that move from short-term leases to longer-term leases.

Case Study

Case study - Artificial intelligence (AI) in schools

AI technology is increasingly being introduced to schools in Bridgend County Borough. We have a clear and agreed policy direction which has been communicated to schools with guidance and skills training to support it. Headteacher and practitioner skills training for AI use has been provided.

Training has been delivered on topics such as, online safety, the use of the Digital Competence Framework 'Planning for Progression' resource, Microsoft 365, Google for Education, Adobe Express and additional Hwb tools and services.

Teachers and practitioners are now well-prepared to integrate these digital tools and frameworks into their curriculum. We also deliver online safety learning events that support parents and carers with their understanding of online safety and the means to better safeguard themselves and their children.

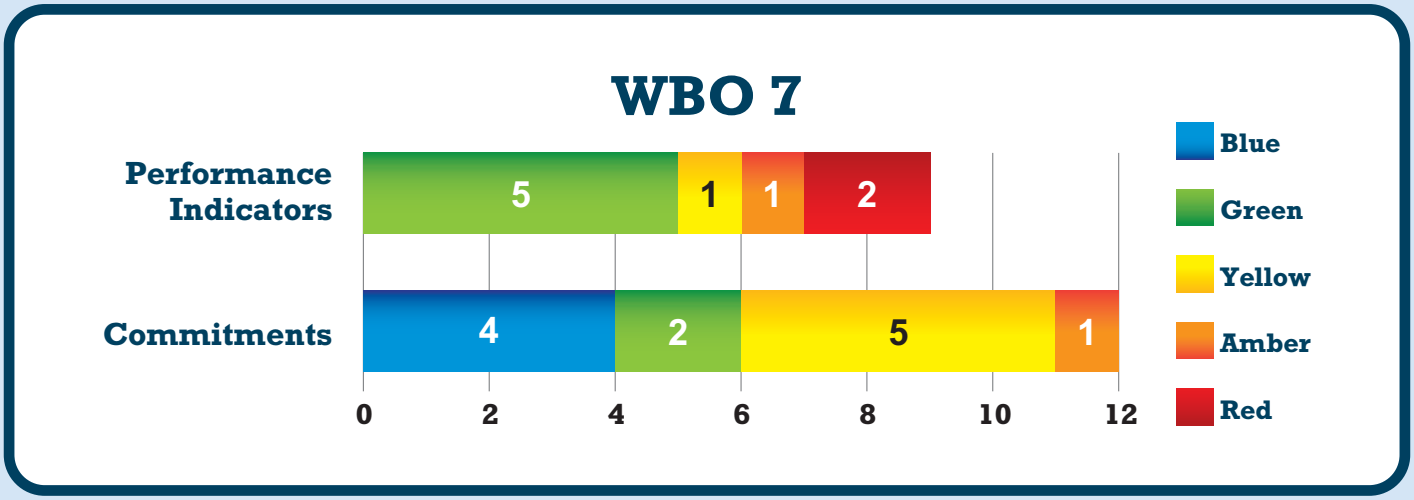




Wellbeing Objective 7

A County Borough where we support people to be healthy and happy

SCORE
GOOD



The information below gives you more detail on how we are doing on each aim under this wellbeing objective.

Aim	Status	Description
Improving active travel so people can walk and cycle	GOOD	The Metrolink bus facility in Porthcawl opened in November 2024. The active travel improvements work planned for the year is now also complete with drop kerb installations added throughout the borough.
Offering attractive leisure and cultural activities	EXCELLENT	The Grand Pavilion refurbishment project is underway and a tender process to award the contract for the construction work has been completed. Enabling works at the site have been completed to prepare the site for the main contract work. The National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS)operated beyond capacity with 1331 new referrals across 24,663 sessions. 473 participants completed a 16-week course. There were 157 referrals for carer support with 35 participants starting the course and 26 participants completing the course. For pulmonary rehabilitation 141 participants started and 117 completed the course. The Feel Good for Life wellbeing programme has supported 600 attendances. Super-Agers community wellbeing activities have supported 163 individuals including 2061 attendances across 126 opportunities. Work has begun on a long-term strategy for libraries. A public engagement exercise has been developed for use next year. Library usage is monitored quarterly looking at events, borrowing and digital resources. There have been over 73,000 attendances (supporting nearly 34,000 junior issues and just over 3,700 ICT sessions).

Aim	Status	Description
Improving children's play facilities and opportunities	EXCELLENT	The refurbishment of play areas has progressed as planned. Investment in play areas in 2024/25 has reached over £1.7 million, exceeding the target of £1.6 million. A total of 22 play areas were refurbished and handed over to the community. We are doing a play sufficiency assessment looking at what we have already and what we need for the future. 142 children and young adults with additional needs have had free HALO membership to support health and wellbeing.
Providing free school meals and expanding free childcare provision	GOOD	The roll out of Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) has been completed across the County Borough. There has been a further increase in children accessing Flying Start funded childcare with a total of 542 children now registered. This is slightly below target with falling birth rates in Flying Start areas believed to be impacting the numbers. The percentage of non-maintained settings judged by Care Inspectorate Wales as at least 'good' was 83% which was below the target of 100% we have set. We are awaiting reinspection of settings that received less than good judgements dating back to 2019. We provide extensive support to settings to prepare for inspections.
Integrating our social care services with health services so people are supported seamlessly	GOOD	70 people were delayed on the national pathway of care, which is much better than last year and slightly better than our target. We have used Welsh Government 50-day challenge grant money to support the remodelling of support at home. We are working with the health board around the enhanced community care model. We have fully embedded the strengths-based practice model. This has led to an increase in the overall number of people receiving reablement, and a reduction in the overall domiciliary care hours provided, in line with the Discharge to Recover and Assess model.
Improving the supply of affordable housing	ADEQUATE	Only 77 additional affordable homes have been provided by Registered Social Landlords this year against a target of 110, although 92 have been built or acquired and will soon be ready for occupation. The Welsh Government Leasing Scheme has been adopted with a growing portfolio of accommodation already in use and further properties in the pipeline. We have engaged with all RSLs and Welsh Government to discuss general housing needs, temporary accommodation and supported housing schemes. Over the last 12 months we have made progress with the top 20 priority empty properties. Five properties have been sold; seven properties have been subject to renovation works; two have been placed up for sale and two have become occupied. Enforcement action has been taken against four of the properties. Five properties have been subject to informal action whereas two properties have received no intervention in this financial year. The Empty Property Loan Scheme is live and is generating interest.

What will we do to improve?

- Continue the redevelopment of Porthcawl Grand Pavilion.
- Phase three expansion of Flying Start will target new areas in 2025/26.
- Complete the Play Sufficiency Assessment looking at what we have already and what we need for the future.
- Complete engagement on the long-term strategy for libraries.
- Continue to target long-term empty properties.
- Support childcare settings to prepare for Care Inspectorate Wales inspections.

Case Study

Porthcawl's new Metrolink

The new Porthcawl Metrolink opened on 18 November 2024. It is a modern transport interchange, located on land in the Porthcawl regeneration area alongside the Portway and Salt Lake.

It forms part of the wider Metro Plus programme, improving public transport links across south-east Wales. It will be used by all bus services currently operating within Porthcawl, can accommodate up to four buses at a time, and features a covered shelter and station building, space for a kiosk, outdoor seating areas, an environmentally friendly 'green' roof, and a rain garden.

The facility was constructed using money from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and UK Government as well as the council's own Porthcawl Regeneration budget.



How is the council using its resources?

We have always had to report how well we are using our resources. For example, telling Audit Wales about our spending, workforce and buildings. Until recently, we did not have a process for reviewing how we are managing all our different resources. To help us write this report, we developed a process to look at:

- Finances and risk management,
- Commissioning and procurement,
- Corporate planning and performance management,
- Workforce planning, and
- Asset management.

To come to our judgements, we used:

- Performance indicators e.g. staff vacancy levels and building maintenance,
- Evidence on delivery of our projects and improvement plans,
- Feedback from customers, staff and trade unions, and
- The views of regulators e.g. Audit Wales report on workforce planning

We asked questions based on the Well-being of Future Generations Act, including:

- Do we focus on prevention, not just putting things right when they go wrong?
- Are we making strong long-term plans?
- Do we share ideas, plans and resources with partner organisations?
- Are we making links and doing things consistently across the council?
- Are we involving the community and customers in key plans and decisions?

We presented findings to councillors who scrutinised them, checked and asked questions, and used the same judgement scale from excellent to unsatisfactory.

Overall judgement

Use of resources	ADEQUATE	For the fourth year in a row, our use of resources is adequate. Some things have got better; we have implemented almost all of our performance management improvement plan and reviewed our Corporate Plan Delivery Plan. Improvements have been made to the identification, management and reporting of risk and a review by internal audit found there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. We have improved or automated some of our Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures and reduced our use of agency workers. We have updated our Contract Procedure Rules to reflect new legislation and strengthened consideration of social value and carbon reduction in our tenders. Audit Wales have reviewed our Financial Sustainability and concluded that we 'understand our financial position with good arrangements to support financial sustainability'. Our Financial Procedure Rules have been updated. We have reduced our asset management maintenance backlog, improved our management of Statutory Building Compliance with Big-5 Compliance at 95%, and made progress with the rationalisation of our estate. Other things have stayed the same or got worse. Budget monitoring and outturn projections have been difficult with a large projected overspend changing to a large underspend within the year. Some agreed budget reductions were not achieved, and some base budget pressures remain. As reserves fall, there is a risk that this will put our financial sustainability at risk. Our financial position overall has become more challenging. Planned improvements on more consistent corporate commissioning, reviewing our performance framework, and workforce planning have not gone ahead as there is limited capacity in corporate teams. We have strong frameworks and robust processes for day-to-day management of resources, with clear and agreed working models and good working relationships between corporate teams and directorates. But longer-term planning, addressing capacity in corporate and directorate teams, improving proactiveness and developing our corporate services to meet changing demands will be difficult with the resource issues we face.



Theme judgements

Finances	ADEQUATE	Financial Planning is adequate. This is based on generally positive judgements from regulators, success in balancing our budget every year, and unqualified Statements of Accounts signed off by the Auditor General for Wales. Budget monitoring and outturn projections have been difficult with a large projected overspend changing to a large underspend within the year. Some agreed budget reductions were not achieved, and some base budget pressures remain. As reserves fall, there is a risk to our financial sustainability. Our financial position has become more challenging, due to pay and price increases and service pressures and greater difficulty in collecting Council Tax. The challenges continue in 2025/26 and beyond. Strong financial planning will be crucial to setting balanced budgets in future. Audit Wales have reviewed our Financial Sustainability and concluded that we 'understand our financial position with good arrangements to support financial sustainability'. It included two recommendations to strengthen financial sustainability. Our financial framework is robust, with strong governance arrangements which drive the budget, including Financial Procedure Rules which were updated this year, Treasury Management Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) principles, and budget principles, which drive the budget and spending, and investment and borrowing decisions of the Council. The financial position is set out in regular reports, for members and the public, and we demonstrate a high level of compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, principles and standards. Areas for improvement include earlier longer-term planning, including work with Welsh Government towards sustainable funding, multi-year settlements, and flexibility around grants. We will focus on early engagement with Members to set a balanced budget for 2026/27 and supporting services to manage their budgets tightly to minimise overspends.
Corporate planning	GOOD	Corporate planning is good. We have reprioritised the corporate plan delivery plan (CPDP) to reflect the ambitions of elected members, staff and partners as well as challenges and limitations. The CPDP was agreed by Council on 9 April 2025 with directorate business plans are to follow. In September 2024, Audit Wales published their review of our setting of wellbeing objectives (in the Corporate Plan), concluding, 'The Council has applied the sustainable development principle when setting its well-being objectives, but there are opportunities to build on how it involves citizens and intends to work with partners.' Opportunities for improvement include starting the review process earlier and engaging better with staff and trade unions as part of the social partnership duty.

Risk management	GOOD	Risk management is good. Improvements have been made to the identification, management and reporting of risk in the past year. An updated Corporate Risk Assessment was developed at the start of 2025 and was positively received by Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) in January 2025. Reports and the reporting process for risk are straightforward and accessible, including for members. A review by internal audit of the Council's Corporate Risk Management, completed in March 2024, reported reasonable assurance in relation to risk management. We will continue to support GAC to scrutinise the Corporate Risk Assessment, standardise risk reporting across directorates and integrate risk reporting with performance and finance across all service areas. We will also consider whether we are overly risk-averse at a corporate level.
Commissioning and Procurement	ADEQUATE	Procurement and commissioning are adequate. The procurement element is good. A new, UK Procurement Act 2023 came into force 24 February 2025 and a Welsh Social Partnership & Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 came into force April 2024. We have implemented new contract procedure rules in line with the UK Act and will develop and run training sessions on these. We are working on the development of a new strategy and delivery plan to reflect these changes. Social value and carbon reduction have been strengthened as a consideration in our tenders. Contractor Safeguarding Protocol has also been included to ensure suppliers are aware of their duties for safeguarding vulnerable people. We have developed a website for tenders and procurement, including a Corporate Contracts Register and a new 'Selling to the Council' guide to support suppliers and contractors to do business with the council. We have developed and implemented a Modern Slavery Statement and standard terms and conditions for use across the council. We made changes to our processes and procedures in light of the Council's financial position in 2023/24 including a price cap and authorisations for purchasing card spending. These have continued as they have proved successful. The overall judgement is assessed as adequate based on the need for improved capacity in the corporate and directorate teams, particularly to focus on supplier relationships and reporting on social value, the need for an improved and more consistent approach to commissioning across directorates.

Performance management	ADEQUATE	Performance management is adequate. Since our last self-assessment, we have made progress on our Performance Management Improvement Plan, closed the recommendations of the Audit Wales Review of Performance Management and addressed the remaining recommendations of the internal audit of performance indicators (PIs). Main improvements include – **More effective review of quarterly performance information through separate reporting to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.** **Developed a whole council approach to performance reporting, presenting performance data under corporate wellbeing objectives rather than directorates.** **Improved our regulatory tracker and better integrated this into our quarterly performance management.** **Improved data quality and accuracy through PI audits and better use of supporting evidence.** **Supported Group Managers and Performance Champions to improve data quality and reporting timescales.** **Developed and implemented a more objective system to make judgements on our performance for self-assessment.** **Improved our use of service user perspectives through the National Residents Survey and work with Data Cymru.** Improvements are still needed, including improving challenge and effective use of performance information, building capacity in corporate and directorate teams, reviewing our performance framework and improving resilience of our performance system.
Workforce planning	ADEQUATE	Workforce management is good. Feedback from employees, managers, trade union representatives and internal audits is generally positive. Managers are assisted to deal effectively with people issues through appropriate and timely support from the HR and Organisational Development Service. The HR operating model aims to give managers an improved service focused on proactive and preventative HR services and an incremental reduction in the need for and provision of reactive support services. There have been improvements to our Strategic Workforce Planning and further development of HR policies and procedures e.g. automation in the recruitment process. Managers have been supported to manage sickness absence. HR briefings on key workforce topics have provided support for managers. We have focused on reducing use of agency workers with success in social services including international recruitment and grow your own. We continue to focus on organisation wellbeing, supporting employees and managers where needed. We will continue to develop HR processes, where automation will be key. There is still the need for added capacity amongst managers and in the HR team, and an increased focus on strategic workforce planning across the council, including succession planning.

Asset management	ADEQUATE	Asset management policy is good with good engagement internally from all directorates. The asset management strategy is dynamic and undergoes annual and bi-annual service, asset and market linked reviews with services and partners. The overall judgement is assessed as adequate, based on the need to address the continued workforce and resource challenges that are impacting on our ability to plan more strategically, and resulting in a continued reactive approach. Over the last year we have – **Reduced our maintenance backlog** **Improved our management of Statutory Building Compliance. Overall compliance is now 78%, Big-5 Compliance at 95% and Legionella compliance 88%.** **Started procuring an Integrated Works Management System (IWMS) and development of a new plant asset database.** **Rationalised our estate with the sale of Ravenscourt to South Wales Police and vacating The Innovation Centre for disposal. Supported the move of MASH to Civic Offices.** **Continued to develop the new Asset Management Plan.** **Worked on a new condition survey commissioning specification to allow enhanced condition surveys in 2025/26.** **Completed an external Audit of our Major Projects Team to enhance work as we design and construct new schools.** But more improvements are still needed, including adopting the new strategic asset management plan, continuing improvements in the maintenance backlog and statutory building compliance, procuring and implementing the IWMS and focusing on our workforce capacity. We will also work closely with the decarbonisation team to enhance our asset management approach.



How good is the council's governance?

Organisations that have good governance use clear decision-making processes and communicate openly about what they are doing. They work well with their stakeholders, manage the risks they face, and take responsibility for their assets.

We have always had to report on our governance, to Audit Wales. There is a clear process for developing an 'Annual Governance Statement' (AGS) that has existed for many years. The information below summarises the Council's AGS for 2024/25.

What is our judgement?

Governance	**GOOD**

Our governance arrangements are good and work well.

Decision making

Our Governance Framework, Code of Corporate Governance explain how we work, how we are accountable and how decisions are made. In 2022 we developed a new constitution with a simple guide to help members of the public understand it. Through these documents (along with the Member's Code of Conduct, Standards Committee and role of Internal Audit) the Council operates with integrity, ethical values and within its legal powers.

Governance arrangements are reviewed each year and included within the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which is reviewed and approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.

We are committed to ensuring we have good governance principles and management practices. These are used right across the councils to make sure we have the public's trust. The arrangements the Council has for Corporate Governance are set out below.

1	**Bridgend County Borough Council Code of Corporate Governance**	The Council's Code of Governance provides a public statement that sets out the way in which the Council meets and demonstrates compliance with the CIPFA Governance principles.
2	**The Governance Framework**	The Council's Code is underpinned by a Governance Framework which comprises the policies, procedures, behaviours and values by which the Council is governed and controlled.

3 The Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement provides assurances regarding the Council's Governance arrangements, together with identifying areas of future focus and improvement. The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to report publicly on the extent to which the Council complies with its Code of Corporate Governance. It identifies those areas which have been identified as needing improvement following self-assessment.

4 Annual Governance Statement Action Plan

The Council continues to review the areas for improvement identified within the Governance Statement which are monitored through the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.

A number of significant issues were identified in the Council's 2023/24 AGS, to be taken forward during 2024/25, so in the past year we have made improvements including:

- Improvements to our medium to long-term financial management processes include holding early meetings with political groups so they could comment on budget proposals and two focused meetings with Budget Research and Evaluation Pane (BREP) looking at Education and Schools, and Social Care and Wellbeing.
- Workforce planning activities including grow your own via apprentices and graduates and international recruitment have resulted in continued improvement with the recruitment of Childrens Social Workers. These principles need to be applied in other areas that are experiencing difficulty in recruiting.
- The Carbon Trust reviewed our progress towards the 2030 zero carbon objective, our governance arrangements and to provide approximate implementation costs for the objective. They presented initial findings to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2025. We will review their findings and update Cabinet on the action plan and governance on the 2030 journey.
- We are participating in a Performance Information Community of Practice to help enhance the quality of performance information (particularly focused on responding to the Audit Wales criticisms) and provide opportunities to review performance management arrangements, share best practice, and collaborate on data development. A National Resident Survey (WLGA/Data Cymru) ran in the Autumn.
- Revised Finance Procedure Rules were agreed by Cabinet and noted by Council in January 2025. The budget continues to be closely monitored and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. More briefings for members have also been provided. Social media posts were put out in the Autumn to raise awareness of the Council's budget position and explain how the money is spent. This preceded the full budget consultation which was completed in January 2025.
- A new draft Digital Strategy has been developed, reflecting on previous criticisms from Audit Wales and the key priorities for the Council. A consultation process on the document will start in May 2025.

Listening to the views of others

The council provides services to all residents of Bridgend County Borough. Some of our services are universal (used by all residents), like roads and pavements, and waste and recycling. When we are developing, reviewing and changing these services, we need to try and talk to the whole population of the Borough to help us decide what to do. We have a range of different methods for doing this, from formal consultations on major changes, public drop-in sessions and discussions, and the regular, day-to-day engagement from our social media accounts.

Other services are more specialist and used by smaller numbers of residents, like school transport and services for people with learning disabilities or young people leaving care. When we are developing, reviewing and changing these services, we need to try and talk to the people who rely on those services and their families to help us decide what to do. We have a range of methods for doing this, from consultation and engagement sessions, to coproducing those services directly with the users and their families.

Over the last year, we have completed a huge range of activities to understand and use service user perspectives, and the opinions of our regulators. The main ones are summarised below.

Consultation and engagement

Corporate consultations are promoted bilingually on the council's social media channels, shared through weekly resident bulletins and weekly staff messages throughout the consultation period. Up to three consultations a year are shared with our citizen panel to raise awareness and encourage participation. Face to face engagement sessions are held where necessary and our Youth Council are involved with relevant consultations.

We consulted on a number of our key strategies and reports, for example the Director of Social Services Annual Report. This year we also took part in the Data Cymru and WLGA supported 'National Residents Survey' from September to November 2024. This comprehensive consultation aimed to improve our understanding of residents' perceptions, priorities, and experiences on themes including quality of life, community safety, satisfaction with council services, and levels of public trust and engagement. We received over 3,000 responses. We are currently analysing the detail of the responses and the information gathered will help us shape our services and communications.

Other strategies and services are coproduced with service users and their families to help us create services that are more responsive, inclusive and effective. This has included the development of key strategies for carers such as the Young Carers Network and the creation of Young Carer Ambassadors, ensuring that young carers influence the development of peer support, educational resources and policies that directly affect them, promoting awareness and engagement across communities.

We also consulted on some significant proposed changes to the way the council or our services work. Some of the main consultations in 2024/25 were –

- **Our Annual Budget Consultation** included engagement with the Citizens' Panel and took place in January 2025. Respondents were asked about budget principles, reducing or closing services, new charges, Council Tax and citizen focus. There were 1,637 interactions with the consultation from survey completions, social media engagement and via the Citizens' Panel. Participants largely opposed reductions in services for vulnerable people, education, and child protection. Lower priority was given to services like leisure facilities or nursery provision. Over 54% of respondents supported Council Tax increases of 4.5% or above.

- A **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment** was carried out in winter 2024 with surveys for parents and providers. The parent survey received a total of 984 responses and the provider received 30. This assessment will help us better understand parents and carers use of childcare, the overall supply of childcare and any issues or changes that might have an impact on the demand of childcare over the next five years.

- A consultation on a new **Assisted Transport Policy** took place August to October 2024. It outlined our approach on the provision of transport for people accessing services meeting an assessed care or support need. The consultation raised concerns which were reflected in an amended policy then agreed by Cabinet.

- On the **Porthcawl Town Centre Placemaking Plan** early engagement workshops with local and organisational stakeholders between September and December 2024.

- On the **Regeneration Masterplan for Salt Lake and Sandy Bay** engagement took place over a month between January and February 2025, to gain feedback to help guide the final redevelopment option. Over 900 people attended the public exhibition. In addition feedback was received via email, online feedback forms and hard copies at the exhibitions. This was supported by a project website and numerous stakeholder engagement session in schools and roundtables.

- We consulted on five proposed changes to **Home-to-School Transport** between April and July 2024 including four public consultation sessions and four pupil and youth sessions. In total, there were 1,308 responses to the survey. Responses received were mixed. Between 48 and 70% of respondents opposed each of the proposals, for reasons focused on child safety and wellbeing, environmental concerns, social and economic impact, and the effect on attendance and education. Cabinet reluctantly agreed to four of the five proposals due to the urgent need to save money, saying it has become impossible to offer what was previously one of the most generous levels of provision in Wales. Changes to proposal five which looked at transport for pupils with additional learning needs will be deferred until more research is completed. Starting from September 2025, these changes will be made:

    - Where a safe walking route has been identified, qualifying distances for school transport will change to the statutory limits set by Welsh Government of two miles for primary school pupils, and three miles for secondary school pupils.

    - In future, pupils who have had eligibility for free school transport passed on by an older sibling will no longer be entitled to receive the same provision.

    - Free transport for nursery and post-16 learners will no longer be available, but continues for those attending Welsh-medium or faith schools who live beyond qualifying distances.

Complaints and compliments

We have a clear and agreed two stage process for dealing with complaints:

Informal Complaint Stage

Informal complaints should be dealt with quickly and where possible informally. It advises customers to contact the office responsible for the service to provide an opportunity to solve the problem. Informal complaints are logged by our Information Team and we report on them every quarter to the Public Services Ombudsman. In 2024/25 we had the following informal complaints:

	Number	Resolved	Upheld	Discontinued / withdrawn	Ongoing
Adult Social Care	0	0	0	0	0
Benefits Administration	4	2	2	0	0
Children's Social Services	4	4	0	0	0
Community Facilities	18	12	2	3	1
Complaints handling	4	4	0	0	0
Education	25	22	2	1	0
Environment	7	6	0	1	0
Finance & Council Tax	36	31	2	3	0
Housing	29	26	3	0	0
Planning / Building Control	18	15	1	2	0
Roads & Transport	40	37	0	3	0
Various/Other	1	0	0	0	1
Waste & Refuse	3	1	0	2	0

Formal Complaint Stage

Formal complaints can be lodged by email, telephone, letter or online complaint form. All formal complaints with the exception of Schools and Social Services (which have their own statutory procedures) are received, logged and acknowledged centrally by the Information Team within five working days. These complaints are sent to a Head of Service who appoints a senior officer from the service to investigate the complaint and respond directly within 20 working days. The Information Team is provided with a copy of the response. We monitor numbers of complaints, time to respond, category of complaint and where in the Borough they come from. The Information Team has received, logged, acknowledged and referred a total of 39 formal complaints during 2024/25:

	Number	Resolved	Upheld	Discontinued / withdrawn	Ongoing
Adult Social Care	0	0	0	0	0
Benefits Administration	1	0	1	0	0
Children's Social Services	1	0	1	0	0
Community Facilities	2	2	0	0	0
Complaints handling	2	0	2	0	0
Education	6	6	0	0	0
Environment	0	0	0	0	0
Finance & Council Tax	4	3	1	0	0
Housing	4	4	0	0	0
Planning / Building Control	4	4	0	0	0
Roads & Transport	5	4	1	0	0
Various/Other	9	8	0	1	0
Waste & Refuse	1	1	0	0	0

There are separate processes for dealing with Social Services complaints, Elected Member conduct concerns and school-based complaints.

Following an internal audit of the corporate complaints process, and a review of the current complaints system and process, a range of improvements are underway including:

- An e-learning module for all complaint handlers.
- A more consistent way of working to collate, record and report complaints and compliments as well as documenting working procedures to support all officers involved in the complaints process.
- Improving the process for customers to make both complaints and compliments (incorporating stage one and stage two complaints in the same system).
- An improved triage and escalation process.
- Improvements to customer feedback and communication.
- Automating elements of the process where possible to streamline the whole process from beginning to end.
- Developing the process to ensure all feedback is captured and recorded, including whether the complaint was upheld or not, and any steps taken in relation to lessons learnt and allowing complaints data to be analysed as a means of identifying potential areas for improvement, and from this to establish areas for further learning and development.
- Reviewing and developing monitoring reports.

Regulator views

Engagement with regulators is strong and systematic. Regular meetings take place between regulators and senior officers in the Council to discuss regulators' work and the Council's improvement plans.

We regularly test our progress against the views and recommendations of our regulators, through a regulatory tracker. This regulatory tracker itself was a response to an Audit Wales recommendation that we needed to improve the way audit, inspection and regulation findings are logged, scrutinised and used to improve the Council's activities. The mechanism was developed to monitor progress against recommendations from all inspections and audits completed by key regulators of local government services. This is reported to Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) in January and July each year. The following new reviews were published in 2024/25.

- An Audit Wales review of our Digital Strategy was published in April 2024. It concluded there are weaknesses in the Council's approach to developing and delivering its Digital Strategy and provided three recommendations. A new Digital Strategy has now been developed and is under consultation.
- An Audit Wales review of Financial Sustainability was published in September 2024. It concluded 'the Council understands its financial position with good arrangements to support its financial sustainability which it flexes and adapts but is at the early stage of developing its long-term approach'. It provided two recommendations. Work is ongoing to ensure that elected members are fully briefed on the financial position of the Council and the BREP process is being reviewed to support longer term financial planning.
- An Audit Wales review of decision-making arrangements was published in October 2024. It concluded 'the Council generally has proper decision-making arrangements in place but weaknesses in forward planning and pre-decision scrutiny are undermining their effectiveness'. It provided five recommendations. Actions were put in place to respond to the recommendations, including publishing a 6-month scrutiny forward work plan, updating our scheme of delegation, scrutiny training and the development of proposals for new scrutiny arrangements including the renaming of the Scrutiny Committees.
- An Audit Wales report on out setting of Well-being Objectives was published in October 2024. It concluded 'the Council has applied the sustainable development principle when setting its well-being objectives, but there are opportunities to build on how it involves citizens and how it intends to work with partners' and provided three recommendations. One of the recommendations is addressed in this report and the other two will form part of the development of the next Corporate Plan.

Internal Audit is also a statutory requirement in Local Government. The Council's internal audit is undertaken by the Regional Internal Audit Service, a partnership shared service between Bridgend County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control for 2024/25 is: "Reasonable Assurance". That means based on the work they have done, no significant cross-cutting control issues have been identified that would impact on the Council's overall control environment. Any weaknesses that have been identified are service specific.

Staff and Trade Union views - Social Partnership Reporting Duty 2024/25

Since 1 April 2024 the Council has been subject to the Social Partnership duty under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023. This means that we have to explain how we have worked with staff and trade unions within the year, and any areas for improvement we have identified.

Relations with the recognised Trade Unions are extremely positive at present and their support is welcomed to ensure we are working in a true social partnership.

Regular work

There is a monthly meeting with Trade Unions, where a range of Officers present on a variety of topics, Trade Union colleagues' views are tested and any issues discussed. The Trade Unions involved in these regular meetings are both those for corporate teams – Unison, Unite, and GMB. Our teaching Trade Unions also take part in the monthly meetings – ASCL, NEU, NASUWT, NAHT and UCAC

In 2024/25 we had ten monthly meetings, usually avoiding January, April and August due to school holiday and general availability. The meetings in 2024/25 took place on 12th April, 14th May, 14th June, 14th July, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November and 13th December 2024, and 7th February and 21st March 2025.

In addition to these regular meetings, Trade Unions have direct access to HR Officers and there is regular and open communication to work together. Trade Unions are involved regularly in workforce and other related meetings.

All policies, protocols and programmes are shared with the relevant Trade Unions at the earliest opportunity to include their views and thoughts. During the recent appointment of the new Chief Executive a Trade Union Officer sat on one of the stakeholder panels as part of the assessment centre.

Planning the year ahead

As part of the annual budget development process, the Chief Officer Finance, Housing and Change attended the regular Trade Union meetings in November 2024 and February 2025. She provided an update on the process, the approach, assumptions made (and later the draft settlement from Welsh Government) and savings proposals.

Trade Unions played an integral part in the development of the Council's 5-year, high level Corporate Plan 2023/28. They were involved at three key points; firstly, developing the approach, then developing, setting and agreeing the wellbeing objectives and finally at the draft report stage. To date, Trade Unions have not been directly involved in the development of the 1-yearly Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

Reviewing the year behind

Each year since its inception, Trade Unions have been involved in the development of the Council's Corporate Self-Assessment. As part of the development of the corporate Self-Assessment 2023/24 the Corporate Policy and Performance Manager, attended the regular Trade Union meeting on 14 July 2024. She presented the key points and judgements from the draft self-assessment and took views, areas for development and any issues from the Trade Unions in attendance. The draft report itself was also circulated to Trade Unions for review and any additional comments or changes.

Areas for improvement

- Develop a more engaging and interactive process for involving Trade Union colleagues in the self-assessment process
- Develop a clear and agreed role for Trade Union colleagues as part of formal budget consultation.
- Involve Trade Union colleagues in the development and review of the 1-year Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (every year rather than the current involvement every 5 years).
- Providing training or awareness raising to employees and Trade Union representatives on how the Social Partnership Duty is being implemented.
- Working to confirm updated Trade Union facilities time agreements.

Our Strategic Equality Plan

Our new Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) was developed and consulted on in early 2024 and outlined our six strategic equality objectives, which will shape how we plan, provide, and deliver our services to reflect the diversity of our communities.

We have developed a Strategic Equality Action Plan for 2024/28 which was approved in July 2024 and has now been published on our website. Work towards achieving these actions will continue over the next 4-year lifespan of the SEP.

Progress on the plans is regularly reported to the Corporate Equality Network, and responsibility for operational delivery lies with all service areas and teams. Our Cabinet Committee Equalities monitors and scrutinises delivery against the objectives.

How do we identify and collect relevant information?

We are committed to collecting and using data to identify where some protected characteristic groups experience a disproportionate impact or where we could deliver services in a different way. We collect data on customers and residents via our consultation and engagement activities and on our employees via our own internal systems. We will collect and use the following equality data:

- Employment profile data for all protected characteristics.
- Service user data to understand the characteristics of our service users.
- Job applicants for all protected characteristics.

This data will be published annually as part of our Strategic Equality Plan annual reporting process (which will now include the full equality impact assessments undertaken). In addition we will publish annually:

- The Strategic Equality Plan action plan review.
- The Strategic Equality Plan annual report.
- Welsh language Standards annual report.



How effective are the council's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information?

Each year we try to improve the Equality Monitoring Data we hold for employees, revising the data capture to include more characteristics. We encourage employees to update information regularly through communications, appraisals and other methods.

What do our arrangements tell us regarding the equality of access to employment, training and pay?

Every year, we report our 'equalities in the workforce' report to Cabinet Committee Equalities. This tells us about a range of things including the numbers of employees with protected characteristics where declared. It also tells us about pay, recruitment and training of employees with protected characteristics. This is all put together and included in the Strategic Equality Plan. Areas for development are included in the Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan.






Except buses
Ac eithro bysiau
GIVE WAY
to reversing vehicles
ILDIWCH

2024/25

Performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-25

In March 2023 the Council published its new 5-year Corporate Plan 2023-28 and seven new wellbeing objectives. A 1 year Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2024-25 was agreed in April 2024 which defined 41 aims, with 80 commitments to deliver these objectives and 108 performance indicators (and sub indicators) to measure progress.

This document is intended to provide an overview of the Council's performance against the wellbeing objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan at quarter 4 of 2024-25, which is the final year-end position.

The wellbeing objectives are:

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

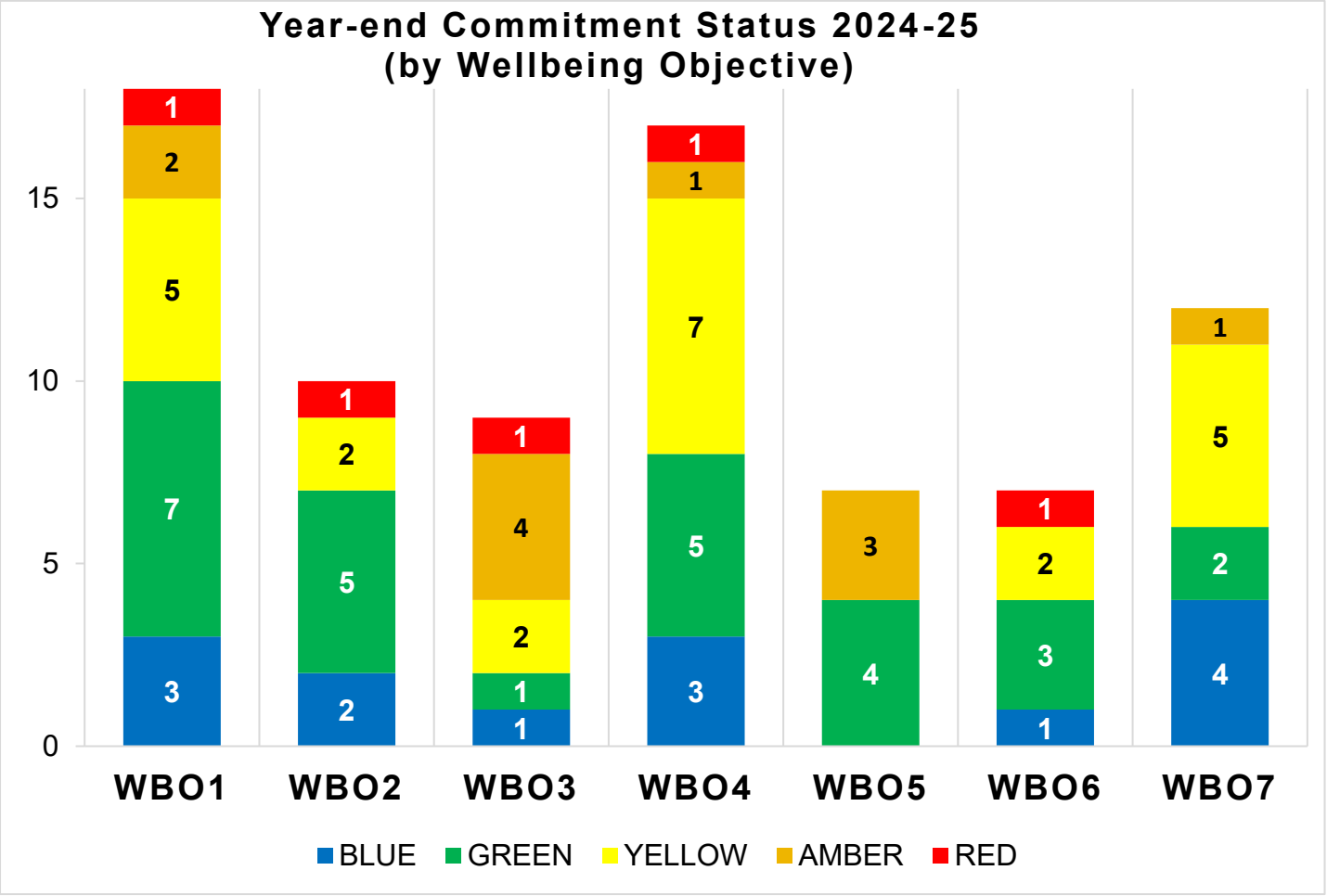
Summary of progress on Corporate Commitments

Each of the commitments has been awarded an appropriate Blue, Red, Amber, Yellow or Green (BRAYG) status at the end of quarter 4. Table 1 below shows a summary of the overall status of the 80 commitments with Chart 1 demonstrating this for each of the well-being objectives.

Table 1 – Commitments by BRAYG status

Status	Meaning of this status	Performance at year end	
		Number	%
COMPLETE (BLUE)	Project is completed	14	17.5%
EXCELLENT (GREEN)	As planned (within timescales, on budget, achieving outcomes)	27	33.75%
GOOD (YELLOW)	Minor issues. One of the following applies - deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	23	28.75%
ADEQUATE (AMBER)	Issues. More than one of the following applies - deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	11	13.75%
UNSATISFACTORY (RED)	Significant issues – deadlines breached, project over budget, risk score up to critical or worse	5	6.25%
	Total	80	100%

Chart 1 – Commitments by BRAYG status for each wellbeing objective



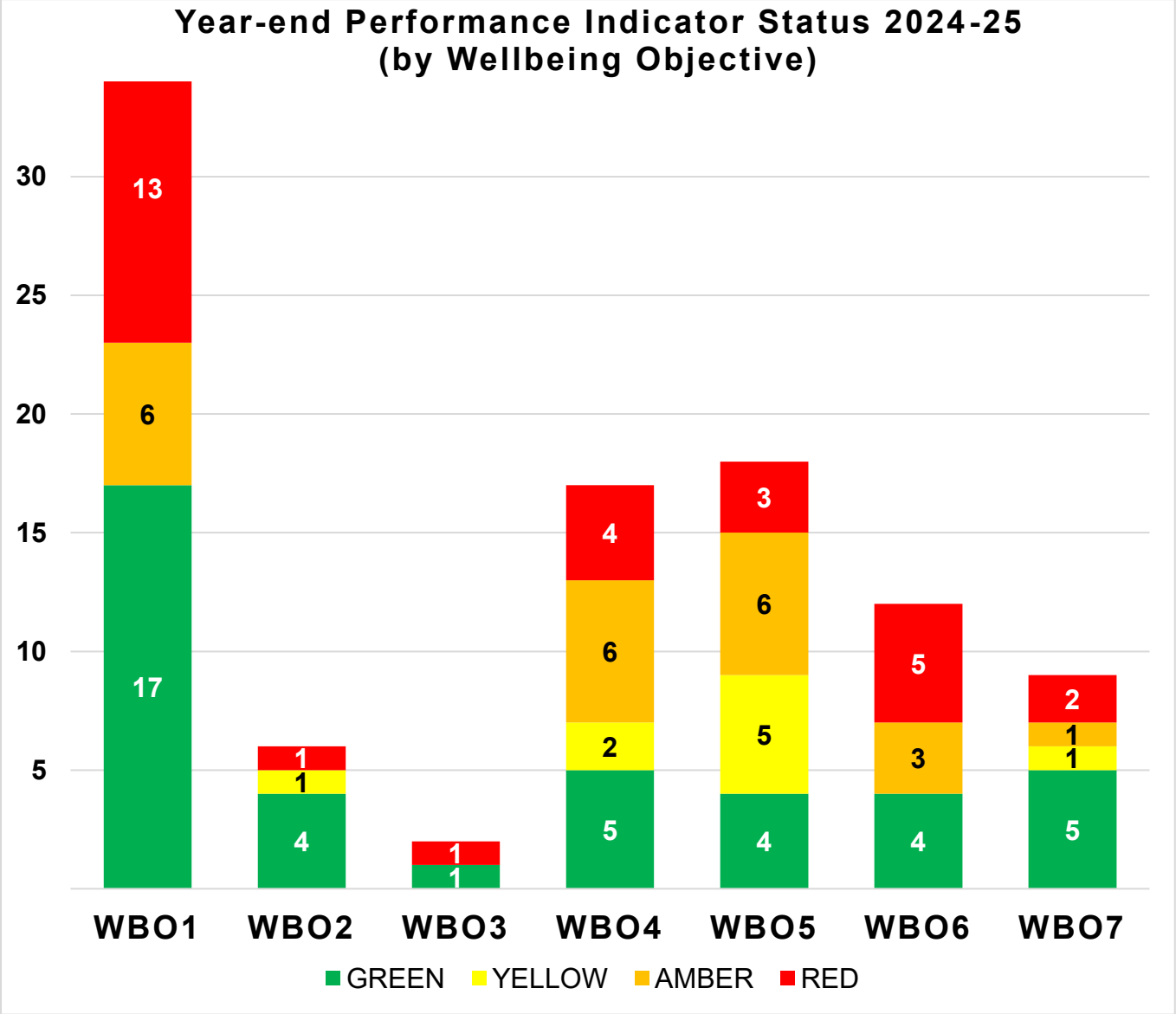
Summary of Performance Measures

Performance is being judged against the revised performance indicator (PI) targets approved in summer 2024. Of the 108 indicators (including all sub indicators), 100 could be compared against a target and awarded a Red, Amber, Yellow or Green (RAYG) status. Table 2 below shows a summary of performance by status, with Chart 2 providing this summary broken down by well-being objective.

Table 2 - PIs by RAYG status

Status	Meaning of this status	Performance at year end	
		Number	%
EXCELLENT (GREEN)	On target and improved or is at maximum	40	40%
GOOD (YELLOW)	On target	9	9%
ADEQUATE (AMBER)	Off target (within 10% of target)	22	22%
UNSATISFACTORY (RED)	Off target (target missed by 10%+)	29	29%
	Total	100	100%

Chart 2 - PIs by RAYG status for each wellbeing objective



Set out below is our performance for each of these performance indicators, or measures of success which we set ourselves for each well-being objective. This also shows performance trend, so you can see how this outturn position compares with the same period last year, where appropriate to do so.

Performance Indicators Trend Definition	
↑	Performance has improved compared to last year
↔	Performance has been maintained (this includes those at maximum)
↙	Performance has declined BUT within 10% of the last year
↓	Performance has declined by 10% or more compared to previous year

WBO 1 - A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable

Aim 1.1 Providing high-quality children's and adults social services and early help services to people who need them

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of eligible carers who were offered a carer's assessment in: a) Children's Social Care. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	100%	100%	**100% GREEN**	⟷
Percentage of eligible carers who were offered a carer's assessment in: *b)* Adult Social Care. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	Data not available	100%	**92.78% AMBER**	No trend
Timeliness of visits to a) children who are care experienced. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	85.31%	87%	**88.28% GREEN**	↑
Timeliness of visits to b) children on the child protection register. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	86.77%	87%	**89.27% GREEN**	↑
Safe reduction in the number of care experienced children *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	370	350	**333 GREEN**	↑
Safe reduction in the number of children on the child protection register. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	189	175	**75 GREEN**	↑
Percentage of enquiries to the Adult Social Care front door which result in information and advice only. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	74.88%	75%	**84.58% GREEN**	↑
Total number of packages of reablement completed during the year. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	377	400	**509 GREEN**	↑
Percentage of reablement packages completed that a) reduced the need for support. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	14.32%	18%	**17.49% AMBER**	↑
Percentage of reablement packages completed that b) maintained the same level of support *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	13.79%	14%	**15.72% GREEN**	↑
Percentage of reablement packages completed that c) mitigated need for support. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	66.58%	68%	**55.99% RED**	↓
Number of people who access independent advocacy to support their rights within: a) children's social care. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	64	130	**39 RED**	↓
Number of people who access independent advocacy to support their rights within: b) adult's social care. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	87	180	**67 RED**	↓

Percentage of completed Team Around the Family (TAF) plans closed with a successful outcome. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	83%	87%	**82% AMBER**	↙

Aim 1.2 Supporting people in poverty to get the support they need / help they are entitled to

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of people supported through FASS (Financial Assistance and Support Service) where support has resulted in increased income through claims for additional/increased benefits and allowances. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	92%	85%	**96% GREEN**	↑
Percentage of people supported through FASS who have received advice and support in managing or reducing household debt. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	93%	85%	**94% GREEN**	↑

Aim 1.3 Supporting people facing homelessness to find a place to live

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of households threatened with homelessness successfully prevented from becoming homeless. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	11%	20%	**31.2% GREEN**	↑
Percentage of people presenting as homeless or potentially homeless for whom the Local Authority has a final legal duty to secure suitable accommodation. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	29%	10%	**26.4% RED**	↑

Aim 1.4 Supporting children with additional learning needs to get the best from their education

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2023-24 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of new local authority individual development plans (IDPs) delivered using the online IDP system. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	New 2024-25	100%	**0% RED**	No trend
Number of pupils on the waiting lists for specialist provision. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	23	10	**55 RED**	↓
Percentage of year 9 pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) with a transition plan in place, that have had an annual review by 31 March of each current school year. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	New 2024-25	100%	**74.3% RED**	No trend

Aim 1.5 Safeguarding and protecting people who are at risk of harm

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of council staff completing safeguarding awareness training *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	82.73%	100%	**85.77% RED**	↑
Percentage of Adult safeguarding inquiries which receive initial response within 7 working days. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	81.85%	85%	**83.08% AMBER**	↑
Percentage of Childrens referrals where decision is made within 24 hours. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	99.69%	100%	**99.97% AMBER**	↑
Percentage of child protection investigations completed within required timescales. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	77.78%	75%	**84.4% GREEN**	↑
Average waiting time on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) waiting list. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	16 days	16 days	**10 days GREEN**	↑

Aim 1.6 Help people to live safely at home through changes to their homes

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) for: a) Low level access showers *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	694 days	210 days	**811 days RED**	↓
Average number of days taken to deliver a DFG for: b) Stair lifts *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	351 days	210 days	**527 days RED**	↓
Average number of days taken to deliver a DFG for: c) Ramps *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	835 days	210 days	**980 days RED**	↓
Average number of days taken to deliver a DFG for: d) Extensions *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	945 days	210 days	**1,319 days RED**	↓
Percentage of people who feel they can live more independently as a result of receiving a DFG in their home *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	98%	98%	**99.3% GREEN**	↑

Aim 1.7 Support partners to keep communities safe

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of council staff completing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) training (Level 1) *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	75.54%	100%	**75.92% RED**	↑
Number of instances where CCTV supports South Wales Police in monitoring incidents *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	944	944	**1,020 GREEN**	↑
Percentage of Assia service users reporting increased feelings of safety at their exit evaluation *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	New 2024-25	100%	**99.12% AMBER**	No trend
Percentage of high-risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 48 hours *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	New 2024-25	100%	**100% GREEN**	No trend
Percentage of medium risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 72 hours *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	New 2024-25	100%	**100% GREEN**	No trend

WBO 2 - County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns

Aim 2.1 Helping our residents get the skills they need for work

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme going into employment *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	366	233	**453 GREEN**	Trend not applicable

Aim 2.2 Making sure our young people find jobs, or are in education or training

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme supported into education or training. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	76	409	**678 GREEN**	Trend not applicable
Percentage of Year 11 leavers not in education, training, or employment (NEET) in the careers Wales annual destination statistics. *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	1.4%	1.5%	**1.9% RED**	↓

Aim 2.4 Attracting investment and supporting new and existing local businesses

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of businesses receiving support through Shared Prosperity Funding *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	25	21	**37 GREEN**	↑
Number of business start-ups assisted. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	219	53	**94 YELLOW**	↓

Aim 2.5 Making the council an attractive place to work

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: a) I feel every department is working towards the same common goal. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	35%	42%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: b) I am satisfied with BCBC as an employer. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	66%	74%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: c) Working here makes me want to perform to the best of my ability. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	73%	79%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: d) I feel that BCBC values its employees' ideas and opinions. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	39%	48%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: e) Do you think there are opportunities for two-way communication to discuss and raise ideas and issues? *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	85%	86%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: a) I feel supported to manage my personal wellbeing whilst in work: *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	67%	71%	Data not available	No trend
Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: b) The council is dedicated to taking positive action to support employees achieve a positive sense of wellbeing in their working lives. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	50%	54%	Data not available	No trend

Number of sign up of new subscribers to the staff extranet *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	Data not available	Baseline Setting	Data not available	No trend

Aim 2.6 Ensuring employment is fair, equitable and pays at least the real living wage

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of real living wage employers identified. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	250	255	**257 GREEN**	↑

WBO 3 - A County Borough with thriving valleys communities

Aim 3.1 Investing in town centres, including Maesteg town centre

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of commercial properties assisted through the enhancement grant scheme *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	4	2	**7 GREEN**	↑

Aim 3.6 Encourage the development of new affordable homes in the valleys

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of additional affordable homes provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the valleys. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	2	20	**2 RED**	↔

WBO 4 - A County Borough where we help people meet their potential

Aim 4.1 Providing safe, supportive schools, with high quality teaching

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of schools judged by Estyn to be in 'significant improvement' or 'special measures'. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	1	0	**1 RED**	⟷
Average 'Capped 9' score for pupils in Year 11 *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	361.5	363.0	**357.40 AMBER**	↙
Percentage pupil attendance in primary schools *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	91.5%	93%	**92.49% AMBER**	↑
Percentage pupil attendance in secondary schools *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	87.9%	90%	**87.31% AMBER**	↙
Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in primary schools. *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	0.024%	0.03%	**0.031% AMBER**	↓
Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in secondary schools. *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	0.165%	0.15%	**0.152% AMBER**	↑
Percentage of schools that have self-evaluated themselves as 'green' as part of their annual safeguarding audit. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	93%	100%	**93% AMBER**	⟷

Aim 4.3 Expanding Welsh medium education opportunities

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	8.56%	8.7%	**8.83% GREEN**	↑
Percentage of learners studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	6.62%	7.16%	**7.23% GREEN**	↑
Number of learners studying for Welsh as a second language at AS Level and A Level *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	29	20	**17 RED**	↓

Aim 4.5 Attract and retain young people into BCBC employment

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of apprentices employed across the organisation *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	46	20	**22 YELLOW**	↓
Percentage of those concluding apprenticeships and obtaining a non-apprentice role *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	90%	90%	**55.56% RED**	↓

Aim 4.6 Offering youth services and school holiday programmes for our young people

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Participation in targeted activities for people with additional or diverse needs *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	357	400	**540 GREEN**	↑
Participation in the national free swimming initiative for 16 and under *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	19,659	16,000	**23,208 GREEN**	↑

Aim 4.9 Being the best parents we can to our care experienced children

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the a)12 months since leaving care. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	68.97%	70%	**59.38% RED**	↓
Percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the b)13- 24 months since leaving care. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	57.69%	65%	**82.14% GREEN**	↑
Percentage care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	7.17%	10%	**9.96% YELLOW**	↓

WBO 5 - A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency

Aim 5.1 Moving towards net zero carbon, and improving our energy efficiency

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Reduction in emissions (across our buildings, fleet & equipment, streetlighting, business travel, commuting, homeworking, waste, procured goods and services) *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	4.3%	5%	**1% RED**	↓
Annual Gas Consumption across the Authority (kWh) *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	21,966,783 kWh	20,868,443 kWh	**21,122,938 kWh AMBER**	↑
Annual Electricity Consumption across the Authority (kWh) *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	15,210,536 kWh	14,450,009 kWh	**15,019,064 kWh AMBER**	↑
Annual CO2 related to gas consumption across the Authority (tonnes) *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	4,018 tonnes	3,817 tonnes	**3,866 tonnes AMBER**	↑
Annual CO2 related to electricity consumption across the Authority (tonnes) *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	3,150 tonnes	2,925 tonnes	**3,110 tonnes AMBER**	↑
Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) pollution in the air (micrograms per m3) *(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)*	43.80	40	**43.60 AMBER**	↑

Aim 5.2 Protecting our landscapes and open spaces and planting more trees

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of green flag parks and green spaces *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	2	2	**2 YELLOW**	↔
Number of blue flag beaches *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	3	3	**3 YELLOW**	↔

Aim 5.3 Improve the quality of the public ream and built environment through good placemaking principles

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of all planning applications determined within 8 weeks. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	68%	80%	**67% RED**	↙

Percentage of planning appeals dismissed. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	87%	80%	**81% YELLOW**	

Aim 5.4 Reducing, reusing or recycling as much of our waste as possible

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of street cleansing waste prepared for recycling. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	41.18%	40%	**41.22% GREEN**	
Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted (Overall) *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	72.78%	70%	**70.93% YELLOW**	
Percentage of waste a) reused *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	1.43%	1%	**0.54% RED**	
Percentage of waste b) recycled. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	50.42%	49%	**50.59% GREEN**	
Percentage of waste c) composted *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	20.14%	20%	**19.8% AMBER**	
Kilograms of residual waste generated per person. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	119.80kg	125kg	**117.76kg GREEN**	
Percentage of highways land inspected and found to be of a high / acceptable standard of cleanliness. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	99.8%	99%	**99.35% YELLOW**	

Aim 5.5 Improving flood defences and schemes to reduce flooding of our homes and businesses

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of statutory sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) applications processed within 7 weeks from receipt of appropriate scheme drawings. (*Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	100%	95%	**100% GREEN**	

WBO 6 - A County Borough where people feel valued, heard, and part of their community

Aim 6.1 Celebrating and supporting diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of council staff completing Introduction to Equality and Diversity E-Learning. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	47.61%	100%	**64.25% RED**	↑

Aim 6.2 Improving the way we engage with local people, including young people, listening to their views and acting on them

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of consultation participants who answered positively: How effective do you think we have been in meeting our aim of being citizen-focused over the last 12 months? *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	49.4%	50%	**44.2% RED**	↓
Level of engagement (Welsh / English) a) across consultations *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	7,946	8,300	**8,050 AMBER**	↑
Level of engagement (Welsh / English) b) with corporate communications to residents using the digital communications platform. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	972,384	972,500	**1,203,706 GREEN**	↑
Level of engagement (Welsh / English) c) across all corporate social media accounts *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	1,715,802	1715,900	**1,488,712 RED**	↓

Aim 6.3 Offering more information and advice online, and at local level, and making sure you can talk to us and hear from us in Welsh

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage first call resolutions (via Customer Contact Centre) *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	69.17%	75.92%	**72.67% AMBER**	↑
Number of online transactions using the digital platform *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	72,500	72,500	**81,034 GREEN**	↑
Number of hits on the corporate website *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	3,415,000	3,415,000	**3,267,538 AMBER**	↙
Percentage of staff with Welsh language speaking skills (including schools) *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	26.82%	28%	**28.35% GREEN**	↑

Percentage of council staff completing Welsh Language Awareness E-Learning *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	47.61%	100%	**63.12% RED**	↑

Aim 6.4 Helping clubs and community groups take control of and improve their facilities and protect them for the future

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of council owned assets transferred to the community for running (CATs) *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	7	10	**2 RED**	↓
Number of people supported to have their needs met in their communities by local community co-ordinators. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	395	450	**566 GREEN**	↑

WBO 7 - A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

Aim 7.2 Offering attractive leisure and cultural activities

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of visits by older adults to physical activity opportunities supported *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	23,308	23,500	**24,663 GREEN**	↑

Aim 7.3 Improving children's play facilities and opportunities

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Value of investment in play areas. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	£54,443	£1.6 million	**£1,709,584 GREEN**	↑
Number of play areas that have been refurbished. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	0	22	**22 GREEN**	↑

Aim 7.4 Providing free school meals and expanding free childcare provision

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Percentage of eligible learners offered a free school meal.	100%	100%	**100%**	↔

(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)			**GREEN**	
Percentage of non-maintained settings that are judged by Care Inspectorate Wales as at least 'good'. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	76.5%	100%	**83% RED**	↑
Number of two-year-olds accessing childcare through the Flying Start programme. *(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)*	530	570	**542 AMBER**	↑

Aim 7.5 Integrating our social care services with health services so people are supported seamlessly

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of people recorded as delayed on the national pathway of care. *(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)*	104	71	**70 GREEN**	↑

Aim 7.6 Improving the supply of affordable housing

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	Actual 2024-25 & RAYG	Trend
Number of additional affordable homes provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) across the County Borough. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	64	110	**77 RED**	↑
Number of empty properties returned to use with local authority intervention. *(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)*	70	5	**36 YELLOW**	↓

Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS**
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES** **CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING**
Responsible Officer:	**DELYTH WEBB** **GROUP MANAGER STRATEGIC REGENERATION**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.**
Executive Summary:	**The report provides a detailed update on the Bridgend Town Centre Access proposal and seeks Cabinet approval to progress with a package of measures to provide greater flexibility to town centre loading and unloading restrictions, more flexibility on Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) exemptions during times that the bollards are raised, improved access for cycling, and increased blue badge parking on Derwen Road. These measures would be on an 18-month trial basis, subject to continual monitoring.**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the Bridgend Town Centre Access project, following a Call-in of the Cabinet decision made on 23September 2025. This report responds to the concerns of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee following their extraordinary meeting of 3 October 2025 and seeks approval to introduce an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) comprising the following measures:

- increased flexibility for loading and unloading;
- additional exemptions to existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) when protective bollards are raised;
- improved access and secure parking for cycling; and
- expanded Blue-badge parking provision on Derwen Road.

1.2 It should be noted that improved access to the town centre will not serve as a panacea for the wider challenges it faces. Meaningful regeneration will require a combination of this and other town centre initiatives. It is proposed that an update on the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021) projects be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

1.3 This report also seeks delegated authority for the Corporate Director – Communities to finalise the detail design, progress the ETRO and bring it into force, establish monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and submit or accept any external funding required to deliver the scheme. Also to progress work to consider access and new parking for blue badge holders along Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. In addition to progress further work to consider enabling further vehicular access along Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street.

2. Background

2.1 Bridgend town-centre pedestrianisation was completed in November 2004. Traders have subsequently indicated that the associated access restrictions are adversely affecting footfall and economic performance.

2.2 The Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan assessed the findings from previous Town Centre Access studies and concluded that options for improved town centre access should be explored further to account for changes in National Policy and guidance. Atkins Réalis were appointed in 2023, to look at options for improved accessibility in the Town Centre, including three access options for Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street: These included the following:-

- **Option 1** – shorten the pedestrianised period while retaining delivery access outside those hours.
- **Option 2** – allow all traffic outside a core pedestrian window while retaining the northbound one-way system.
- **Option 3** – permit all traffic at all times while retaining the one-way layout.

2.3 The study concluded that Options 2 and 3 would re-introduce significant traffic volumes, alter the street typology from Pedestrian Priority to Informal and necessitate kerb upstands of at least 60 mm. Both options conflicted with national and local policy, and external funding for their implementation is unlikely to be available.

2.4 Option 1, supported by a complementary multi-modal package (revised pedestrian hours, cycling provision, way-finding, peripheral bus-stop enhancements and an updated parking strategy for more than 700 edge-of-centre spaces), was therefore recommended.

2.5 The recommendations of the AtkinsRéalis Access Study were presented to Cabinet in November 2023 following a comprehensive review of the available technical evidence, policy context, and safety considerations. This report presents the next stage of this process, providing evidence-based recommendations informed by the outcomes of the independent Road Safety Audit and the recorded public support for the measures proposed under the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO).

2.6 This report summarises the key findings, set out the rationale for the preferred approach, and confirmed that all recommendations were grounded in both the technical evidence from the AtkinsRéalis study and the extensive public consultation feedback.

2.7 For transparency, the full AtkinsRéalis report and the Road Safety Audit have been appended **as Appendix 1 and 2** for ease of reference.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Following on from the Atkins Realis study and recommendation (2024) a town centre access scheme was refined through internal officer discussions, an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) on-street traffic surveys and ongoing safety risk assessments. The RSA highlighted a potential increase in cyclist–pedestrian interactions and advised that any amendments should consider an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to allow post-implementation monitoring and, if required, adjustment.

3.2 Public consultation was held from 4 April to 2 May 2025. It sought views on extending loading and unloading hours, permitting cycling with improved cycle parking, and introducing additional blue-badge bays on Derwen Road. The consultation was publicised via social media, the Council e-newsletter, bilingual leaflets delivered to more than 400 town-centre businesses, three stakeholder webinars, two staffed drop-in sessions at The Bridge, and paper surveys on request. The additional flexibility for loading and unloading proposed by the ETRO encompasses Adare Street, Caroline Street and Wyndham Street, in addition to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. This was supported by 60% of the public survey responses who responded 'yes' to this core proposal.

3.3 On 15 January 2025 Full Council endorsed a Motion, requesting Cabinet to consider a partial re introduction of traffic. Following a meeting with Cabinet and Bridgend Town Centre Councillors, the consultation questionnaire was amended accordingly to establish whether there continued to be public demand for access to all traffic through Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. The intention was not to propose the re-introduction of general traffic as part of the current proposal, but to gauge public opinion on pursing restoring all general traffic to the three streets in the future. The questionnaire results focus in the main on what is proposed in the Atkins Report which was previously endorsed by Cabinet. The current proposal is the first positive stage in improving Bridgend Town Centre Access. As the town centre continues to develop the proposal to re-introduced general traffic will be explored further, but currently the re-introduction of general traffic through the town centre is contrary to current planning policy. There would also be a requirement to implement significant highway engineering works to meet current design standards and ensure the safety of vulnerable users. This would be subject to detailed design and funding, noting that the lack of policy alignment would make a successful external funding bid difficult to achieve.

3.4 It should also be noted that the Atkins Realis report (2024) identified from a benchmarking review that there is no clear evidence that re-introducing vehicular traffic into a town centre would result in an increase in economic activity. Even so, the gathering of public views on the matter is of value to inform future decision-making, in the event of the Council deeming the potential benefits to outweigh the risks.

3.5 The consultation generated 760 responses (758 online, one paper and one email) and 17 attendees at the drop-in sessions. An overview of the feedback indicated the following, with a full copy of the consultation responses attached as **Appendix 3**.

- 60 per cent support for extending loading and unloading (28 per cent opposed, 2 per cent favoured shorter hours, 10 per cent unsure);
- 56 per cent support for permitting cycling within the pedestrian area, comprising 37 per cent unqualified support and 19 per cent conditional support (37 per cent opposed, 7 per cent unsure);
- 64 per cent support for introducing additional Blue-badge parking on Derwen Road (22 per cent opposed, 14 per cent unsure).

3.6 Taking account of the evidence and consultation feedback, and subject to completion of the external safety risk assessments, it is proposed to introduce an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) that would:

(i) extend loading and unloading until 11:00 and recommence it after 16:00, with additional flexibility for facilitating emergency situations and events;
(ii) allow cycling within the pedestrian zones, with localised restrictions if required by the design and risk assessments; and
(iii) convert under-utilised taxi bays on Derwen Road to Blue-badge parking, with precise operational times to be established.

3.7 An extraordinary meeting of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee was held on 3 October 2025 following the decision of 4 Scrutiny Members and a Scrutiny Chair to call-in the decision of Cabinet in relation to the Bridgend Town Centre Access. A copy of the Notice of Call-In Form is attached as **Appendix 4** for information**.** The role of Councillors exercising Overview and Scrutiny is, amongst other things, to ensure that the development of the Council's policies and the way they are being implemented reflect the needs and priorities of local Communities in the County Borough. As such, in holding the Cabinet to account for the efficient exercise of the executive function, the Overview & Scrutiny process aims to strengthen accountability for the decisions and performance of Bridgend County Borough Council. Following its examination of the decision, the Committee decided to recommend that the decision be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration. This report now reflects those queries and discussions with additional recommendations to enhance future work on access improvements. The concerns of the Committee were as outlined in the Notice of Call-in Form and additionally as follows:-

1) The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) lacks a clear timetable, setting out for traders and the public, the different steps and possible extensions that will be taken during the 18-month Order.

2) The ETRO focuses on the extension of loading and unloading times, but there is a lack of consideration regarding equality of access to the town centre, including parking for blue badge holders and insufficient focus on the equality impact assessment.

3) There is a lack of clarity regarding what will be measured, to record effects of changes made, the mechanism for measuring and what will be reported back to the Committee.

4**)** More evidence and detailed information justifying the reason for decisions be included in Cabinet reports.

5) Clarification is required that as there is no appetite for a full reopening of Bridgend Town Centre to traffic, that Adare, Caroline and Wyndham Street are excluded from the ETRO.

3.8 The ETRO is an 18-month process which provides a sufficient period where road users and other stakeholders can provide feedback on the restrictions while they are in force. It allows for the removal or amendment of restrictions if valid objections are made to the specific Order, or if a safety concern is identified as part of the monitoring and evaluation regime. While the order will be for 18 months, it is our intention to do an initial impact assessment after 6 months.

3.9 Subject to Cabinet approval to proceed, a full monitoring, and evaluation regime will be established for the ETRO. This will include updated safety audits, regular traffic surveys covering all modes of travel, and the collection of data from a range of sources such as the

Council's town centre footfall system, official personal injury collision records, police incident reports, positive support for events, and stakeholder feedback.

3.10 The process will ensure that the trial is assessed comprehensively, not only against safety outcomes, but also in terms of accessibility, user experience, the economy, and the wider town centre environment. Public and trader feedback will form a key part of this assessment, and the findings will be reported back to Cabinet. Subject to Cabinet approval and no adverse effects, the Order will remain in situ.

3.11 Consideration of equality of access to the town centre, specifically regarding parking opportunities for blue badge holders, has been reviewed throughout previous studies and is reflected in the proposal for additional blue badge parking on Derwen Road and the retention of the pedestrianised area.

3.12 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) notes that whilst vehicle access for Blue Badge holders will support some users, it will also negatively affect many Blue Badge holders who navigate the town centre as a pedestrian, who would be placed at a higher safety risk due to the presence of additional vehicle traffic. As part of this ETRO proposal it will not be possible to allow Blue Badge holders to drive and park within the pedestrianised town centre as this would increase vehicular traffic to potentially high volumes and therefore conflict with existing sustainable transport and place-making policy objectives. It is recommended below to bring further collected evidence and evaluation of the benefits and disadvantages of allowing Blue Badge access and parking to Cabinet, and next steps to be determined.

3.13 To date any scheme to reintroduce traffic, including blue badge holders, has come with a warning from appointed transport consultants. Therefore, the Highway Authority would be acting against professional advice if it proceeded with a general reintroduction of traffic into Bridgend town centre. Further work will be required alongside the current proposed ETRO implementation to explore the feasibility of allowing additional vehicular access along Queen Street, Dunraven Place, and Market Street.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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 impacts as a result of this report.

4.2 A full EIA has been carried out as part of the development of this strategy, policy or proposal. The full EIA **attached as Appendix 5,** considers the impact of the strategy, policy or proposal on the nine protected characteristics, the Socio-economic Duty and the use of the Welsh Language. Survey materials were available in Welsh and English, and online sessions were offered to stakeholder groups representing protected characteristics. Additional Blue-badge bays on Derwen Road will improve access to the town centre for disabled visitors. The prioritisation of active travel through the retention of a pedestrian and cycle priority zone provides an inclusive alternative to private car use.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The proposed town-centre interventions will assist in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan well-being objectives 2025-26. In particular, contributing towards well-being objective One: A prosperous place with thriving communities.

- Promote the conditions for economic growth and prosperity, by Improve sustainable and active travel choices.

- Regenerate our town centres and Valleys.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 Any future projects progressed from the Placemaking Plans will be developed to ensure there is no negative impact on the environment and is in line with the commitment to achieve the Council's Net Zero targets. Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport accords with the sustainable-transport hierarchy set out in Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy 2021 and will help reduce emissions from short car trips. This also supports the Corporate Wellbeing Objective number 5.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 Due regard has been paid to the BCBC Safeguarding Policy which seeks to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect and to ensure that effective practices are in place throughout the Council and its commissioned services. Given the subject matter of this report no negative safeguarding implications have been identified.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Total implementation costs of the Town Centre Access improvements are £102,206. This sum covers legal drafting of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, new signage, carriageway markings for Blue-badge bays, secure cycle parking, and monitoring and evaluation.

8.2 External Grant of £89,761 (88%) has been secured from Welsh Government Transforming Towns and Shared Prosperity Funding. The match funding of £12,445 is ring fenced within a feasibility earmarked reserve budget specific to this scheme

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

9.1 Note the concerns of the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the decision of 4 Scrutiny Members and a Scrutiny Chair to call-in the decision of Cabinet in relation to the Bridgend Town Centre Access as outlined at paragraph 3.7 of the report;

9.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities to:-

(i) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the extension of loading and unloading hours to 11:00 and recommence it after 16:00, with additional flexibility allowed for emergency situations and events;

(ii) pursue an 18-month ETRO to permit cycling within the pedestrianised area, subject to the satisfactory completion of the safety risk assessments;

(iii) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the conversion of under-utilised taxi bays on Derwen Road to Blue-badge parking bays.

9.3 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities to establish monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) and to modify, suspend or revoke the Order if required, during the experimental period.

9.4 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy , to submit and accept external funding, award and enter into contracts, agreements and other legal documentation on behalf of the Council which is necessary to deliver the measures.

9.5 During the ETRO period, review the bollard operating system for the town centre.

9.6 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities to progress work to consider access and new parking for blue badge holders along Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street alongside the implementation of the ETRO.

9.7 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities to progress further work to consider enabling further vehicular access along Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street alongside the implementation of the ETRO

9.8 Note that further reports will be presented to Cabinet proposing a permanent position in respect of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) and on Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan projects.

Background Documents:

None

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

AtkinsRéalis

Options Appraisal

Bridgend County Borough Council

April 2024

5221498-RP01-v4.1

BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS STUDY

Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely as information for Bridgend County Borough Council and use in relation to the Bridgend Town Centre Access Study

AtkinsRéalis UK Limited assumes no responsibility to any other party in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this document and/or its contents.

This document has 92 pages including the cover.

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Project	BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS STUDY
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Contents

Executive Summary **7**

1. Introduction **10**

1.1 Background 10

1.2 Study Area 10

1.3 Study Status and Context 12

1.4 Level Surface Scheme Guidance 13

2. Town Centre Access Options **15**

2.1 Overview 15

2.2 Option Development 15

2.2.1 Option 1 – Light Touch 16

2.2.2 Option 2 – Time Limited De-pedestrianisation of Selected Streets 17

2.2.3 Option 3 – Full De-pedestrianisation of Selected Streets 18

3. Socio-demographic context **19**

3.1 Demographics 19

3.2 Travel Distances 20

3.3 Transport Infrastructure 23

3.3.1 Active travel 23

3.3.2 Public Transport 26

3.3.3 Highway Network 28

3.3.4 Car Parking 29

4. Benchmarking Review **31**

4.1 Travel Mode Spending 31

4.2 Local Examples 32

4.3 Summary 34

5. Inclusive Design Considerations **35**

6. Option Appraisal Against Policy **38**

6.1 Introduction 38

6.2 Policy Documents 38

6.3 Scoring Methodology 38

6.4 Policy Appraisal 39

6.4.1 Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021 39

6.4.2 Active Travel (Wales) Act 2021 40

6.4.3 Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 40

6.4.4 Planning Policy Wales 2024 40

6.4.5 Future Wales: the national plan 2040 41

6.4.6 Bridgend County Borough Council - Corporate Plan 42

6.4.7 Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028 42

6.4.8 Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021 42
6.5 Summary of Policy Appraisal 43
6.6 Other relevant policy 43
7. De-pedestrianisation Options Review Summary 45
7.1 Overview 45
7.2 Benchmarking Exercise 45
7.3 Inclusive Mobility Review 45
7.4 Policy Appraisal 45
7.5 Deliverability Considerations 46
7.6 Engagement 46
7.7 Core Study Recommendations 46
8. Potential Multi-modal Intervention Options 48
8.1 Introduction 48
8.2 Description of Multi-Modal Interventions 48
8.2.1 Bus Access to Town Centre 48
8.2.2 Bus Facilities Improvements 48
8.2.3 Enable Cycling Access to the Town Centre 49
8.2.4 Active Travel Route Improvements in Town Centre 50
8.2.5 Wider Active Travel Connections – TfW ATNDR 50
8.2.6 Wider Active Travel Connections – ATNM 50
8.2.7 Cycle Storage / Cycle Hub 51
8.2.8 Cycle Hire Scheme 52
8.2.9 Wayfinding / Town Centre Signage 52
8.2.10 On-street Blue Badge Provision 53
8.2.11 Car Parking Strategy 53
8.2.12 ShopMobility Hub Reinstatement 53
8.3 Matrix of Potential Interventions 54
9. Bridgend Town Centre – Multi-Modal Access Recommendations 56
9.1 Summary of Multi-modal Package 56
9.2 Other Potential Complimentary Interventions 57

Tables

Table 3-1 - Age demographics of Bridgend Central, Bridgend County Borough and Wales 19
Table 3-2 - Health Data of BCB and Bridgend Central 20
Table 3-3 - Active travel route audit summary 25
Table 3-4 - BTC and National Express Services 27
Table 3-5 - Car Parking 30

Table 4-1 - Tonypandy Town Centre footfall 33

Table 5-1 - Inclusive Design Considerations 35

Table 6-1 - Summary of Overall Scores Against Policy 43

Table 8-1 - BTC Potential Interventions to Form Part of a Multi-Modal Package 54

Figures

Figure 1-1 - Map of Bridgend Town Centre Study Area 11

Figure 1-2 - Development Zone Map 12

Figure 1-3 - BTC Town Centre Accessibility Timeline 12

Figure 2-1 - Option 1 16

Figure 2-2 - Option 2 17

Figure 2-3 - Option 3 18

Figure 3-1 - Distance Travelled to work 20

Figure 3-2 - Typical distance range for each mode of active travel 21

Figure 3-3 - Walking distances from Bridgend Town Centre 22

Figure 3-4 - Cycling distances from Bridgend Town Centre 22

Figure 3-5 - BCBC ATNM summary 24

Figure 3-6 - Active travel route audit plan 25

Figure 3-7 - Bus stop provision 26

Figure 3-8 - Bridgend Railway Station 28

Figure 3-9 - Bridgend Town Centre – Highway Network 29

Figure 3-10 - Off Road Car Parks 30

Figure 6-1 - Llwybr Newydd - Principles 39

Figure 6-2 - Transport Hierarchy 39

Figure 6-3 - Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 principles 40

Figure 6-4 - Sustainable Transport Hierarchy (Planning Policy Wales 2024) 41

Figure 7-1 - De-pedestrianisation Option Recommendations 47

Figure 8-1 - Potential Bus Stop Improvements....49
Figure 8-2 - TfW ATNDR Bridgend Station Access Proposals....50
Figure 8-3 - Bridgend ATNM Map....51
Figure 8-4 - Cycle Hub Type Storage Example (ATAG)....52
Figure 8-5 - Wayfinding Example....52
Figure 9-1 - Town Centre Access – Multi-modal Package....56

Executive Summary

Introduction

AtkinsRéalis has been commissioned by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to undertake an appraisal of three options for amending vehicular access to Bridgend Town Centre (BTC), which are intended to increase footfall and improve the vibrancy of the area. The three options are:

- Option 1 – Reduce pedestrianisation hours from the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm to a shorter time period from 11am to 5pm. Retain access for deliveries / collections only outside of this period.
- Option 2 – All vehicular traffic would be allowed access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street, with the existing northbound only one-way system retained. Reduce pedestrianisation hours from the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm to a shorter time period from 11am to 3pm.
- Option 3 – All vehicular traffic would be allowed access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street at all times of the day. The routes would retain the existing one-way system that operates northbound.

This report follows the completion of the *Bridgend Town Centre – Accessibility Options Appraisal 2023*[1] (AOA) report, which forms part of a series of studies undertaken to consider the potential de-pedestrianisation of BTC.

The pedestrianised part of BTC is primarily a level surface 'Pedestrian Prioritised Street' as defined by ATAG. If traffic volumes were to increase such that this part of the town centre would be designated as an 'Informal Street' a demarked kerb upstand of 60mm would be required. It is understood that the pedestrianised part of the town centre does not currently provide a 60mm kerb upstand.

Bridgend Town Centre Description

A review of the existing situation in terms of demographics, location and infrastructure revealed the following:

- The health data and age demographics for Bridgend, including the central area and the surrounding districts, are broadly in line with the Welsh average.
- BTC is within walking distance of most of Bridgend and within cycling distance of all of Bridgend and some surrounding areas including parts of Pencoed and Ogmore. It is also within the average travel to work distance for Bridgend and surrounding areas.
- BTC is well connected for access by all modes of travel, although necessary and desired improvements to active travel links have already been identified by BCBC and TfW. The central bus and rail stations are both in proximity to BTC. The highway links to the centre are good and ample dedicated car parks are provided.

Benchmarking Review

The benchmarking review, considering what the potential impact of amending vehicular access may be, indicates that:

- Although footfall in town centres has fallen over the last two decades, pedestrians and cyclists are likely to visit these areas more often and therefore spend more when compared to drivers. Should public space improvements be made to a town centre, such as increasing the availability of cycle parking, then this figure is likely to increase.

[1] Bridgend County Borough Council, Building Design Partnership Ltd, Asbri, Cooke & Arkwright, PJA (March 2023). *Bridgend Town Centre Accessibility Options Appraisal*. Accessed offline.

- There is some evidence that successful high streets and town centres have concentrated on improving the environment and improving the experience for visitors.
- Overall, there is no clear evidence from the benchmarking review that re-introducing vehicular traffic into a town centre would result in an increase in economic activity.
- There is some local evidence for positive outcomes related to some de-pedestrianisation schemes. However, in each case the de-pedestrianisation element was a smaller part of a wider town centre improvement scheme with significant wider investment. It is therefore unclear the extent to which removing pedestrianisation had a positive outcome.

Inclusive Design Considerations

The following are some of the key findings of an inclusive design consideration of re-introducing additional volumes of traffic into a pedestrianised space. The findings have the greatest implications for the de-pedestrianisation options that introduce more traffic for larger parts of the day (e.g., Options 2 and 3):

- Negative implications:
    - Increased difficulty for pedestrians to manoeuvre around the space particularly relevant to the mobility / visually / cognitively impaired, the elderly, those in pregnancy and children. Also impacts on road safety and perceptions of safety amongst these groups.
    - Likely to hamper the enjoyment of the space for some as there are less areas to meet, particularly effecting children and teenagers.
    - Potential to make it more difficult for parents and carers to observe.
    - Potential pollution impacts including noise pollution.
- Positive implications:
    - Potential benefits to blue badge holders including mobility / visually / cognitively impaired, their carers, and the elderly, if vehicles can bring them closer to their destination.
    - Potential benefits to the risk and fear of crime by increasing the level of passive surveillance.

Overall, the inclusive design implications of de-pedestrianisation are mixed. Any scheme for BTC should be subject to suitable stakeholder engagement and ensure the needs of all groups are considered in the design of any scheme.

Appraisal of Options against Policy

The alignment of the three de-pedestrianisation options were considered against the following key national, regional and local policy documents:

- The Wales Transport Strategy 2021
- Active Travel Act - Guidance 2021
- Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning Policy Wales 2024
- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Local Transport Plan 2015-2030
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021

Overall, the summary of scores for policy alignment show that none of the de-pedestrianisation options are well aligned with current policy. In general, policy favours the promotion of sustainable modes of travel and seeks to reduce the reliance on the private motor car. Therefore, any scheme that promotes access for the private motor vehicle to the detriment of active travel users will be contrary to current policy goals. Option 1, which would only

introduce a small amount of additional traffic is least contrary to current policy. Option 2 which would re-introduce all traffic for a limited amount of time is more contrary, whilst Option 3 which would reintroduce traffic at all times is the most contrary to policy.

De-pedestrianisation Recommendation

It is considered likely (subject to a safety assessment) that Option 1 (considered the light touch option) could be introduced and BTC would still retain its character as a Pedestrian Priority Street (as set out in ATAG). Therefore, significant works to provide a kerb upstand of at least 60mm are not likely to be required. Options 2 and 3 would reintroduce a more significant volume of traffic and are therefore likely to change the character to an Informal Street (as set out in ATAG) for which significant works to introduce a kerb upstand of at least 60mm would be required.

The de-pedestrianisation options do not align well with policy and consequently there are significant delivery risks, particularly associated with Options 2 and 3, surrounding the following:

- Legislation
- Funding
- Reputation

Further the inclusive design considerations of de-pedestrianisation are mixed and there is no clear evidence from the benchmarking review that re-introducing vehicular traffic into a town centre would result in an increase in economic activity.

Based on the appraisal it is recommended that Option 1 should be taken forward and that it should form part of a package of multi-modal transport interventions rather than as a standalone ‘de-pedestrianisation’ option. Option 1 has a better alignment with policy, is likely to be deliverable in a shorter timescale and at a significantly lower cost than the other options considered whilst providing benefits to businesses in the town centre.

Package of Multi-Modal Interventions

The advantages and disadvantages of several potential multi-modal interventions that would be introduced alongside Option 1 were considered. This included their alignment with policy, delivery cost and timescales and direct relevance to BTC. Interventions that align with policy, have a lower cost and shorter delivery timescales and that are directly relevant to BTC are preferred.

Based on the assessments, the following combined package of multi-modal interventions is recommended to improve access to BTC:

- Reduced hours of pedestrianisation (11am to 3pm / 11am to 4pm / 11am to 5pm) enabling deliveries / collections outside of this period.
- Allow cycling in the town centre.
- Provide additional convenient cycle parking in the town centre, covered where possible. Provide a cycle hub at a key destination such as the bus or rail station.
- Develop and implement a wayfinding strategy for the town centre.
- Improve bus facilities on the periphery of the town centre, such as providing timetable information, cantilever shelter, raised kerbs, etc. There is also the potential to introduce additional stops where coverage is incomplete.
- Develop and implement a parking strategy for the town centre. There are over 700 parking spaces in dedicated car parks on the periphery of the town centre as well as on street parking. A strategy could be developed to advertise and improve the offering, as well as increasing the provision of on-street blue badge parking.

1. Introduction

AtkinsRéalis has been commissioned by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to undertake an appraisal of three options for amending vehicular access to Bridgend Town Centre (BTC), which are intended to increase footfall and improve the vibrancy of the area. This report follows the completion of the *Bridgend Town Centre – Accessibility Options Appraisal 2023*[2] (AOA) report, which forms part of a series of studies undertaken to consider the potential de-pedestrianisation of BTC. The output of the AOA is a recommendation to consider three options with a view to identifying a preferred option for detailed development.

1.1 Background

Several studies have been commissioned by BCBC relating to access to the town centre, with more detail provided in section 1.3. The *Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021*[3] (RM), sets a focus on fulfilling Bridgend's role as a destination and centre for retail, living, employment, education and heritage. To enable this, BCBC has been encouraged by some stakeholders to consider de-pedestrianisation as a potential way to increase footfall in the town centre to support the local economy and create a more vibrant and inclusive town centre for residents and visitors alike. Following the pedestrianisation of BTC in 2004, traders in the area have reported a reduction in footfall and associated spend. For some this is perceived to be due to the restricted access for private motor vehicles and the pedestrianisation of BTC was noted as a key issue for local traders following a programme of engagement.

A Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity & Constraints (SWOC) analysis within the report identified the following in relation to the pedestrianisation of BTC:

- **Strengths**: Well connected by bus and rail, which is part of the South Wales Metro expansion network, to Cardiff, Swansea and surrounding areas.
- **Weakness**: Second phase of pedestrianisation including Market Street, Queen Street and Wyndham Street has been unpopular with the local retailers and businesses in the town centre. Lack of cycle parking and active travel links to the railway station.
- **Opportunities**: There are opportunities to consider partial or complete de-pedestrianisation of the town centre (this was set out in the 2016 Town Centre Access report produced by Capita) with an appropriate balance between place and movement with safe and importantly, an attractive pedestrian environment.
- **Constraints**: Existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) in the town centre offer no provision for emerging click and collect facilities* and home delivery business models. This also detracts BCBC investment in improvements to the public realm and careful consideration should be given for potential reintroduction of vehicle movements to the pedestrianised streets. The second phase of pedestrianisation is also perceived to have led to a decline in visitor numbers in the town centre due to lack of accessible parking spaces.

  ***Note there are currently no click and collect facilities operating in the town centre

1.2 Study Area

Bridgend is a town situated in Bridgend County Borough, located approximately 20 miles west of Cardiff, and 20 miles east of Swansea. It forms part of the Cardiff Capital Region, which is a collaborative programme between ten local authorities to stimulate regional growth.

[2] Bridgend County Borough Council, Building Design Partnership Ltd, Asbri, Cooke & Arkwright, PJA (March 2023). *Bridgend Town Centre Accessibility Options Appraisal*. Accessed offline.

[3] Bridgend County Borough Council, Building Design Partnership Ltd, PJA, Gleeds (December 2021). *Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan*. Accessed online at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3b0fvv42/bridgend-town-centre-masterplan.pdf.

The town centre area [BTC] as defined for the purposes of this study, is bounded by Boulevard De Villenave D'Ornon, Derwen Road, Nolton Street, The Rhiw, Water Street, Queen Street, and Ogmore River (see Figure 1-1). More specifically, a focus of the report is on the pedestrianised area which includes Wyndham Street, Adare Street, Caroline Street, Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street.

BTC primarily comprises of retail and commercial premises, which is a key employment sector of the town. The town centre area scoped in this study is identified in the RM as a development zone for retail and café & culture regeneration projects (see Figure 1-2).

Figure 1-1 - Map of Bridgend Town Centre Study Area

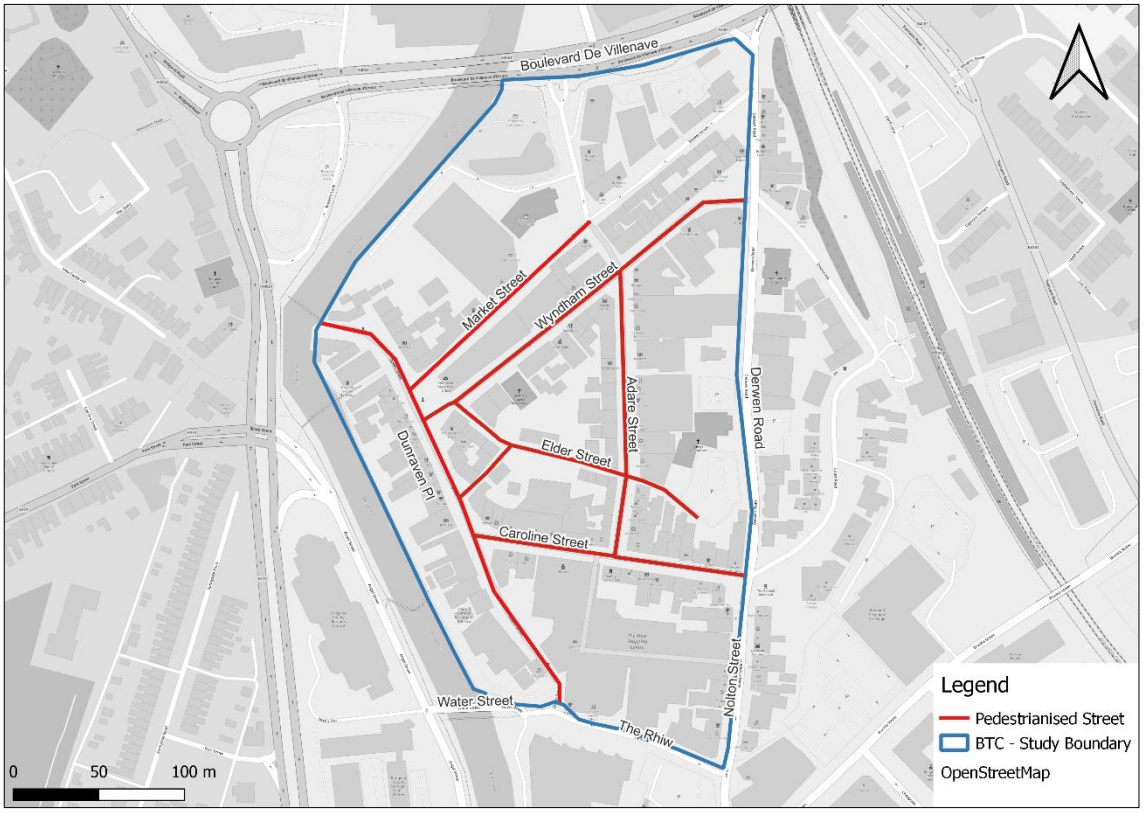
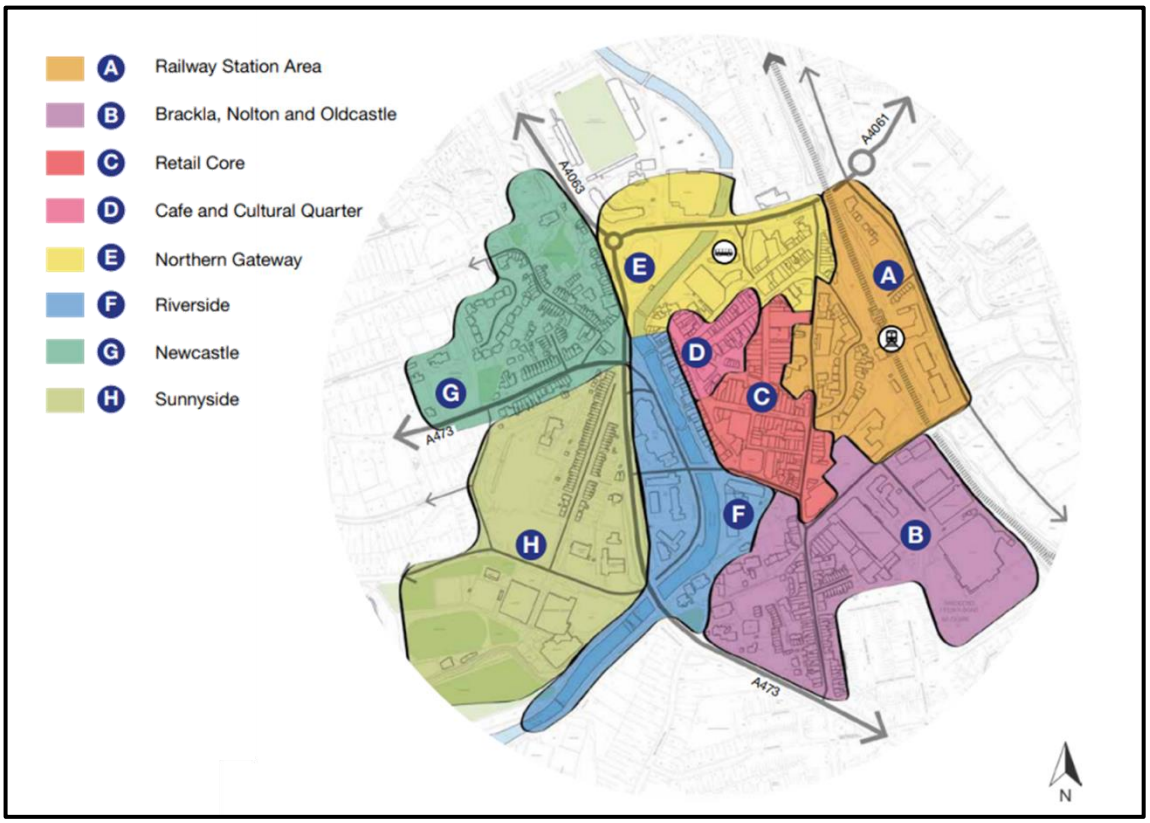


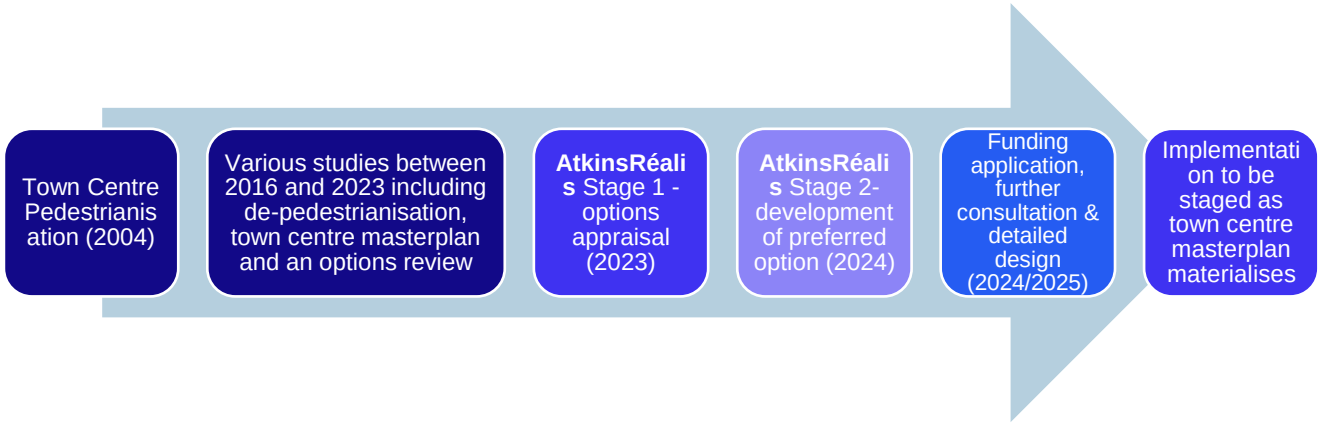
Figure 1-2 - Development Zone Map[4]



1.3 Study Status and Context

BCBC has been asked to consider de-pedestrianisation as a potential solution to reverse the decrease in footfall in the town centre area. The AOA study, commissioned by BCBC, followed two previous commissions undertaken since 2016 which both looked at whether elements of the town centre could be de-pedestrianised. A summary of the status of the overall study programme is presented in Figure 1-3.

Figure 1-3 - BTC Town Centre Accessibility Timeline



[4] Bridgend County Borough Council, Building Design Partnership Ltd, PJA, Gleeds (December 2021). *Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan*. Accessed online at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3b0fvv42/bridgend-town-centre-masterplan.pdf

The 2016 study assessed (1) suspending pedestrianisation at all times, (2) limiting pedestrianisation to between 11am and 3pm, and (3) reversing the one-way system on Wyndham Street and Caroline Street. The study found that pedestrianisation focussed on the 11-3 peak period allowed for a good balance of visitor / shopper experience, while allowing for intensification and flexibility of the night-time economy and limiting wear and tear on the paving surfaces by limiting loading periods.

A second study in 2019, assessed the impact of de-pedestrianising the road from the southern end of Queen Street up to Dunraven Place and eastbound along Market Street to its junction with Quarella Road. The study concluded ‘‘the results of this study, based on safety and costs alone, recommend that Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street remain a Pedestrian Zone and if vehicle traffic is reintroduced to the Study Area BCBC would need to accept the risks to public safety that would be reintroduced’’.

Following on from these two studies, the Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021 (RM) assessed the findings from the 2016 and 2019 reports, finding that the zone assessed by 2019 report (southern end of Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street up to the junction with Quarella Road) ‘could benefit from flexible vehicular access and that this was currently defined by a 20mm kerb upstand, tactile paving at crossing points and contrasting materials, and thus did not run counter to the pause on level surface schemes’. However, please see section 1.4 for the current interpretation of level surface scheme guidance and the Welsh Government position on this.

The AOA report was produced in response to the consideration for de-pedestrianisation in the RM report. The outcome of the report was the composition of three potential de-pedestrianisation options for the area. The options were created with an aim of balancing the competing aims and priorities of stakeholders in BTC, substantiated by policy and context analysis.

1.4 Level Surface Scheme Guidance

In September 2018 the Department for Transport (DfT) issued a pause on the introduction of new shared space schemes that feature a level surface. A level surface is defined as a design feature in which the level difference between footway and carriageway is removed. The focus of the guidance was on areas with relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movement, such as high streets and town centres. This guidance applied to local authorities in England but has been reflected in the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG, 2021) [5] applicable in Wales. Paragraph 11.11.2 of ATAG states:

> ‘*A review undertaken in 2018 by Institute of Highway Engineers has identified two types of approach; Pedestrian Prioritised Streets with very low volumes of motor traffic where the whole street surface is primarily for pedestrians; and Informal Streets where volumes are higher and designated space for walking and cycling is required, as well as defined pedestrian crossing points*.’

It goes on to highlight that blind and partially sighted people find shared space difficult to use and may avoid such areas due to fear of road danger and difficulty in navigating through the space. Noting that such issues apply within town centres and high streets. Paragraph 11.11.5 states:

> *‘Currently the only confirmed demarcation fully detectable to most blind people and recognised by guide dogs is a footway raised above the carriageway with at least 60mm kerb upstand. Colour, texture and tonal contrast between the carriageway and the footway areas will also help*.’

[5] Source: Active Travel Act guidance (gov.wales)

The interpretation of this guidance is that for Informal Streets (i.e., streets that do not experience very low volumes of motor traffic) a demarked kerb upstand of 60mm is required. It is understood that none of the streets within the currently pedestrianised part of Bridgend town centre has a kerb upstand of 60mm.

2. Town Centre Access Options

2.1 Overview

In this Chapter, options identified in the AOA report are presented with addition contextual information. These options form the basis of options for appraisal in this study.

2.2 Option Development

The following processes were undertaken in the AOA study to develop a series of potential options:

- Engaging relevant stakeholders, including statutory stakeholders and internal BCBC officers.
- Undertaking a survey of traders to understand their requirements and insights.
- Exploring options for improved town centre access.

A summary of the three options that were developed following this process is outlined in the following sections, with more detailed information presented in tables contained in Appendix A.

Each option presents a potential change to the way in which access, particularly vehicular access, can be achieved in the town centre.

2.2.1 Option 1 – Light Touch

This option outlines several light touch proposals that aim to strike a balance between the needs of traders and visitors to the town centre. This option retains pedestrianisation for a shorter period than existing covering a period from 11am to 5pm, rather than the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm. Outside of these periods access will be permitted to the town centre streets for loading only. Note the existing one-way systems in the town centre would be retained.

This option would provide additional time for loading in the morning and evening but would not re-introduce general traffic to the town centre. It is anticipated that this option would retain very low vehicle numbers and remain a Pedestrian Prioritised Street as set out in ATAG.

The option is presented in Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1 - Option 1

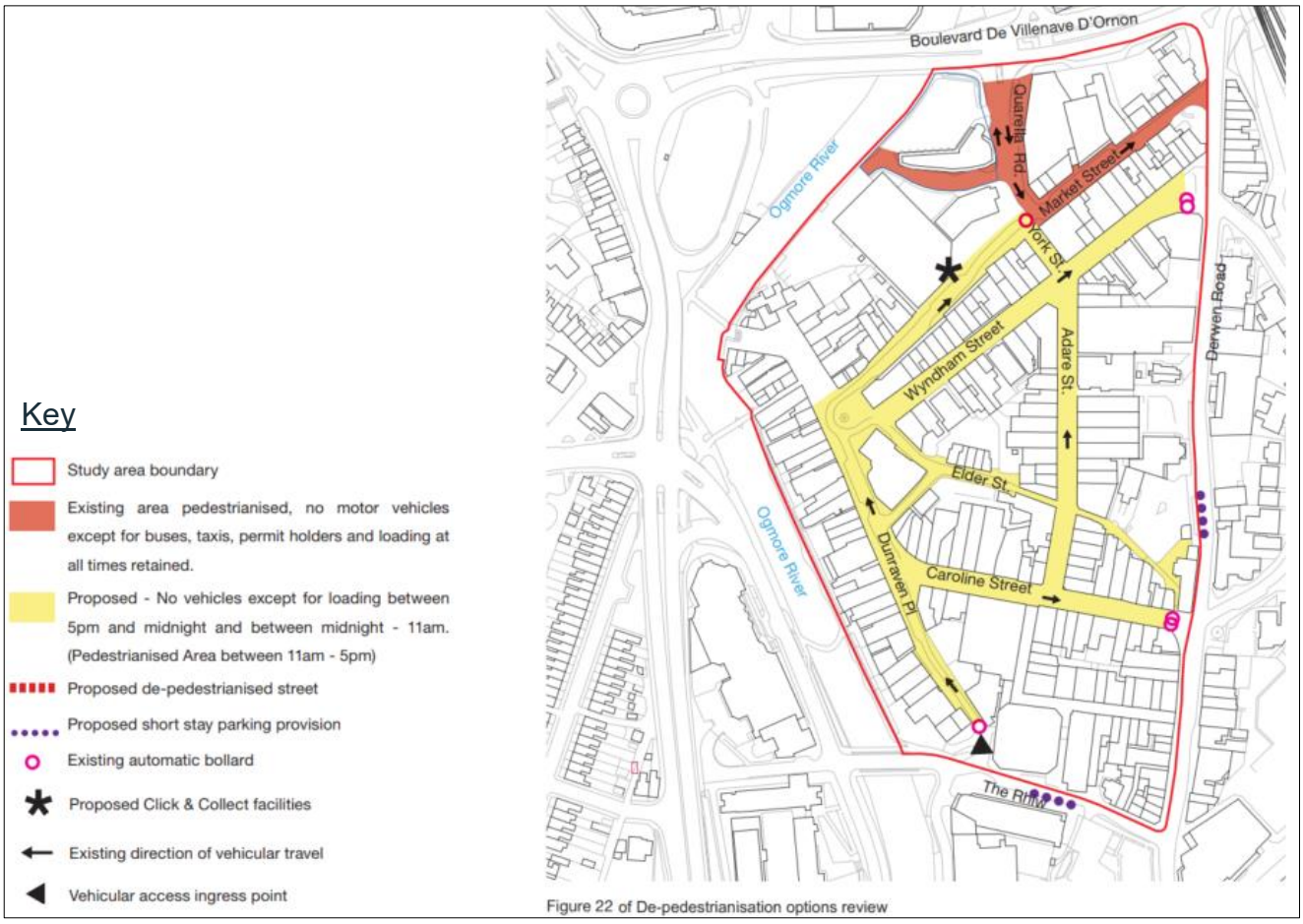


Figure 22 of De-pedestrianisation options review

2.2.2 Option 2 – Time Limited De-pedestrianisation of Selected Streets

Option 2 presents a time limited approach to the de-pedestrianisation of parts of the town centre. In this option the pedestrianisation period would be reduced from the existing 10am to 6pm so that it applies between 11am and 3pm instead.

In this option all vehicular traffic would be allowed access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street, with the existing northbound only one-way system retained. In addition, short-stay parking would be provided at appropriate locations on Dunraven Place and Market Street which would be accessible to vehicles outside of the 11am to 3pm pedestrianised period.

This option would enable all vehicles to access the town centre route outside of 11am and 3pm presenting a through route for some traffic movements. It is likely that this option would result in a sizeable increase in traffic volumes making Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street 'Informal Streets' as designated by ATAG, which would require construction work to provide a 60mm kerb upstand.

The other streets that make-up the pedestrianised town centre area, including Wyndham Street, Adare Street, Elder Street and Caroline Street would be retained as access for loading only. However, the period during which pedestrianisation is applied to these streets would also be reduced to 11am to 3pm, increasing the period during which loading is allowed by an hour in the morning and three hours in the afternoon / evening.

The option is presented in Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-2 - Option 2

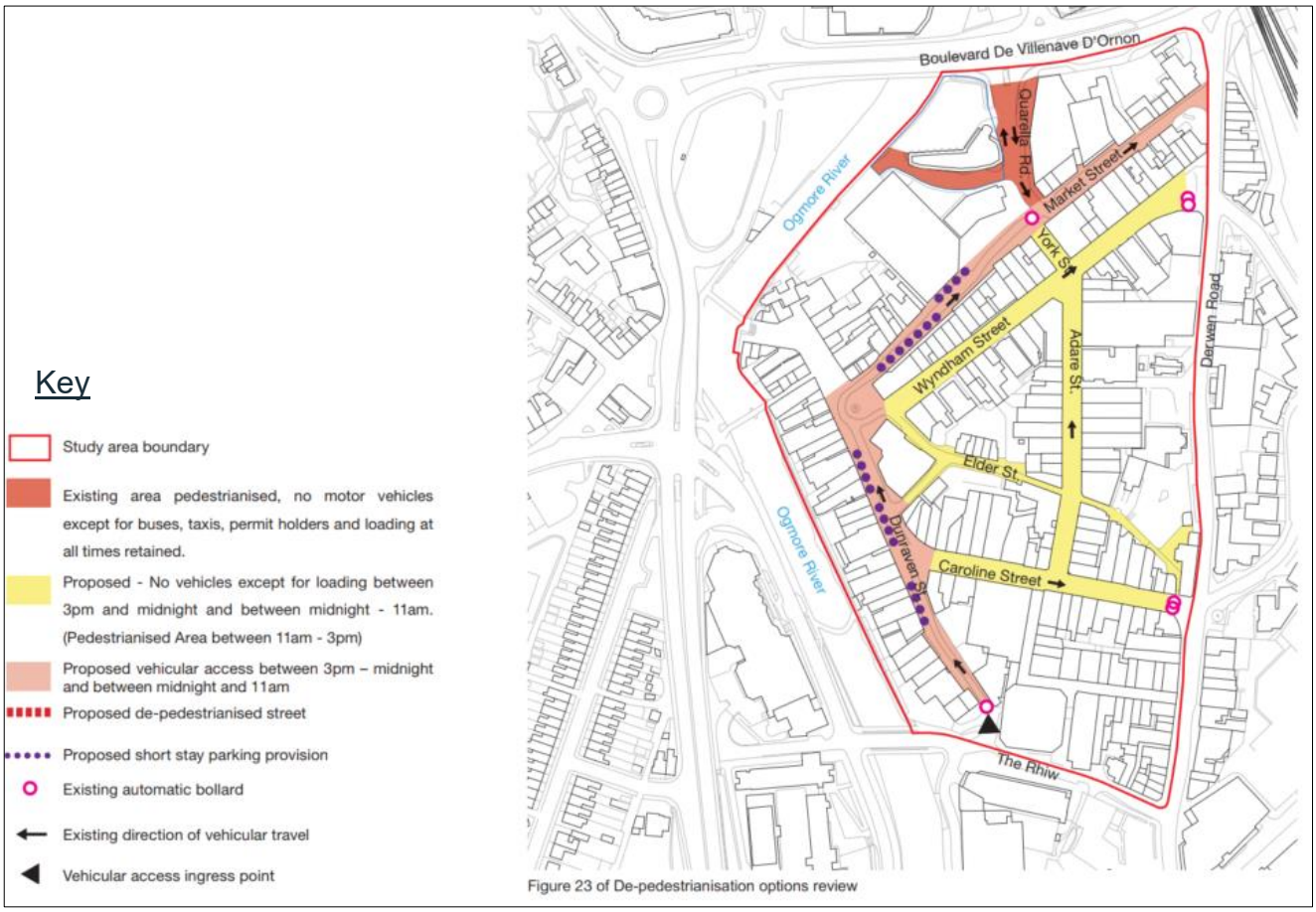


Figure 23 of De-pedestrianisation options review

2.2.3 Option 3 – Full De-pedestrianisation of Selected Streets

Option 3 presents a more extensive approach to de-pedestrianising Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. In this option all vehicular traffic would be allowed access to these roads at all times of the day. The routes would retain the existing one-way system that operates northbound. In addition, short-stay parking would be provided at appropriate locations on Dunraven Place and Market Street which would be accessible to vehicles at all times.

This option would enable all vehicles to access the town centre route, at all times, presenting a through route for some traffic movements. It is likely that this option would result in a sizeable increase in traffic volumes, making Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street 'Informal Streets' as designated by ATAG, which would require construction work to provide a 60mm kerb upstand.

The other streets that make-up the pedestrianised town centre area, including Wyndham Street, Adare Street, Elder Street and Caroline Street will be retained as access for loading only. However, this will be time limited so that loading access would only be permitted outside of the 11am to 3pm pedestrianised period.

The option is presented in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 - Option 3

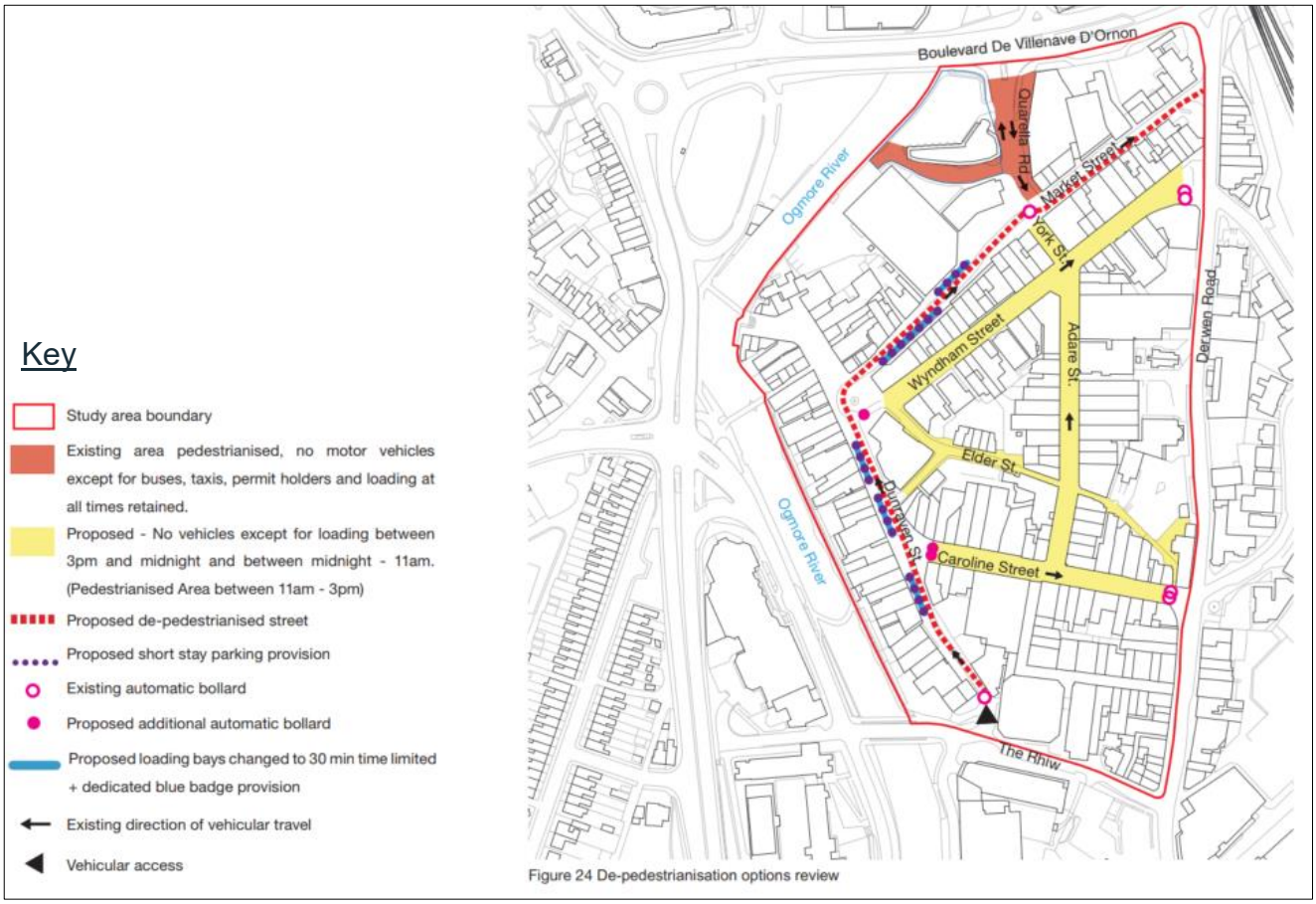


Figure 24 De-pedestrianisation options review

3. Socio-demographic context

To frame the review of potential options and assessment of the socio-demographic context has been undertaken, which is summarised in this section. An understanding of demography, travel to work patterns, and existing transport infrastructure can help focus the development of an option to ensure that access to BTC is fit for purpose and serving the needs of the people that currently, and potentially could use it.

3.1 Demographics

Population

The population representation in age is comparable between Bridgend Central, Bridgend County Borough (BCB) and Wales (see Table 3-1), with no significant disparity.

In the context of this study, the most relevant age groups, from a road safety perspective, are those recognised as being vulnerable[6]: those aged over 65 and under 15. This is primarily due to mobility issues (>65 age group) and distraction (<15 age group). In Bridgend Central, 17% of the population are under the age of 15, and 22% are over the ages of 65. A significant proportion [39%] of the population in Bridgend Central are therefore considered as vulnerable road users. It is recommended that BCBC consider the range and abilities of all ages in the evaluation and delivery of this scheme.

Table 3-1 - Age demographics of Bridgend Central, Bridgend County Borough and Wales[7]

Age	Bridgend Central		Bridgend County Borough		Wales	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<15	**1,715**	**17%**	26,005	18%	548,078	18%
16-24	**869**	**9%**	13,441	9%	329,080	11%
25-64	**5,221**	**52%**	75,945	52%	1,568,291	50%
>65	**2,263**	**22%**	30,095	21%	662,043	21%
Total	**10,068**	**100%**	145,486	100%	3,107,492	100%

General Health

General health trends are similar between Bridgend Central, BCB and Wales (see Table 3-2).

The largest proportion representation for general health is 'Very good health', followed by 'Good health' and 'Fair health'. Less than 6% of the population for all locations are identified as having 'Bad Health', and 2% of the population reported as having 'Very bad health'. The only significant difference in trend is noted in the 'Very good health' category where 46% of BCB and Wales's population, respectively, have 'Very good health'. Bridgend Central stands at 43% in the same category. Whilst data conveys that the majority of the population residing in Bridgend Central have Fair to Very good health, 76% of which have Good to Very good health, development and evaluation of Options must still be inclusive of those with Bad to Very bad health (8%).

[6] Road Safety Scotland (n.d.). *Vulnerable road users should always come first.* Accessed online at: https://roadsafety.scot/road-user-advice/vulnerable-road-users/

[7] Office for National Statistics (2021). *TS007A - Age by five-year age bands.* Accessed online at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

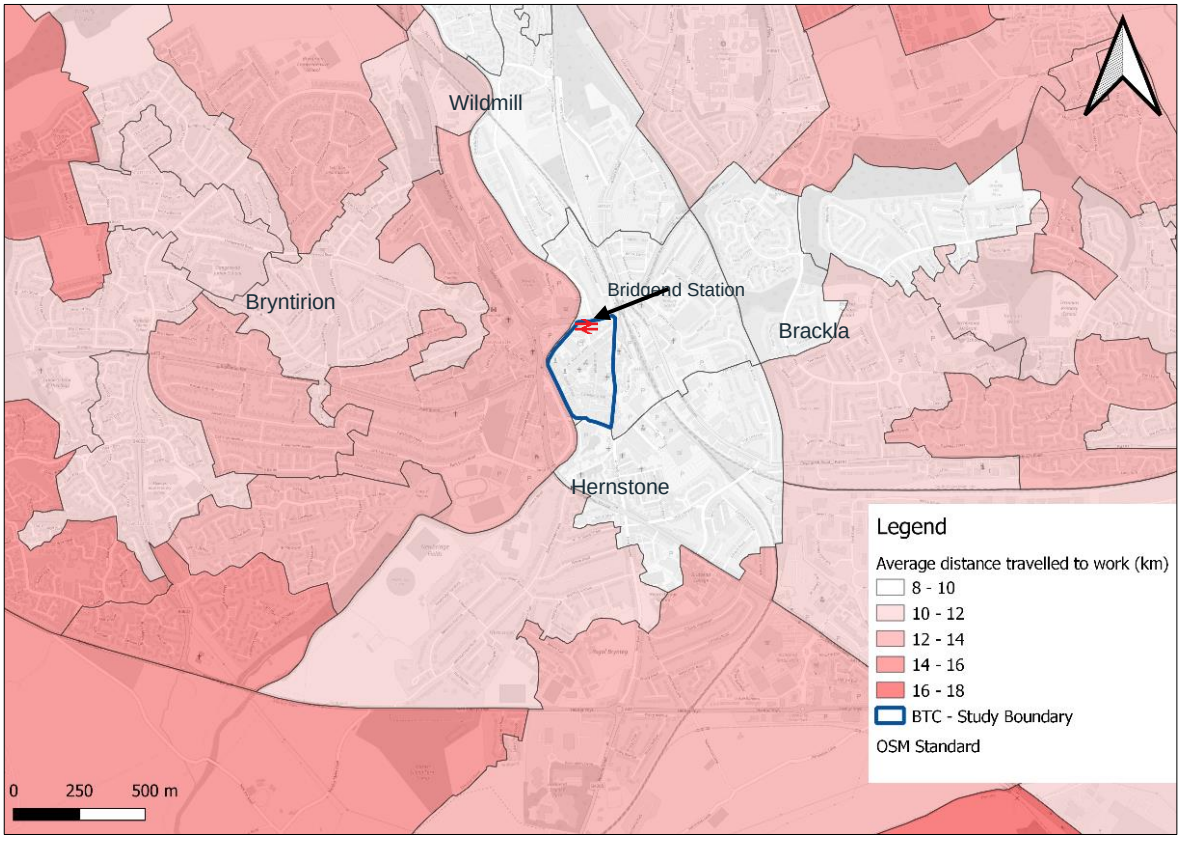
Table 3-2 - Health Data of BCB and Bridgend Central[8]

Health	Bridgend Central		Bridgend County Borough		Wales	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very good	**4,210**	**42%**	66,751	46%	1,436,479	46%
Good	**3,388**	**34%**	46,142	32%	1,005,485	32%
Fair	**1,625**	**16%**	21,589	15%	449,655	14%
Bad	**644**	**6%**	8,254	6%	164,102	5%
Very bad	**206**	**2%**	2,752	2%	51,774	2%
Total	**10,068**	**100%**	145,486	100%	3,107,492	100%

3.2 Travel Distances

Figure 3-1 shows the average distance travelled to work (km) in Bridgend and surrounding areas based on the results of the 2011 Census (note 2021 Census data was not used due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic). The figure shows that residents living within the centre of Bridgend travel less than 10km to work on average, whilst those living on the outskirts travel further on average. Overall, the Census data indicates that BTC is within the average travel to work distance for those living within Bridgend and surrounding areas. On this basis BTC can be considered within accessible distance of the surrounding areas.

Figure 3-1 - Distance Travelled to work[9]

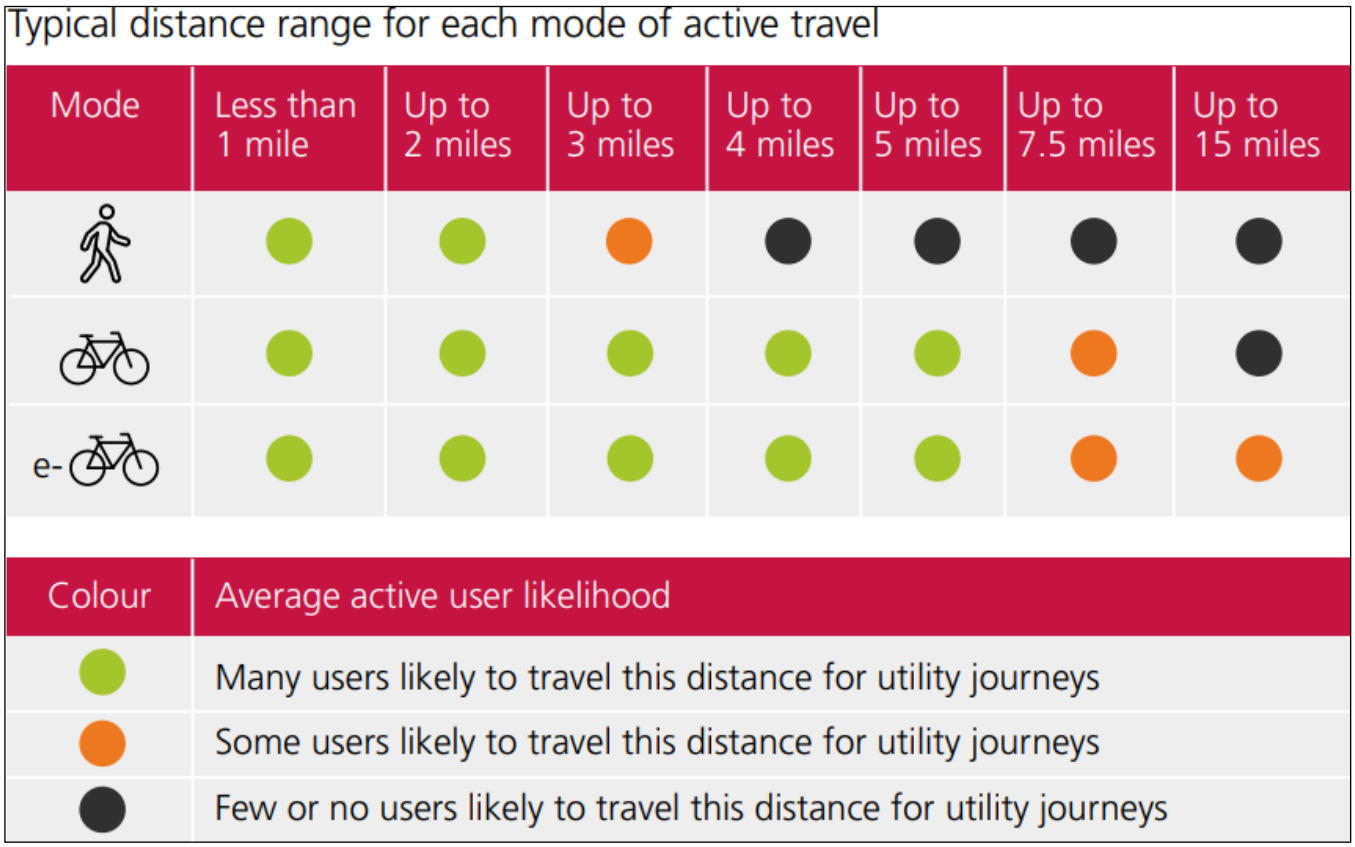


[8] *Office for National Statistics (2021). TS037 - General health. Accessed online at : https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/*

[9] *Office for National Statistics (2021). Accessed online at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/*

Figure 3-2, taken directly from the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG) illustrates the active travel (walk and cycle) distance that are considered acceptable to those travelling for utility journeys.

Figure 3-2 - Typical distance range for each mode of active travel[10]



The distances that ATAG designates as 'many users likely to travel this distance for utility journeys' have been mapped in the context of BTC.

Figure 3-3 illustrates the walking distances that would be acceptable for many, whilst Figure 3-4 illustrates the cycling distances that would be acceptable for many.

The figures illustrate the acceptable distances using isochrones. Each isochrone has an outer boundary showing the area within a specified walk or cycle distance of BTC. In figure 3-3, for instance the dark green area indicates all areas within a 1-mile (1.6km) walk distance, the outer lighter green area indicates the areas between a 1 and 2 mile (1.6 – 3.2km) walk distance of BTC.

[10] Welsh Government (July 2021). *Active Travel Act [Wales] Guidance*. Accessed online at: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/active-travel-act-guidance.pdf

Figure 3-3 - Walking distances from Bridgend Town Centre

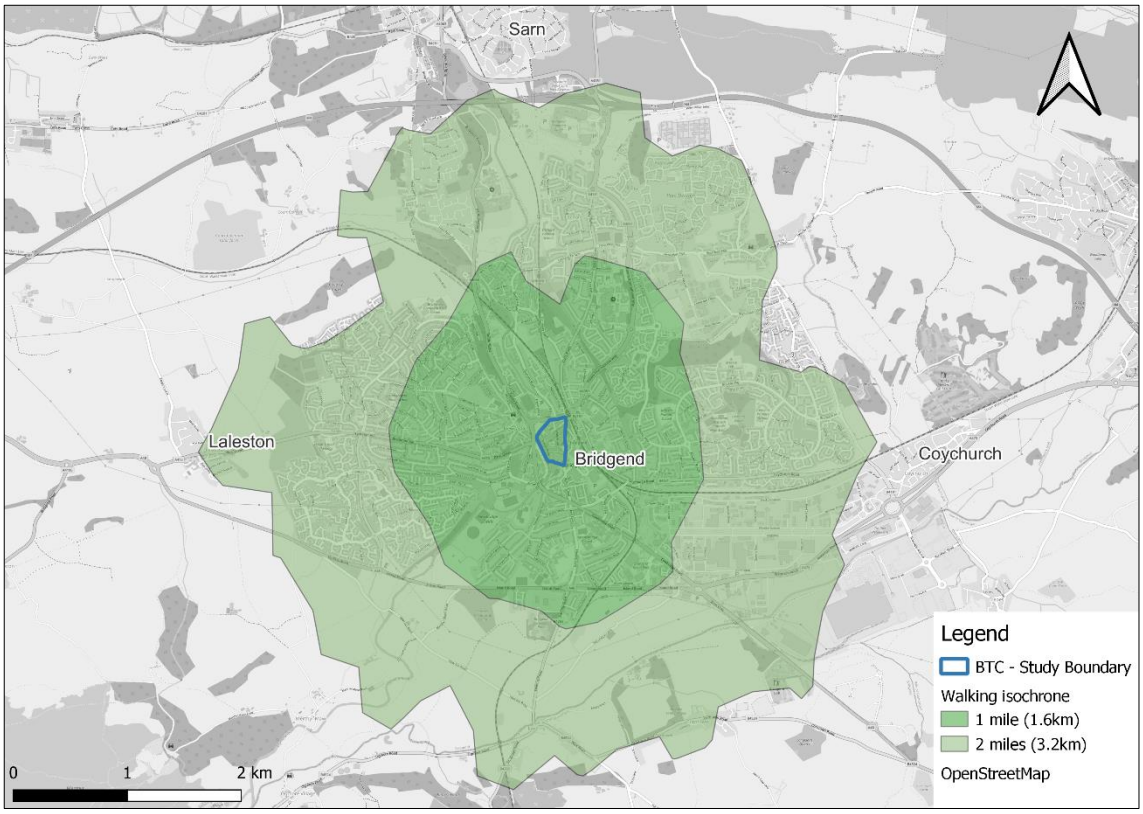


Figure 3-4 - Cycling distances from Bridgend Town Centre

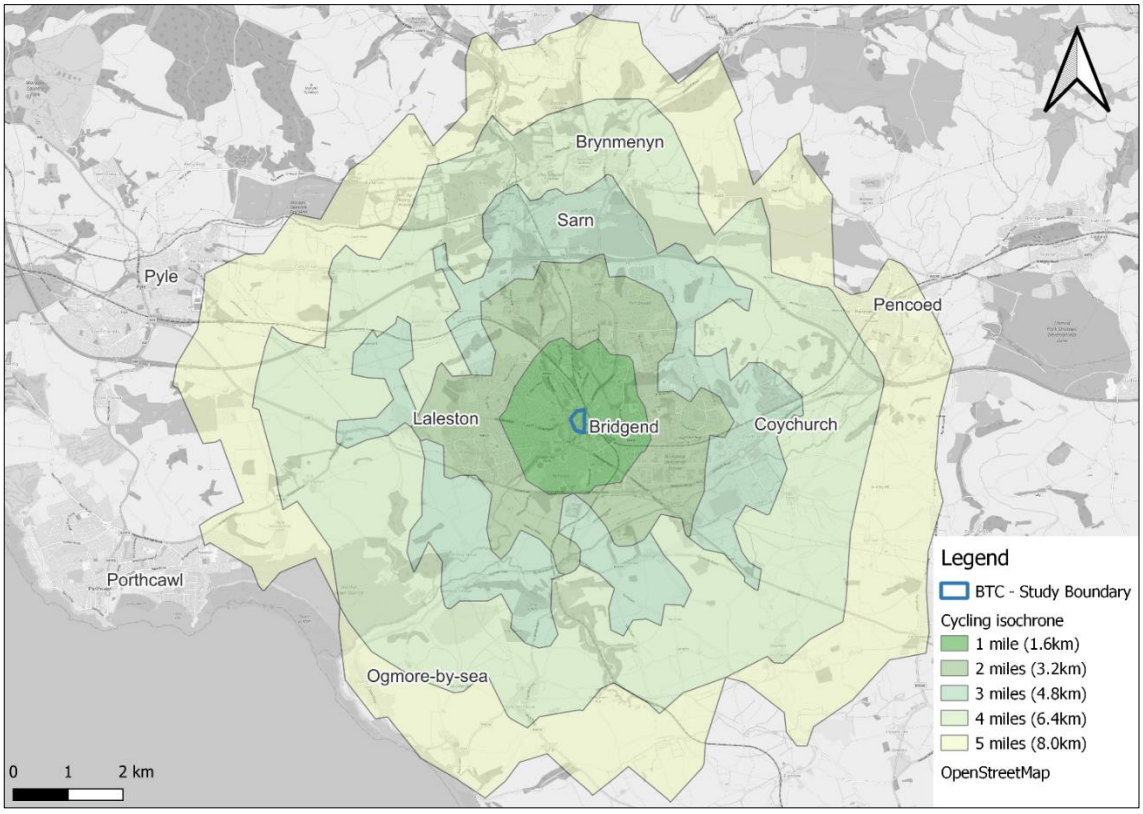


Figure 3-3 indicates that almost all of Bridgend could be considered within acceptable walking distance of BTC based on the ATAG guidance. Similarly, Figure 3-4 indicates that all of Bridgend is within acceptable cycling distance of the town centre and so are significant parts of the surrounding area, including parts of Pencoed and Ogmore.

Overall, it is considered that BTC is within acceptable distance for access by active travel modes for a significant proportion of the local population. However, it is recognised that the existing infrastructure may not be of sufficient standard to enable all users to undertake such journeys.

3.3 Transport Infrastructure

The multi-modal transport infrastructure within BTC and within the vicinity of the study area is reviewed within this section, to allow the existing accessibility of the area to be understood.

3.3.1 Active travel

Active Travel Network

The Welsh Government introduced the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 that places a legal requirement on Local Authorities to map, plan, *improve and promote active travel routes*, with authorities required to produce maps showing existing routes (ERM) and planned future routes (INMs) covering a 15-year programme. There is also a requirement to update these maps, now combined into the Active Travel Network Maps (ATNM) every five years.

To consider the walking and cycling network within the BTC area reference is made to the latest BCBC Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) [11], a summary of which is presented in Figure 3-5.

[11] Source: https://datamap.gov.wales/maps/active-travel-network-maps/

Figure 3-5 - BCBC ATNM summary

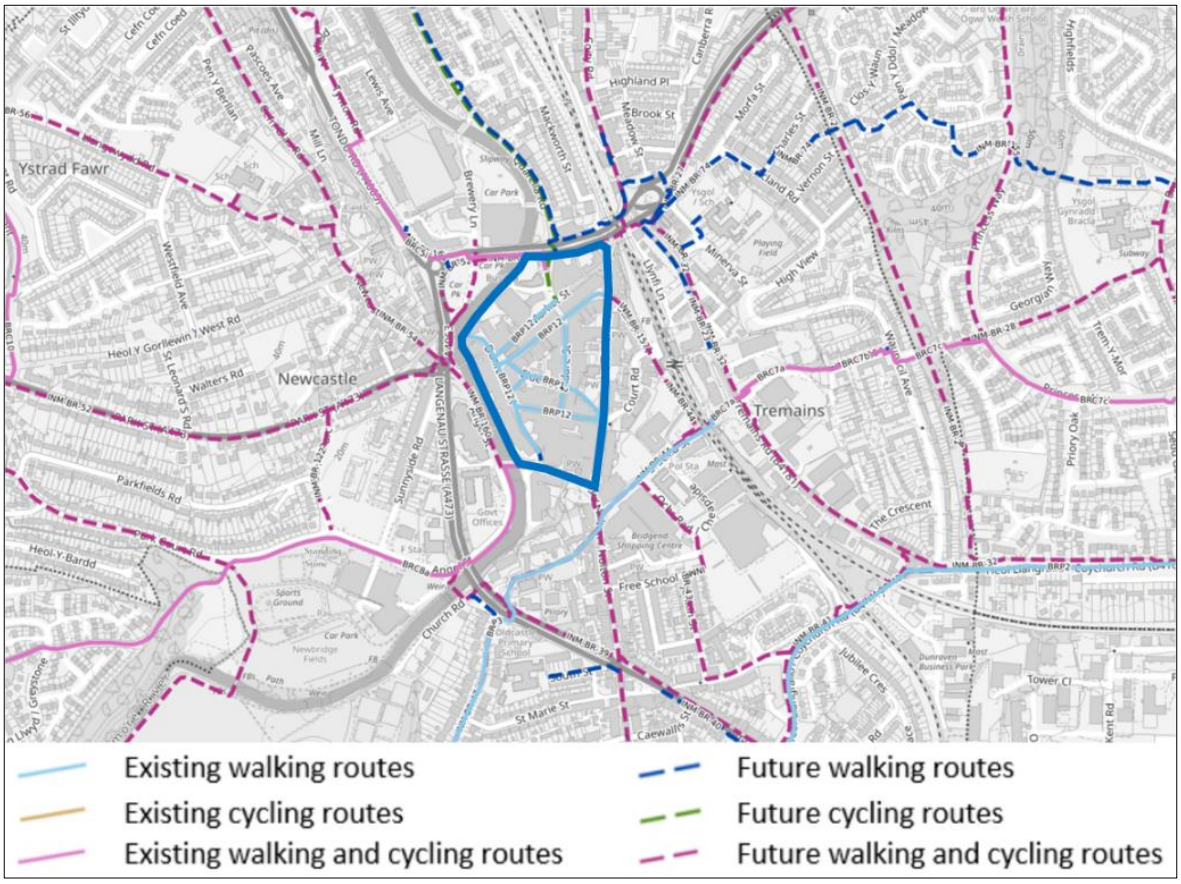


Figure 3-5 illustrates that the principal routes through the study area are currently referenced within the ATNM as 'existing walking routes' with no cycle routes currently identified. It is noted however, there are several 'future walking and cycling routes' identified in the vicinity of the study area, which could serve to improve active travel accessibility to the BTC in the future.

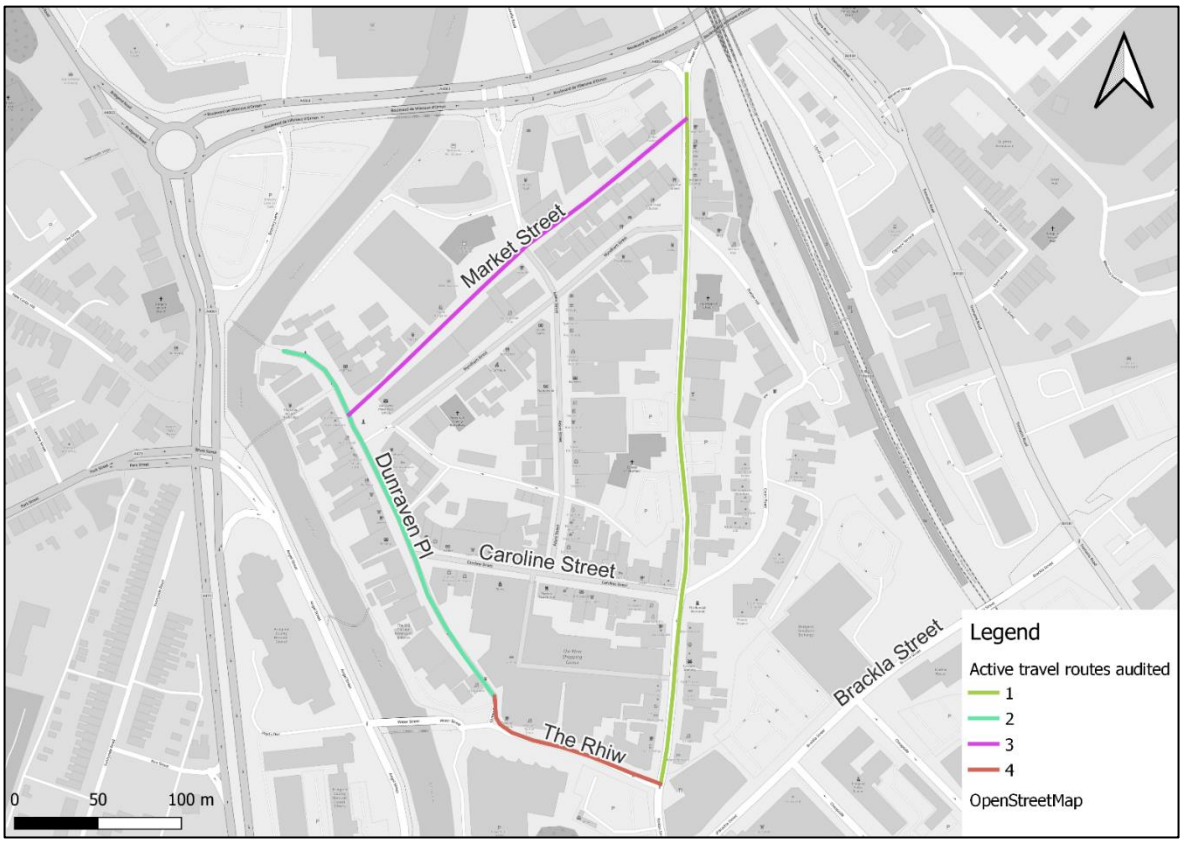
It should also be noted that any potential future funding applications for any active travel improvements may be predicated on the route being included on the ATNM, and as such a review of the suitability of the ATNM within BTC may be appropriate. Early discussions would be needed with TfW / Sustrans to amend the ATNM.

Active Travel Network Route Audits

Walking and cycle route audits have been undertaken on routes within BTC that would potentially be impacted by a de-pedestrianisation scheme, to understand the current level of provision and to provide an indication as to how any change could impact active travel access. These audits also help ascertain whether any improvements to the active travel infrastructure could provide benefit to the town centre.

The route plan used for the audits is presented in Figure 3-6.

Figure 3-6 - Active travel route audit plan



A summary of the route audit scores is provided in Table 3-3

Table 3-3 - Active travel route audit summary

Metric	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
Walking route audit score	25/40 (63%)	35/40 (88%)	27/40 (68%)	24/40 (60%)
Cycle route audit score	24/50 (48%)	Critical fail – cycling prohibited	Critical fail – cycling prohibited	21/50 (42%)

The results show that the active travel route audit scores are low, particularly for cycling. They are generally below 70% which is below the recommended pass mark included within the Active Travel Design Guide.

Route 2 scored 88% (a strong pass) for its walking audit due to the quality of the pedestrian provision. Route 3 was close to a pass but failed due to the fact the pedestrian provision on the eastern part of the route was of lower quality than the western part. Route 1 and 4 failed due to inconsistent widths and obstacles within the circulation of the footways.

All of the cycling route audits failed, mainly due to a lack of dedicated provision, insufficient signage, or narrow widths. Routes 2 and 3 did not have scores and critically failed due to cycling being prohibited on these routes. The audit scores indicate that the town centre could benefit from improvements to the active travel infrastructure.

3.3.2 Public Transport

Bus

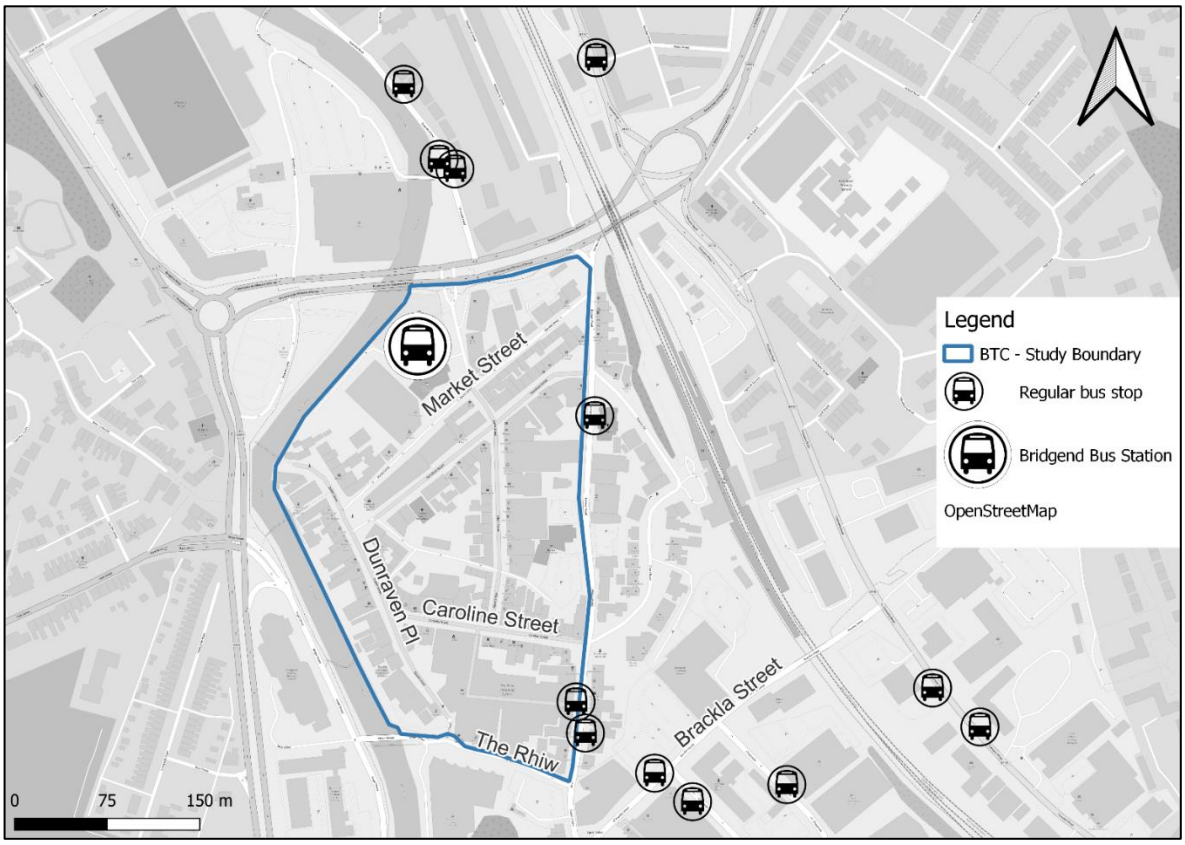
BTC has relatively good public transport infrastructure with a bus station located in the northern part of the study area. Buses access the station via Quarella Road, which links with the A4061 to the north and to the non-pedestrianised section of Market Street to the south.

There are also two southbound bus stops located on Derwen Road and Nolton Street on the eastern boundary of BTC and a northbound bus stop on Nolton Street. A summary of the infrastructure at these stops is as follows:

- Derwen Road southbound – flagpole with raised kerbs, no shelter or timetable information.
- Nolton Street southbound – shelter with seating and raised kerbs.
- Nolton Street northbound – flagpole with timetable information, no shelter or raised kerbs (surface level access between carriageway and bus stop).

There are also bus stops located to the south-east on Brackla Street and Cheapside, and further afield to the north of the A4061 and east of the railway line. Bus infrastructure is illustrated in Figure 3-7.

Figure 3-7 - Bus stop provision



Key bus/coach services include local services between Bridgend and Swansea, Cardiff, Neath, Porthcawl and Pontypridd. National coach services include services to London, Swansea, Hull and Birmingham (see Table 3-4). There is current uncertainty in the funding of bus services in Wales and significant potential for changes in the services that are set out.

Table 3-4 - BTC and National Express Services

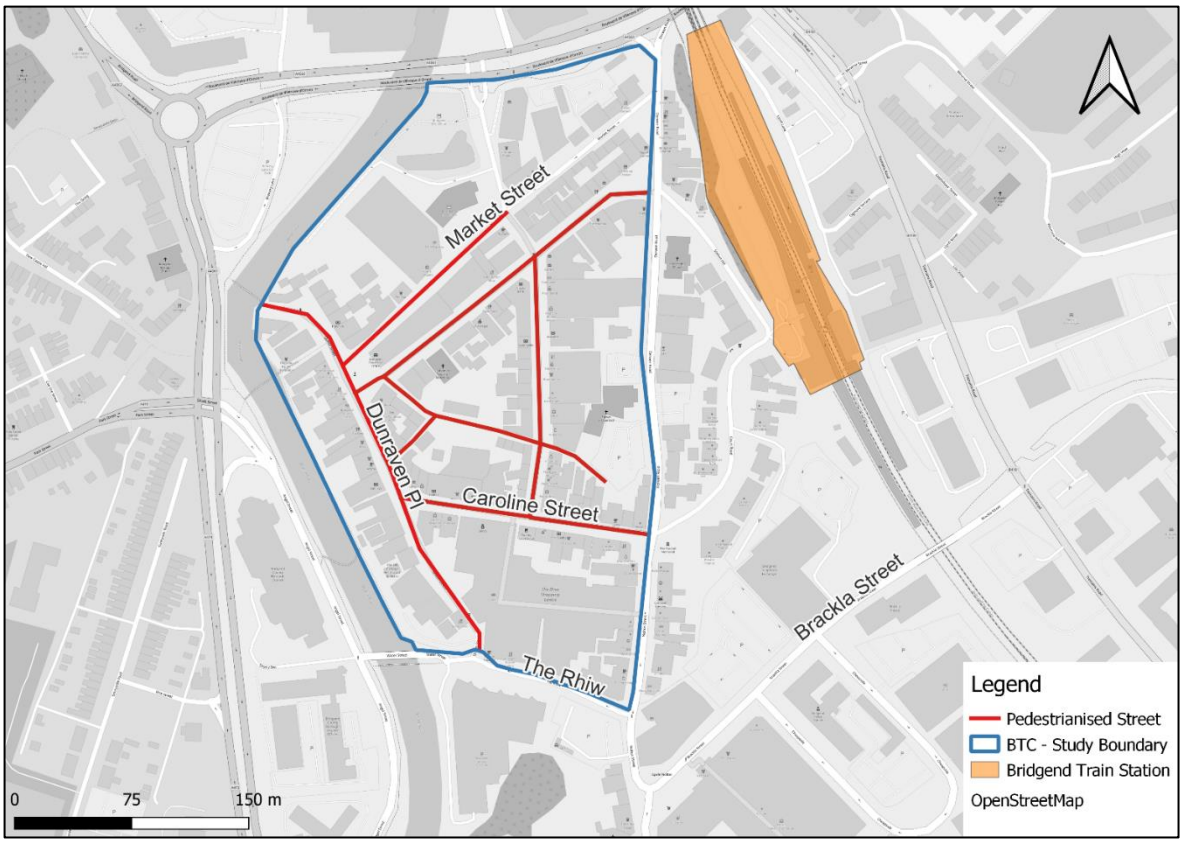
Bus/Coach Service	Bus route
Local	
X1	Bridgend - Swansea
X2	Cardiff - Bridgend - Porthcawl
X4	Bridgend - Port Talbot - Neath
63/63B	Bridgend - Porthcawl
65	Bridgend - Talbot Green
68/69	Bridgend – Cefn Glas (Circular)
70/71	Bridgend - Maesteg - Cymmer
72	Bridgend - Blaengarw
74	Bridgend - Nantymoel
76	Bridgend - Bettws
172	Bridgend - Merthyr Tydfil
303	Bridgend - Llantwit Major - Rhoose - Barry
404	Bridgend - Pontypridd
National Express Coaches	
201	Gatwick - Heathrow - Bristol - Chepstow - Newport - Cardiff - Bridgend - Swansea
202	Heathrow - Bristol - Newport - Cardiff - Bridgend - Swansea
322	Hull - Nottingham - Birmingham - Worcester - Newport - Cardiff - Bridgend - Swansea
343	Birmingham - Worcester - Monmouth - Newport - Cardiff -

Rail

Bridgend Railway Station is located immediately to the east of the study area as shown in Figure 3-8.

It is well connected to key destinations including Cardiff, Swansea, Carmarthen, Newport, Bristol, Reading and London, with regular train services. Transport for Wales (TFW) operate the Marches Line, Maesteg to Cheltenham Spa, Swanline and South Wales Valley Line which provide access to key railway stations including Cardiff Central, Swansea, Carmarthen and Newport. Whilst the Great Western Railway operate the London – Swansea line, which run hourly (with extra services at peak hours). The entrance to the station is situated 145m southeast of Wyndham Street (the most accessible route north of the site) and 182m northeast of Caroline Street (the most accessible route south of the site). Rail is considered an accessible means of transport to BTC for the majority of visitors.

Figure 3-8 - Bridgend Railway Station

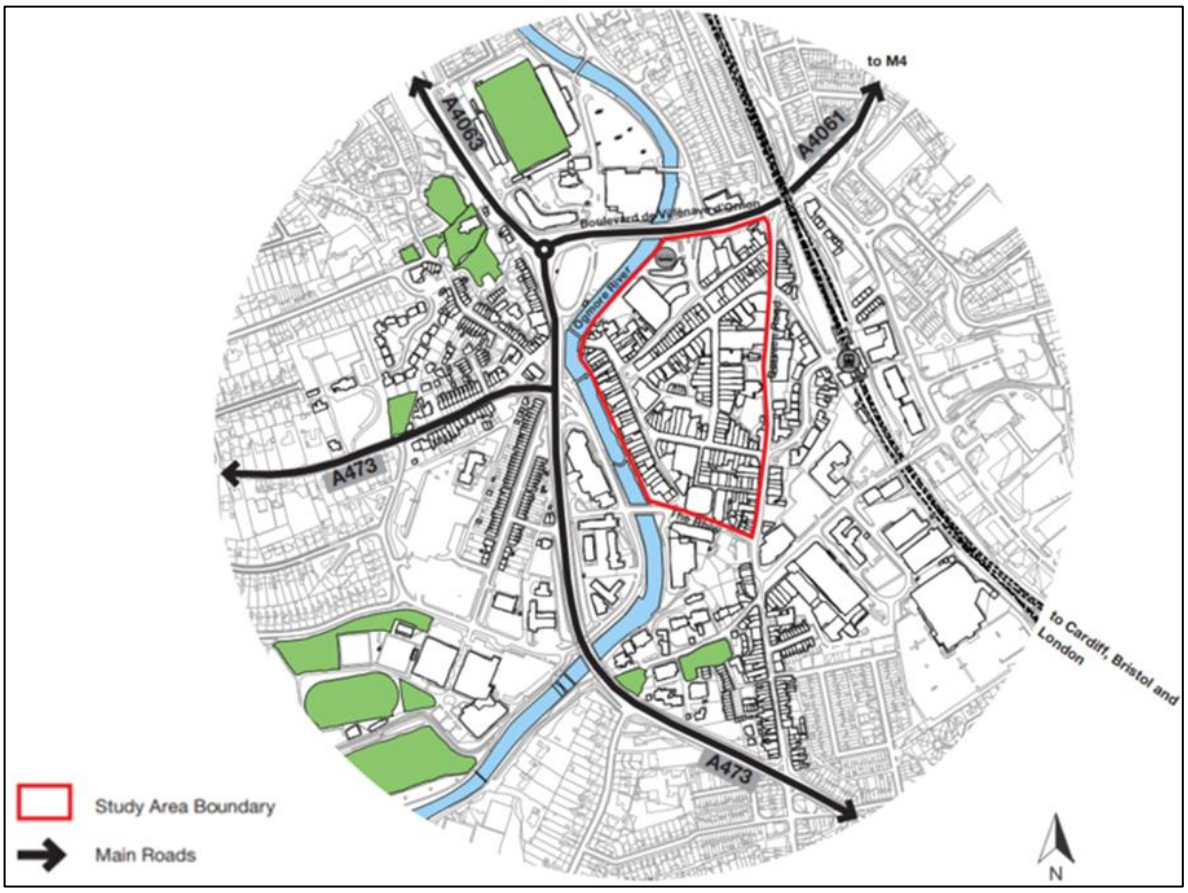


3.3.3 Highway Network

BTC is well connected with key parts of the highway network including the A4061, A4063, A473 and the A48. These routes are summarised in the following (and illustrated in Figure 3-9):

- The A4061 – primarily a two-lane dual carriageway that provides connectivity through the northern / north-eastern part of Bridgend and on to surrounding areas to the north, such as Bryncethin, Ogmore Vale and Nant-y-moel. Provides a connection to the M4 Junction 36 and the Designer Outlet Bridgend, out of town retail outlet.
- The A4063 – primarily a two-lane dual carriageway that provides connectivity through the northern / north-western part of Bridgend and on to surrounding areas to the north, such as Tondu, Maesteg and Cymer.
- The A473 – provides an east-west link in the vicinity of BTC. Immediately to the west it provides a key single lane single carriageway route providing connectivity through the western part of Bridgend and on to the A48. It also leads south and east of BTC through the urban extent of Bridgend. To the south of the town it provides a primarily two-lane dual carriageway route linking east to Pencoed and the M4 Junction 35. Further east it is a key single carriageway route leading to Talbot Green and beyond via Bryncae and Llanharan.
- A48 – provides a key east-west route providing connectivity to the south of Bridgend (approximately 1.5km south of BTC). It connects with Cowbridge and the western outskirts of Cardiff to the east and with North Cornelly and Pyle to the west.

Figure 3-9 - Bridgend Town Centre – Highway Network[12]



In summary, as would be expected of a town centre location, BTC is well connected for access via key parts of the highway network. Main highways lead in all directions to and from BTC, linking with other parts of the town, the wider hinterland and major road junctions including with the M4 motorway.

3.3.4 Car Parking

There is existing car parking provision in and around the study boundary to the northwest, northeast, southeast and south of the site (see Figure 3-10). A summary of car park accessibility is displayed in Table 3-5. The site is very well provisioned in terms of number of car parking spaces with 708 in total, 413 of which are free for 2 hours. In addition to this, all car parks are less than 800m from the town centre, which is the acceptable accessibility standard set by Sustrans for walking & wheeling to key services[13].

It is important to note the following issues which may impact on the accessibility of these car parks:

- Disabled parking bays have not been accounted for in Table 3-5.
- The total does not account for any on-street parking provision.
- The condition of car parking facilities has not been assessed.

[12] Bridgend County Borough Council, Building Design Partnership Ltd, asbri, Cooke & Arkwright, PJA (March 2023). *Bridgend Town Centre Accessibility Options Appraisal*. Accessed offline.

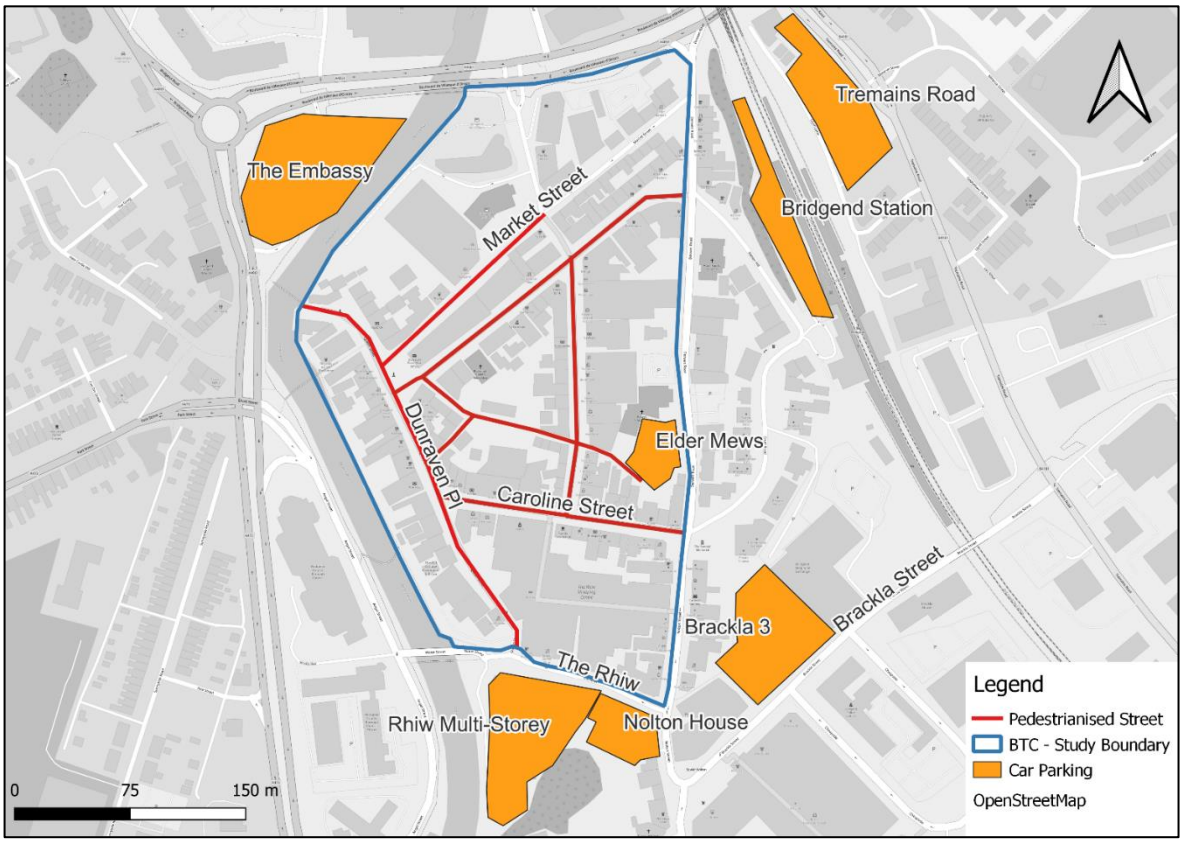
[13] Sustrans (May 2022). *Walkable neighbourhoods - Building in the right places to reduce car dependency*. Accessed at: https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/10520/walkable-neighbourhoods-report.pdf

- The condition of footways or path between the BTC site boundary and car parking facility has not been assessed.

Table 3-5 - Car Parking[14]

Car Park	Number of car parking spaces	Cost for 2 hours	Distance from BTC Study Boundary
Rhiw Multi-Storey	242	Free	40m
The Embassy	200	£1.50	30m
Tremains Road	56	£1.50	155m
Bridgend Station	95	£4	145m
Brackla 3	115	£1.50	50m
Nolton House	35	£2	20m
Elder Mews	27	£2	Within

Figure 3-10 - Off Road Car Parks



[14] Parkopedia (n.d.). Accessed online at: https://en.parkopedia.co.uk/

4. Benchmarking Review

A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken to consider the potential economic impact of de-pedestrianisation. This has been based on a review of available literature around the potential economic benefits and disbenefits of increased cars within a town centre.

4.1 Travel Mode Spending

Following a review of various pieces of literature on 'travel mode spending', which provided a mixed overview of potential impacts; the following points are considered relevant to this study:

- UK high streets have been struggling for over two decades. The latest available data showing a 23.1% decrease in footfall compared to 2019 data (Statista, 2022)15. Nevertheless, well-planned improvements to public spaces within town and city centres have been shown to boost commercial trading by up to 30% (Transport for London, 2013)16.
- People who travel actively to the high street spend up to 40% more than people who drive as they tend to make more visits (Transport for London, 2014).
- Research from Living Streets shows that shoppers who arrive on foot can spend up to six times more than those who arrive by car (LivingStreets, 2018)17.
- Other studies support this suggestion (Bike Portland, Cycling UK, Sustrans 2020)18 19 20 which found, whilst drivers will spend more per visit, cyclists and pedestrians will visit more often, and therefore spend more overall.
- It is a common myth that removing parking spaces and reducing traffic in town centres will harm the local economy. A study published in 2021 conducted by IASS, found that on two Berlin shopping streets only 7% of customers travelled to the high street by car, accounting for just 9% of sales. When shop owners and traders were asked for their predictions of how people travelled, they estimated 22% of customers drove, an overestimation of more than three times (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, 2021)21.
- This study is further supported by a study in Bristol, where retailers thought that just 12% of customers lived within half a mile, and 40% more than two miles away. In reality, 42% had travelled less than half a mile, and 86% less than two miles (CyclingUK, 2016)22.
- These studies highlight how the perception of car users can be much greater than their actual impact. More considerations should be made about the amount of cycle parking space that can be achieved in the same amount of space as a car space.

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[15] Statista (August 2022). UK retail footfall YoY change in high streets 2021. Accessed online at: UK retail footfall YoY change in high streets 2021 | Statista

[16] Transport for London (2013). Walking and cycling: the economic benefits. Accessed online at: Walking and cycling: the economic benefits (tfl.gov.uk)

[17] Living Streets (2018). The secret to saving our high street is in our feet. Accessed online at: The secret to saving our high street is in our feet – new report | Living Streets

[18] Bike Portland (July 2012). Study shows biking customers spend more. Accessed online at: Study shows biking customers spend more – BikePortland

[19] Cycling UK (August 2019). How investing in cycling makes more sense and more money. Accessed online at: How investing in cycling makes sense and makes money | Cycling UK

[20] Sustrans (July 2019). Common misconceptions of active travel investment. Accessed online at: common-misconceptions-of-active-travel-investment.pdf (sustrans.org.uk)

[21] Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (June 2021). Local Business Perception vs Mobility Behaviour of shoppers: A survey from Berlin. Accessed online at: content (iass-potsdam.de)

[22] Cycling UK (August 2019). How investing in cycling makes more sense and more money. Accessed online at: How investing in cycling makes sense and makes money | Cycling UK

- Since Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns, many high streets used this time as an opportunity to close high streets to traffic and let local businesses expand into the road, thus improving the public space offering. One example, Cotham Hill in Bristol, has recently been under consultation to make the high street closure permanent. A recent survey of residents of this area showed an overwhelming 90% of those surveyed were in favour of keeping the closure with a series of one way that allow access for residents, businesses and visitors while reducing traffic speeds (BetterByBike, 2022)23.
- However, the nearby Clifton village road closure has proved more controversial. A study commissioned by the Clifton Village BID group supplies a lot of anecdotal evidence from businesses suggesting sales and footfall are down. There is also evidence that poor implementation (lack of cycle parking provision, poor diversions, temporary structures) are negatively affecting this scheme. Despite this, the data shows that the impact on footfall due to the road closure has been minimal and difficult to quantify, but the closure seems to be affecting shopping habits across seven days (Clifton Village BID, 2021)[9].
- On a national level, the Government's own review suggests 69% of business owners support the reduction of traffic, and a further 61% support the re-allocation of road space for walking and cycling. (Gear Change, one year on review, 2021)24.
- A national survey of BIDs resulted in 95% reporting that a good environment for walking was important to business performance, whilst a further 85% for cycling. This combined with earlier statistics stating that pedestrians and cyclists will spend more over more trips, clearly highlights the need for well-designed low traffic high streets and town centres (Healthy Streets, A business View, Transport for London, 2018)25.
- Since Covid-19, there has been a meaningful change in spending patterns, with a much greater percentage of shopping trips now occurring on the weekend. This is likely due to the continued success of home working and therefore fewer commuters. The town centre is therefore seen as a destination for leisure time, and successful examples are designed with this in mind (Financial Times, 2022)26.
- This idea of high streets as destinations for activities beyond the purely functional is supported by a 2022 study from the local government association. This study goes on to state that resilient high streets of the future should offer users experiences that go beyond purely retail or functional-orientated activities, and that flexibility of space should be built in. This again re-enforcing the importation of space allocation and prioritisation, if the high street is to be resilient in the future, then it must meet changing demands (LGA, 2022)[27].

Should town centres wish to develop and thus become more resilient then they should look to change and offer users further development which would encourage them into these areas at all times. However, a key focus should be placed upon the implementation of any scheme which is brought forward. The role of stakeholder and community engagement cannot be underestimated in generating support for any potential scheme.

4.2 Local Examples

In this section, a review has been undertaken of local examples of changes made to the town centre / high street access arrangements have been amended through a TRO change. Two examples have been identified in Rhondda Cynon-Taff (RCT), namely Tonypandy Town Centre and Pontypridd Town Centre. An engagement meeting was held with RCT to identify any lessons learnt from the schemes.

[23] Clifton Village BID (January 2022). Review: Princess Victoria Street temporary road closure. Accessed online at: Clifton Village BID PVS Road Closure Report (final).pdf - Google Drive

[24] Department for Transport (May 2021). Gear Change: One year on review. Accessed online at:assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007815/gear-change-one-year-on.pdf

[25] Transport for London (November 2018). Healthy Streets: A business view. Accessed online at: Healthy Streets: A Business View (tfl.gov.uk)

[26] Financial times (February 2022). High street spending recovers faster in smaller regional centres than in London. Accessed online at: Subscribe to read | Financial Times (ft.com)

[27] Local Government Association (January 2022). Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal'. Accessed online at: Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal' | Local Government Association

Tonypandy Town Centre (2018)

The regeneration of Tonypandy Town Centre (TTC) in 2018 was a £1.5 Million project led by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) to stimulate and improve the economic regeneration of the main retail district of Tonypandy[28]. The TTC scheme included the de-pedestrianisation of Dunraven Street over approximately 100m, with proposals including the following:

- Reintroduction of vehicles to the street, allowing traffic to flow one-way in a northerly direction.
- Raised footways to ensure a safer environment for pedestrians.
- Improvements to street furniture.
- Parking and loading laybys.
- New bus stop
- Grants available to businesses to improve shop frontages.

In November 2018, RCTCBC completed work at Dunraven Street to remove the 200-metre pedestrian-only zone, which had been in place since the 1990s. An increase of 15% [16,000] in TTC footfall was confirmed between October-December 2018 and January-March 2019 [29]. Footfall in TTC continued to increase by a further 16% [19,500] in April-June 2019, bringing the total cumulative increase in footfall to approximately 31% [35,000] since implementation of the TTC regeneration scheme.

Table 4-1 - Tonypandy Town Centre footfall

	2018	2019	
	October – December	January – March	April – June
Approximate footfall	98,462	114,462	133,696

Councillor Andrew Morgan, Leader of RCTCBC and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways, stated that the “first two quarters of 2019, suggests the scheme is working”. This is substantiated by Councillor Robert Bevan, RCTCBC’s Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing, who commented: “I’m very pleased that the footfall figures for the Town Centre continue to rise following the strategic Highways scheme last year, to remove the pedestrian-only section of Dunraven Street with the intention of increasing passing trade”.

However, it should be noted that RCTCBC have recognised some issues following the implementation of this scheme, such as parking on pavements in TTC.

Pontypridd Town Centre (2012)

In 2012 amendments were made to the time limited pedestrianisation operation in Pontypridd town centre by RCTCBC. As with the Tonypandy scheme referred to above, RCT stated that this amendment was supported by significant wider investment in the town centre, meaning that feedback may not be wholly attributable to the access change.

The change was centred on a reduction in the pedestrianised times in the town centre to 11am-3pm on Monday to Saturday, compared to the previous pedestrianised time of 11am-4pm. RCT offered anecdotal feedback stating that the town centre is perceived as performing well after the wider investment supplementing the change in access

[28] Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (n.d). *RCT Invest Programme - Tonypandy Town Centre*. Accessed online at: https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/RCTInvestProgramme/MajorProjects/TonypandyTownCentre/TonypandyTownCentre.aspx

[29] Rhys Greogory for Wales 247 (August 2019). *Footfall figures in Tonypandy Town Centre continue to rise*. Accessed online at: https://www.wales247.co.uk/footfall-figures-in-tonypandy-town-centre-continue-to-rise

times. It was stated that there appears to be no pressure from stakeholders for amendments, and subsequently no future plans currently in the pipeline to increase car access into the town centre.

It should be noted that both the Tonypandy and Pontypridd were undertaken under a slightly different policy regime that predated the Welsh Government's declaration of a Climate Change Emergency (dated April 2019[30])

4.3 Summary

The benchmarking review indicates that:

- Although footfall in town centres has fallen over the last two decades, pedestrians and cyclists are likely to visit these areas more often and therefore spend more when compared to drivers. Should public space improvements be made to a town centre, such as increasing the availability of cycle parking, then this figure is likely to increase.
- There is some evidence that successful high streets and town centres have concentrated on improving the environment and improving the experience for visitors.
- Overall, there is no clear evidence from the benchmarking review that re-introducing vehicular traffic into a town centre would result in an increase in economic activity.
- There is some local evidence for positive outcomes related to some de-pedestrianisation schemes. However, in each case the de-pedestrianisation element was a smaller part of a wider town centre improvement scheme with significant wider investment. The extent to which the removal of pedestrianisation had a positive outcome compared to the benefits of the wider town centre scheme are therefore unclear.

[30] Welsh Government makes climate emergency declaration | GOV.WALES

5. Inclusive Design Considerations

This chapter discusses some key inclusive design considerations associated with the general principle of encouraging more motor vehicles into the core of BTC, with the review set out in Table 5-1. This chapter does not appraise each of the options, but rather provides insight from the inclusive design perspective as to key potential implications regarding the re-introduction of higher volumes of motor traffic. It should be noted that all options considered would increase traffic volumes to some extent. However, the inclusive design considerations will have more resonance for the options that would be expected to result in the greatest increase in traffic (i.e., Option 3) and less resonance for options that would be expected to result in only a small increase in traffic volumes (i.e., Option 1). The inclusive design considerations are cognisant of the current guidance on level surface schemes as set out in Section 1.4.

Table 5-1 - Inclusive Design Considerations

Individuals, groups, or stakeholders	Factor to consider	Negative aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Positive aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Other notes
General comment	Arrival / various	Likely negative implications for a range of town centre users due to the reintroduction of traffic into a currently pedestrianised space.	There are potential positive implications for Blue Badge users, visually/mobility/cognitive impaired people and their carers, some elderly people, and other people such as pregnant women, who could benefit from public transport/taxis/Blue Badge vehicles if their arrival points could be brought closer to their key destinations.	A wide range of people's needs, and potential impacts will need to be assessed and balanced. An exercise mapping accessible arrival/leaving/parking points and key destinations including public toilets, would give a baseline picture of accessible arrival. Consultation associated with the Bridgend Town Centre masterplan revealed that a proportion of residents did feel that access to the town centre was poor and that this could be improved by partial / full re-opening to traffic with additional parking spaces. The consultation also revealed a desire for improved active travel and public transport connectivity. Stakeholder engagement with Holistic Vision (a local accessibility charity group) also revealed that appropriate access to some town centre shops for blue badge holders could be an issue, although the charity felt safety, especially for the visually impaired, was a key concern.
Local authority	Public Sector Equality Duty	See row above	See row above	BCBC will need to consider how to fulfil their equality duties in relation to the scheme aims and the options. The options will need to be assessed against the key relevant principles of the Equalities Act. One key principle is that any changes made should not result in people with protected characteristics being put at a disadvantage.
Local authority	Equalities Impact Assessment			An Equalities Impact Assessment will be needed at the appropriate stages.
Any local businesses	Delivery impact			Green delivery strategies (e-cargo vehicles from a central depot) could form part of the consideration.
Local business forums	Funding implications	Reintroduction of traffic could negatively impact accessibility which could be a deterrent for funders and affect funding eligibility.	Reintroduction of traffic could positively impacts accessibility which could appeal to funders and affect funding eligibility.	It is understood from the engagement that has been undertaken to date with local traders, that many would be supportive of the full or partial re-introduction of traffic in the town centre.

Individuals, groups, or stakeholders	Factor to consider	Negative aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Positive aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Other notes
Children and teenagers (parents)	Ease of use and ease of movement through scheme area. Safety. Pollution implications. Space for seating, dwelling, buggies, communication with carers.	Reintroducing traffic is likely to hamper children's enjoyment and safety within the scheme area (increased noise, pollution, vehicle danger, having to stay close to parents, less space to move around). More stressful experience for parents as they will need to worry about safety more / have less space for buggies. Teenagers need space to gather in groups without obstructing pedestrian routes or other essential street activity - this would likely be negatively affected by more traffic.	Reintroducing traffic could benefit Blue Badge users if the change would mean an improved situation for Blue Badge users (parents/children) or other disabled children, who might be able to reach destinations easier.	Children are smaller and therefore less visible to drivers – this is an inclusion and safety issue. Danger increases for some people with protected characteristics due to higher likelihood of accidents with vehicles (children/people with reduced sense of danger, auditory/visual impairments, and others) Children have more unpredictable and meandering movements which need more footway/pedestrian-only space.
Elderly people	See Row 1 on this table			Considerations that are relevant for elderly people are likely to be included within mobility/visual/auditory impairment considerations, safety considerations. Other considerations for this group are social life and opportunities for public social interaction including in winter, and ease of access to services. Key considerations include accessible arrival that is close to public toilets, well-signed/lit/maintained walking routes with good passive surveillance, frequent seating (some with shade), auditory quiet environments to support communication, and having choice of routes and spaces that are not also used by cycles/cars.
Disability - various	Blue Badge parking			A wide range of people can be eligible for a Blue Badge, and this will need to be factored in when assessing how options could positively or negatively affect Blue Badge users. There is a reasonable availability of parking in publicly accessible car parks on the edge of the town centre area, and on-street Blue Badge parking on the periphery of the town centre. Future plans associated with Blue Badge parking bays would need to be established more clearly to fully understand the implications.
Visual impairment	Ease of arrival to scheme area/ key locations. Safety.	Introduction of traffic is likely to disadvantage visually impaired people, in terms of ease of use/safety. Negatives - increased noise levels (hearing ability is a key sense for someone with visual impairment) / increased potential interaction with traffic (safety and ease of use) / vehicles blocking sight lines.	Depending on the scheme option design at the next stage, arrival for some people within this group might be eased, however different needs would need to be balanced.	Engagement is recommended with this group. The reintroduction of vehicular traffic would necessitate the modification kerb heights (at least 60 mm) to ensure proper separation between pedestrian infrastructure and the street. This raised kerb will help people with visual impairments to navigate the new layout and reduce the risk that they walk onto the street inadvertently.
Mobility impairment	Ease of arrival to scheme area/ key locations.	Introduction of traffic is likely to disadvantage this group in terms of ease of use/safety on routes.	Depending on the scheme option design at the next stage, arrival/access to accessible toilets	See Rows 1, 6, 7, 8, 9 on this table.

Individuals, groups, or stakeholders	Factor to consider	Negative aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Positive aspect of factor (re-introducing traffic / no change)	Other notes
	Safety.	Any decrease in space for seating is a disadvantage.	for some people within this group might be eased.	Ease of reaching publicly accessible wheelchair accessible toilets is a key consideration for this group, as is space on/maintenance of good pedestrian routes.
Auditory impairment	Communication and wayfinding.	Introduction of traffic is likely to disadvantage this group in terms of ease of use, and potentially affect safety on routes.		Cycle routes and e-vehicles (cars, service vehicles, cycles, scooters, other) that do not make noise are a safety consideration for this group.
Neurological Needs		Introduction of traffic is likely to disadvantage this group in terms of ease of use, and potentially affect safety on routes.	Depending on the scheme option design at the next stage, arrival for some people within this group might be eased, however different needs would need to be balanced.	Important for carers: auditory quiet, rest stops, routes and space away from traffic, accessible and safe arrival, easy routes to key facilities and services.
Metabolic need (publicly accessible toilets - wheelchair accessible/family/standard toilets)	Ease or otherwise of accessing toilets	More vehicles could make accessing a toilet less predictable.	Parking closer, if available, would make it easier for some to access toilets.	Relationship with arrival points / good routes and wayfinding to these facilities are key.
Carers (of children and adults)	Dropping off / picking people up and ensuring those being cared for can be kept safe	More vehicles could make the caring task more onerous.	Reintroducing traffic could make it easier to pick up and collect, depending on availability of parking, ability to stop and wait, and potentially taxi access.	See Row 6, 8, 10, 12.
Protected characteristics (various)	Risk and fear of crime impacts	Increases observation from vehicles whose occupants cannot be observed.	Potential increase in passive surveillance.	Important to consult with police and members of the public.
Pregnant women	Mobility	Potential introduction of more complexity in moving around town centre.	Potential ease of access in getting to destination	Refer to Rows 7 and 10 as many of these needs are relevant.

The issues raised in the Table 5-1 set out inclusive design considerations in the context of any scheme that re-introduces additional volumes of vehicular traffic into a pedestrianised space. The following are some of the key findings. They have the greatest implications for the de-pedestrianisation options that introduce more traffic for larger parts of the day (e.g., Option 3):

- Negative implications:
  - Increased difficulty for pedestrians to manoeuvre around the space particularly relevant to the mobility / visually / cognitively impaired, the elderly, those in pregnancy and children. Also impacts on road safety and perceptions of safety amongst these groups.
  - Likely to hamper the enjoyment of the space for some as there are less areas to meet, particularly effecting children and teenagers.
  - Potential to make it more difficult for parents and carers to observe.
  - Potential pollution impacts including noise pollution.
- Positive implications:
  - Potential benefits to blue badge holders including mobility / visually / cognitively impaired, their carers and the elderly, if vehicles are able to bring them closer to their destination.
  - Potential benefits to the risk and fear of crime by increasing the level of passive surveillance.

Overall, the inclusive design implications of de-pedestrianisation are mixed. Any scheme for BTC should undertake suitable stakeholder engagement and ensure the needs of all groups are considered in the design of any scheme.

6. Option Appraisal Against Policy

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter considers how well aligned each of the three de-pedestrianisation options is to key local, regional and national policy guidance. It sets out the policy document that have been considered, the methodology that has been applied and details the alignment scores against relevant policies in each of the policy documents.

6.2 Policy Documents

The policy documents that have been considered were identified through a combination of desktop research, and a literature review. A workshop was conducted on the 19th of March 2023 between BCBC and AtkinsRéalis, and the following policies were agreed as being relevant to the study:

- The Wales Transport Strategy 2021
- Active Travel Act - Guidance 2021
- Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning Policy Wales 2021
- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Local Transport Plan 2015-2030
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
- Bridgend County Borough Council - Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021

6.3 Scoring Methodology

A high-level scoring methodology was adopted for this study, that considered how well each of the de-pedestrianisation options was aligned with policy. This process appraises the policy alignment of the options against a do-nothing scenario in which the current situation would be retained. The appraisal has considered how well each option aligns with policy, on the basis of the following categories:

a) -1 – Not aligned with policy
b) 0 – No material policy impact
c) 1 – Positively aligned with policy

A negative score would indicate that an option does not align with current policy guidance, whilst a score higher than 0 would indicate that an option, or elements of an options aligns with policy. The options have been scored against each relevant policy within the policy documents. A qualitative approach has been applied in which the scoring has been undertaken by qualified professional transport planners, supported by a review undertaken by BCBC and their appointed consultant. Whilst, the individual scoring is qualitative, it is considered that the overall alignment of each of the de-pedestrianisation options is well accounted for using this process. This method broadly aligns with the industry standard approach taken to the appraisal of transport schemes as part of Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (2022, Consultation Draft).

The scoring appraised different elements of the proposed de-pedestrianisation options against the policy guidance, including the areas / roads that would be impacted, additional parking. The remainder of this section summarises the policy alignment scores for each policy document. The full scoring is included in Appendix B, with a summary provided within this document.

6.4 Policy Appraisal

6.4.1 Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021[31]

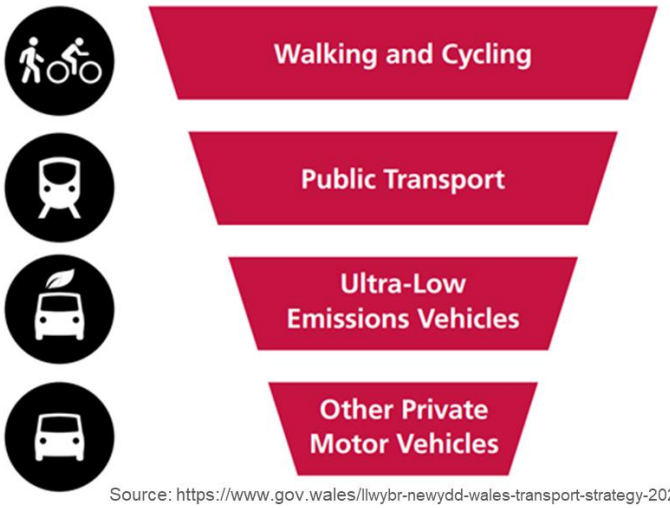
The Wales Transport Strategy sets out Welsh Government's (WG) vision for a transport. The identified priorities of the strategy and the well-being ambitions are shown in Figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1 - Llwybr Newydd - Principles



The Wales Transport Strategy also includes a hierarchy of transport modes, as shown in Figure 6-2. It places walking and cycling top as the highest priority, followed by public transport, with private vehicles the lowest priority.

Figure 6-2 - Transport Hierarchy



Source: https://www.gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021

[31] Source: https://www.gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021

6.4.2 Active Travel (Wales) Act 2021[32]

The Active Travel Act Guidance (Wales) (ATA) is legislation published by WG for use throughout Wales and the contents must be considered when planning, designing and maintaining active travel routes. The vision of the ATA is for walking and cycling to be the natural mode of choice for short everyday journeys, or as part of a longer journey in combination with other sustainable modes. This is to be undertaken through maintenance and the provision of active travel facilities, enhancing provision for walkers and cyclists as part of other highway schemes (including planned maintenance work), considering the needs of walkers and cyclists as part of new developments, traffic management, and road safety schemes.

6.4.3 Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015[33]

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA) is a piece of legislation that places a duty on public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions on people, the environment, and communities. This is to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The principles of the WFGA are set out in Figure 6-3.

Figure 6-3 - Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 principles



Source: https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/

6.4.4 Planning Policy Wales 2024[34]

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of WG. PPW states that the planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport. By influencing the location, scale, density, mix of uses and design of new development, the planning system can improve choice in transport and secure accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development, increases physical activity, improves health and helps to tackle the causes of climate change and airborne pollution.

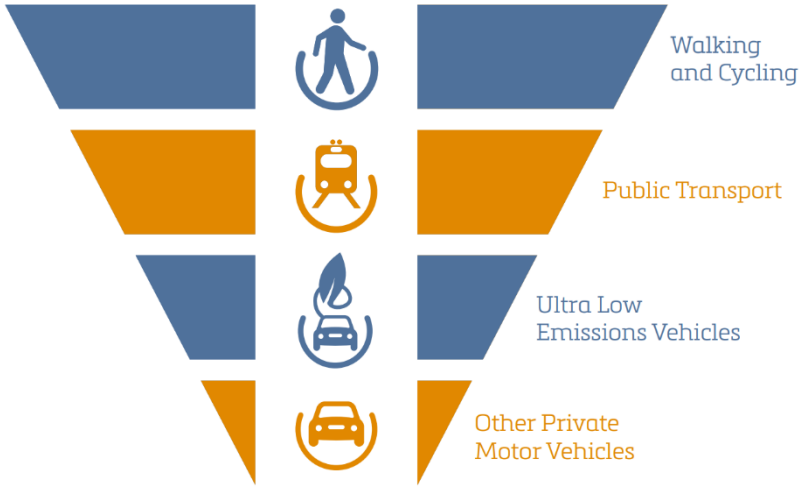
[32] Source: https://www.gov.wales/active-travel-act-guidance

[33] Source: https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/

[34] Source: https://www.gov.wales/planning-policy-wales

PPW states that where new transport infrastructure is needed, the sustainable transport hierarchy (Figure 6-4) will be used to give priority to meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles. Wider development proposals must seek to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, by prioritising the provision of appropriate on-site infrastructure and, where necessary, mitigating transport impacts through the provision of off-site measures, such as the development of active travel routes, bus priority infrastructure and financial support for public transport services. PPW highlights that importantly, sustainable transport infrastructure and services should be prioritised and put in place from the outset before people have moved in and travel patterns have been established.

Figure 6-4 - Sustainable Transport Hierarchy (Planning Policy Wales 2024)



6.4.5 Future Wales: the national plan 2040[35]

Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 (FW) is the WG national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of Welsh communities.

These priorities are addressed within the transportation context through the ambition to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private vehicles, and support a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. The sustainable transport hierarchy in PPW, which prioritises active travel and public transport, is a fundamental WG principle that underpins Future Wales.

Options, 1, 2 and 3 all scored negatively in the appraisal and are therefore considered contrary to FW ambitions. Again Option 1 is seen as the least contrary and Option 3 the most contrary to the national plan policy. Bridgend County Borough Council - Local Transport Plan 2015-2030[36]

The BCBC Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the local implementation plans for transport in and has the following vision: *"An effective, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system that can meet the short, medium and long term needs of a changing population, the economy and society."*

[35] Source: https://www.gov.wales/future-wales-national-plan-2040

[36] Source: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/4087/bridgend-ltp-wg-approved-version-may-2015-2030.pdf

All options appraised received negative scores, attributing the options as contrary to the LTP. Again Option 1 is seen as least contrary and Option 3 as the most contrary to the policy set out in the BCBC LTP. The reduction in pedestrianised hours in favour of vehicle prioritisation, and the promotion of vehicle use through the increase in provision in car parking spaces is contrary to LTP ambitions with regards to:

a) Goals 1 and 4: Reducing negative externality of consumption through car usage.
b) Goal 2 and 3: Ensuring access to key sites (including sites of employment) are affordable and accessible to target transport poverty. Facilitating the extended usage of private vehicles potentially creates disparity in accessibility to key sites of interest. This is due to the fact that a person must be able to afford a car to make use of the extension in car usage time for all options.

6.4.6 Bridgend County Borough Council - Corporate Plan[37]

Every five years BCBC publishes a new Corporate Plan (CP) which describes the challenges BCB faces and sets out priorities for delivery in accordance with the WFG. As per the WFG, and BCBC must agree and publish a set of wellbeing objectives to share how they will contribute to the national wellbeing goals in addressing their challenges. The CP has been produced using feedback from staff, BCB residents of all ages and backgrounds, users and providers of council services, elected members, partner organisations, other local authorities and more.

All options received negative scores during the appraisal process. As a result, Options 1, 2 and 3 are considered as contrary to CP ambitions. Again Option 1 is seen as least contrary and Option 3 most contrary to the corporate plan.

6.4.7 Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028[38]

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board (PSB) is a consortium of previous Public Service Boards in the Cwm Taf area, and covers Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, and Bridgend. This new board comprises of public bodies, who deliver services locally to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being in the area by setting objectives that will achieve the Well-being Goals outlined in WFG. The vision of this PSB is to use sustainable development principles when making decisions that could have an impact on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

6.4.8 Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021[39]

The regeneration masterplan for Bridgend town centre is a dynamic long-term planning document that offers a theoretical layout to guide future regeneration and growth, with the ultimate vision for a liveable and vibrant community. It identifies a series of ambitious and deliverable projects for the next 10 years that will support future economic growth and secure more benefits and opportunities for BCBC. It complements the BCBC Local Development Plan and is a document of priority for adoption as future Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). Ultimately, in the context of this study, it provides analysis, recommendations, and proposals for BTC.

The options have been scored against the goals of the BTC Regeneration Masterplan with Options 1, 2 and 3 all receiving negative scores, indicating that overall, they are contrary to the goals of the regeneration masterplan, albeit the masterplan did suggest that some alterations to access arrangements in the town centre should be a consideration. Again Option 1 is considered least contrary and Option 3 most contrary to the overall goals.

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[37] Source: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/performance-plans-and-reports/corporate-plan/

[38] Source: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/bridgend-public-services-board/

[39] Source: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/regeneration/bridgend-town-centre-regeneration-masterplan/

6.5 Summary of Policy Appraisal

The scores indicating how well aligned the de-pedestrianisation options are to key national, regional and local policy documents have been tabulated as a summary in Table 6-1. This is intended to provide an indicative view as to the overall policy alignment of the schemes. It is noted that some policy documents score higher or lower overall depending on the number of policies contained within the document.

Table 6-1 - Summary of Overall Scores Against Policy

Policy Document	Option 1 Score	Option 2 Score	Option 3 Score
The Wales Transport Strategy	-7	-14	-28
The Active Travel Act – Guidance 2021	-2	-3	-4
Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	-9	-16	-22
Planning Policy Wales 2021	-4	-6	-8
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040	-12	-18	-24
BCBC – Local Transport Plan 2015-2030	-8	-12	-16
BCBC – Corporate Plan (2023-2028)	-4	-6	-8
Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board Well-being Plan (2023-2028)	-4	-6	-8
BCBC – Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan (2021)	-4	-6	-8
Overall	**-54**	**-87**	**-126**

Overall, the summary of scores for policy alignment show that none of the de-pedestrianisation options is well aligned with current policy. In general policy favours the promotion of sustainable modes of travel and seeks to reduce the reliance of the private motor car. Therefore, any scheme that explicitly promotes access for the private motor vehicle to the detriment of active travel users will be contrary to current policy goals. Option 1, which would only introduce a small amount of additional traffic is least contrary to current policy. Option 2 which would re-introduce all traffic for a limited amount of time is more contrary, whilst Option 3 which would reintroduce traffic at all times is most contrary to policy.

6.6 Other relevant policy

Roads Review

This policy direction in favour of sustainable modes has been underlined in the outcome of the Welsh Government Roads Review, announced by the Deputy First Minister on 23rd February 2023. The panel advised of 55 schemes assessed, 31 should be stopped on the basis of them being contrary to policy, with their focus being on increasing road capacity for private vehicles.

The panel recommended that schemes that modify the form of a road should only be for certain purposes, including shifting trips to sustainable transport. It is clearly stated that road schemes should meet four conditions, which are:

1. To support modal shift and reduce carbon emissions.
2. To improve safety through small-scale changes.
3. To adapt to the impacts of climate change.

4. To provide access and connectivity to jobs and centres of economic activity in a way that supports modal shift.

The Roads Review notes that the focus should be on minimising carbon emissions and not increasing road capacity. The options reviewed within this appraisal all, in some form, facilitate the potential for increased car travel within BTC which could potentially be at the expense of pedestrian amenity and safety in the town centre.

Climate Change Emergency

The Welsh Government declared a climate change emergency in April 2019. BCBC also declared a climate emergency in June 2020 and subsequently released its Net Zero Carbon Strategy. Exploring opportunities to develop the sense of place within BTC to increase footfall through active travel is more aligned with the notion of Net Zero, with there being a risk of reputational pushback if a scheme to encourage car users is promoted by the Council, despite having previously declared a climate emergency.

7. De-pedestrianisation Options Review Summary

7.1 Overview

The potential to amend the vehicular access arrangements in BTC has been a consideration for BCBC and the subject of several previous studies, with varying conclusions and recommendations. The latest study, the Bridgend Town Centre – Accessibility Options Appraisal, suggested three 'de-pedestrianisation' options all of which would enable vehicles to move in one direction (northbound) on Queen Street, Dunraven Place, Market Street and Quarella Road. These can be summarised as follows:

- Option 1 – Reduce pedestrianisation hours from the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm to a shorter time period from 11am to 5pm. Retain access for deliveries / collections only outside of this period.
- Option 2 – All vehicular traffic would be allowed access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street, with the existing northbound only one-way system retained. Reduce pedestrianisation hours from the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm to a shorter time period from 11am to 3pm.
- Option 3 – All vehicular traffic would be allowed access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street at all times of the day. The routes would retain the existing one-way system that operates northbound.

7.2 Benchmarking Exercise

The benchmarking exercise showed no strong evidence for re-introducing vehicles to a town centre on economic grounds. The findings of available literature and scheme reviews are mixed, with more evidence supporting the removal of vehicles, albeit the benefits and disbenefits of pedestrianisation schemes are location specific. There is some positive evidence of de-pedestrianisation schemes from the neighbouring authority of Rhondda Cynon Taff at Pontypridd and Tonypandy. However, it is noted that in both schemes de-pedestrianisation was only a small part of a wider significant investment in the town centre, so there is no evidence to show whether it was increased car accessibility or enhanced trip attractors and town centre environment that influenced the outcomes.

7.3 Inclusive Mobility Review

The inclusive mobility review has indicated that the re-introduction of traffic into the town centre is likely to have negative implications for a range of town centre users and may have implications for their Public Sector Equality Duty. De-pedestrianisation could impact the visually impaired, blind and those that have mobility issues by adding moving vehicles into the area. However, there could be potential benefits, for instance to blue badge holders, if short stay parking is provided closer to the destinations they wish to visit. The inclusive mobility review is cognisant of the guidance on level surface schemes, whereby a route that has more than very low traffic numbers would require a 60mm kerb upstand.

7.4 Policy Appraisal

An appraisal of the de-pedestrianisation options against key national and local policy documents has illustrated that all options are contrary to current policy, which supports the promotion of sustainable transport modes and seeks to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle. Option 1 the lighter touch proposal scores the best against the policy as it retains the primacy of sustainable modes to a greater extent and is less likely to encourage private vehicle travel. Option 3 scores the worst in terms of policy has it proposes the most extensive change by fully de-pedestrianising Queen Street, Dunraven Place, Market Street and Quarella Road. This not only re-introduces traffic destined for the town centre, but also creates a potential route for through traffic, which could further encourage travel by private vehicle.

7.5 Deliverability Considerations

A review of the deliverability of the options, in addition to the potential impact has led to a conclusion that there may be deliverability challenges for all options. The deliverability constraints are greater for Options 2 and 3 which would re-introduce traffic into the town centre for some or all periods of the day. This would be expected to change the character of the roads from 'Pedestrian Priority Streets' to 'Informal Streets' and consequently kerb reinstatement would be required with significant cost implications. Deliverability constraints would include:

- Legislation
- Funding
- Reputation

The process of de-pedestrianising the town centre will require appropriate permissions, which would involve BCBC having to submit the relevant applications, potentially requiring a public inquiry; a successful outcome (from the perspective of de-pedestrianisation) would be reliance on a strong evidence base being put forward before the Inspector.

7.6 Engagement

An engagement workshop was held with officers from key departments in BCBC on the 19th May 2023. The potential to trial the preferred Option for a minimum of 6 months to 1 year was discussed. Interventions/fixtures would be deployed in a form that is temporary, and key indicators would be monitored and reported during the trial period. Following the completion and review of the trial period, a decision would be made whether the Option would be permanently deployed. However, it was agreed that a study would need be undertaken, or consideration made, for the financial viability of the trial.

Engagement was undertaken with Council members at informal cabinet on the 25th July 2023. It was discussed that a multi-modal approach to access should be applied rather than de-pedestrianisation in isolation.

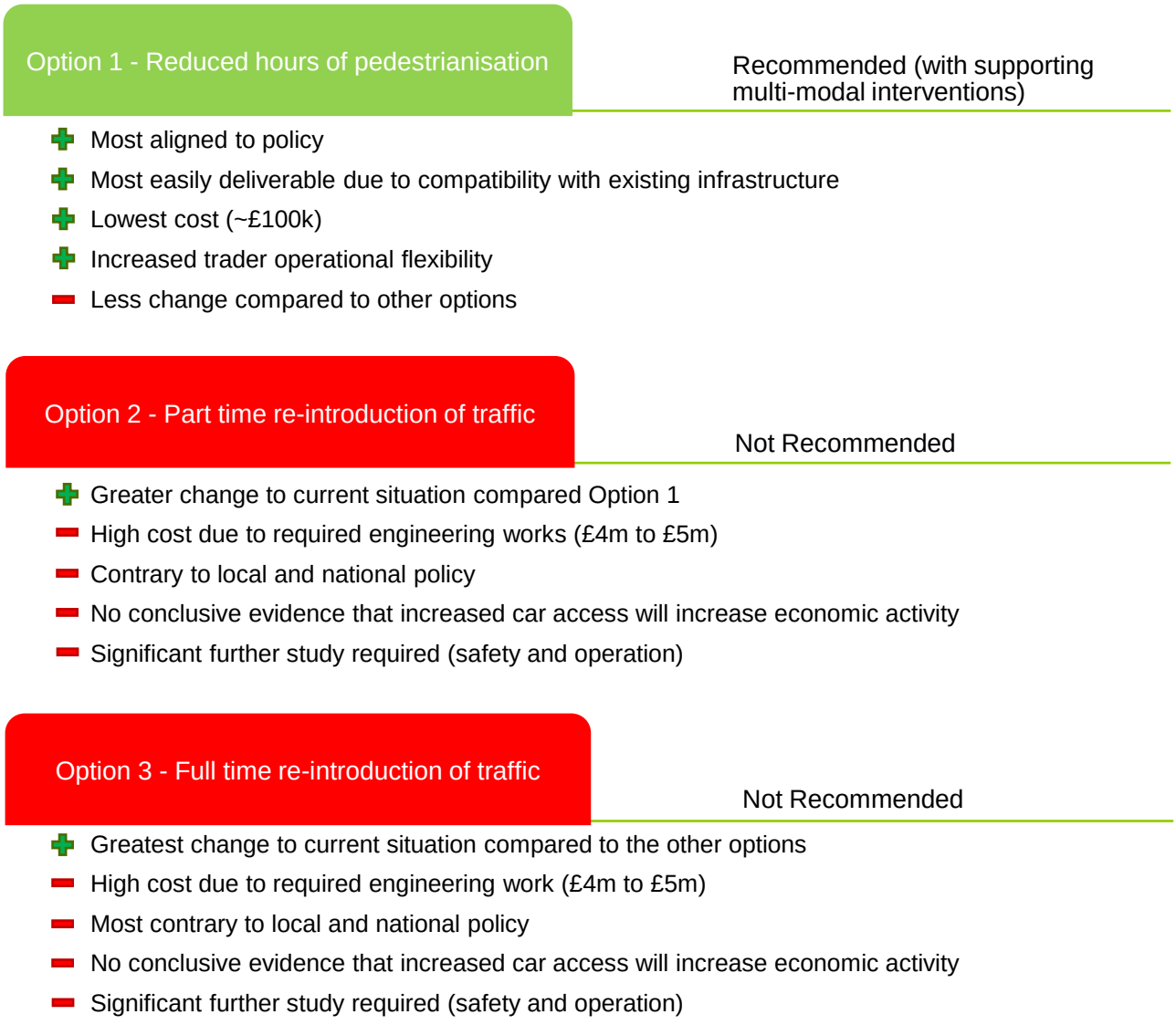
Further engagement was held with BCBC council officers on 10th October 2023 during which a multi-modal package of options was presented. The officers requested that the multi-modal options be set out in the report with a recommendation.

7.7 Core Study Recommendations

The core study recommendations concerning the three de-pedestrianisation options introduced in Section 2 is provided in Figure 7-1.

Further detail concerning the recommendations is provided in Appendix C.

Figure 7-1 - De-pedestrianisation Option Recommendations



The overall recommendation is to take forward De-pedestrianisation Option 1, which proposes a light touch approach that would reduce the pedestrianised time period from 10am to 6pm to 11am to 5pm (potentially this could be further reduced to 11am to 4pm, or 11am to 3pm).

It is recommended that Option 1 be progressed as part of a sustainably focussed multi-modal package of options that will improve access to the town centre. The potential options that could form part of the multi-modal package are discussed in Chapter 8.

8. Potential Multi-modal Intervention Options

8.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides a summary of multi-modal improvement interventions that could be introduced alongside De-pedestrianisation Option 1 to form part of a multi-modal package of measures. The potential intervention options, described in the following section, are:

- Enabling buses to access the town centre.
- Providing improvements to bus facilities around the town centre.
- Enabling cyclists to access the town centre.
- Improvements to active travel routes in and around the town centre.
- Improving wider active travel connections on approaches to the town centre based on a TfW study to improve access to the railway station.
- Improve wider active travel connections on approaches to the town centre based on the Bridgend Active Travel Network Map (ANTM).
- Provide additional cycle storage, potentially including a cycle hub.
- Develop a cycle hire scheme.
- Provide improved wayfinding / town centre signage.
- Expand the provision of blue badge parking in the vicinity of the town centre.
- Develop a car parking strategy for the town centre.
- Reinstate a ShopMobility Hub.

8.2 Description of Multi-Modal Interventions

8.2.1 Bus Access to Town Centre

Enabling bus use of Market Street, Queen Street and Dunraven Place would provide more direct access to the town centre. Currently bus users must connect to the centre either via Bridgend Bus Station or stops on the periphery.

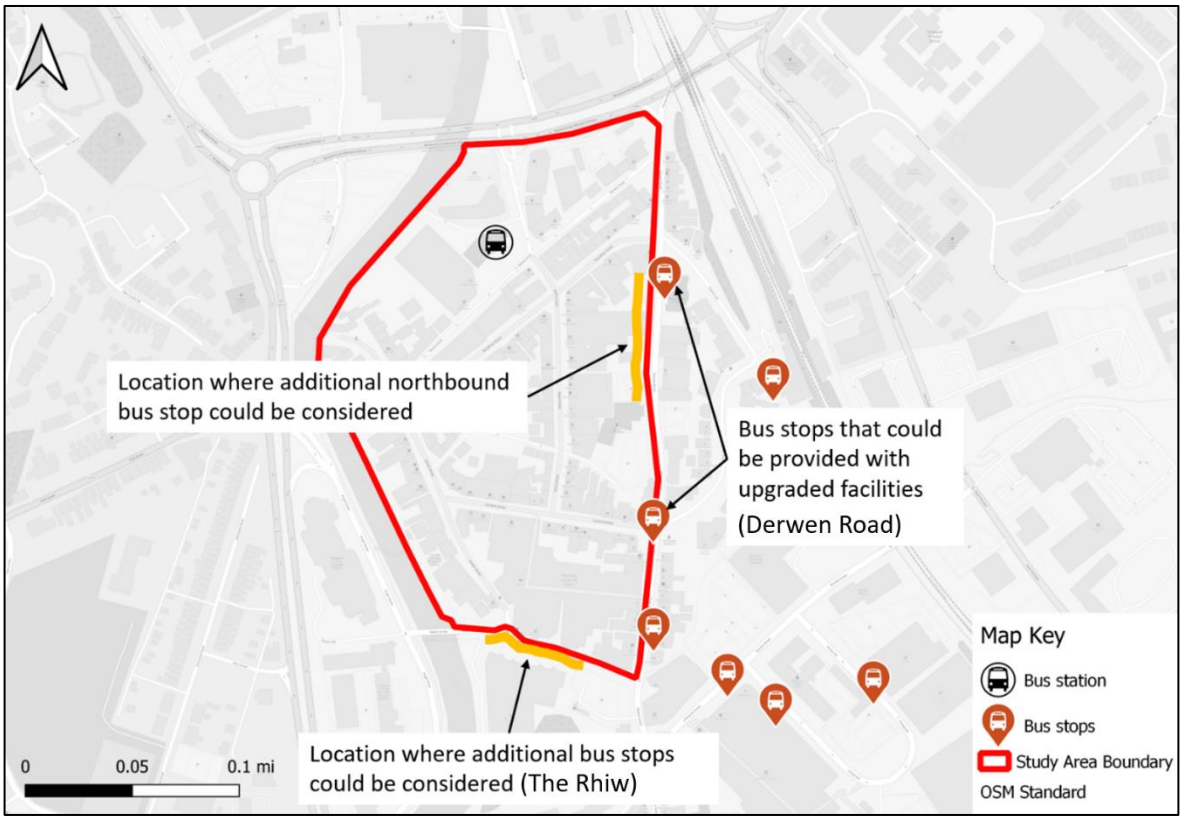
A safety assessment would be needed, which should be based on recorded pedestrian data and predicted bus movements. A kerb upstand would need to be introduced where there are bus stops and so some construction works would be required. Potentially the increased risk associated with the proposal could require wider kerb reinstatement, which would have a higher cost and construction impact. Discussion with key stakeholders would be required, such as bus operators to ascertain whether services could be diverted to the town centre.

8.2.2 Bus Facilities Improvements

Improvements could be made to bus stops in the vicinity and potentially new stops added to increase permeability of the town centre for bus users. Bridgend Bus Station is located on the northern periphery of the town centre and provides a high standard of provision. However, this can be a walk distance of over 300m for some locations. As part of a multi-modal package of measures improving bus facilities may encourage some additional visitors, for instance there is a southbound stop on Derwen Road and a northbound stop on Nolton Street that provide only limited facilities. Subject to available space additional facilities could be provided such as timetabling information or a cantilever type shelter. In addition, there is no existing northbound stop on Derwen Road.

The potential location for bus stop improvements is illustrated in Figure 8-1.

Figure 8-1 - Potential Bus Stop Improvements



8.2.3 Enable Cycling Access to the Town Centre

The existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) does not permit cycling in the pedestrianised part of the town centre. Cyclists are currently required to dismount. Evidence set out in the benchmarking review indicates that cyclists tend to make more visits to a town centre than people who drive (e.g., Sustrans 2020) and consequently spend more money (Transport for London, 2014).

Anecdotal evidence, such as observations during site visits, suggests that the existing TRO is ignored by some cyclists and that some cycling does occur in the town centre. However, by removing the prohibition of cycling TRO an increase in cycling would be expected, both in terms of those accessing the town centre and those travelling through to other destinations (such as the train station or college). This would help increase footfall in the town centre and the viability of businesses which rely on cycling for deliveries. It would also help connections with other potential transport schemes being developed by BCBC such as improvements associated with the Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) and active travel routes being developed by TfW.

There may be some increase in risk associated with the interaction of pedestrians and cyclists in the pedestrianised area. However, shopping streets that enable pedestrian and cycling access are currently in place elsewhere in Wales (such as in Cardiff and Swansea city centres) and any TRO change could be supported by 'share with care' signage and a public awareness campaign. ATAG notes that cycling in vehicle restricted areas can cause concerns to pedestrians, particularly to people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities who may not expect cyclists to be present. However, it concludes consideration should always be given to allowing cycling.

8.2.4 Active Travel Route Improvements in Town Centre

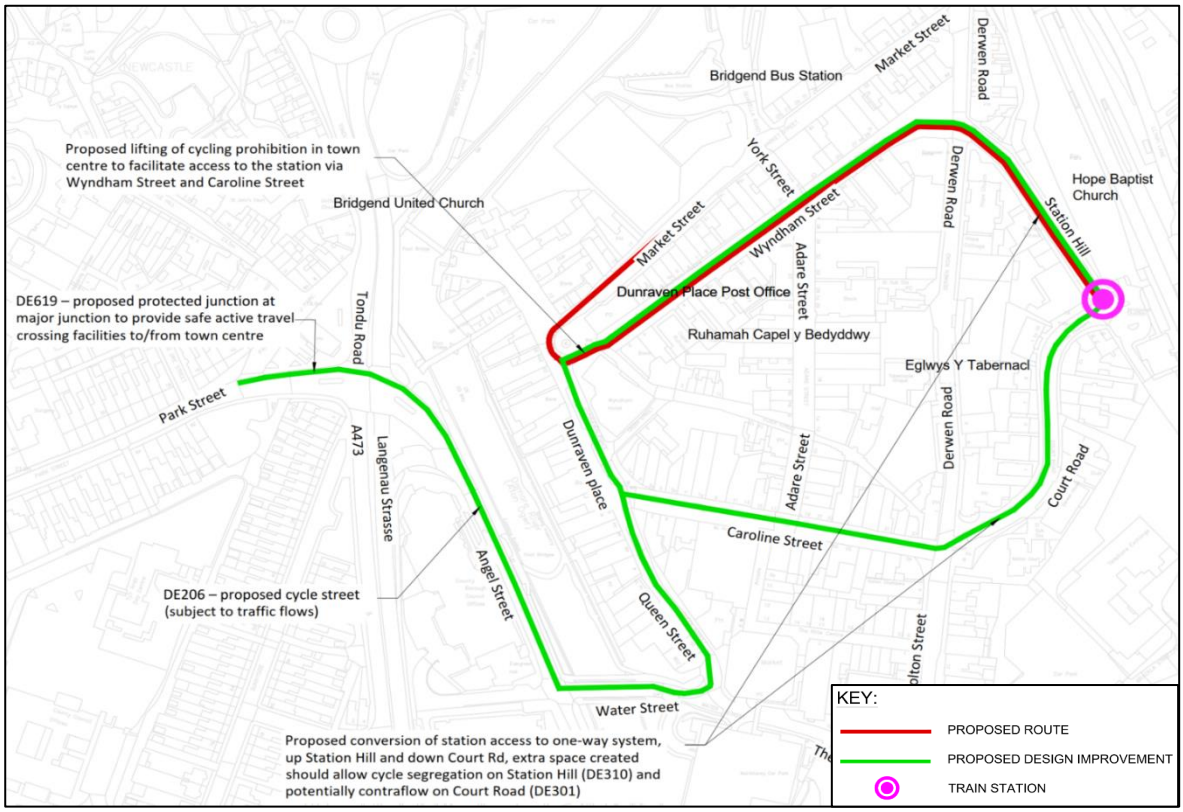
There is the potential to allow cyclists to access the town centre and provide designated cycle facilities such as cycle lanes. ATAG notes that 'both pedestrians and cyclists may express a preference for clearly defined cycle routes. However, this can lead to higher cycle speed and greater potential for conflict with pedestrians.'

8.2.5 Wider Active Travel Connections – TfW ATNDR

This option focuses on active travel connections between Bridgend Railway Station, the town centre and areas to the west. At present the footway connections between the station and the town centre are not good and there is no clear cycling link. Similar deficiencies exist in cycling provision to the west of the town centre. The potential option for active travel access to the station is derived from the TfW Active Travel Network Development Report (ATNDR) for Bridgend Station. The options are displayed in Figure 8-2 and summarised as follows:

- Make Station Hill and Court Road a one-way traffic system. Use the additional space to provide improved pedestrian facilities and a segregated cycle connection with the town centre.
- Lift the prohibition of cycling in the town centre.
- Convert Angel Street to a cycle street increasing the prominence of cycling through surfacing and signage.
- Improve active travel facilities at the Park Street junction to the west.

Figure 8-2 - TfW ATNDR Bridgend Station Access Proposals

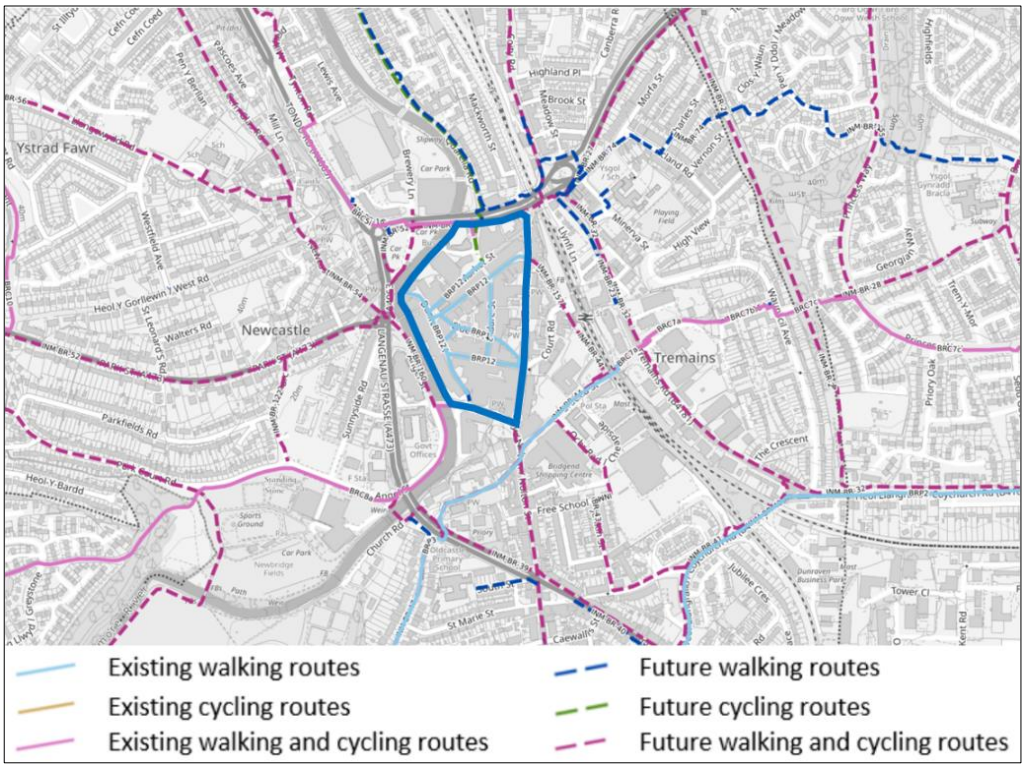


8.2.6 Wider Active Travel Connections – ATNM

The Bridgend ATNM (shown in Figure 8-3) sets out future walking and cycling routes that are envisaged by BCBC. The town centre is shown as an existing walking route. The future routes have not been designed in any detail at this stage, but several future walking and cycling routes are shown to the west, south and east of the town centre,

which could entail the delivery of Shared Use Paths (SUPs). To the north of the town centre separate future walking and cycling routes are envisaged, which it is assumed would be delivered as segregated walking and cycling facilities. Delivery of these options would help improve sustainable access to the town centre.

Figure 8-3 - Bridgend ATNM Map

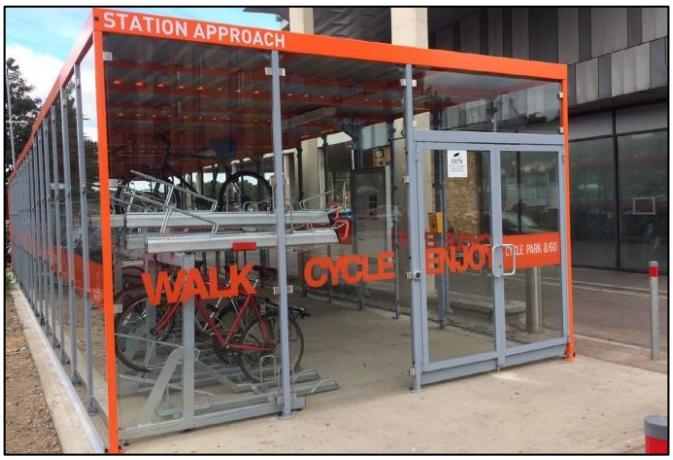


8.2.7 Cycle Storage / Cycle Hub

Safe, secure and convenient cycle parking is vital to ensure good cyclist access and where possible a covered shelter should be provided. There is some existing cycle parking in the town centre, but this could be expanded in conjunction with enabling cycling access to, with storage provided in proximity to key destinations.

The provision of more significant cycle hub type storage could also provide a more secure environment, which may commonly be seen at interchanges. An example of a cycle storage hub taken from ATAG is provided as Figure 8-4. A hub could be provided at either the bus or rail station, which may assist with those accessing the town centre who do not wish to use on street cycle parking (for instance those using high value e-bikes).

Figure 8-4 - Cycle Hub Type Storage Example (ATAG)



8.2.8 Cycle Hire Scheme

A cycle hire scheme could be introduced in Bridgend that would enable better access to the town centre. It would increase the viability as a mode of travel to access the town centre which would be expected to form the key central hub of any cycle hire scheme. It would be beneficial to combine it with the previously mentioned cycling access improvements. However, any cycle hire scheme would need to be area wide rather than town centre specific. The costs of such a scheme vary depending on the type of operating model but are likely to be sizeable. The direct benefits in comparison to costs may not support this as a town centre specific improvement measure.

8.2.9 Wayfinding / Town Centre Signage

To improve connectivity within the town centre and between the town centre and nearby destinations a wayfinding strategy could be developed and implemented. There are different types of wayfinding approaches that can be adopted including the use of signage, schematic maps, wayfinding totems, pavement markings, insets and slabs. This could potentially be linked to the Bridgend Heritage Trail Integrated Wayfinding Strategy that is currently in the latter stages of development.

Examples of wayfinding features (scheme map and totem signpost) are presented in Figure 8-5.

Figure 8-5 - Wayfinding Example



8.2.10 On-street Blue Badge Provision

There are existing blue badge parking spaces on the periphery of the town centre, but these could be expanded via amendments to existing TROs and / or amendments to existing disabled bays. For instance, there are taxi only stopping bays on Derwen Road that could be converted so that they could also be used by blue badge holders during the day. This would be subject to engagement with local taxi firms. In addition, there are existing blue badge holder bays parallel to The Rhiw which could be converted to perpendicular or echelon bays to increase capacity.

8.2.11 Car Parking Strategy

There are several dedicated parking areas in close proximity to the town centre, which provide over 700 spaces in addition to on-street car parking and private parking areas. The standard of the parking areas is variable, as are the connections to the town centre. The location of the car parking areas may not be obvious to visitors of the town. There would be benefit in developing a car park strategy for Bridgend Town Centre. This could include better signage (there is potential for electronic signage that indicates the number of spaces), improved lighting in the car parks and on paths to the car parks, modifications to car park layouts and resurfacing. Electric vehicle charging points could be added to allow charging for the duration of a person's visit to the town centre. Change to on-street blue badge provision should form part of the car parking strategy.

8.2.12 ShopMobility Hub Reinstatement

ShopMobility is a nationwide network of centres that hire out mobility equipment to the public to people with restricted mobility. The type of equipment that is hired includes manual wheelchairs, powerchairs and mobility scooters. There was previously a ShopMobility centre located on Brackla Street in the eastern part of the town centre, however this has since closed and there is no longer a facility of its type within the centre.

The ShopMobility hub type facility offers a means of ensuring that people with restricted mobility can access all parts of the pedestrianised town centre without the need for vehicular access. However, to reinstate the facility a suitable location would need to be found to house the hub. ShopMobility is an independent organisation and part of a registered charity. Any reinstatement of such a hub would be subject to reaching suitable agreements with them.

8.3 Matrix of Potential Interventions

Table 8-1 provides a summary of the possible interventions that could be introduced alongside De-Pedestrianisation Option 1 as part of a multi-modal package. The table includes the actions required, the indicative cost and timescales and a recommendation as to whether the intervention should be included. The table summarises each of the potential interventions that could be implemented. The preferred package of measures is subsequently described. However, the table also presents a red, amber, green colour coding to indicate those options that should form part of the preferred package (green), that could form part of longer-term interventions (amber) and those measures that do not form part of the current study but may have merit for other departments or if alternative funding streams become available. (red).

The full table is included in Appendix D and provides more detail including the advantages and disadvantages of the intervention, the key stakeholders and the potential funding sources

Table 8-1 - BTC Potential Interventions to Form Part of a Multi-Modal Package

Intervention	Actions Required	Indicative Cost / Timescale	Reason for inclusion / non-inclusion
Bus access to town centre	• Signage amendments. • Bus stop provision. • Detailed design with kerb reinstatement anticipated at bus stops. • TRO change.	In the order of £1m / Medium to long-term timescale	**Not included**: Medium to long-term option. Relatively high-cost with potential safety implications. Benefits of increased bus access may not be sufficient in comparison to costs and disruption. The option would need agreement from bus operators and amendments to existing routes.
Improve bus facilities improvements	• Review existing bus stop provision. • Design and implement improvements	£50k-150k / within 1 year	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, would help improve access to the town centre as part of multi-modal package, well aligned with policy.
Cycle access permitted to town centre	• TRO change	£60k-100k / Within 1 year, dependent on successful TRO application	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, likely to provide benefits including both footfall and with regard to takeaway / restaurant home delivery arrangements, well aligned with policy.
Active travel route improvements in town centre (segregating pedestrians and cyclists)	• Route assessment to confirm the most appropriate active travel routes. • TRO change. • Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). • Consultations under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations. • Cycle street treatments. • Signage amendments.	£1-2m / 1-2 years	**Not included**: The benefits of segregated active travel facilities (e.g. cycle lanes) in a town centre environment are not well defined. Potential for confusion, inappropriate use and difficulty of enforcement.
Wider active travel connections – TfW ATNDR **Wider active travel connections – ATNM**	• Kerb realignment. • Cycle street treatment. • Signage amendments. • Public communication. • TRO change. • EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.	£1-2m / 1-2 years	**Not included**: Higher cost, medium to long term intervention. Wider active travel connections would be better considered as part of wider Bridgend active travel improvements (such as via TfW's access to stations work (ATNDR) or BCBC's ATNM work) rather than directly as a BTC scheme.
Cycle storage / cycle hub	• Identify suitable locations (could be situated at bus and / or rail stations). • Possible kerb realignment and surfacing. • Installation of cycle parking / shelters. • TRO change.	£50-500k / 6-9 months	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, likely to provide benefits and would help overcome the lack of cycle storage issue highlighted in the town centre masterplan, well aligned with policy.

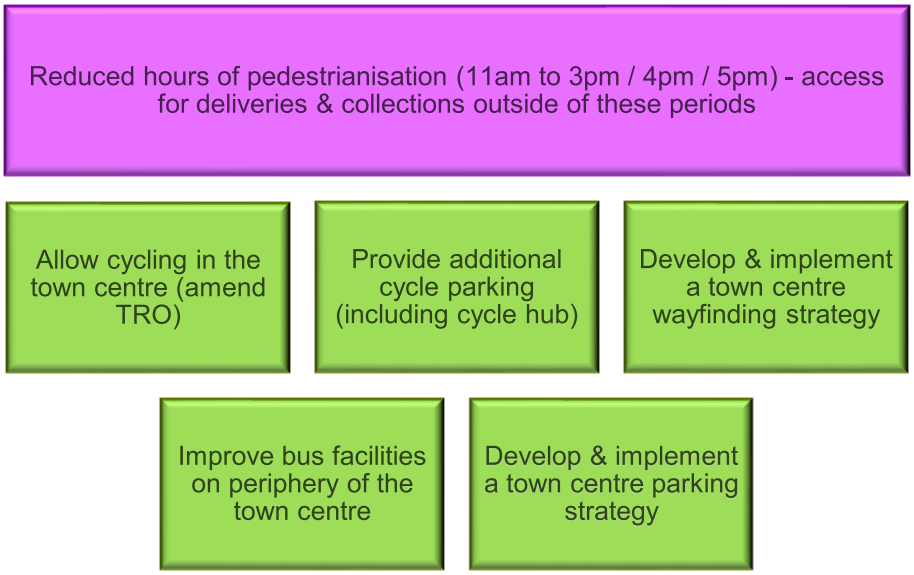
Intervention	Actions Required	Indicative Cost / Timescale	Reason for inclusion / non-inclusion
	• EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.		
Cycle hire scheme	• Review of suitable sites. • Installation of cycle parking / shelters. • Enter into agreement with a suitable provider. • Kerb realignment and surfacing. • TRO change. • EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.	£ will vary depending on the operating model chosen / Medium to long-term	**Not included**: Higher cost, medium to long term intervention. Would require the delivery of an area-wide scheme. Whilst there could be benefits to the town centre, it would be better considered as part of wider Bridgend active travel improvements rather than directly as a BTC scheme.
Wayfinding / town centre Signage	• Development of wayfinding strategy. • Design work. • Installation of signage and totems.	£100k-750k + / 1 – 2 years depending on complexity of scheme	**Included**: Short-term, potentially low-cost solution, that is likely to have benefits as part of a multi-modal package of measures. Well aligned with policy. Potential to connect with wayfinding schemes elsewhere in the county. Would ensure suitable connectivity between pedestrianised area and shopping centre, and the new college site to the southeast.
On-street blue badge provision	• Identify parking locations on Derwen Road and The Rhiw (check if there is potential for perpendicular / echelon spaces).	£50k-500k / 1-2 years	**Included**: Short-term, potentially low-cost solution, that is likely to have benefits as part of a multi-modal package of measures including as part of a car parking strategy. Would help improv blue badge holder access to the town centre.
Develop a car parking strategy for BTC	• Produce a strategy. Any required works would be based on this.	£10-20k / within a year to produce strategy Implementation costs and timescales dependent on scale of intervention.	**Included**: It is recommended that a car parking strategy is developed for BTC that considers potential improvements such as signage, etc. in conjunction with the provision of additional on-street blue badge parking. This would help make better use of existing assets and would be suitable as part of a multi-modal package of interventions.
Shop mobility hub reinstatement	• Identify suitable location and premises. • Lease / construct premises. • Potential need to subsidise costs.	£ will vary depending on the operating model chosen / medium term.	**Not included**: ShopMobility is not operated by BCBC and there are external factors beyond the control of the council regarding reinstatement. There would be difficulties associated with the availability of suitable premises and potential associated costs of the scheme. The option does not form part of the current package but could be considered as a standalone medium to long term option to improve inclusive access.

9. Bridgend Town Centre – Multi-Modal Access Recommendations

9.1 Summary of Multi-modal Package

The recommended package of options to improve access to Bridgend Town Centre is summarised in Figure 9-1. De-pedestrianisation Option 1 – reduced hours of pedestrianisation – should be introduced alongside several other measures that will improve access to the town centre by multiple modes of travel.

Figure 9-1 - Town Centre Access – Multi-modal Package



Further detail regarding each of the proposed option is as follows:

- **Reduced hours of pedestrianisation (11am to 3pm / 11am to 4pm)** – retain access for deliveries and collections outside of this period. Requires a safety assessment. Subject to the assessment the hours could potentially be amended via a change in signage and TRO. There is the potential that an experimental TRO could be introduced and monitored to understand impacts as a 'quick win', although this would also be subject to a safety assessment. This would increase activity in the town centre and improve access for businesses. Once introduced this option could be monitored in terms of footfall and vehicle flows. There is potential to enable access for other vehicle types such as blue badge holders and / or permit holders, but these arrangements can be difficult to manage, and a better understanding of the impact would be required.
- **Allow cycling in the town centre**. Could be introduced relatively quickly via an amendment to the existing TRO (or potentially as part of an experimental TRO) and changes to signage / introduction of 'share with care' signage. This would increase activity and potentially footfall in the town centre.
- **Provide additional convenient cycle parking in the town centre**, covered where possible. Provide a cycle hub at a key destination such as the bus or rail station. This would ensure cycling is a viable mode to visit the town centre (combined with the measure above).
- **Develop and implement a wayfinding strategy for the town centre**. Should link to key locations such as the bus and rail stations, the southern part of the town centre and the new Bridgend College site. A wide range of wayfinding strategies could be applied from signage to electronic totems. A proportionate strategy

should be developed, that could link with the Heritage Trail Integrated Wayfinding Strategy currently being developed. This will help ensure the pedestrianised part is clearly connected to the rest of the town centre.

- **Improve bus facilities on the periphery of the town centre**, such as providing timetable information, cantilever shelter, raised kerbs, etc. There is also the potential to introduce additional stops where coverage is incomplete. This will help encourage bus access to the town centre.
- **Develop and implement a parking strategy for the town centre**. There are over 700 spaces in dedicated car parks on the periphery of the town centre as well as on street parking. A parking strategy could include signage, potentially including electronic capacity information; improvements to the surfacing, layout and lighting of car parks; the introduction of Electric Vehicle charging points, improvements to inks from the car parks to the town centre; seeking opportunities for additional short stay or blue badge holder parking on the periphery of the town centre. For instance, echelon parking could be introduced on The Rhiw, whilst the TRO for taxi ranks on Derwen Road could be amended to enable for use by other vehicle types during the day. A parking strategy would help make better use of the existing vehicular access provision.

The recommended interventions listed above should be developed as a package. Nonetheless there may be opportunities for quick wins, where TRO amendments or even experimental traffic orders could be introduced. Additionally, opportunities for greening, public realm improvements and the promotion of café culture should be sought whilst developing the transport led package of measures.

9.2 Other Potential Complimentary Interventions

A key to the success of modern town centres is driven by the experience and the sense of place. Visitors are drawn to a town centre to experience the environment it provides as much as for the goods or services they wish to purchase. Other interventions that could help improve the attractiveness of the town centre as an experience and therefore encourage an increase in footfall are set out as follows:

- Landscaping / greening of the town centre (in line with the Bridgend Town Centre Green Infrastructure Plan currently being developed) – this could include tree planting, soft-landscaping, rain gardens and informal ‘play on the way’ features.
- Public realm improvements – street furniture, additional seating areas.
- Enable more outdoor seating and large umbrellas to facilitate a café culture. This could involve changes to licensing agreements and the reworking of the streetscape to identify suitable locations.
- Streetscene enhancement (linked to the Transforming Towns Programme). This could involve regenerating shop fronts, improving shop signage and other repairs, painting frontages, or repurposing buildings into co-working workshops.
- Identify suitable spaces for outdoor events. This could include weekend or lunch time farmers markets, Christmas markets, or other users.

These potential complimentary interventions are to be further explored when funding allows.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Option Details

A.1 Option 1 Details

Elements	Location	Existing	Proposed
Pedestrianised Area	Quarella Road and the eastern side of Market Street.	No motor vehicles except for buses, taxis, permit holders and loading. **At All Times.**	▪ • Retained – no changes to TRO.
	Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street from its junction with Dunraven Place to a point approximately 4 metres south of the southern boundary of 20 Queen Street. **N.B.** Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street are governed by the same times but are not referred to in the current TRO.	**10am – 6pm** No vehicles except for loading between 6pm - midnight and between midnight - 10am.	• Pedestrianised area time changed to 11am- 5pm. Change to TRO. • Include Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street in Schedule 6 of the new TRO. Currently not referred to. Pedestrianised area times for these roads also changed accordingly to 11am – 5pm. Change to TRO • Change loading times to reflect new pedestrianised area times. No vehicles except for loading between 5pm – midnight and between midnight – 11am. Change to TRO.
	Derwen Road between its junctions with southern side of Wyndham Street and northern side of Caroline Street.	**10pm Friday – 6.30am Saturday** **10pm Saturday – 6.30am Sunday**	• Remove from TRO subject to consultation with South Wales Police. Change to TRO.
Short Stay Parking Provision	Derwen Road	**Monday – Saturday 5am – 6pm**	• Include new short stay parking provision within loading only bays. Undertake a survey to establish usage of days between 10am and 6pm. Change to TRO.

	Rhiw Road	**Monday – Saturday 10am – 4pm**	• Include new short stay parking provision within loading only bays. Undertake a survey to establish usage of days between 10am and 6pm. Change to TRO.
Automated Bollards	Queen Street, Market Street, Wyndham Street and Caroline Street.	**Operational 10am – 6pm**	• Change automated bollards operating times to reflect new pedestrianised area times 11am – 5pm.
Signage	Town Centre – various locations		• Add new traffic signage to reflect changes to the TRO.
Click and Collect Provision	Town Centre – various locations		• Exact location of click and collect facility to be confirmed.
Shop Mobility	Town Centre	Brackla 1 Car Park	• Options for Shop Mobility to be appraised.
Cycle Storage	Town Centre	No cycle storage provision	• Provide new cycle storage facilities at key access points to the town centre.
Evening Car Parking Provision	Town Centre Car Parks	• BCBC Rhiw Multi-Storey Car Park - closes at 7pm and locked access after 7pm. • BCBC Brackla Three (Brackla Street) Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Bowls Hall Car Park – closes at 6pm. • BCBC Tondu Road Car Park (Bridgend RFC) - Open 24 hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Tremains Road Car Park - Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • Private Car Parks – Timings vary.	• Promote car parking availability for evening hours. • Install improved lighting on the access link to the Brackla Three Car Park (Brackla Street) from the town centre.
New TRO	Town Centre	Various versions of the Town Centre TRO	• Revision of TRO. BCBC Legal to advise.

A.2 Option 2 Details

Elements	Location	Existing	Proposed
Pedestrianised Area	Quarella Road and the eastern side of Market Street.	No motor vehicles except for buses, taxis, permit holders and loading. **At All Times.**	• Quarella Road retained. • Eastern Side of Market Street - Pedestrianised Area between 11am- 3pm - No motor vehicles except for buses, taxis, permit holders and loading. All vehicles allowed between 3pm - midnight and midnight and 11am.
	Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street from its junction with Dunraven Place to a point approximately 4 metres south of the southern boundary of 20 Queen Street. **N.B.** Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street are governed by the same times but are not referred to in the current TRO.	**10am – 6pm** No vehicles except for loading between 6pmmidnight and between midnight -10am.	• Pedestrianised area time changed to 11am- 3pm. Change to TRO. • Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street from its junction with Dunraven Place to a point approximately 4 metres south of the southern boundary of 20 Queen Street Pedestrianised area between 11am - 3pm. All vehicles allowed between 3pm – midnight and between midnight and 11am. (See additional short stay provision below) • Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street Pedestrianised area between 11am – 3pm. No vehicles except for loading between 3pm-midnight and between midnight -11am. Change to TRO.
	Derwen Road between its junctions with southern side of Wyndham Street and northern side of Caroline Street.	**10pm Friday – 6.30am Saturday** **10pm Saturday – 6.30am Sunday**	• Amend TRO subject to consultation with South Wales Police.
Short Stay Parking Provision	Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street.	**Monday – Saturday 5am – 6pm**	• Introduce new short stay parking provision within former loading bay areas in the pedestrianised area between 3pm and 11am on Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street. Change to TRO.

Automated Bollards	Queen Street, Market Street, Wyndham Street and Caroline Street.	Operational 10am – 6pm	• Change automated bollards operating times to reflect new pedestrianised area times 11am – 3pm. • Requirement for additional automatic bollards to be explored.
Signage	Town Centre – various locations		• Add new traffic signage to reflect changes to the TRO.
Shop Mobility	Town Centre	Brackla 1 Car Park	• Options for Shop Mobility provision to be appraised.
Cycle Storage	Town Centre	No cycle storage provision	• Provide new cycle storage facilities at key access points to the town centre.
Evening Car Parking Provision	Town Centre Car Parks	• BCBC Rhiw Multi-Storey Car Park - closes at 7pm and locked access after 7pm • BCBC Brackla Three (Brackla Street) Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Bowls Hall Car Park – closes at 6pm. • BCBC Tondu Road Car Park (Bridgend RFC) - Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Tremains Road Car Park - Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • Private Car Parks – timings vary	• Promote car parking availability for evening hours. • Install improved lighting on the access link to the Brackla Three Car Park (Brackla Street) from the town centre.
New TRO	Town Centre	Various versions of the Town Centre TRO	• Revision of TRO. BCBC Legal to advise.

A.3 Option 3 Details

Elements	Location	Existing	Proposed
Pedestrianised Area	Quarella Road and the eastern side of Market Street.	No motor vehicles except for buses, taxis, permit holders and loading. **At All Times.**	• Retained for Quarella Road. • Removed for eastern side of Market Street. - de-pedestrianised. Change to TRO.
	Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street from its junction with Dunraven Place to a point approximately 4 metres south of the southern boundary of 20 Queen Street N.B. Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street are governed by the same times but are not referred to in the current TRO	**10am – 6pm** No vehicles except for loading between 6pmmidnight and between midnight -10am.	• Removed for western side of Market Street, Dunraven Place and Queen Street - de-pedestrianised. Removed from TRO. • Physical works to create differences between road and footway levels. • Include Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street in Schedule 6 of the new TRO. Currently not referred to. • Pedestrianised area times for Caroline Street, Adare Street, Wyndham Street and Cross Street changed to 11am – 3pm. Physical barrier will need to be installed to prevent access. Change to TRO.
	Derwen Road between its junctions with Southern side of Wyndham Street and northern side of Caroline Street.	**10pm Friday – 6.30am Saturday** **10pm Saturday – 6.30am Sunday**	• Remove from TRO subject to approval from South Wales Police. Change to TRO.
Short Stay Parking Provision	Market Street and Dunraven Place.	**None**	• Part redesignation of former loading bays as 30-minute limit parking bays between 8am -6pm. After 6pm and before 8am no limit on parking time. Change to TRO • Part redesignation of former loading bays as dedicated blue badge parking spaces. Stipulate in the TRO limited waiting times for Blue Badge users. Change to TRO.

Automated Bollards	Queen Street, Market Street, Wyndham Street and Caroline Street.	Operational 10am – 6pm	• Remove bollards on Queen Street and Market Street. • Add new bollards to the entrance of the pedestrianised zone on Wyndham and Caroline Street. • Change automated bollards operating times to reflect new pedestrianised area times (11am – 3pm).
Signage	Town Centre – various locations		• Add new traffic signage to reflect changes to the TRO.
Shop Mobility	Town Centre	Brackla 1 Car Park	• Options for Shop Mobility provision to be appraised
Evening Car Parking Provision	Town Centre Car Parks	• BCBC Rhiw Multi-Storey Car Park - closes at 7pm and locked access after 7pm • BCBC Brackla Three (Brackla Street) Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Bowls Hall Car Park – closes at 6pm. • BCBC Tondu Road Car Park (Bridgend RFC) - Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • BCBC Tremains Road Car Park - Open 24hours – no charge after 6pm. • Private Car Parks – timings vary.	• Promote car parking availability for evening hours. • Install improved lighting on the access link to the Brackla Three Car Park (Brackla Street) from the town centre.
New TRO	Town Centre	Various versions of the Town Centre TRO	• Revision of TRO. BCBC Legal to advise.

Appendix B. Option Appraisal – Policy Alignment

Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Priorities		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel:		-1	-2	-4
2	Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable transport:		-1	-2	-4
3	Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport:		-1	-2	-4
	Well-Being Ambitions				
4	Good for people and communities:	Equality	-1	-2	-4
	A transport system that contributes to a more equal Wales, a healthier Wales and that everyone has the confidence to use.	Health			
		Confidence and safety			
5	Good for the environment:	Carbon emissions	-1	-2	-4
	A transport system that delivers a significant reduction in Greenhouse gas emissions, maintains biodiversity and ecosystem resilience and reduces waste	Biodiversity			
		Soils & water			
		Waste			
6	Good for the economy and places:	Cohesive communities	-1	-2	-4
	A transport system that contributes to our wider economic ambitions, helps local communities, supports a more sustainable transport supply chain, uses the latest innovations and addresses transport affordability	Placemaking			
		Innovation			
		Distribution of goods			
		Affordability			
7	Good for culture and the Welsh Language:	Welsh language	-1	-2	-4
	A transport system that supports the Welsh language, enables more people to use sustainable transport to get to arts, sport and cultural activities, and protects and enhances our historic environment.	Arts, sports and culture			
		Historic environment			
Total			**-7**	**-14**	**-28**

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2021 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Priorities	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	For walking and cycling to be the natural mode of choice for short everyday journeys, or as part of a longer journey in combination with other sustainable modes.	-2	-3	-4
	Total	-2	-3	-4

Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Principle	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognise the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change3); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	-2	-3	-4
2	A resilient Wales	A nation with maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)	-2	-3	-4
3	A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).	2	0	-1
4	A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.	-2	-3	-4
5	A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.	-2	-3	-4
6	A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.	n/a	n/a	n/a
7	A globally responsible Wales	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.	-3	-4	-5
		Total	-9	-16	-22

Planning Policy Wales (2024) Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Priorities	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	Growing our economy in a sustainable manner	Fosters economic activity	0	0	0
		Enables easy communication			
		Generates its own renewable energy			
		Vibrant and dynamic			
		Adaptive to change			
		Embraces smart and innovative technology			
2	Making best use of resources	Makes best use of natural resources	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Prevents waste			
		Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings			
		Unlocks potential and regenerates			
		High quality and built to last			
3	Facilitating accessible and healthy environments	Accessible and high-quality green space	-2	-3	-4
		Accessible by means of active travel and public transport			
		Not car dependent			
		Minimises the need to travel			
		Provides equality of access			
		Feels safe and inclusive			
		Supports a diverse population			
		Good connections			
		Convenient access to goods and services			
		Promotes physical and mental health and well-being			

ID	Priorities	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
4	Creating & sustaining communities	Enables the Welsh language to thrive	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Appropriate development densities			
		Homes and jobs to meet society's needs			
		A mix of uses			
		Offers cultural experiences			
		Community based facilities and services			
5	Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact	Resilient biodiversity and ecosystems	-2	-3	-4
		Distinctive and special landscapes			
		Integrated green infrastructure			
		Appropriate soundscapes			
		Reduces environmental risks			
		Manages water resources naturally			
		Clean air			
		Reduces overall pollution			
		Resilient to climate change			
		Distinctive and special historic environments			
Total			-4	-6	-8

Future Wales: the national plan 2040 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Priorities	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	A Wales where people live and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places that everyone can be a part of.	connected – with the right transport, internet and phone networks	-2	-3	-4
		inclusive – meeting people's needs whatever their background or age			
		healthy – with the right homes, jobs, services, leisure and public spaces			
2	A Wales where people live in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services.	connected – with the right transport, internet and phone networks	-2	-3	-4
		inclusive – meeting people's needs whatever their background or age			
		healthy – with the right homes, jobs, services, leisure and public spaces			
3	A Wales where we tackle health, poverty and inequality through growth.	bring opportunities – attracting businesses, better homes and jobs	n/a	n/a	n/a
		improve people's lives and reduce poverty			
		focus on each region's strengths and what they need to thrive			
4	A Wales where the Welsh Language is thriving.	protect Welsh speaking communities and promote new development which encourages people to speak Welsh	n/a	n/a	n/a
5	A Wales where people live and work in cities and towns that are growing	create jobs and opportunities	-2	-3	-4
		reduce pollution			
		use investment in the right ways			

ID	Priorities	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
6	A Wales where people live in places that promote wealth, new ideas and culture.	bring businesses, jobs and activities	0	0	0
		explore new technologies			
		attract people from all over the world			
7	A Wales where travel is sustainable.	develop better transport networks	-2	-3	-4
		improve public transport – reducing the need to use cars			
		reduce pollution			
8	A Wales where people can connect to great digital infrastructure.	make sure everyone can get superfast and ultra-fast broadband	n/a	n/a	n/a
		develop better phone networks			
9	A Wales where places manage natural resources and reduce pollution.	protect and enhance natural resources – including the coastline, forests, water and minerals	-2	-3	-4
		reduce pollution and improve people's lives			
10	A Wales where there are biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems.	value and protect nature – our forests, wildlife, flowers and insects	n/a	n/a	n/a
		reverse the harm done to nature and help it to thrive			
11	A Wales where people live in places that are decarbonised (create less carbon pollution).	face the challenges of the climate crisis	-2	-3	-4
		promote opportunities for renewable energy and electric vehicles			
		improve people's health and wellbeing			
Total			-12	-18	-24

Bridgend County Council - Local Transport Plan 2015-2030 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Goals	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	To support economic growth and safeguard jobs with a particular focus on City Regions, Enterprise Zones and local growth zones by:	Improving access to jobs and services by sustainable and active travel;	-2	-3	-4
		Reducing congestion, improved journey time reliability, greater network resilience;			
		Maximising potential to use bus and/or rail to access key employment and other sites;			
		Improving access for freight.			
2	To reduce economic inactivity by delivering safe and affordable access to employment sites through:	Seamless journeys and integrated ticketing;	-2	-3	-4
		Affordable access to jobs, services and education.			
3	To maximise the contribution that effective and affordable transport services can make to reducing transport poverty and target investment to support improvements in accessibility for the most disadvantaged communities by:	Supporting rural areas by improving access to key services;	-2	-3	-4
		Promoting bus services that enable communities to access employment/services			
4	Encourage safer, healthier and sustainable travel to achieve:	Increased take up of active and sustainable travel;	-2	-3	-4
		Reduced number of personal injury accidents;			
		Reduction in the negative impact of transport emissions on health and the environment;			
		Increased number of journeys to tourism destinations being made by sustainable and active travel modes.			
Total			-8	-12	-16

Bridgend County Council - Corporate Plan Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Goals	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable	Providing high-quality children's and adult social services and early help services to people who need them	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Supporting people in poverty to get the support they need or help they are entitled to			
		Supporting people facing homelessness to find a place to live			
		Supporting children with additional learning needs to get the best from their education			
		Safeguarding and protecting people who are at risk of harm			
2	A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns	Helping our residents get the skills they need for work	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Making sure our young people find jobs or are in education or training			
		Improving our town centres, making them safer and more attractive			
		Attracting investment and supporting new and existing local businesses			
3	A County Borough with thriving valleys communities	Investing in Maesteg town centre and creating more jobs in the valleys	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Improving community facilities and making them more accessible			
		Improving education and skills in the valleys			
		Investing in our parks and supporting tourism to the valleys			
4	A County Borough where we help people meet their potential	Providing safe, supportive schools with high quality teaching	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Expanding Welsh medium education opportunities			
		Modernising our school buildings			
		Supporting and encouraging lifelong learning			
		Being the best parents we can to our care experienced children			

ID	Goals	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
		Offering youth services and school holiday programmes for our young people			
5	A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency	Moving towards net zero carbon	-2	-3	-4
		Improving the energy efficiency of our buildings and services			
		Protecting our landscapes and open spaces and planting more trees			
		Reducing, reusing or recycling as much of our waste as possible			
		Improving flood defences and schemes to reduce flooding of our homes and businesses			
6	A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community	Improving the way we engage with local people, including young people, listening to their views and acting on them	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Offering more information and advice online and in your libraries and community buildings, not just in Civic Offices			
		Helping clubs and community groups to take control of and improve their facilities and protect them for the future			
		Making sure you can talk to us and hear from us in Welsh			
		Celebrating and supporting diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination			
7	A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives	Improving active travel routes and facilities so people can walk and cycle	-2	-3	-4
		Offering attractive leisure and cultural activities			
		Improving children's play facilities and opportunities			
		Providing free school meals and expanding free childcare provision			
		Integrating our social care services with health services so people are supported seamlessly			
		Improve the supply of affordable housing			
Total			-4	-6	-8

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Goals	Key requirements		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	Healthy local neighbourhoods	Support communities to be inclusive so that:	• more people say they feel connected • fewer people say they feel lonely • there is a range of community activities for everyone in the language of their choice.	-2	-3	-4
		Promote healthier lifestyles in our communities so that:	• more people are active • fewer people, particularly children, are obese • there are more opportunities to be active locally and affordably.			
		Work with communities to build a sense of belonging so that:	• more people report feeling safe in their local area • fewer people experience anti-social behaviour • there are opportunities to act together to tackle problems when they occur			
		Help people to access to support, services and opportunities in their local neighbourhood so that:	• more people use active travel • fewer people face long / costly journeys to access services • there are community buildings for everyone to access and use.			
2	Sustainable and resilient local neighbourhoods	Improve, use, enjoy and protect our natural local spaces so that we see:	• more local, accessible green and blue spaces; • fewer incidents of pollution and fly tipping; and • more resilient, healthier ecosystems and natural environment in our local area, including our rivers and hillsides.	-2	-3	-4
		Support communities by increasing opportunities for more active travel in	• more of the things we need and use being nearby; • fewer journeys being undertaken by car; and			

ID	Goals	Key requirements		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
		their daily lives so that we see:	• an improvement in air quality and health.			
		Understand how we can all use resources more sustainably so that we see:	• more re-use and recycling of a range of materials; • reduced energy consumption; and • improved management of our land and coastline to reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon capture.			
		Work with communities identify opportunities for Climate Change mitigation and adaptation and understand potential risks from climate change so that we see:	• more awareness, knowledge and skills across communities; • fewer people, communities, and properties at risk; and • increased confidence in our ability to respond to future challenges			
Total				-4	-6	-8

Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan 2021 Options Appraisal Summary Table

ID	Goals	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1	**Growth** Consolidation of retail, housing intensification and diversification of town centre uses through the introduction of focused employment and education uses to achieve diverse, well curated and managed town centre growth.	**Urban Living and Intergenerational Communities** Creating in-town living that caters to different age and income groups and increases social housing through the redevelopment of strategic vacant sites and re-purposing of vacant buildings.	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Enterprise Space Creating a satellite hub for businesses with room for office spaces, coworking hubs and light industrial units connecting South Wales and the Cardiff Capital Region through robust transport links.			
		Learning Hub Utilising education as a catalyst for town centre regeneration to spur on the development of a mixed economy that caters for all demographics.			
2	**Resilience** Future-proofing solutions for the town centre by creating a sustainable community and mixed economy through energy conservation, a mix of land uses and demographics, as well as sustainable travel solutions.	**Energy and Renewables** To progress towards a low carbon economy through low energy buildings, combined energy networks, sustainable waste strategies and the strategic use of available land.	-2	-3	-4
		Mixed Economy Fostering a mixed economy to ensure a thriving town centre in the ever-changing economic climate through a combination of business, education, retail, leisure and cultural uses.			
		Integrated and Sustainable Mobility			

ID	Goals	Key requirements	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
		A robust transport strategy that creates a cohesive, accessible and legible network of pedestrian, cycle, public and private transport routes .			
3	**Well-being** Enhancing health and well-being through good quality public spaces and natural landscape to create a more attractive town centre, new open spaces with leisure and recreation opportunities, and richer biodiversity.	**Green Blue Infrastructure** Creating a robust network of streets and spaces that are clearly defined, accessible to all, safe and resilient, incorporating greening measures and sustainable drainage.	-2	-3	-4
		Open Space and Community Hotspots Encouraging positive social interaction through the creation of open spaces and areas of activity that demonstrate transformative place-making to enable inclusive communities in Bridgend.			
4	**Identity** Building on from the achievements of the Townscape Heritage Initiative to best utilise the heritage assets and the positive characteristics of the town to establish a 'County Town' with a strong sense of place, cultural identity and attractive appearance.	**Heritage-based Place-making** Highlighting and reinforcing the existing heritage of Bridgend and utilising it to create a legible town centre with a strong sense of place.	n/a	n/a	n/a
		Events and Culture Diversification of the town centre offer to provide a wider cultural, social and civic experience that brings added vitality and vibrancy.			
Total			-4	-6	-8

Appendix C. Detailed Options Summary

Option 1

Option 1 proposes a light touch approach that would reduce the pedestrianised time period from 10am to 6pm to 11am to 5pm. Outside of this access would be retained for deliveries / collections only. Under this option the town centre streets would be expected to retain very low traffic volumes and remain Pedestrian Priority Streets as set out in ATAG and so would not require significant kerb reinstatement construction works. This option would increase the time periods during which deliveries can take place to coincide with opening hours. Whilst the option does not entirely align with policy it does not represent a significant departure as it is unlikely to encourage a large increase in vehicle trips.

It is recommended that Option 1 be taken forward but as part of a wider package of multi-modal transport options rather than as a standalone option. This option does not represent as significant a change to access arrangements as the other two options and it is therefore recommended that consideration be given to further reducing the pedestrianised time (to 11am to 4pm, or 11am to 3pm). There is potential to enable access for other vehicle types such as blue badge holders and / or permit holders, but these arrangements can be difficult to manage and a better understanding of the impact would be required. The introduction of Option 1, the time periods it applies, and the vehicle types allowed access should be the subject of a safety assessment based on recorded data and calculated predictions. The introduction of any additional vehicle types would be subject to the town centre retaining overall very low traffic levels and therefore remaining a Pedestrian Priority Street.

Options 2 & 3

Options 2 and 3 would reintroduce all vehicular traffic to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. The former would do so outside of a reduced pedestrianised period of 11am to 3pm, whilst the latter would do so at all times of the day. Both options would be expected to increase traffic volumes in the town centre and present a viable through route for vehicles. Consequently, under both Options 2 and 3 these routes would be expected to become Informal Streets as set out in ATAG and so would require significant kerb reinstatement works to achieve the required 60mm upstand.

During engagement with Council members and officers it was agreed that Option 3, full de-pedestrianisation of these routes at all times of day, should not be considered further as the policy review has shown that neither of these options accord with national or local policy as they would be expected to encourage use of the private vehicle at the expense of sustainable modes. Consequently, it would be a challenge to secure external funding. Further, whilst the desire to increase activity and footfall in the town centre is understood, the evidence base that re-introducing traffic would increase economic activity is not established. It is therefore recommended that neither Option 2, nor Option 3 be taken forward.

It is understood that there is some support for Option 2. If the authority did wish to pursue the development of Option 2 at a future date it is recommended that the following be undertaken:

- Traffic impact assessment – use available data to estimate the number of vehicles likely to use the link through the town centre if re-opened. Should include micro-simulation modelling and consideration of parking demand.
- Safety assessment – use recorded data for pedestrian and vehicle volumes along with the output from the traffic impact assessment to assess the level of risk that would arise from the re-introduction of vehicular traffic in the town centre.
- Consider revising the hours during which vehicle access would apply, so that pedestrianisation is retained for a longer period. This could reduce conflict between vehicles and pedestrians during busier periods.
- Consider introducing short stay parking for blue badge holders only within the town centre.
- Undertake further consultation and engagement with emergency services and protected characteristic groups.

- Combine the option with a multi-modal package of measures to ensure that access to the town centre for all modes of travel is improved.

Appendix D. Matrix of Interventions – Full Table

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion
Reduced hours of pedestrianisation (11-3 / 11-4 / 11-5) – retain access for deliveries and collection outside of this period.	• Extend periods for which deliveries and collections can be undertaken including longer periods when shops are open. • Potential to expand to include other vehicle types, increasing accessibility to the town centre.	• Increase in risk as vehicles are reintroduced into a pedestrianised area for a longer period of time. • May be considered a lighter touch option that does not have a significant impact. • Potential to encourage vehicular traffic contrary to existing policy.	• Safety assessment required, which will need to consider pedestrian and delivery volumes based on recorded data. • Detailed design of the proposal (extent of intervention dependent on results of safety assessment. Potential for low cost if only signage changes required, more significant if kerbline / carriageway amendments required.) • TRO amendment required. Potential that this may need to be referred to the Welsh Government due to the non-standard nature of the current TRO.	£100k if signage alterations and TRO amendment only required. If kerbline instatement is required, the cost is likely to be in the order of £4m-£5m.	Short term within the year if signage and TRO amendments (depending on TRO timescales). If significant kerbline and carriageway amendments are required, then longer term.	Disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, traders	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds	**Included**: Offers some increase in vehicle accessibility and the least contrary of the options when appraised against policy. Likely to be deliverable in the short term.
Reduced hours of pedestrianisation (11-3) – all vehicles allowed outside of this period.	• Increases access to town centre for vehicular borne shoppers potentially increasing footfall. • Short stay parking enables visitors to access shops within easy walking distance. • Improved access for blue badge holders directly into the town centre.	• Will result in an increase in risk as vehicles are reintroduced into a pedestrianised area likely changing the character from a Pedestrian Priority Street to an Informal Street for which kerb reinstatement will be required. • Likely to encourage vehicular traffic contrary to existing policy. • Potential for the route to be used as a through route as the parallel Nolton Street is southbound only for traffic. • Increase in vehicular traffic could make the town centre less attractive and reduce the potential for complimentary uses such as markets, or	• Safety assessment required, which will need to consider pedestrian and traffic volumes based on recorded data and predictions regarding diversionary traffic movements. • Detailed design of the proposal which is expected to require kerb reinstatement and carriageway construction. • TRO amendment required. Potential that this may need to be referred to the Welsh Government due to the non-standard nature of the current TRO.	In the order of £4m-£5m	Medium to Long	Disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, traders	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds	**Not included**: Not well aligned with current policy. Likely to be a high cost scheme, with funding and deliverability issues. Potential to monitor delivery of a light touch option and re-appraise if there is a material change in policy guidance, including the guidance on level surface schemes.

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion
		additional outdoor seating areas						
Bus access to town centre	• Improve access for bus users reducing distance to shops. • Encourages additional users to access town centre by bus.	• Increase in risk as large vehicles are introduced into a previously pedestrian area. • Increased risk at junctions. • Increased difficulty in accessing shops for some.	• Signage amendments. • Bus stop provision. • Detailed design with kerb reinstatement anticipated at bus stops. • TRO change.	In the order of £1m	1-2 years	Bus operators, traders, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted (crossing street where buses will travel)	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Local Transport Fund	**Not included**: Medium to long-term option. Relatively high-cost with potential safety implications. Benefits of increased bus access may not be sufficient in comparison to costs and disruption. The option would need agreement from bus operators and amendments to existing routes.
Improve bus facilities improvements	• Improve access to town centre. • Encourage access by bus.	• May not have a significant impact in isolation. Should form part of multi-modal measures.	• Review existing bus stop provision. • Design and implement improvements (subject to available space)	£50k-150k	Within 1 year	Bus operators	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Local Transport Fund	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, would help improve access to the town centre as part of multi-modal package, well aligned with policy.
Cycle access permitted to town centre	• Increases permeability of town centre for cyclists. • Increase number of cyclists in town centre, increasing footfall. • Supports takeaway / restaurant home delivery type arrangements.	• Increased risk, and perception of risk, due to conflict of pedestrians and cyclists.	• TRO change	£60k-100k	Within 1 year, dependent on successful TRO application	Cycling groups, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, likely to provide benefits including both footfall and with regard to takeaway / restaurant home delivery arrangements, well aligned with policy.
Active travel route improvements in town centre	• Allows for more direct active travel access to the town centre. • Places cycling in a primary position as a mode of transport. • Allows for cycle delivery market to expand, supporting home delivery type arrangements.	• Increase in risk and perception of risk, due to conflict of pedestrians and cyclists. • New infrastructure may create some confusion if not implemented carefully. • New infrastructure, that would delineate between pedestrians and cyclists space, may be difficult to enforce	• Route assessment to confirm the most appropriate active travel routes. • Level of service assessment to determine what impact improvements would have on traffic. • TRO change. • Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA).	£1-2m	1-2 years	Cycling groups, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, pedestrians.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106). BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Not included**: The benefits of segregated active travel facilities (e.g. cycle lanes) in a town centre environment are not well defined. Potential for confusion, inappropriate use and difficulty of enforcement.

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion
	• Further clarity provided between cycling and non-cycling locations.	and could be ignored with potential safety implications.	• Consultations under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations. • Cycle street treatments. • Signage amendments.					
Wider active travel connections – TfW ATNDR	• Allow for more direct active travel access to the town centre. • Creates a web of active travel links across the town • Places cycling in a primary position as a mode of transport. • Allows for cycle delivery market to expand, supporting home delivery type arrangements.	• Increase in risk and perception of risk, due to conflict of pedestrians and cyclists.	• Cycle street treatments. • Signage amendments. • Public communication. • TRO change. • EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.	£1-£2m	1-2 years	Cycling groups, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, pedestrians.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Not included**: Higher cost, medium to long term intervention. Wider active travel connections would be better considered as part of wider Bridgend active travel improvements (such as via TfW's access to stations work (ATNDR) or BCBC's ATNM work) rather than directly as a BTC scheme.
Wider active travel connections – ATNM	• Allow for more direct active travel access to the town centre. • Creates a web of active travel links across the town. • Places cycling in a primary position as a mode of transport. • Allows for cycle delivery market to expand, supporting home delivery type arrangements.	• Increase in risk and perception of risk, due to conflict of pedestrians and cyclists.	• Kerb realignment – footway widening to provide SUP • Delivery of cycle only route north of the town centre adjacent to the bus station. • Cycle street treatment. • Signage amendments. • Public communication. • Streets to be taken into consideration: Station Hill, Market Street, Park Street, Water Street. • TRO change. • EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.	£1-2m	1-2 years	Cycling groups, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, pedestrians.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	
Cycle storage / cycle hub	• Increased and improved cycle storage in the town centre. • Encourages active travel and reduces reliance on cars. • Decreased presence of cars in the town centre, reducing traffic congestion and car emissions.	• Space requirements. • Maintenance. • Vandalism of facilities. • Limited capacity. • User education: cyclists need to be aware of the available cycle storage options and how to use them effectively.	• Identify suitable locations (could be situated at bus and / or rail stations). • Possible kerb realignment and surfacing. • Installation of cycle parking / shelters. • TRO change.	£50-500k	6-9 months	Cycling groups.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Included**: Low cost / short-term option, directly applicable to BTC access, likely to provide benefits and would help overcome the lack of cycle storage issue highlighted in the town centre masterplan, well aligned with policy.

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion
	• Space efficiency: proper cycle storage provides a secure place to lock up bicycles, reducing the risk of theft and vandalism. • Reduced demand for parking spaces, freeing up room for more uses. • Improved mobility and connections to other modes of transportation.		• EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.					
Cycle hire scheme	• Increased cycling access to the town centre from a wider area. • Accessibility: bicycles readily accessible to a wider range of people. • Last-mile connectivity: convenient to get from train station to the town centre and other final destinations. • Reduced demand for parking. • Encourages active travel and reduces the demand for travel by car. • Flexibility: various docking stations make it a flexible mode of transportation for short trips or one-way journeys.	• Infrastructure requirements: network of docking stations. • Initial costs: upfront investment in bicycles, docking stations, management system. • Maintenance and repair costs. • Vandalism and theft. • User behaviour: proper parking at docking stations, careful use of bicycles. • Seasonal variability: during the winter months and during poor weather conditions, a cycle scheme car be less cost-effective due to a decrease in use, • Accessibility: not all individuals can use bicycles. • Safety concerns: lack of helmets and perceptions of risk for users.	• Review of suitable sites. • Installation of cycle parking / shelters. • Enter into agreement with a suitable provider. • Kerb realignment and surfacing. • TRO change. • EQIA • Consultation under Highways (Road Hump) Regulations.	£ will vary depending on the operating model chosen.	Medium to long	Cycling groups.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Not included**: Higher cost, medium to long term intervention. Would require the delivery of an area-wide scheme. Whilst there could be benefits to the town centre, it would be better considered as part of wider Bridgend active travel improvements rather than directly as a BTC scheme.
Wayfinding / town centre Signage	• Improve the ability of visitors to navigate the town centre. • Improve connectivity with the bus and rail stations. • Ensure suitable connectivity between pedestrianised part of the town centre and	• Visual clutter. • Sign vandalism and theft. • Maintenance burden. • Misinterpretation: poorly designed or unclear signage can lead to misinterpretation, potentially resulting in	• Development of wayfinding strategy. • Design work. • Installation of signage and totems.	£100k-750k + depending on complexity of scheme	1 – 2 years depending on complexity of scheme	Cycling groups, disability groups, particularly blind and partially sighted, pedestrians.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds, Active Transport Fund	**Included**: Short-term, potentially low-cost solution, that is likely to have benefits as part of a multi-modal package of measures. Well aligned with policy. Potential to connect with wayfinding schemes elsewhere in the

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion
	shopping centre, and the new college site to the southeast. • Enhanced user experience: help people navigate their surroundings with ease, reducing confusion and frustration. Contributes to a positive user experience. • Increased accessibility: improved signage can make spaces more accessible for individuals with disabilities, including those with visual or mobility impairments. • Well-planned wayfinding can lead to increased foot traffic, longer stays, and higher sales for businesses.	users going the wrong way or not reaching their intended destination.						county. Would ensure suitable connectivity between pedestrianised area and shopping centre, and the new college site to the southeast.
On-street blue badge provision	• Increased parking capacity for blue badge holders near the town centre. • Accessibility: ensures that people with disabilities can access and participate in town centre activities just like everyone else, promoting inclusivity and equal access to public spaces. • Independence for individuals with disabilities, reducing their reliance on others for transportation. • Safety: prevents individuals with disabilities from having to park in non-designated areas, where they might be at greater risk of accidents or injuries.	• Misuse or abuse of parking spaces by non-disabled individuals, preventing people with disabilities from accessing spaces they need. • Space allocation: reduction in the number of available parking spots for others, leading to increased congestion or difficulty finding parking.	• Identify parking locations on Derwen Road and The Rhiw (check if there is potential for perpendicular / echelon spaces).	£50k-500k	1 – 2 years	Blue badge holders. People with disabilities.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds	**Included**: Short-term, potentially low-cost solution, that is likely to have benefits as part of a multi-modal package of measures including as part of a car parking strategy. Would help improv blue badge holder access to the town centre.

Intervention	Advantages	Disadvantages	Actions Required	Indicative Cost	Indicative timescales	Stakeholders	Funding Options	Reason for inclusion or non-inclusion

Develop a car parking strategy for BTC	• Makes the existing car parking areas more attractive to support motorist access to the town centre.
	• Provide suitable signage, potentially electronic, so that motorists know how to access the car parks.
	• Enhance safety, security and convenience.
	• Increased capacity.
	• Environmental benefits: electric vehicle charging stations promote sustainability and reduce the car park's environmental impact.
		• Increased user fees.
		• Maintenance costs.
		• May encourage vehicular traffic.
		• Space allocation: reduction of number of parking spots for non-electric vehicles.
		• Misuse of parking spaces reserved for electric vehicles.
			• Produce a strategy. Any required works would be based on this but could include:
			  ○ Electrical connection.
			  ○ Lighting.
			  ○ Surface treatments.
			  ○ Markings.
				£500k +	1 -2 years depending on complexity of scheme	Car park users, electrical vehicle owners.	Levelling Up Shared Prosperity Fund, Developer contributions (section 106), BCBC Capital Funds	**Included**:
								It is recommended that a car parking strategy is developed for BTC that considers potential improvements such as signage, etc. in conjunction with the provision of additional on-street blue badge parking. This would help make better use of existing assets and would be suitable as part of a multi-modal package of interventions.

Shop mobility hub reinstatement	• Improved accessibility, increased independence for people with disabilities. • Enhanced shopping experience: enable people with disabilities and mobility challenges to navigate public spaces more easily. • Convenience for caregivers: rental of mobility equipment. • Promotes inclusivity.	• Space requirements for mobility equipment storage. • Limited availability of equipment / opening hours / location. • Rental fees. • Equipment will need to be maintained in good condition. • Dependence on external factors: layout, accessibility and footpath condition in the area will impact user experience. • Need for funding.	• Identify suitable location and premises. • Lease / construct premises. • Potential to subsidise costs.	£ will vary depending on the operating model chosen.	Medium	Blue badge holders. People with disabilities.	BCBC Capital Funds and / or BCBC Revenue Funds	**Not included**: ShopMobility is not operated by BCBC and there are external factors beyond the control of the council regarding reinstatement. There would be difficulties associated with the availability of suitable premises and potential associated costs of the scheme. The option does not form part of the current package but could be considered as a standalone medium to long term option to improve inclusive access.

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BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS ENHANCEMENTS

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

October 2024

RW-JL-24-4549-RSA1

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On behalf of:	Bridgend County Borough Council / Link Transport Planning

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION....3
2.0 ITEMS CONSIDERED....5
3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THIS STAGE 1 AUDIT....6
4.0 AUDIT TEAM STATEMENT....7

APPENDIX A Location Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report results from a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) carried out on the proposed town centre enhancements in Bridgend.

1.2 The highway proposals include: *The proposal is to amend the existing town centre traffic regulation orders to allow cycling within Bridgend Town Centre, through all existing pedestrianised areas, at all times. The proposal also includes an associated proposal to extend the hours during which loading vehicles may access these pedestrianised zones*. *

Option 1 – Reduce pedestrianisation hours from the current arrangement of 10am to 6pm to a shorter time period from 11am to 5pm. Retain access for deliveries / collections only outside of this period. **

The specific improvements consist of amended traffic regulation orders. No physical carriageway works are currently proposed. *

It is noted from the design drawings that proposals are made to allow movements of pedal cycles in the pedestrianized zone. Also the designation of some taxi, loading and parking areas are proposed to be changed or created.

*From RSA Brief. **From Bridgend Town Centre Access Study.

1.3 The RSA Team have not been made aware of any other RSA having been undertaken on these proposals.

1.4 The Stage 1 RSA was carried out at the request of the Sustrans.

1.5 The Road Safety Audit Brief was supplied by Sustrans. The overseeing organisation is Bridgend County Borough Council. The RSA Brief was accepted by the Audit Team as adequate to complete the RSA.

1.6 The Audit was carried out between 8th and 17th October 2024 by consultants working on behalf of The Safety Forum Limited. The Audit Team, which is established from The Safety Forum Ltd and independent of the project design team, has had no involvement with the project.

The Auditors were:

R Westhead – Team Leader (BSc (Hons), MSoRSA, RSA Certificate of Competency)

J Lowe – Team Member (BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIHT, MSoRSA etc)

1.7 The report has been prepared in accordance with General Principles and Scheme Governance General Information, GG 119, Road Safety Audit (Formerly HD 19/15).

1.8 The Audit consisted of a desktop study and a site visit. The site visit was carried out on 9th October 2024, between 11:10 and 12:15 hours by all members of the Audit Team together. The weather was dry and sunny, and the road surface was dry. The area was moderately busy with pedestrian movements. Some vehicles powered two wheelers and pedal cycles were observed within the town centre pedestrianized area.

1.9 Issues relating to the health & safety of operatives constructing, operating or maintaining the highway are not covered by Road Safety Audit. Only issues relating to the design and construction of facilities for highway maintenance that may potentially contribute to a Road Safety Matter are considered by the Road Safety Audit process.

Road Safety Audit is not a technical check that the design conforms to Standards and/or best practice guidance. Design Organisations are responsible for ensuring that their designs have been subjected to the appropriate design reviews (including, where applicable, Walking, Cycling & Horse Riding Assessment & Review) prior to Road Safety Audit.

Road Safety Audit is not a check that the scheme has been constructed in accordance with the design.

Whilst reference is made to certain design standards, where safety may be compromised by a reduction in standard, this report is not intended to provide a design check. The Auditors have only reported on matters that might have an adverse effect on road safety in the context of the chosen design. No attempt has been made to comment on the justification of the scheme or the appropriateness of the design. Consequently, the Auditors accept no responsibility for the design or construction of the scheme.

1.10 The recommendations in this report are aimed at addressing the road safety problems; however there may be other alternative acceptable ways to overcome a specific problem, when other practical issues are considered. The recommendations contained herein do not absolve the Designer of his/her responsibilities.

1.11 The Overseeing Organisation response to the RSA should be formally recorded and reported to the Designer and the RSA Team so that a record of the Audit process is contained in the *As Built* design pack to be provided and retained by the Overseeing Organisation on final completion.

1.12 All problems identified in this Road Safety Audit Report are indicated on a location plan in Appendix A

2.0 ITEMS CONSIDERED

2.1 The Road Safety Audit was undertaken on the scheme detailed in the following documentation.

Drawing No.	Rev	Title
-	-	Road Safety Audit Brief
DR CH 000006	P01.1	TOWN CENTRE AMENDMENTS
5221498-RP01-v4.1	4.1	BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS STUDY

2.2 No departure from standards or other information was submitted to the Audit Team.

2.3 Some limited collision data was provided with the brief. This did not provide any detailed information or exact locations. The information within the brief is provided in full below:

Bridgend County Borough Council has provided the latest available accident data from WG between 01/04/2019 – 31/03/2024 as follows:
1 – Slight 2019 – Quarella road junction with A4061.
2 – Slight 2019. – Bus station road, Approx Junction with Quarella Road.
3 – Slight 2019. – Bus station road, Approx Junction with Quarella Road.
4 – Slight 2020. – York Street.
5 – Slight 2022. – Caroline Street, East of Adare Street.
6 – Slight 2021. – Nolton Street Junction with The Rhiw.

2.4 No data has been provided regarding existing or proposed traffic / pedestrian / cycle movements.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THIS STAGE 1 AUDIT.

3.1 PROBLEM

LOCATION: Area wide within pedestrianised area.

SUMMARY: Possible increase in risk of conflicts between cycles and pedestrians.

It is recognised that despite the existing prohibition of cycle use in the pedestrianised area there is an existing level of pedal cycle activity ongoing, and indeed there is cycle infrastructure within the pedestrian area in the form of cycle stands.

However, permitting cycles to pass through the pedestrianised area may encourage further numbers and there is a concern that this could increase the level of risk of cycles colliding with pedestrians. This is likely to be of greater concern on some streets where pedestrians are more likely to be using the full width of streets. These may include Wyndham Street and Adare Street which are both dense in volume of retail units, and have more uniform surface character, unlike streets such as Market Street or Dunraven Place which have less retail frontage and have more distinct footway/carriageway definition.

It should be noted that there is no data presented to the RSA Team of existing history of cycle to pedestrian conflicts. Nor is there any data provided for existing or forecast cycle volumes in the pedestrian area. It is therefore difficult to quantify this risk.

RECOMMENDATION

Additional assessment should be made, based on survey data to establish the baseline current levels and forecast levels of cycle traffic and pedestrian flows, to ascertain what the change in level of risk of pedal cycle to pedestrian conflict might be by permitting cycle movements.

Use of an experimental TRO to allow cycling on a temporary basis (for say 6-12 months) may be useful to understand how the vehicle restricted area performs with cycling permitted.

Cycle traffic could be permitted only on those streets where pedestrian activity is less dense, i.e. those streets such as Market Street or Dunraven Place which have less retail frontage and have more distinct footway/carriageway definition.

Signs should be installed to indicate the shared use nature of streets in the pedestrianised area which allow cycle traffic.

4.0 AUDIT TEAM STATEMENT

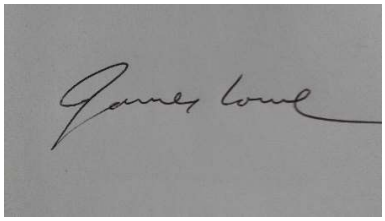
4.1 We certify that this audit has been carried out in accordance with GG 119.

AUDIT TEAM LEADER
Name: R Westhead
Position: Director
The Safety Forum Ltd
PO Box 831
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 9HT

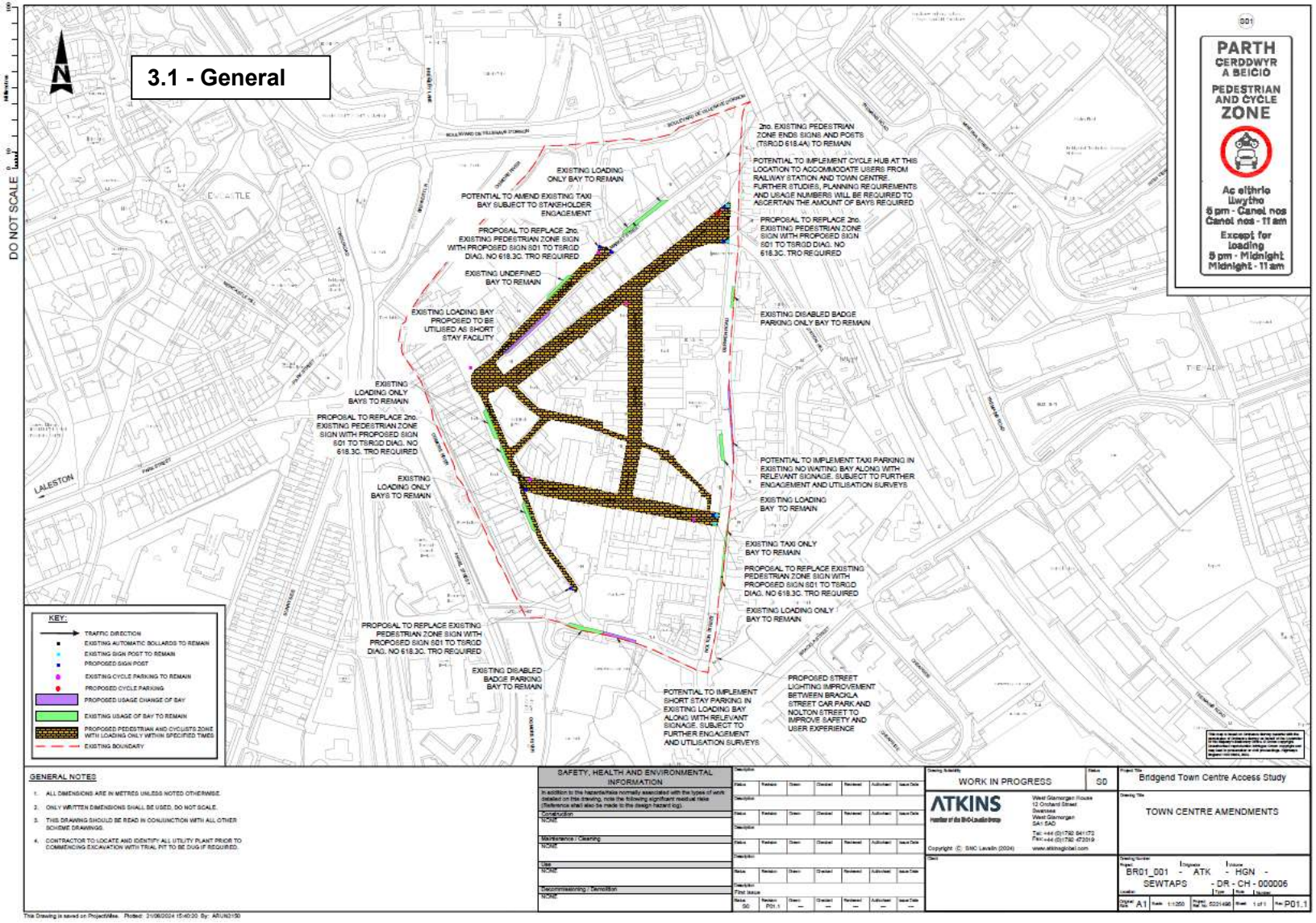
Signed: 

Date: 17 October 2024

AUDIT TEAM MEMBER
Name: J Lowe
Position: Senior Engineer
Sustrans

Signed: 
Date: 17 October 2024

APPENDIX A: LOCATION PLAN


3.1 - General
DO NOT SCALE
PARTH CERDDWYR A BEICIO
PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ZONE
Ac eithrio Llwythu
8 pm - Canol nos
Canol nos - 11 am
Except for loading
8 pm - Midnight
Midnight - 11 am
2no. EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ZONE ENDS SIGNS AND POSTS (TSRGD 618.4A) TO REMAIN
POTENTIAL TO IMPLEMENT CYCLE HUB AT THIS LOCATION TO ACCOMMODATE USERS FROM RAILWAY STATION AND TOWN CENTRE. FURTHER STUDIES, PLANNING REQUIREMENTS AND USAGE NUMBERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ASCERTAIN THE AMOUNT OF BAYS REQUIRED
EXISTING LOADING ONLY BAY TO REMAIN
POTENTIAL TO AMEND EXISTING TAXI BAY SUBJECT TO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
PROPOSAL TO REPLACE 2no. EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ZONE SIGN WITH PROPOSED SIGN 601 TO TSRGD DIAG. NO 618.3C. TRO REQUIRED
EXISTING UNDEFINED BAY TO REMAIN
EXISTING LOADING BAY PROPOSED TO BE UTILISED AS SHORT STAY FACILITY
EXISTING DISABLED BADGE PARKING ONLY BAY TO REMAIN
EXISTING LOADING ONLY BAYS TO REMAIN
PROPOSAL TO REPLACE 2no. EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ZONE SIGN WITH PROPOSED SIGN 601 TO TSRGD DIAG. NO 618.3C. TRO REQUIRED
EXISTING LOADING ONLY BAYS TO REMAIN
POTENTIAL TO IMPLEMENT TAXI PARKING IN EXISTING NO WAITING BAY ALONG WITH RELEVANT SIGNAGE. SUBJECT TO FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND UTILISATION SURVEYS
EXISTING LOADING BAY TO REMAIN
EXISTING TAXI ONLY BAY TO REMAIN
PROPOSAL TO REPLACE EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ZONE SIGN WITH PROPOSED SIGN 601 TO TSRGD DIAG. NO 618.3C. TRO REQUIRED
EXISTING LOADING ONLY BAY TO REMAIN
PROPOSAL TO REPLACE EXISTING PEDESTRIAN ZONE SIGN WITH PROPOSED SIGN 601 TO TSRGD DIAG. NO 618.3C. TRO REQUIRED
EXISTING DISABLED BADGE PARKING BAY TO REMAIN
POTENTIAL TO IMPLEMENT SHORT STAY PARKING IN EXISTING LOADING BAY ALONG WITH RELEVANT SIGNAGE. SUBJECT TO FURTHER ENGAGEMENT AND UTILISATION SURVEYS
PROPOSED STREET LIGHTING IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN BRACKLA STREET CAR PARK AND NOLTON STREET TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND USER EXPERIENCE
KEY:
TRAFFIC DIRECTION
EXISTING AUTOMATIC BOLLARDS TO REMAIN
EXISTING SIGN POST TO REMAIN
PROPOSED SIGN POST
EXISTING CYCLE PARKING TO REMAIN
PROPOSED CYCLE PARKING
PROPOSED USAGE CHANGE OF BAY
EXISTING USAGE OF BAY TO REMAIN
PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLISTS ZONE WITH LOADING ONLY WITHIN SPECIFIED TIMES
EXISTING BOUNDARY
GENERAL NOTES
1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN METRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.
2. ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS SHALL BE USED. DO NOT SCALE.
3. THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER SCHEME DRAWINGS.
4. CONTRACTOR TO LOCATE AND IDENTIFY ALL UTILITY PLANT PRIOR TO COMMENCING EXCAVATION WITH TRIAL PIT TO BE DUG IF REQUIRED.
SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
WORK IN PROGRESS
S0
ATKINS
Bridgend Town Centre Access Study
TOWN CENTRE AMENDMENTS
BR01_001 - ATK - HGN - SEWTAPS - DR - CH - 000006
A1
P01.1

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BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS SURVEY

CONSULTATION REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

www.link-tp.com

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Document Control

Client	Bridgend County Borough Council
Project Name	Bridgend Town Centre Access Consultancy Service
Document Title	Consultancy Report
Document Reference	LTP/2425/CR/01

Document History

Version	Purpose	Originator	Checker	Authoriser	Date
1	Draft	AP	TM	JC	June 2025
2	Final	AP	TM	JC	August 2025
3	Final	JC	JC	JC	September 2025

Digital Viewing: *This report contains detailed maps that are best viewed in digital format to appreciate their full detail and clarity. We recommend accessing and reviewing this document electronically to ensure optimal visibility of these intricate cartographic elements. The digital version allows for zooming and panning features that enhance the readability and interpretation of the maps, which might not be as effective in a printed version.*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 4

2. ENGAGEMENT METHODS 6

3. QUESTION AND ANALYSIS 9

4. GROUPS WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS 25

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION 32

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SURVEY FORM

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Bridgend County Borough Council commissioned Link Transport Planning to support the consultation process for proposed changes to access within Bridgend Town Centre. The project was delivered in partnership with Sustrans Cymru and the Council's Regeneration and Public Engagement teams, ensuring a collaborative and inclusive approach throughout.

1.1.2 The consultation was carried out over four weeks, from 4 April to 2 May 2025. A comprehensive marketing strategy was employed to raise awareness and encourage public participation. Various communication channels were used to reach a broad audience and promote engagement.

1.1.3 The public survey was made available online via the consultation page on the Council's website. Paper copies could be requested directly from the project team. All versions of the survey were offered in both English and Welsh (**Appendix A**).

1.1.4 The consultation focused on multi-modal access to Bridgend Town Centre, following recommendations from a prior study undertaken by Atkins Realis.

1.1.5 The consultation sought public feedback on the following proposed changes to town centre access:

- **Extension of loading and unloading hours** within pedestrianised areas to better support local businesses and their customers.
- **Permitting cycling within pedestrian zones**, accompanied by the introduction of improved cycle parking facilities.
- **Enhancement of disabled parking provision** through the repurposing of underused areas along Derwen Road.

1.1.6 Please note that at the request of Bridgend County Borough Council, an additional survey question was included to assess public views on allowing all traffic access through Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. Although not part of the recommendations from the Atkins Realis study, which formed the basis of the consultation, the question was added in response to stakeholder feedback to inform future decision-making.

1.1.7 A visual summary of these proposed changes, which was included in the public consultation, is presented in Figure 1.

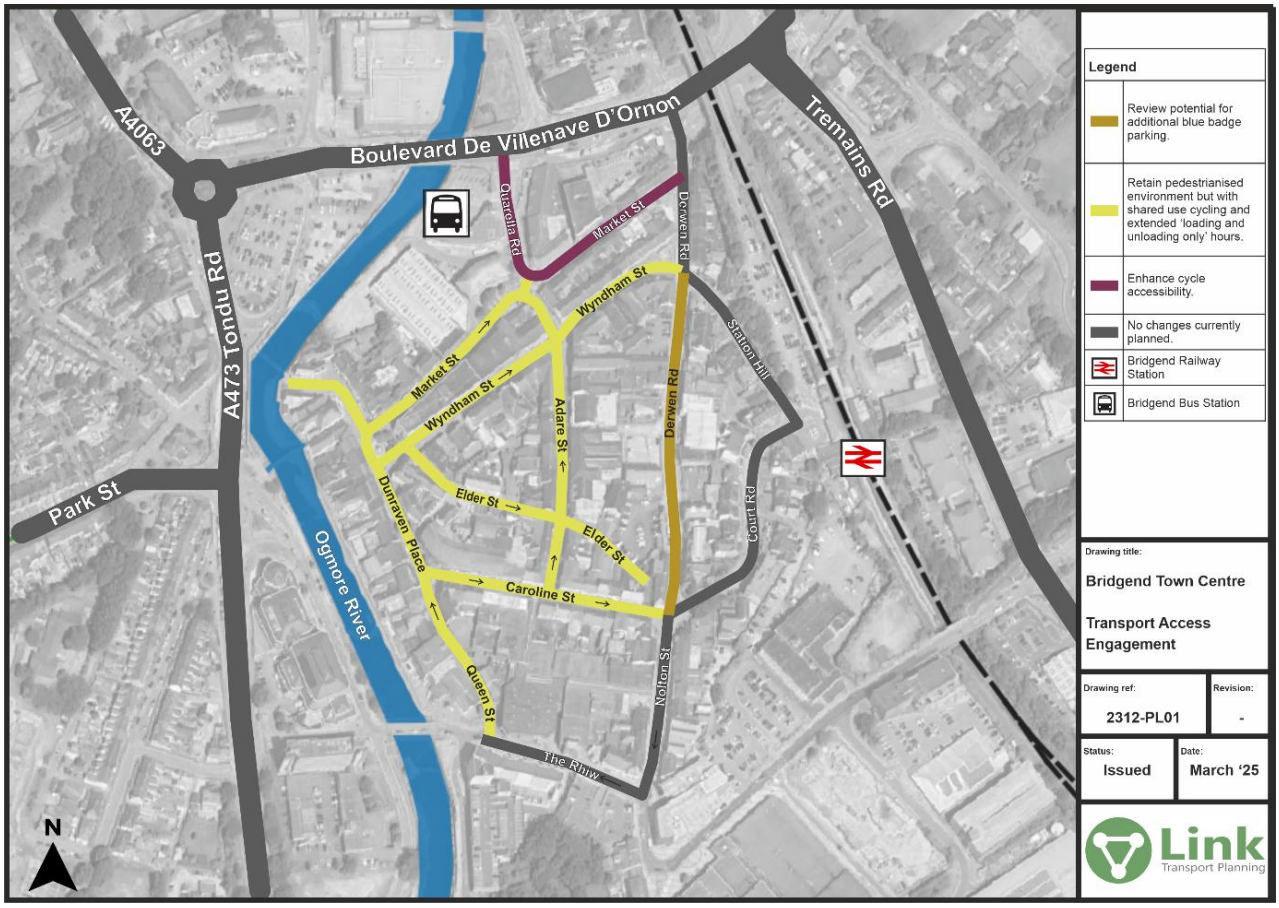


Figure 1: Overview plan for Bridgend Town Centre.

1.1.8 The survey included 28 questions, none of which were mandatory, with the participants given flexibility to skip questions they did not want to answer. Additionally, a standard set of equality monitoring questions was included, aligning with best practice for all public-facing surveys.

1.2 Equality Impact Assessment

1.2.1 A preliminary Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed before the consultation period which confirmed a requirement for a full EqIA. The full EqIA has been drafted and is maintained as a live project document. It will be updated to include the public consultation results.

1.3 Purpose

1.3.1 This consultation report, along with all supporting data, will be submitted to Bridgend County Borough Council to inform future decision-making.

2. ENGAGEMENT METHODS

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter outlines all ways the project team engaged with stakeholders throughout the four-week consultation period (4 April to 2 May 2025). It also includes the response rate of these different engagement methods.

2.2 Online Survey

2.2.1 The project team developed an online survey, which was hosted on Bridgend Council's engagement platform. The online survey gave respondents the ability to respond on a variety of devices, including laptops and smartphones, and was made available in English and Welsh.

2.2.2 The surveys were accessible by visiting the council's website link directly or by following the advertisement on the various social media platforms.

2.2.3 A qualitative section within the survey allowed respondents to suggest any alternative considerations residents would like the council and consultants to review.

2.3 Key Stakeholder Groups

2.3.1 Details of the consultation were sent to several key stakeholder groups, which are included in Table 1 below.

2.3.2 Three online consultation sessions were organised and offered to stakeholders during the first week of May 2025. However, multiple organisations agreed to share the consultation details within their networks as they were unable to participate directly.

Stakeholder	Category	Status
Future Generations Officer	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Children's Commissioner	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Council for Voluntary Youth Work	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Welsh Youth Parliament	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Children in Wales	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Older People's Commissioner	National Groups	Responded – Unable to participate
Age Cymru	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Disability Wales	National Groups	Contacted – No response
RNIB	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Welsh Guide Dogs	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Leonard Cheshire	National Groups	Responded – Unable to participate
Diverse Cymru	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Ramblers	National Groups	Responded – Unable to participate
Living Streets Cymru	National Groups	Contacted – No response
Bridgend Youth Service	Young People	Contacted – No response
Bridgend Youth Development	Young People	Contacted – No response
Bridgend Youth Support	Young People	Contacted – No response
Bridgend Youth Council	Young People	Responded – Unable to participate
Bridgend Youth Mayor	Young People	Contacted – No response

BAVO (Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations)	Young People	Contacted – No response
Family Information Services	Young People	Contacted – No response
Age Cymru West Glamorgan	65+	Contacted – No response
Ageing Well in Bridgend	65+	Contacted – No response
U3A Bridgend	65+	Contacted – No response
Age Cymru Bridgend SHOUT	65+	Contacted – No response
African Community Centre	Race	Contacted – No response
Race Council Cymru	Race	Responded – Unable to participate
Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales	Race	Contacted – No response
WI Glamorgan	Gender	Contacted – No response
Merched Y Waur Glamorgan	Gender	Contacted – No response
People First Bridgend	Learning Disability	Contacted – No response
Age Connects Morgannwg	65+	Contacted – No response
Older People's Commissioner for Wales	65+	Contacted – No response
Stroke Association Bridgend	Disability	Contacted – No response
The National Autistic Society's Bridgend and District Branch	Disability	Contacted – No response
All Wales Forum Parents and Carers	Learning Disability	Contacted – No response
Wales Council for Deaf People	Disability	Contacted – No response
Care and Repair Bridgend	65+	Contacted – No response
Bridgend and District Visual Impairment Society	Disability (Blind)	Contacted – No response

Table 1: Full list of Stakeholders contacted by Sustrans

2.4 Social Media

2.4.1 Bridgend County Borough Council actively promoted the consultation through a range of digital platforms to maximise reach and public engagement.

2.4.2 The consultation was publicised on three social media channels: Facebook, 'X' (formerly Twitter), and Bluesky. The first social media post was published on 'X' on 9 April 2025, with the final post shared on 30 April 2025. In total, the Council issued:

- 6 posts on 'X'
- 1 post on Facebook
- 1 post on Bluesky

2.4.3 In addition to social media activity, the consultation received further exposure via the Council's e-newsletter, with announcements published on 1 April and 10 April 2025. There were also non-council media reports that generated significant discussion and awareness.

2.5 Leaflet Drop

2.5.1 On 15th April, over 400 leaflets were distributed (English and Welsh) throughout Bridgend town centre to various commercial establishments to increase awareness and encourage responses to the survey. The leaflets contained information about both in-person drop-in sessions and online consultation links.

2.6 Community Engagement

2.6.1 Two public engagement sessions were held as part of the consultation process. Both events took place at The Bridge, 46-48 Dunraven Place, Bridgend. The first session was held on 23rd April from 13:00 to 19:00, and the second session on 29th April from 09:00 to 16:00.

2.7 Response Rate

2.7.1 The recorded response rates were as follows:

- 756 responses to the consultation were received in total.
    - Of the responses received, there were 754 online submissions
    - One paper version of the survey was returned at the in-person event.
    - One completed survey form was received via email.
- No comments were received by telephone call.
- The in-person engagement events attracted 17 individuals.

3. QUESTION AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The consultation contained 28 questions related to the Bridgend Town Centre Access proposals. All questions were optional, so participants could choose to answer all or some of the questions.

3.1.2 For qualitative questions, coding was introduced. This required a review of all open-ended survey responses to identify prevailing themes. These themes were then organised into clear categories, each associated with specific keywords and phrases. Using these keywords, responses were sorted into their relevant groups.

3.1.3 This section details the responses to the survey (all survey types).

3.2 Support for Increased Loading/Unloading Hours

3.2.1 Figure 2 below shows responses from part 1, section A, question 1. This question had 748 respondents.

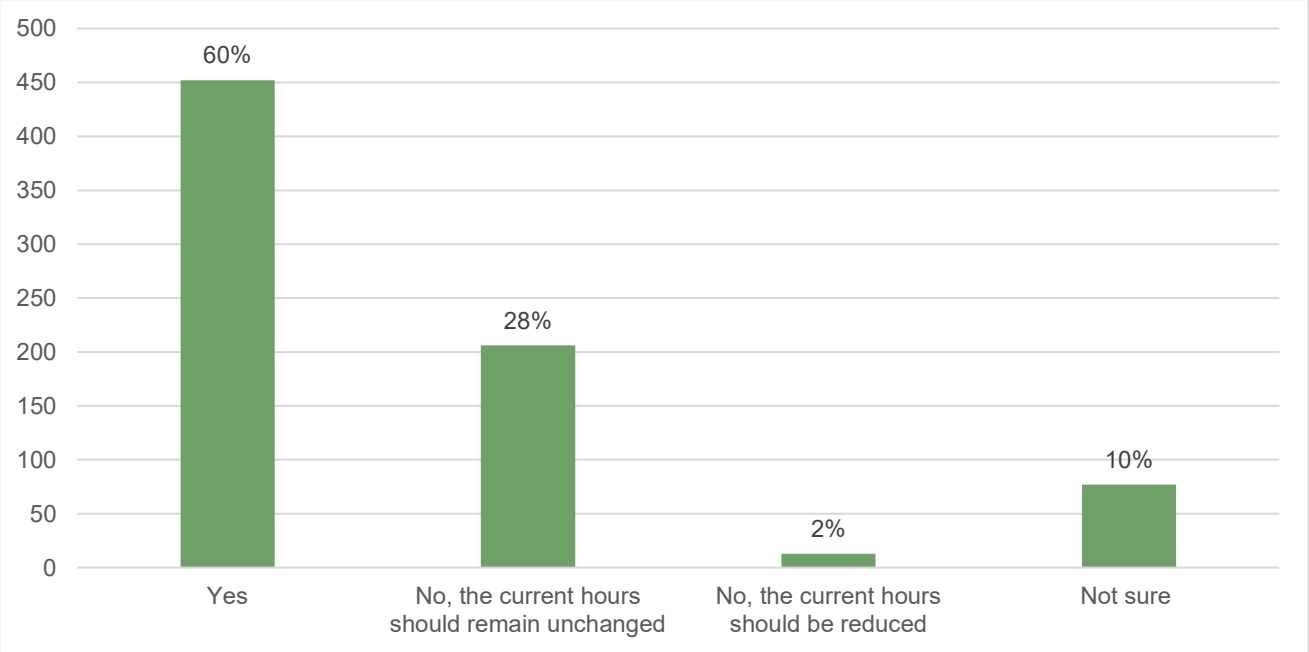


Figure 2: Do you support increasing the hours available for loading and unloading in Bridgend Town Centre?

3.2.2 Figure 2 shows 60% of respondents stated that they support an increase in loading and unloading hours in Bridgend Town Centre. 28% of respondents stated that they support the hours remaining unchanged.

3.2.3 Table 2 below shows responses from part 1, section A, follow-up to question 1. This question had 353 respondents.

Code	Response Count	Percentage	Description
0	47	6%	Ambiguous/Other
1	130	17%	Unrestricted access
2	137	18%	Extended access
3	26	4%	Trader support
4	1	0%	Shopper convenience
5	10	1%	No change
6	2	0%	Accessibility balance
No code	403	54%	Blank

Table 2: What loading and unloading hours do you think should be in place and why?

3.2.4 Table 2 shows that the majority of stakeholders would like loading and unloading hours to be increased in the town centre.

3.3 Support for Queen St/Dunraven Pl/Market Street being more accessible to all traffic

3.3.1 Figure 3 below shows responses from part 1, section B, question 1. This question had 749 respondents.

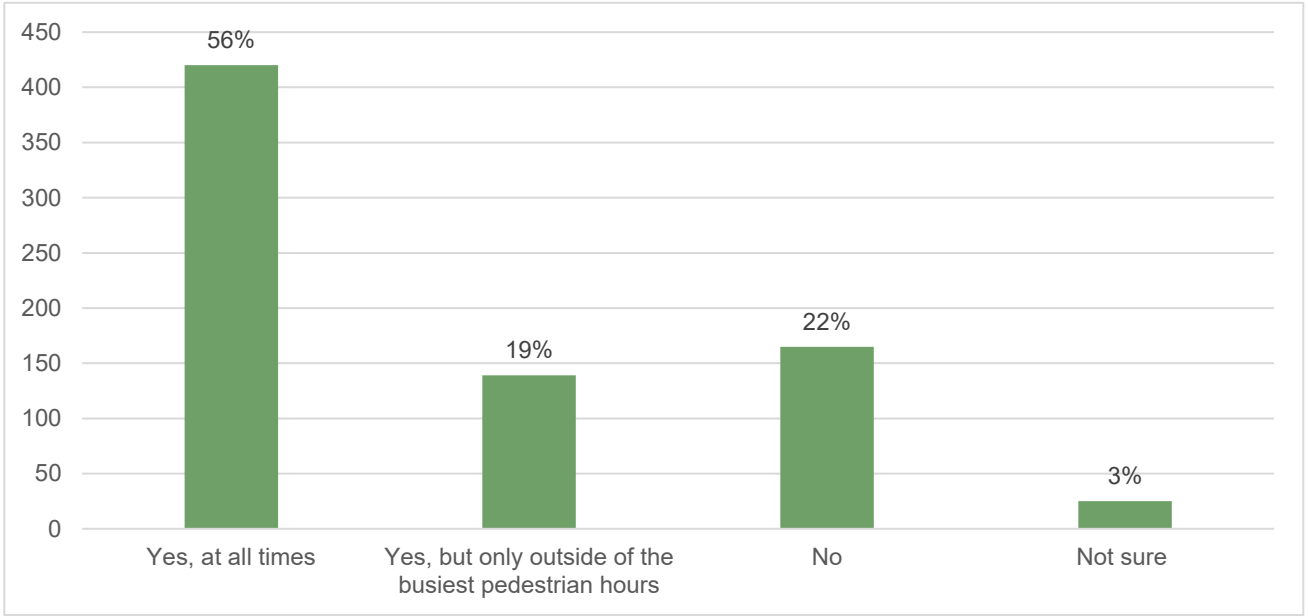


Figure 3: Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?

3.3.2 Figure 3 shows 56% of respondents stated they think that Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street should be more accessible to all traffic at all times. 19% of respondents stated that these streets should be more accessible, but only outside of busy pedestrian hours. 22% of respondents stated that these streets should not be more accessible to all traffic.

3.3.3 Table 3 below shows responses from part 1, section B, follow-up to question 1. This question had 377 respondents.

Code	Response Count	Percentage	Description
0	3	0%	Ambiguous/Other
1	156	21%	Pro-pedestrianisation
2	13	2%	Traffic safety concern
3	71	9%	Accessibility/Mobility concerns
4	123	16%	Critical of pedestrianisation
5	11	2%	Traffic enforcement/Management
No code	379	50%	Blank

Table 3: What is your opinion on all traffic access to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street?

3.3.4 As shown in Table 3, stakeholder opinions regarding traffic access to these streets were divided.

3.4 Support for Cycling through the Town Centre

3.4.1 Figure 4 below shows responses from part 1, section C, question 1. This question had 750 respondents.

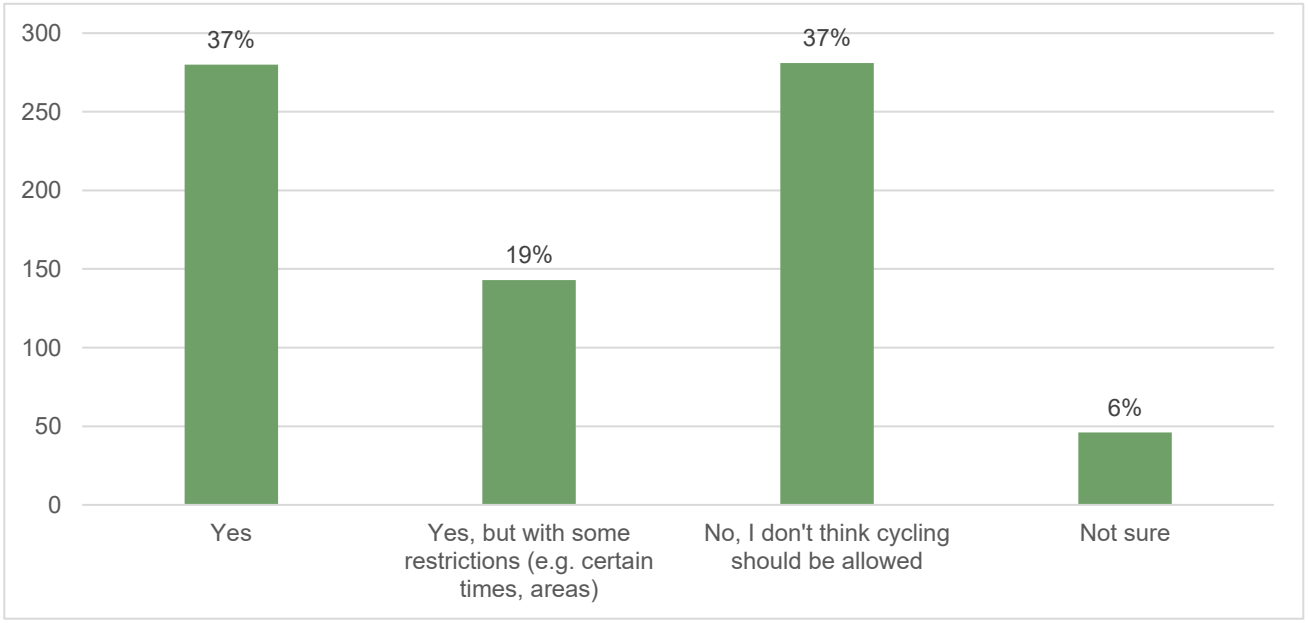


Figure 4: Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

3.4.2 Figure 4 shows 37% of respondents believe that cycling should be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours and a further 19% of respondents stated that cycling should be allowed in the town centre, but with some restrictions. However, 37% of respondents also stated that cycling should not be allowed in the town centre.

3.4.3 Table 4 below shows responses from part 1, section C, follow-up to question 1. This question had 506 respondents.

Code	Response Count	Percentage	Description
1	387	51%	Safety/Behaviour concerns
2	31	4%	Disabled/Vulnerability concerns
3	57	8%	Positive support for cycling
4	27	4%	Infrastructure needs
5	4	0%	Misuse/Abuse fears
No code	250	33%	Blank

Table 4: What is your opinion on cycling in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

3.4.4 As indicated in Table 4 a high proportion of stakeholders have concerns that permitting cyclists into the town centre could result in safety concerns and behavioural problems.

3.5 Support for Improved Cycle Parking in the Town Centre

3.5.1 Figure 5 below shows responses from part 1, section C, question 2. This question had 746 respondents.

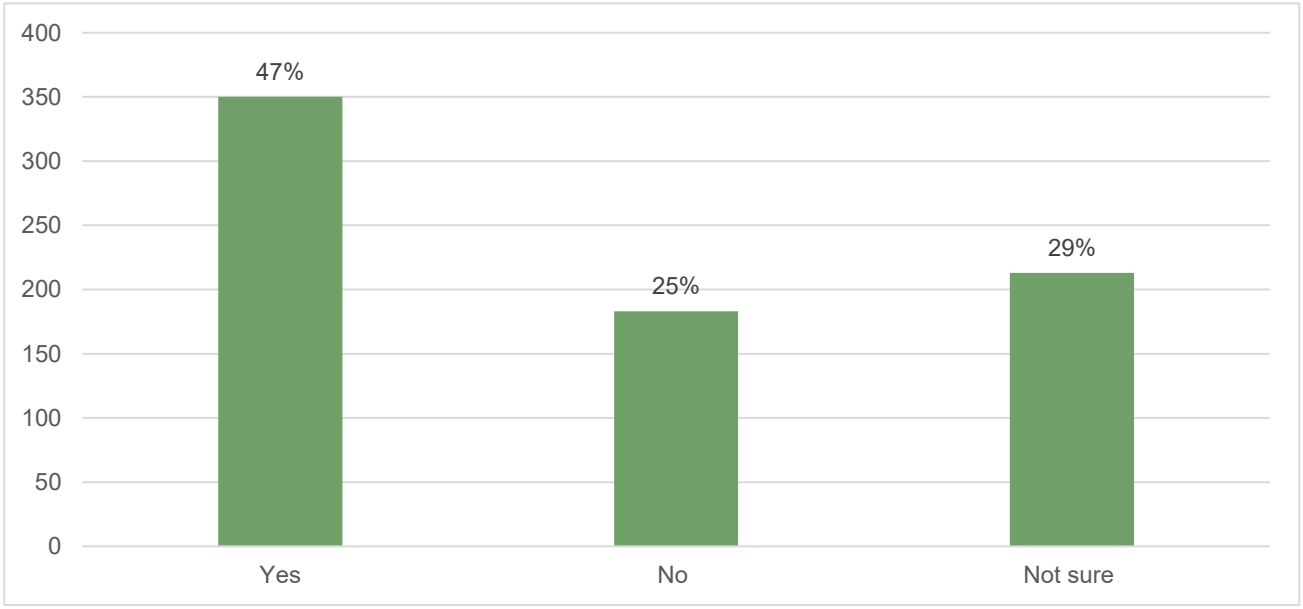


Figure 5: Do you think there should be improved cycle parking in the town centre?

3.5.2 Figure 5 shows that 47% of respondents stated that there should be improved cycle parking in Bridgend town centre. 25% of respondents stated that there should not be improved cycle parking in the town centre. There were also 29% of respondents who stated 'Not sure' to this question.

3.5.3 Table 5 below shows responses from part 1, section C, follow-up to question 2. This question had 236 respondents.

Code	Response Count	Percentage	Description
0	41	6%	Ambiguous/Other
1	6	1%	More cycle parking is needed
2	113	15%	Need secure/Covered parking facilities
3	62	8%	Suggested specific locations
4	14	1%	Current cycle parking is sufficient
No code	520	69%	Blank

Table 5: What is your opinion on improved cycling parking in Bridgend Town Centre?

3.5.4 Table 5 demonstrates that there is support for the provision of additional secure and sheltered cycle parking facilities within the town centre.

3.6 Support for the creation of more disabled parking in place of taxi or loading bays

3.6.1 Figure 6 below shows responses from part 1, section D, question 1. This question had 748 respondents.

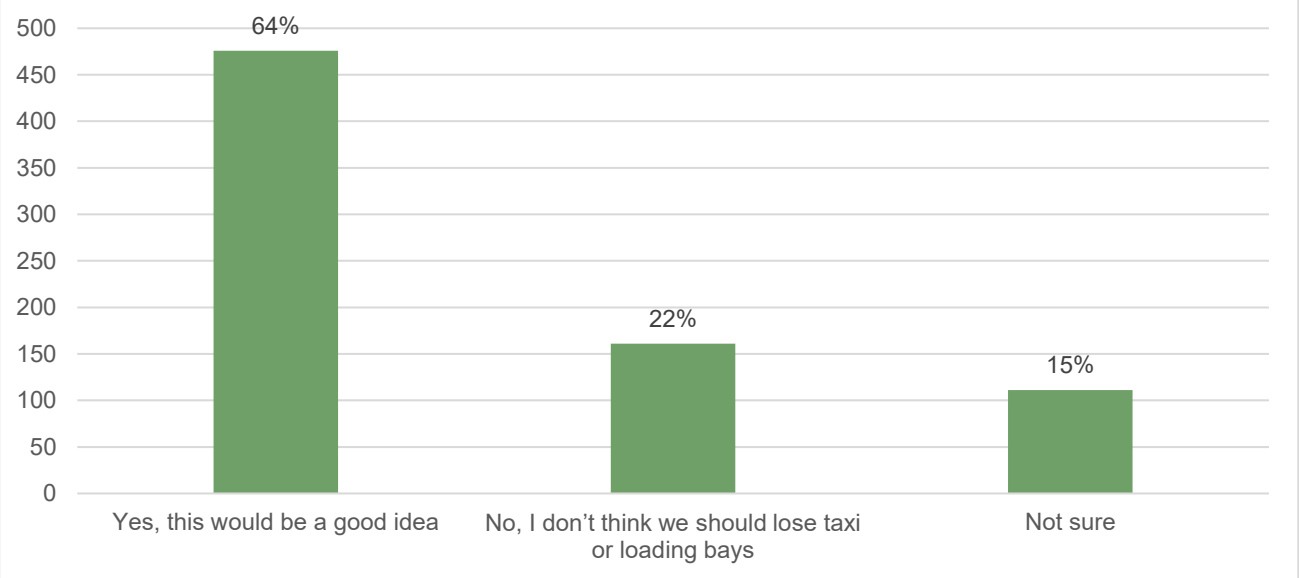


Figure 6: Do you think that we should create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used?

3.6.2 Figure 6 shows that 64% of respondents stated that it would be a good idea to create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used. 22% of respondents stated that they do not think taxi and loading bays should be lost to create more disabled parking spaces. There were also 15% of respondents who answered 'Not sure' to this question.

3.6.3 Table 6 below shows responses from part 1, section D, follow up to question 1. This question had 748 respondents.

Code	Response Count	Percentage	Description
0	3	0%	Ambiguous/Other
1	476	61%	Support creating blue badge spaces in taxi and loading bays
2	272	35%	Oppose replacing taxi and loading bays
3	13	2%	Conditional/Mixed views
4	4	1%	Current disabled parking is sufficient
No code	8	1%	Blank

Table 6: What is your opinion on creating more disabled parking in place of taxi and loading bays in Bridgend Town Centre?

3.6.4 As indicated in Table 6, the majority of respondents support converting currently under-utilised taxi and loading bays into Blue Badge parking spaces.

3.7 Insights on Ancillary Data

3.7.1 Figure 7 below shows responses from section D, question 2. This question had 744 respondents.

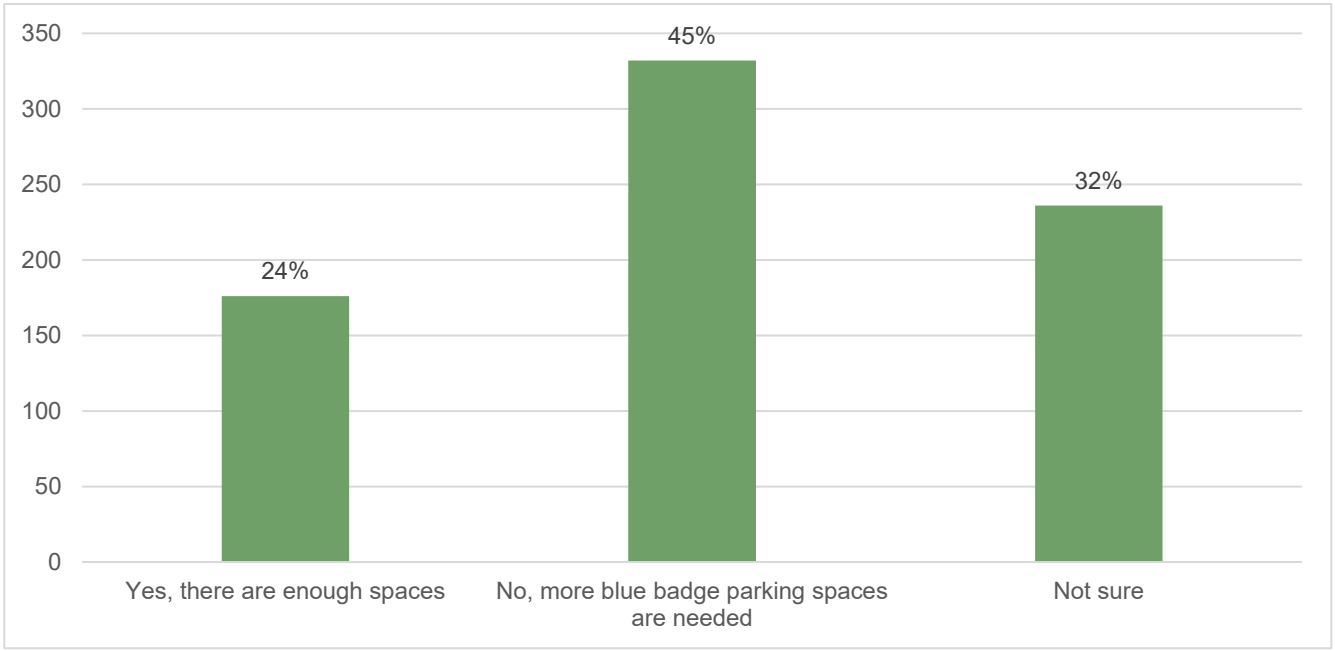


Figure 7: Thinking more widely, do you think there is enough disabled parking available to allow access to the town centre?

3.7.2 Figure 7 shows that 45% of respondents stated that more blue badge parking spaces are needed in Bridgend town centre, 32% of respondents answered 'Not sure' to this question. There are also 24% of respondents who believe there are enough blue badge parking spaces in the town centre.

3.7.3 Figure 8 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 1.

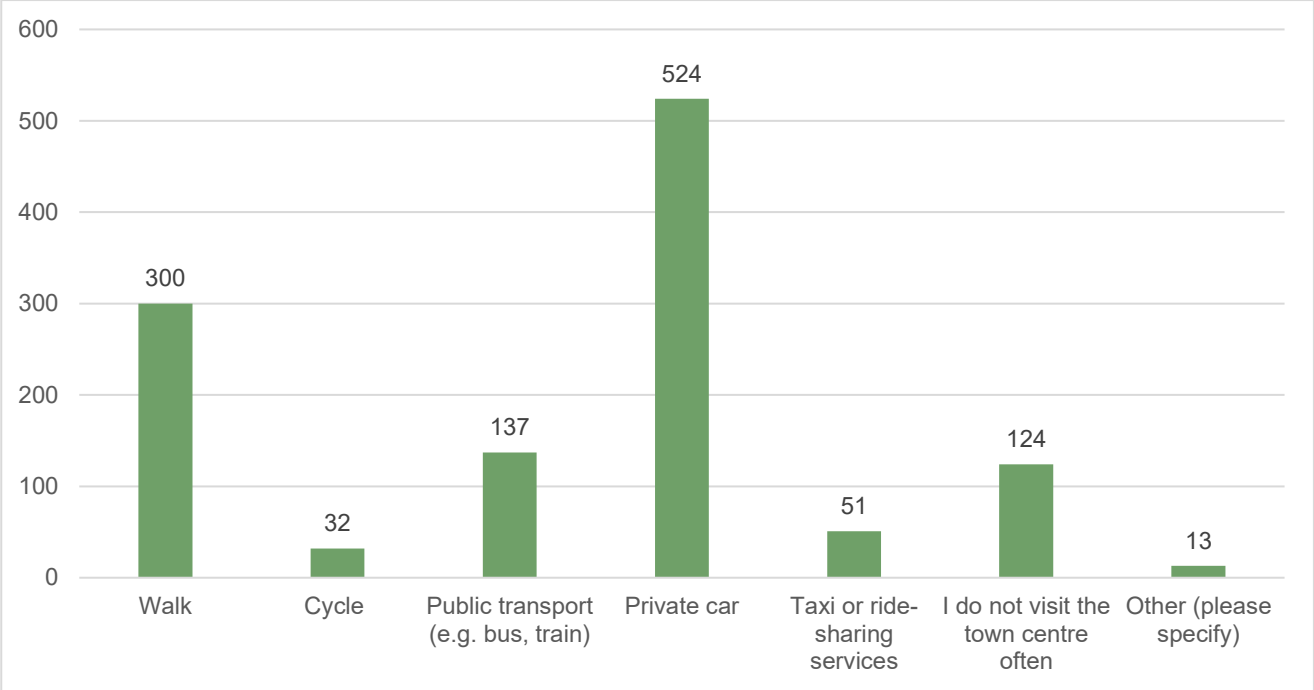


Figure 8: How do you usually travel to the town centre? (select all that apply)

3.7.4 Figure 8 shows that the most popular mode of transport for travel to the town centre is via private car, followed by walking. Cycling, taxi, or ride-sharing are amongst the least popular modes of transport.

3.7.5 Figure 9 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 2. This question had 751 respondents.

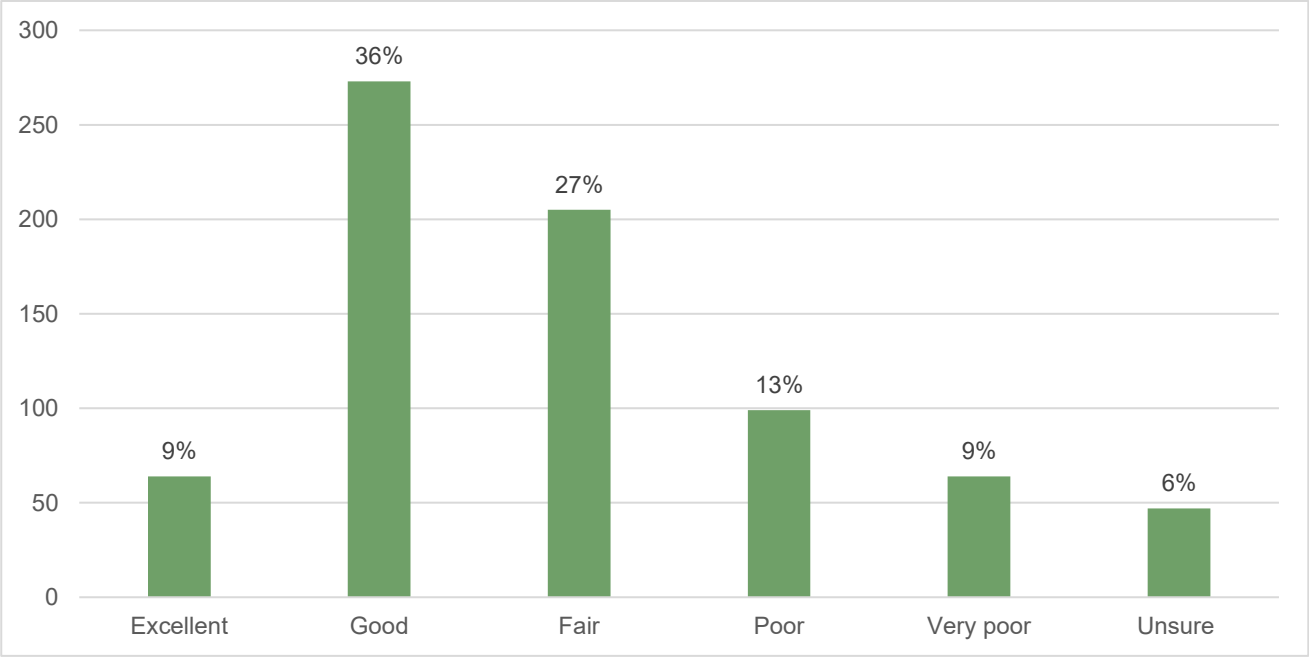


Figure 9: How would you rate the ease of town centre access for walking, cycling or public transport?

3.7.6 Figure 9 shows 36% of respondents stated that there is 'good' access to the town centre via walking, cycling and public transport, 27% of respondents stated that there is 'fair' access to the town centre.

3.7.7 Figure 10 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 3. This question had 753 respondents.

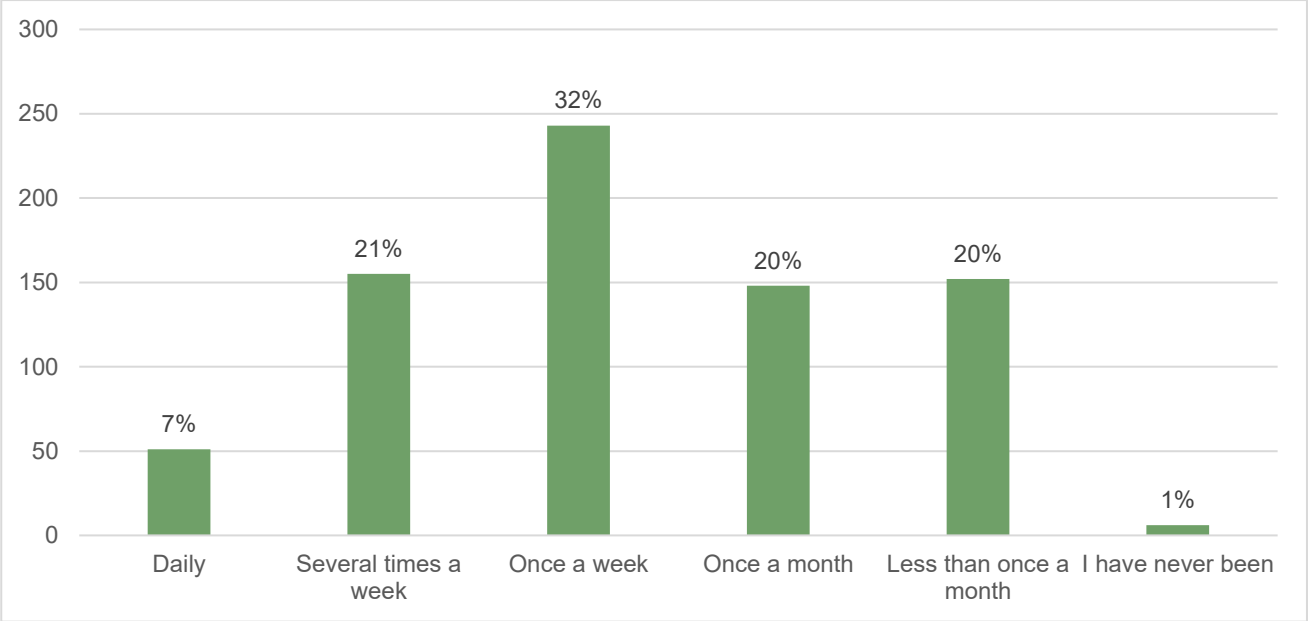


Figure 10: How often do you visit the town centre?

3.7.8 Figure 10 shows that 32% of respondents visit the town centre once a week, 21% visit several times a week, 20% visit less than once a month and 20% visit once a month.

3.7.9 Figure 11 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 4.

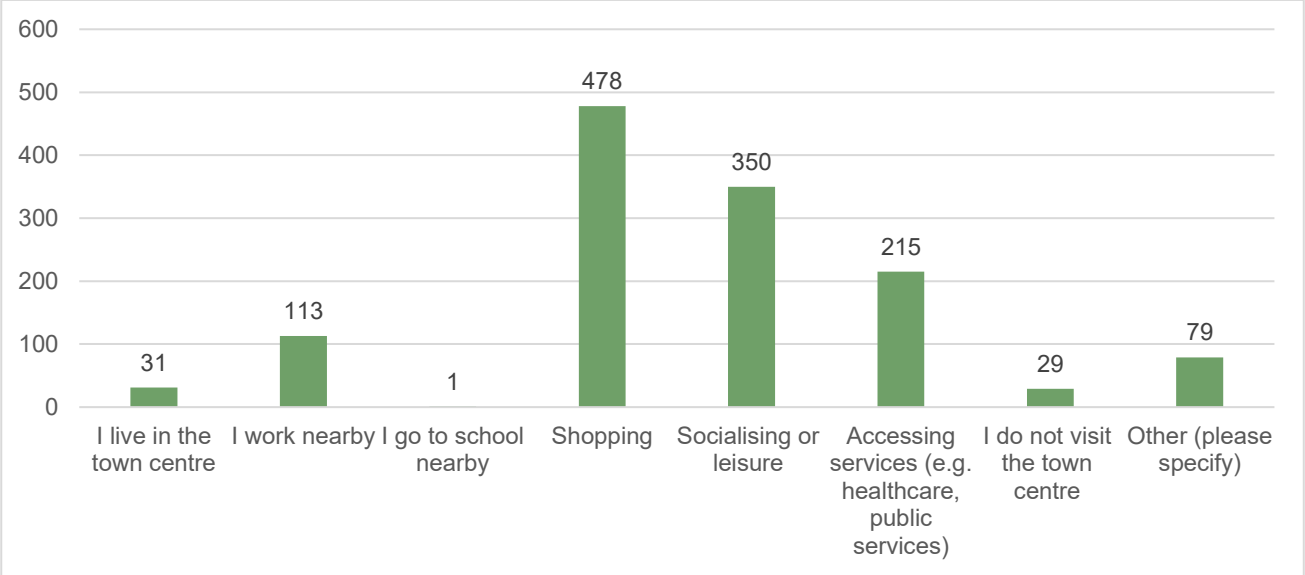


Figure 11: What is the main reason for your visits to the town centre? (select all that apply)

3.7.10 Figure 11 shows that the most popular reasons to visit the town centre are shopping, socialising or leisure and also access to services. Some of the least popular reasons for visiting are living in the town centre, school nearby and working nearby.

3.7.11 Figure 12 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 5.

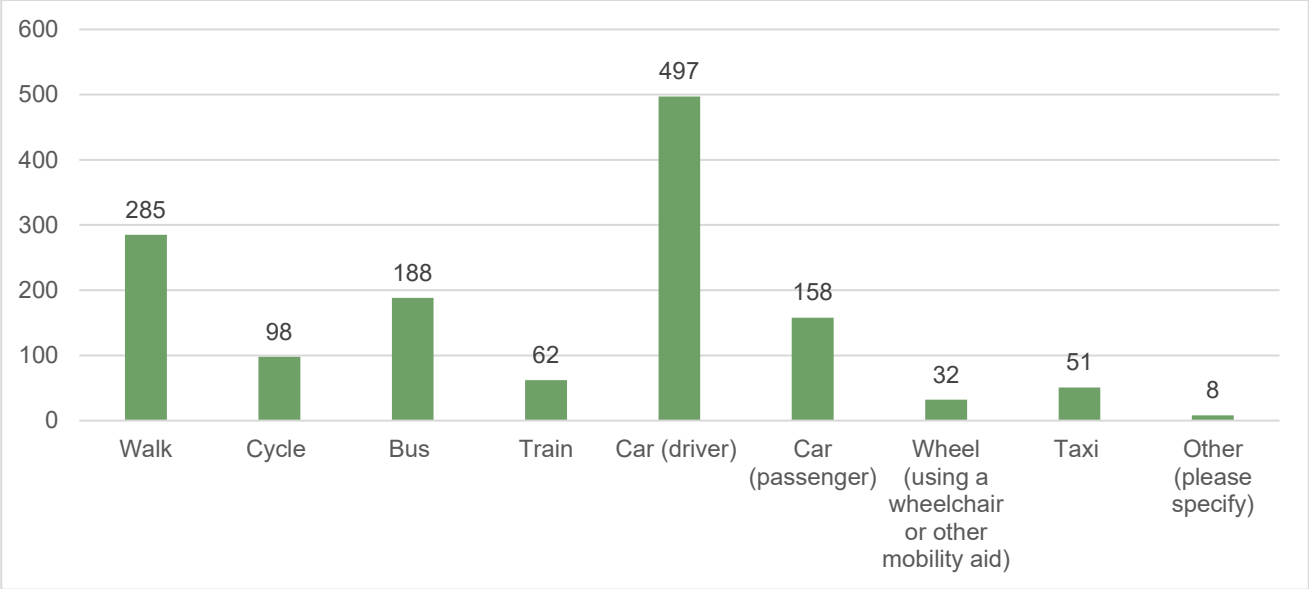


Figure 12: How would you like to travel to Bridgend Town Centre?

3.7.12 Figure 12 shows that the most popular way respondents would like to travel to the town centre is by car, followed closely by walking and bus.

3.7.13 Figure 13 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 6.

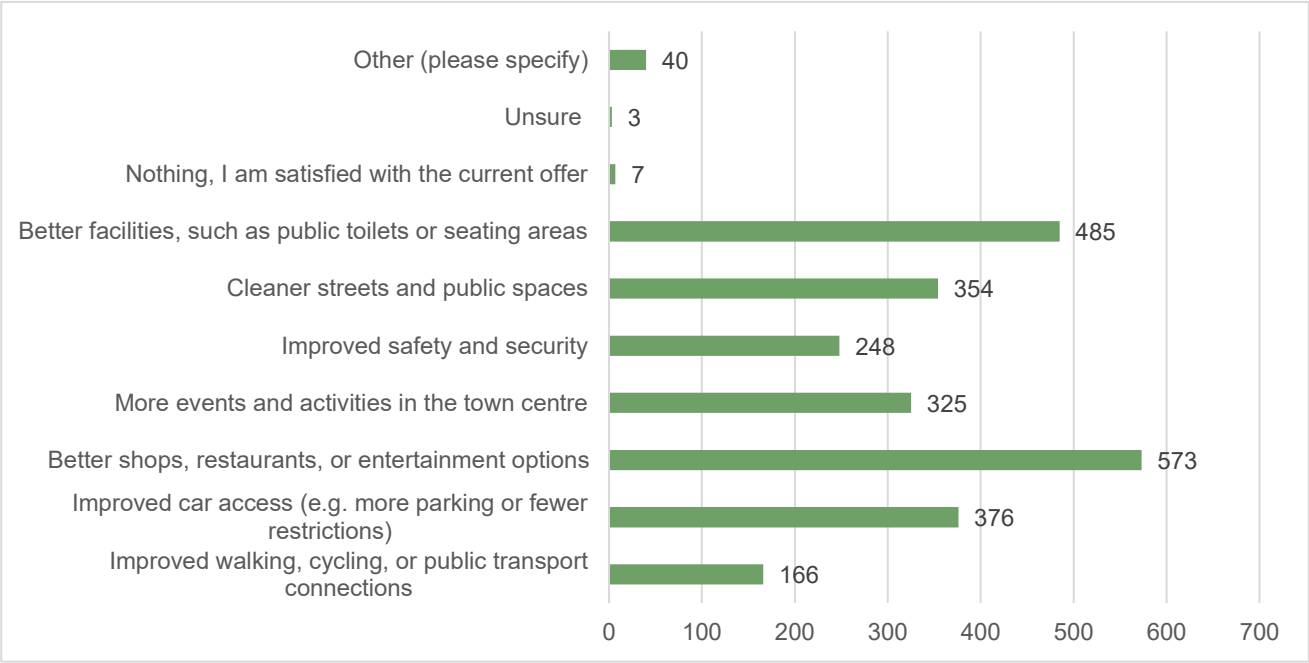


Figure 13: What would encourage you to visit Bridgend Town Centre more often? (select all that apply)

3.7.14 As shown in Figure 13, respondents believe that better shops, restaurants, or entertainment options as well as better facilities, like toilets and seating areas and cleaner streets and public spaces, will encourage respondents to visit the town centre more often.

3.8 Equalities Monitoring Questions

3.8.1 Figure 14 below shows responses from part 2, section A, question 7. This question had 787 respondents[1].

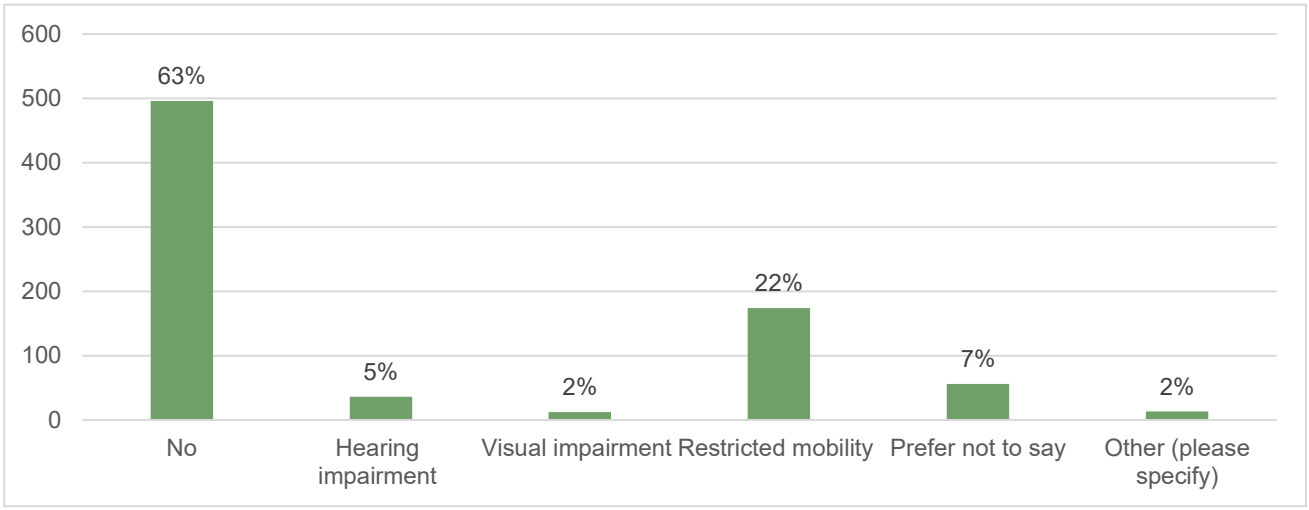


Figure 14: Do you have a health issue that affects your mobility?

3.8.2 Figure 14 shows that 63% of respondents do not have a health issue that affects their mobility, 22% of respondents have restricted mobility, 5% of respondents have an audio impairment and 2% of respondents are visually impaired.

3.8.3 This question had 507 respondents.

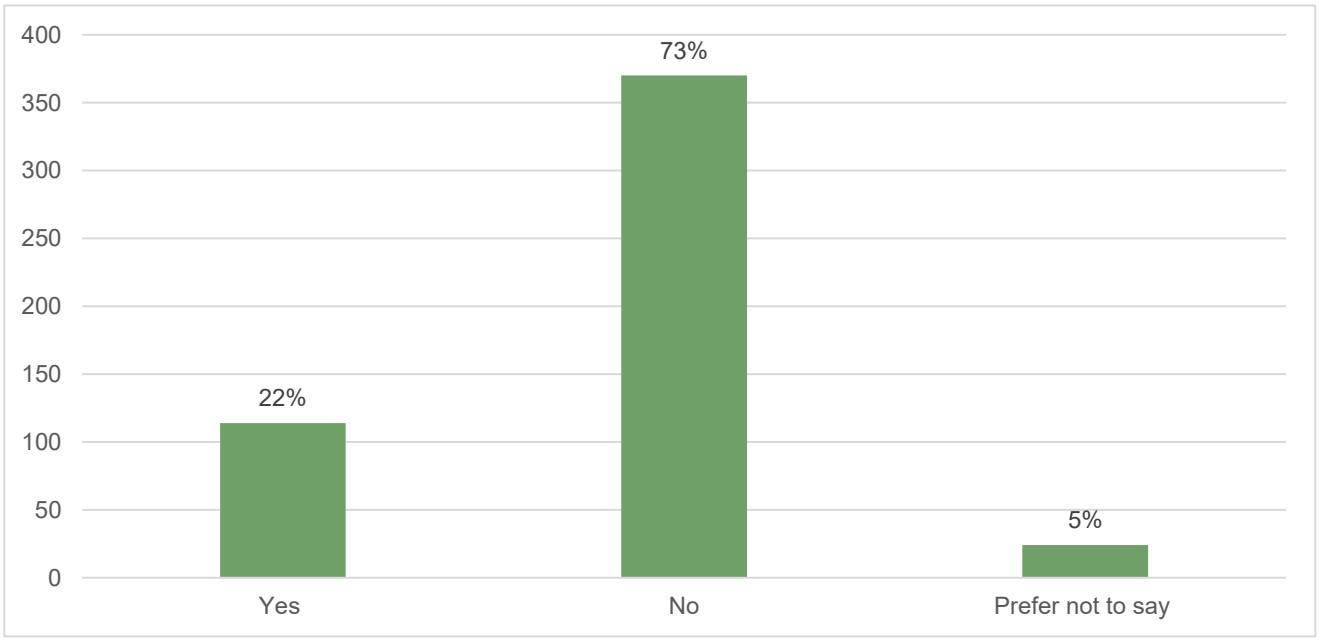


Figure 15: Do you consider yourself disabled?

[1] *Note that this is higher ~~that~~than the total survey completions due to this question allowing multiple responses.answers*

3.8.4 Figure 15 shows that 73% of respondents stated that they are not disabled and 22% of respondents consider themselves disabled. 5% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

3.8.5 This question had 511 respondents.

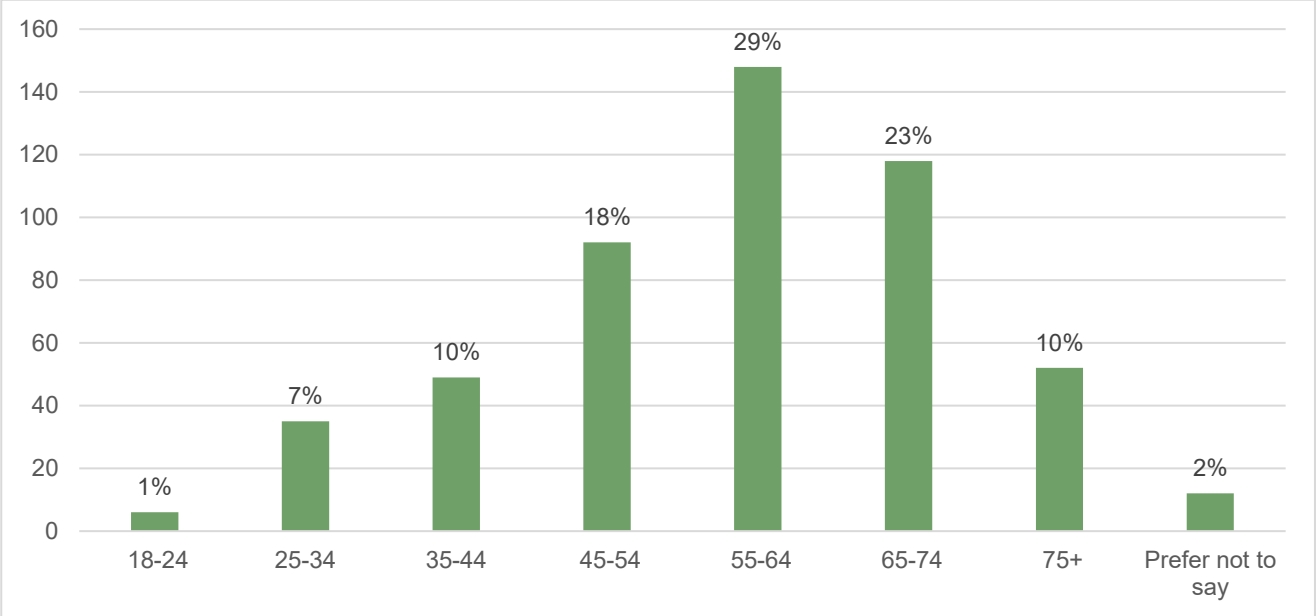


Figure 16: Please select your age category

3.8.6 Figure 16 shows that 29% of respondents are in the age range of 55-64, followed by 65-74 with 23% of respondents and then 45-54 with 18% of respondents. The age ranges with the least number of responses are 18-24 with 1%, 25-34 with 7% and 35-44 with 10% of respondents.

3.8.7 This question had 510 respondents.

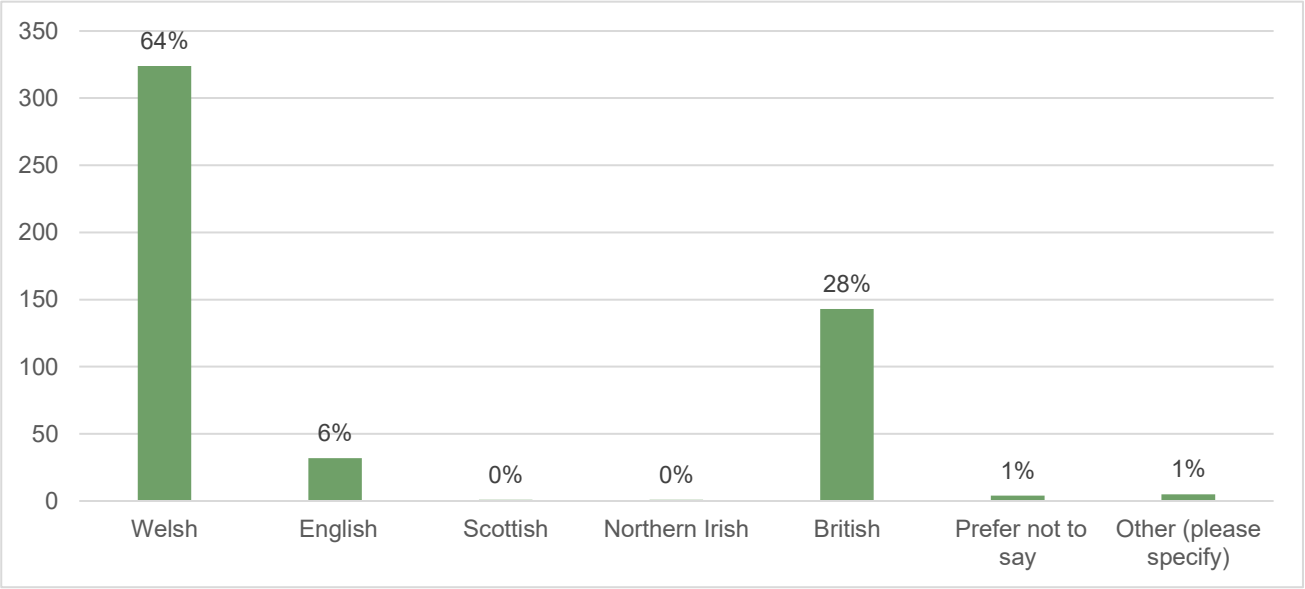


Figure 17: How would you describe your nationality?

3.8.8 Figure 17 shows that 64% of respondents describe their nationality as Welsh, another 28% of respondents describe their nationality as British.

3.8.9 This question had 511 respondents.

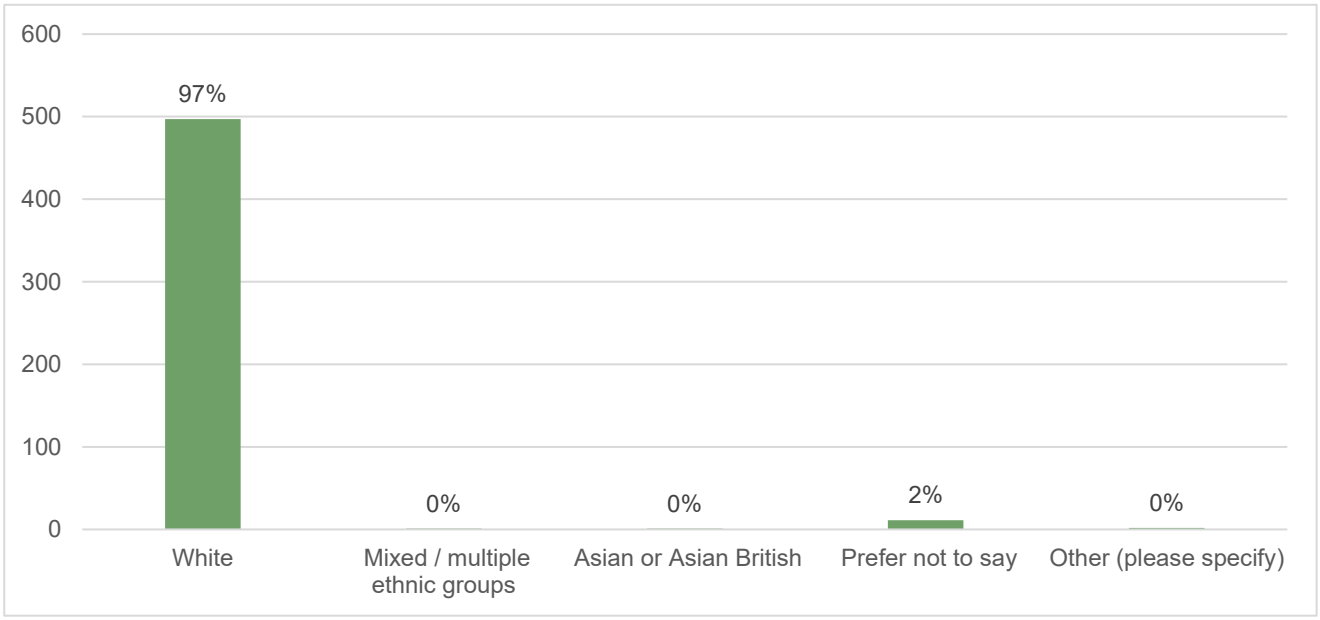


Figure 18: What is your ethnic group?

3.8.10 Figure 18 shows that 97% of respondents are 'white' ethnically and 2% of respondents answered 'Prefer not to say'. The remaining 1% falls within the other categories.

3.8.11 This question had 505 respondents.

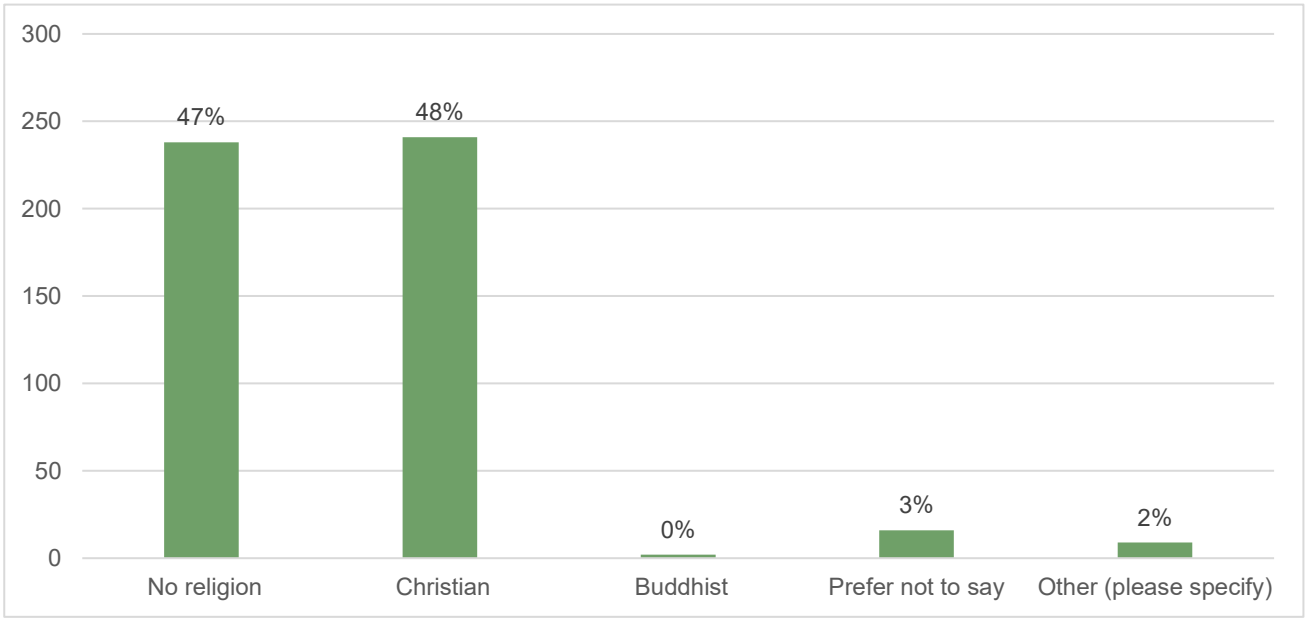


Figure 19: What is your religion or belief?

3.8.12 Figure 19 shows that 48% of respondents identify as Christian, and there are also 47% of respondents who do not identify with a specific religion.

3.8.13 This question had 509 respondents.

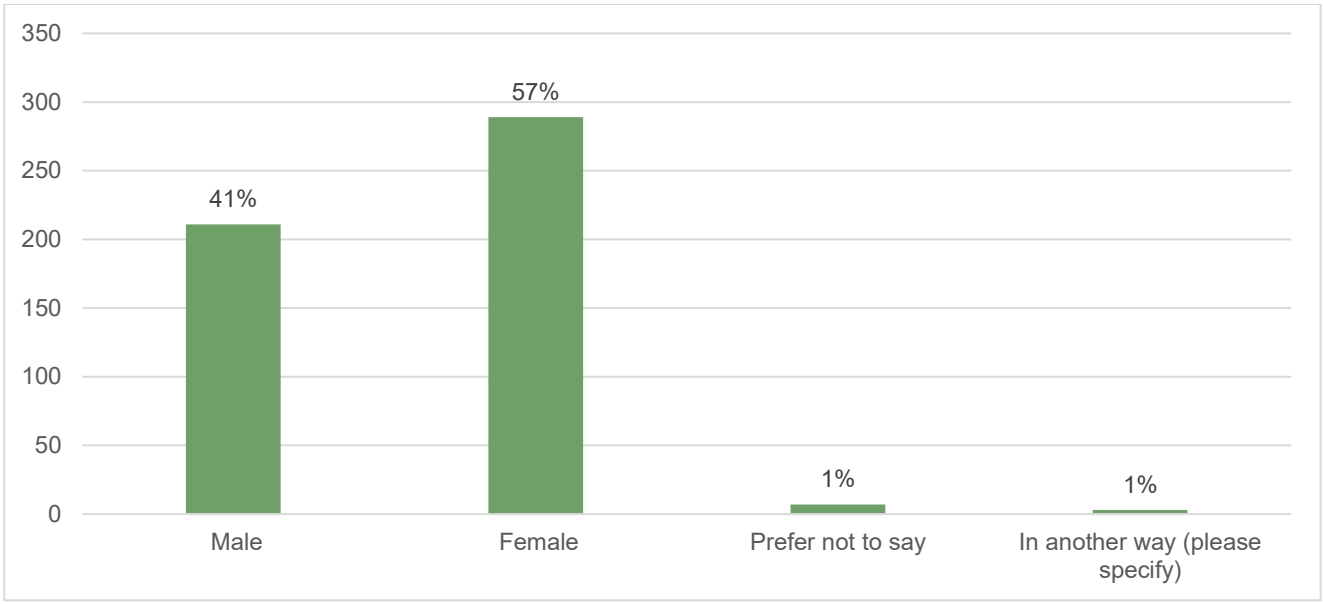


Figure 20: How do you describe your gender?

3.8.14 Figure 20 shows that 57% of respondents describe themselves as female and 41% of respondents describe themselves as male. There was 1% of respondents that answered 'Prefer not to say' to this question and 1% of respondents that describe their gender 'in another way'.

3.8.15 This question had 494 respondents.

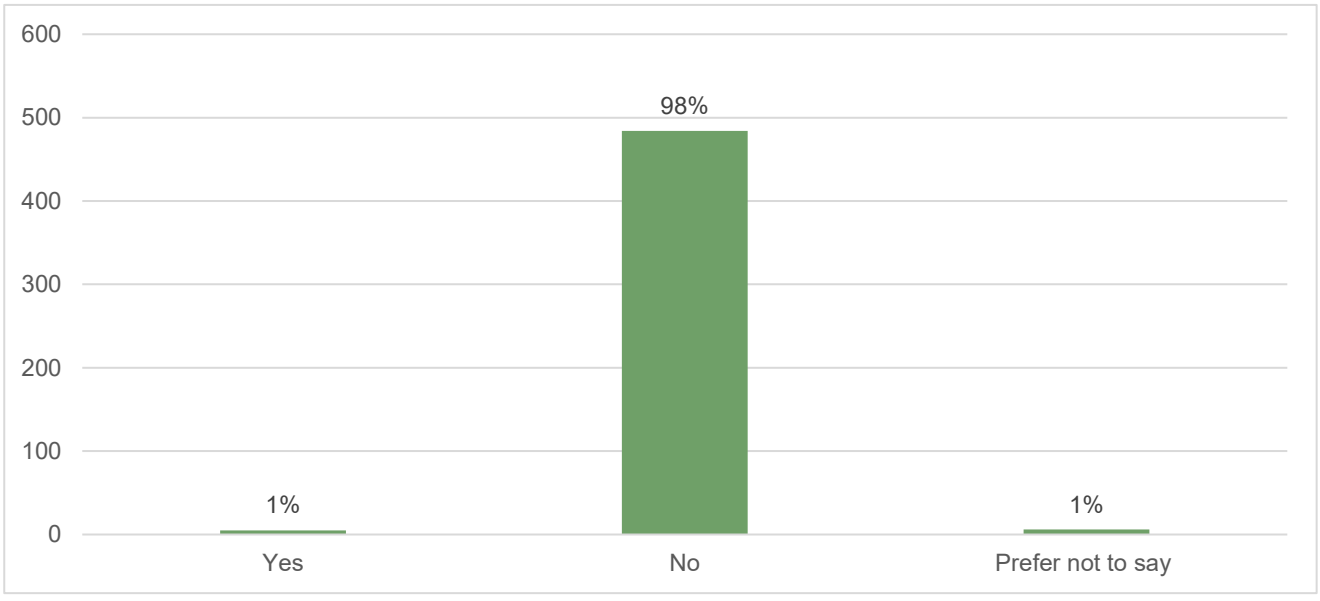


Figure 21: Have you given birth in past 26 weeks?

3.8.16 Figure 21 shows that 98% of respondents have not given birth in the past 26 weeks, 1% of respondents answered both 'Yes' and 'Prefer not to say' to this question.

3.8.17 This question had 506 respondents.

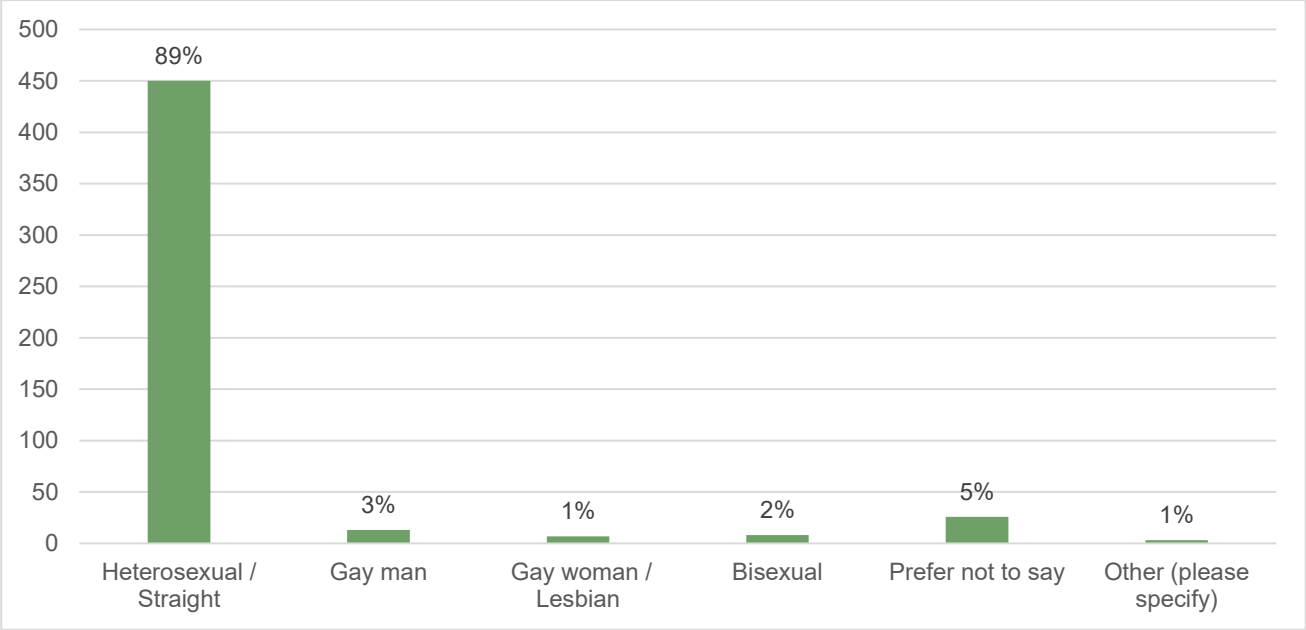


Figure 22: What is your sexual orientation?

3.8.18 Figure 22 shows that 89% of respondents are heterosexual/straight in terms of sexual orientation, 5% of respondents answered 'Prefer not to say' for this question.

3.8.19 This question had 507 respondents.

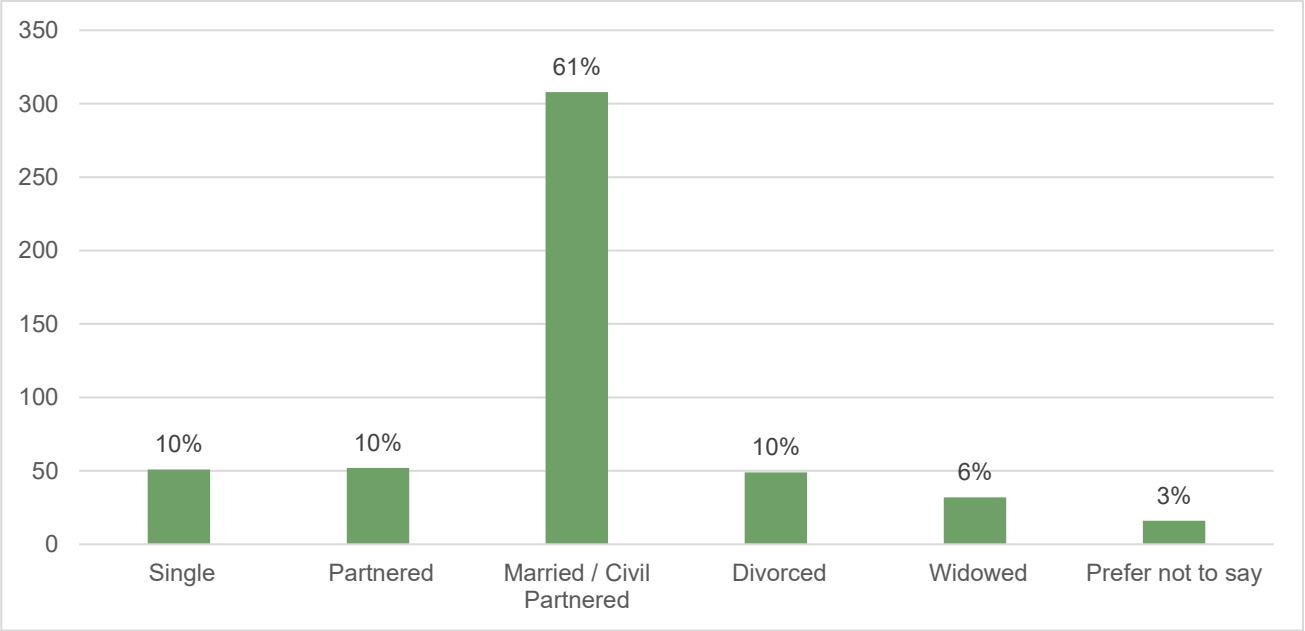


Figure 23: What is your marital status?

3.8.20 Figure 23 shows that 61% of respondents who answered this question are married or in a civil partnership, 10% of respondents are both single and partnered. Followed by 10% of respondents that are divorced, 6% are widowed and 3% of respondents answered 'Prefer not to say'.

3.9 Welsh Language

3.9.1 'Are you able to speak Welsh?' had 510 respondents.

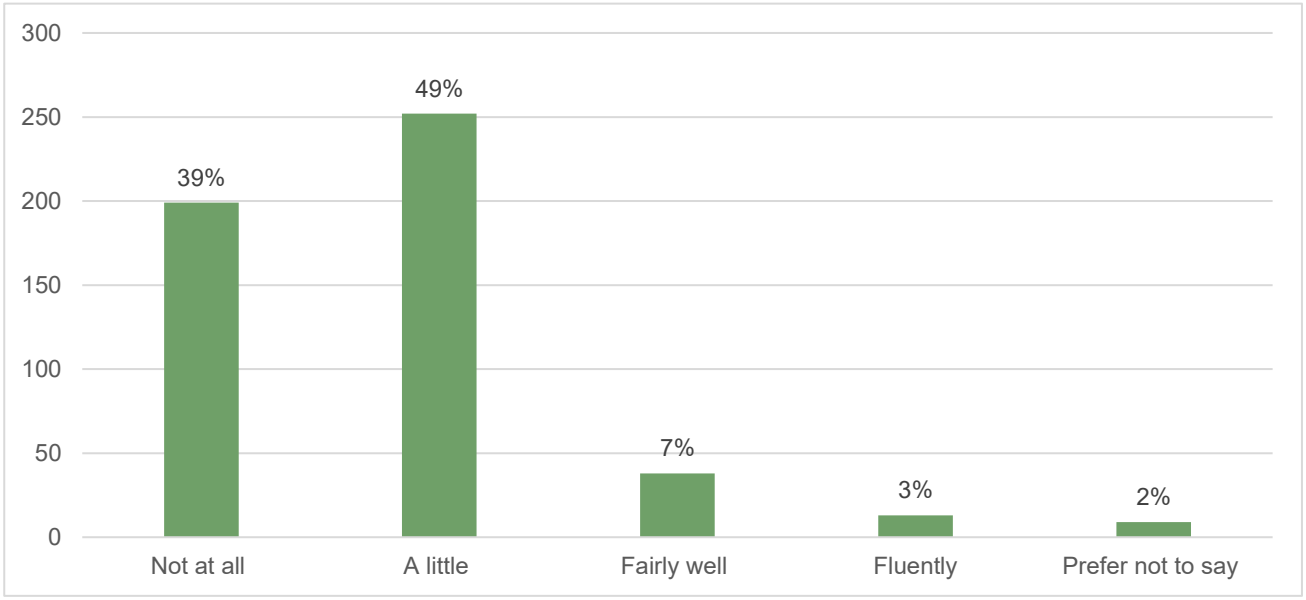


Figure 24: Are you able to speak Welsh?

3.9.2 Figure 24 shows that 49% of respondents are able to speak 'a little' Welsh, 39% of respondents are not able to speak any Welsh. 7% are able to speak Welsh 'Fairly Well' and 3% can speak Welsh fluently.

3.9.3 'Are you able to read Welsh?' had 507 respondents.

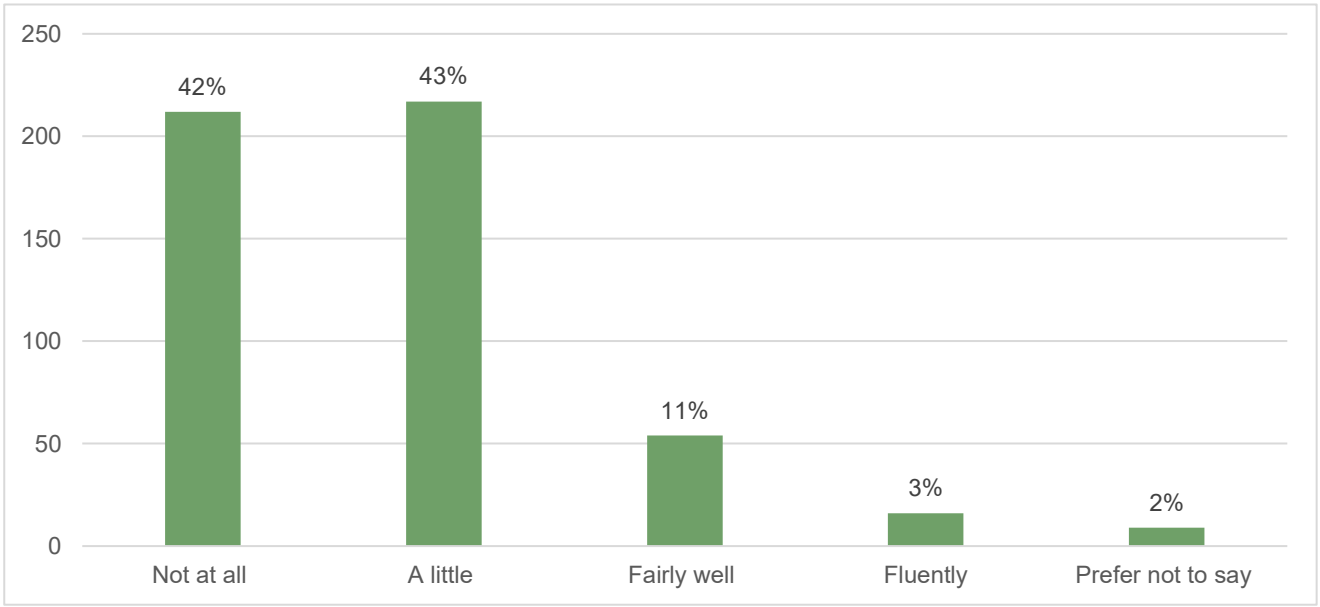


Figure 25: Are you able to read Welsh?

3.9.4 Figure 25 shows that 43% of respondents are able to read 'a little' Welsh, 42% of respondents are not able to read any Welsh. 11% are able to read Welsh 'Fairly Well' and 3% can read Welsh fluently.

3.9.5 'Are you able to write Welsh?' had 506 respondents.

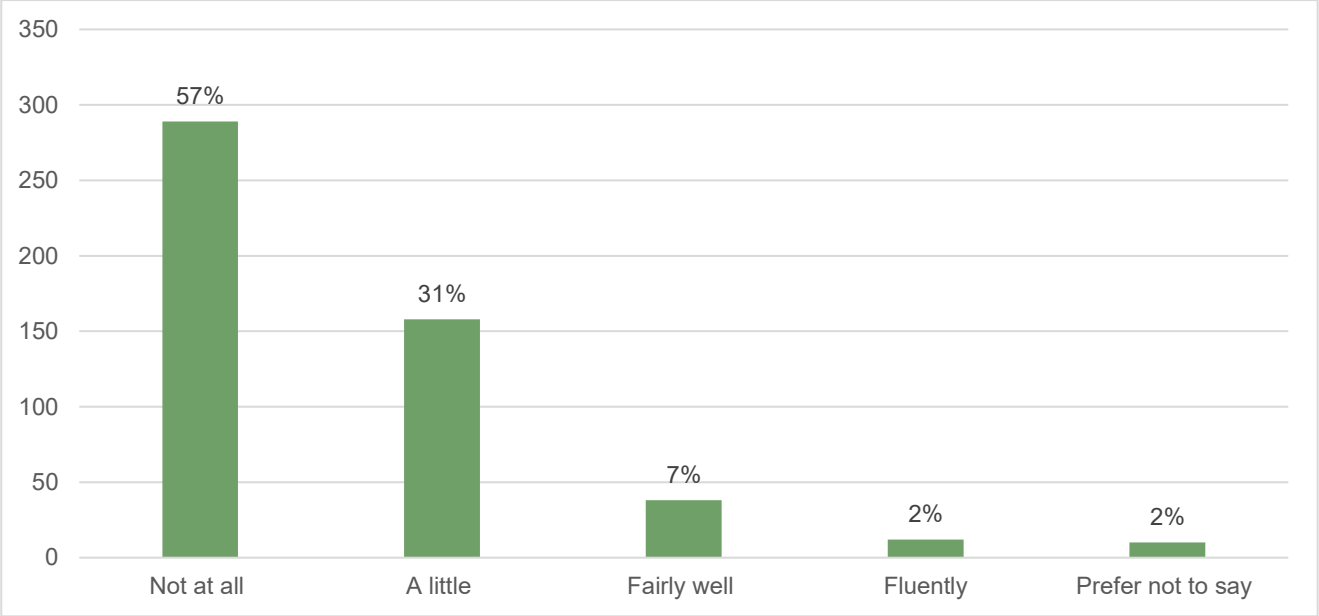


Figure 26: Are you able to write Welsh?

3.9.6 Figure 26 shows that 57% of respondents are not able to write any Welsh, 31% of respondents are able to write 'a little' Welsh. 7% are able to write Welsh 'Fairly Well' and 2% can write Welsh fluently.

4. GROUPS WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This Chapter explores views from groups with protected characteristics, including audio, visual and physical impairments.

4.2 Audio impairments

4.2.1 The following shows views by respondents who consider themselves to be audio-impaired. This Figure shows responses to part 1, section A, question 1. There were 33 respondents who consider themselves to have an audio impairment.

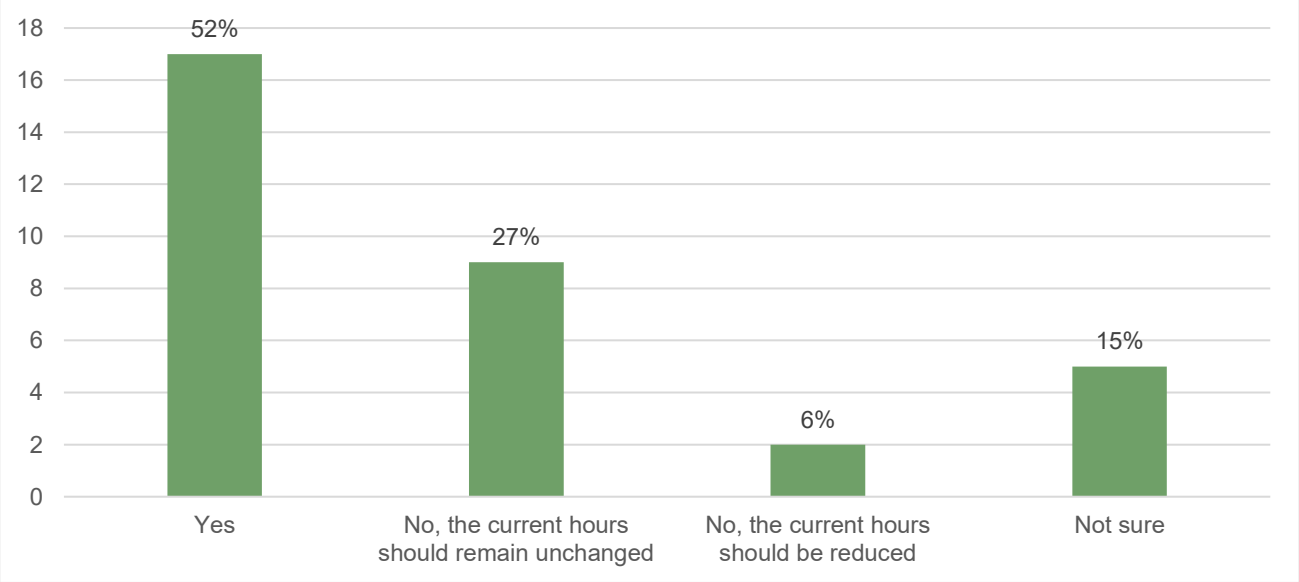


Figure 27: Do you support increasing the hours available for loading and unloading in Bridgend Town Centre?

4.2.2 Figure 27 shows that 52% of respondents support the increase of loading and unloading hours in Bridgend Town Centre. 27% of respondents think that the hours should remain unchanged.

4.2.3 Figure 28 below shows responses from part 1, section B, question 1.

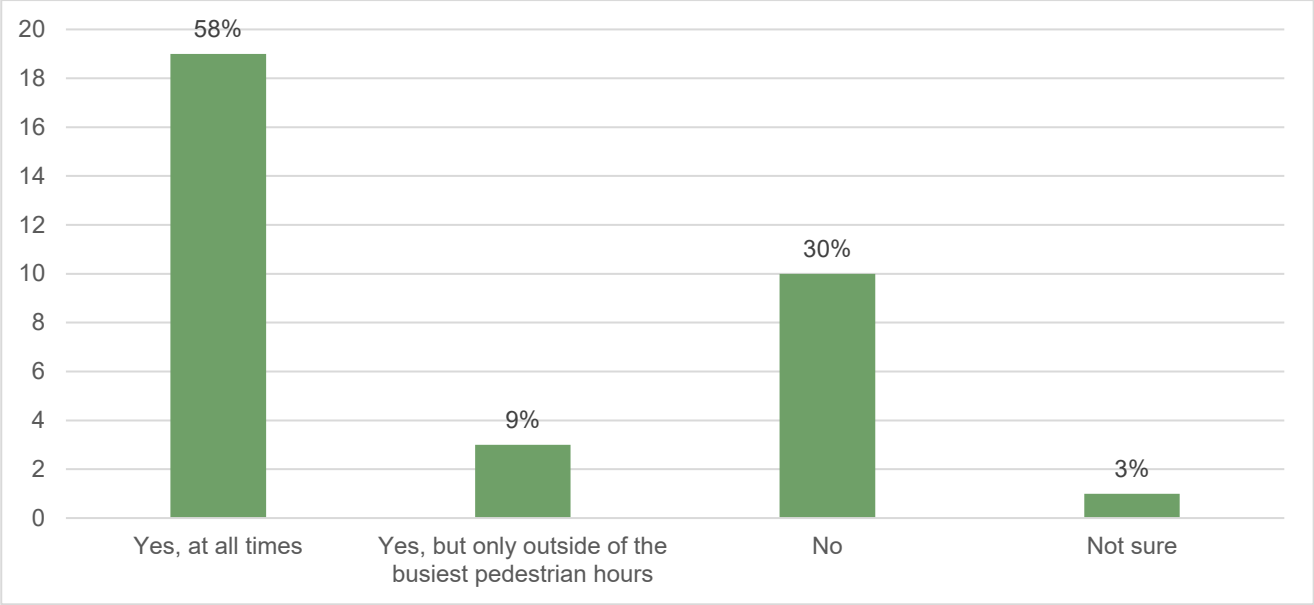


Figure 28: Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?

4.2.4 Figure 28 shows that 58% of respondents support opening Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street to all traffic. A further 9% support opening these streets to all traffic but only outside of the busiest pedestrian hours. 30% of respondents believe that these streets should not be more accessible to all traffic.

4.2.5 Figure 29 below shows responses from part 1, section C, question 1.

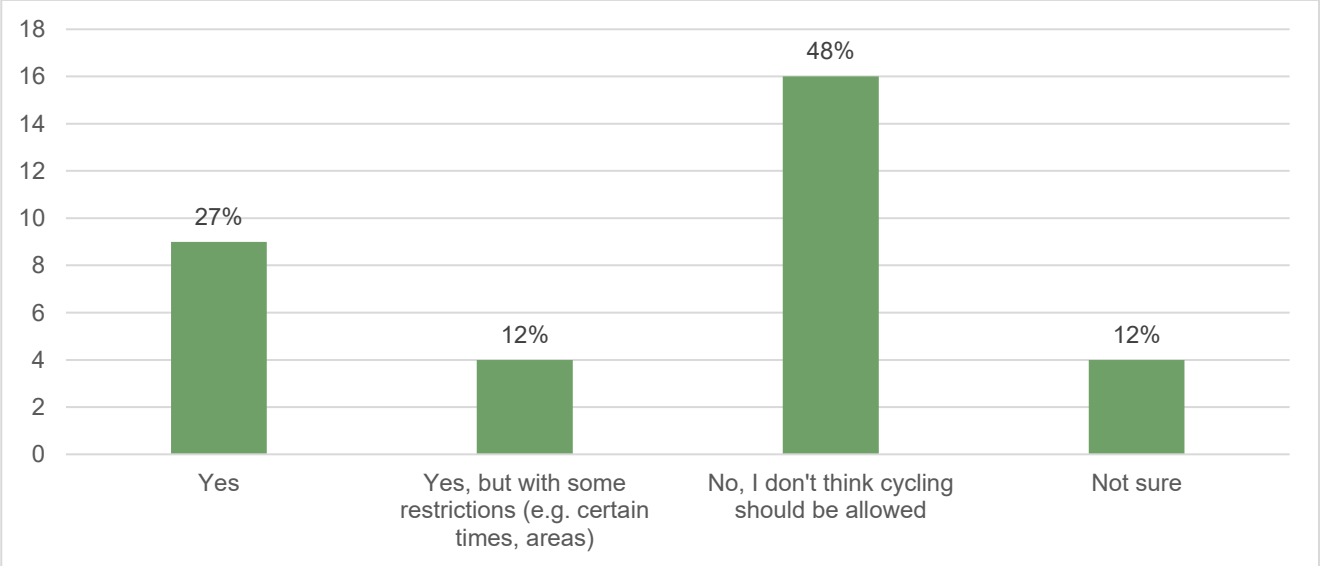


Figure 29: Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

4.2.6 Figure 29 shows that 48% of respondents do not support cycling in the town centre during pedestrianised hours. 27% of respondents support cycling in the town centre, and another 12% support cycling in the town centre but with some restrictions.

4.2.7 Figure 30 below shows responses from part 1, section D, question 1.

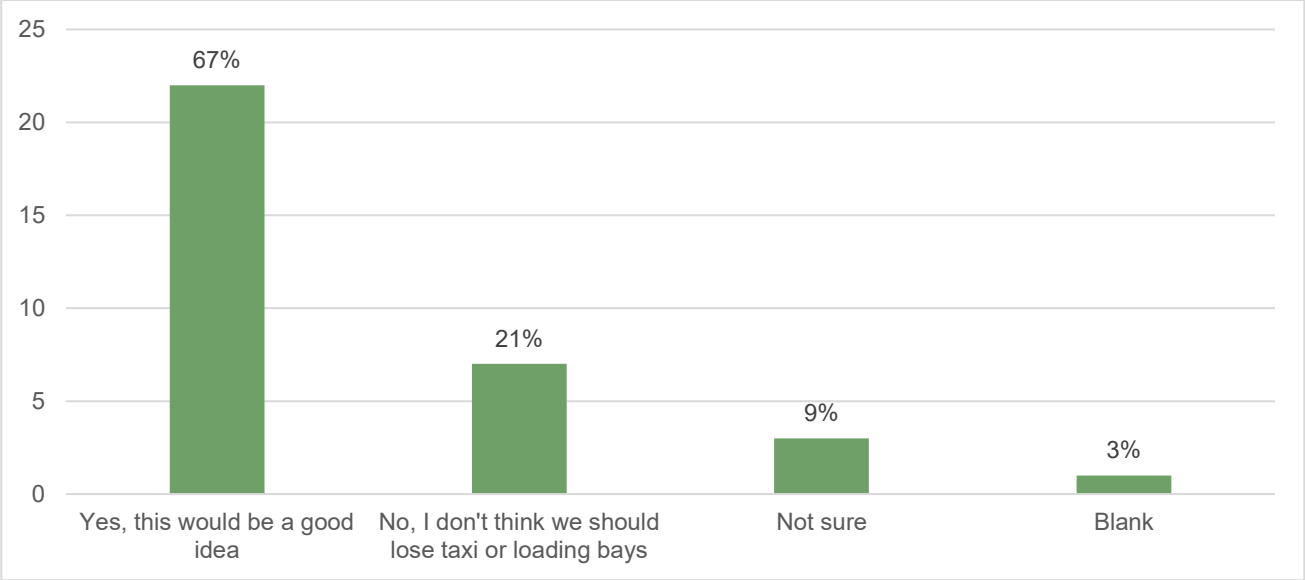


Figure 30: Do you think that we should create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used?

4.2.8 Figure 30 shows that 67% of respondents support the creation of disabled parking spaces along Derwen Road. 21% of respondents don't think taxi and loading bays should be lost for more disabled parking spaces.

4.3 Visual Impairments

4.3.1 The following shows views by respondents who consider themselves visually impaired. This Figure shows responses to part 1, section A, question 1. There were only 6 respondents who consider themselves visually impaired, which is a low sample rate, so the results should be treated with caution.

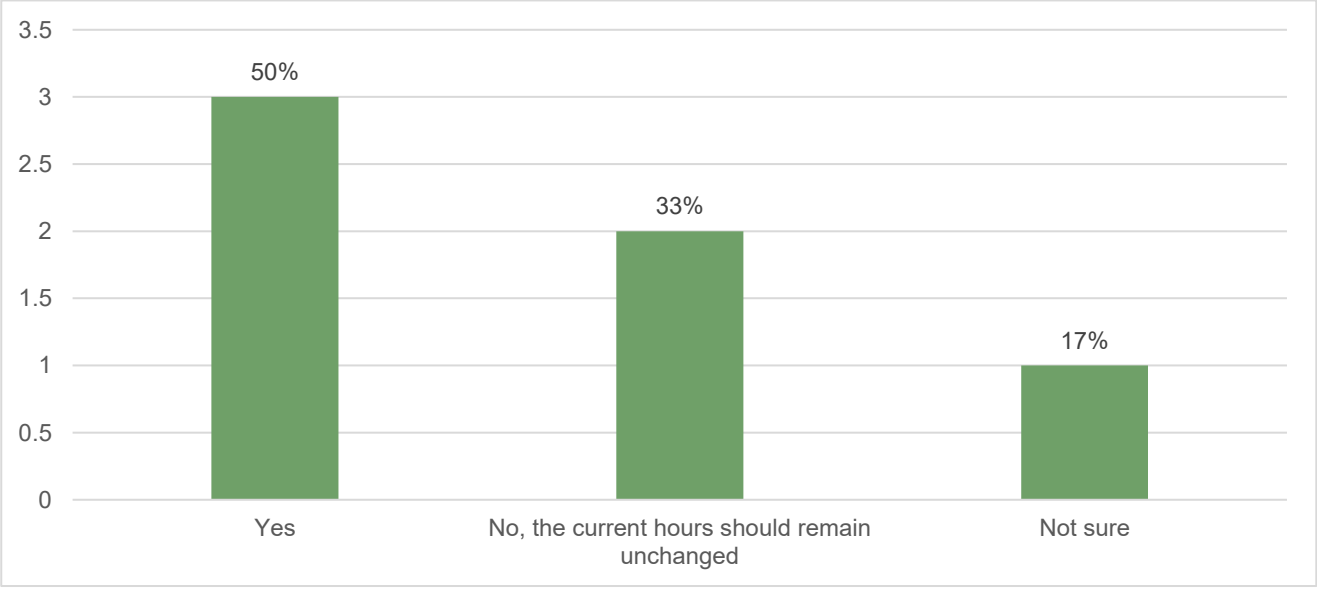


Figure 31: Do you support increasing the hours available for loading and unloading in Bridgend Town Centre?

4.3.2 Figure 31 shows that 50% of respondents support increasing loading and unloading hours in Bridgend Town Centre. 33% of respondents support the hours for loading and unloading remaining unchanged.

4.3.3 Figure 32 below shows responses from part 1, section B, question 1.

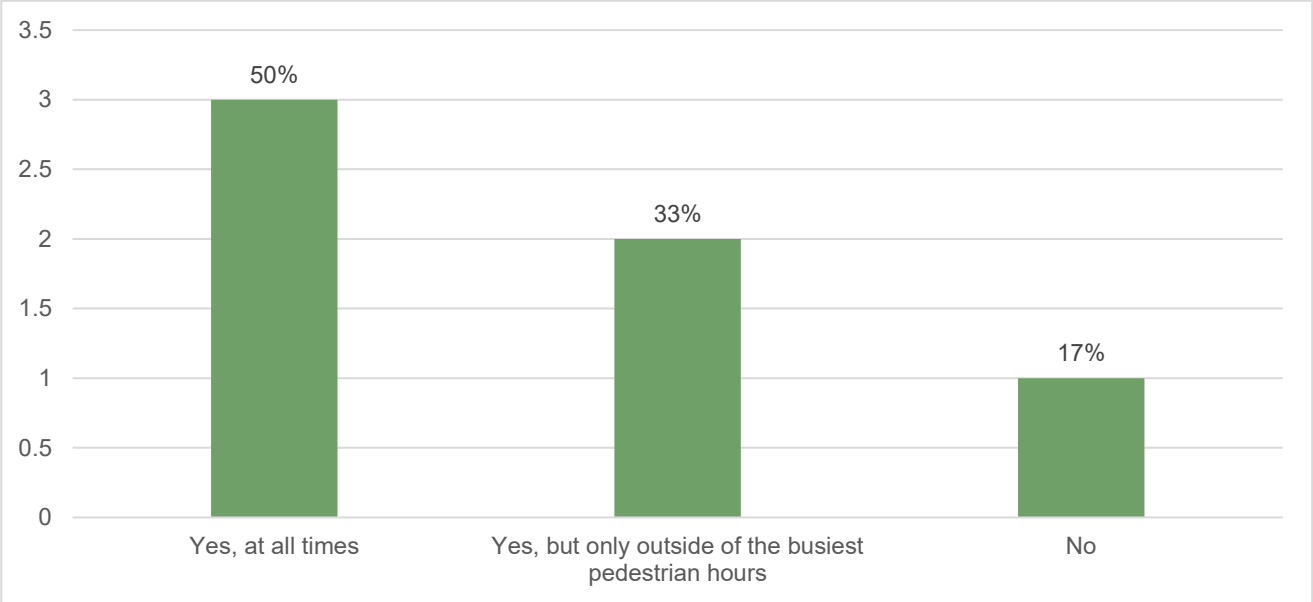


Figure 32: Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?

4.3.4 Figure 32 shows that 50% of respondents support opening Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street to all traffic. A further 33% support opening these streets to all traffic but only outside of the busiest pedestrian hours. 17% of respondents believe that the town centre should not be more accessible to all traffic.

4.3.5 Figure 33 below shows responses from part 1, section C, question 1.

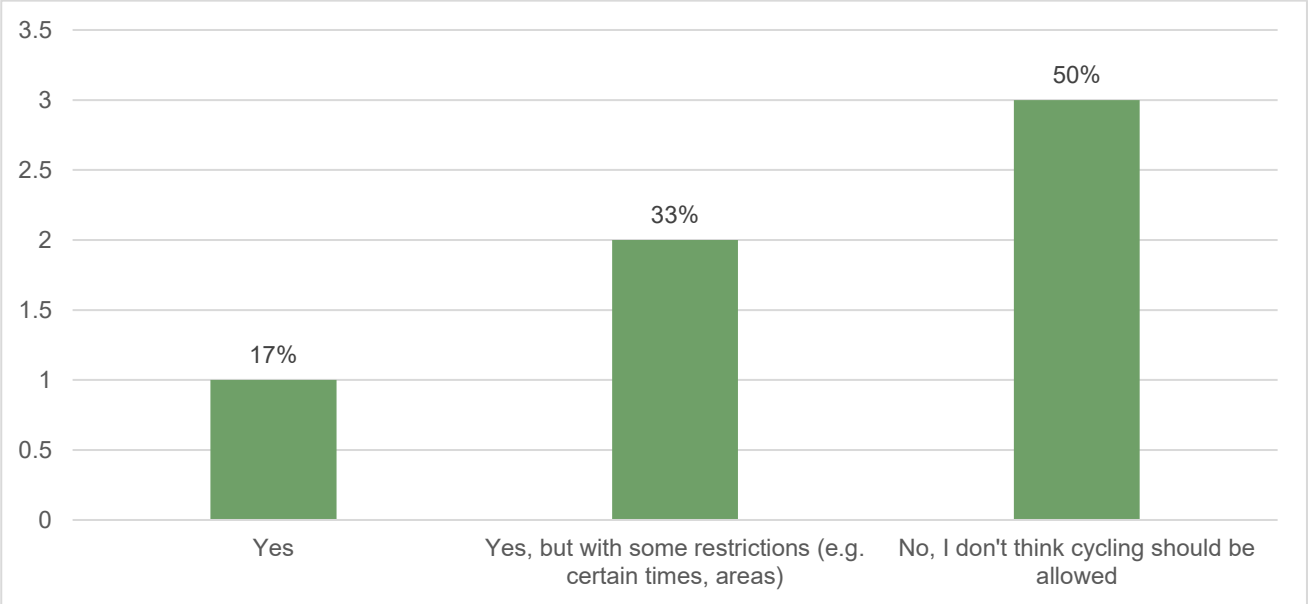


Figure 33: Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

4.3.6 Figure 33 shows that 50% of respondents do not support cycling in the town centre during pedestrianised hours. 17% of respondents support cycling in the town centre, another 33% support cycling in the town centre but with some restrictions.

4.3.7 Figure 34 below shows responses from part 1, section D, question 1.

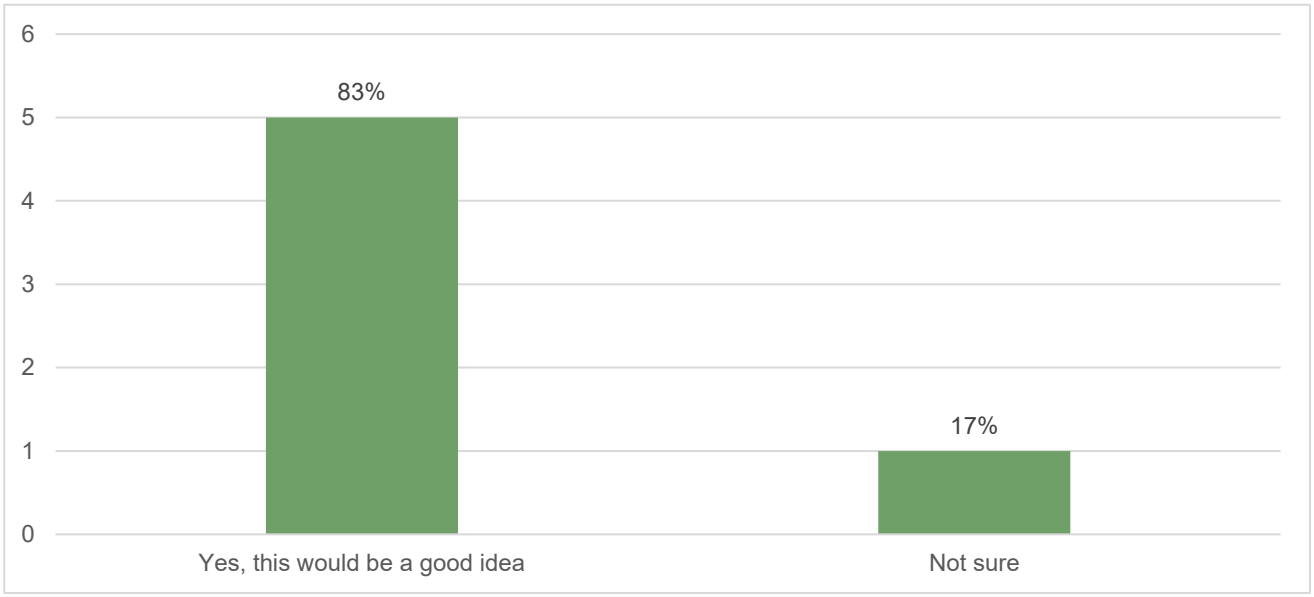


Figure 34: Do you think that we should create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used?

4.3.8 Figure 34 shows that 83% of respondents support the creation of disabled parking spaces along Derwen Road. 17% of respondents were unsure when answering this question.

4.4 Physical Impairments

4.4.1 Figure 35 below shows views by respondents that consider themselves physically impaired. This Figure shows responses to part 1, section A, question 1. There were 133 respondents that consider themselves physically impaired.

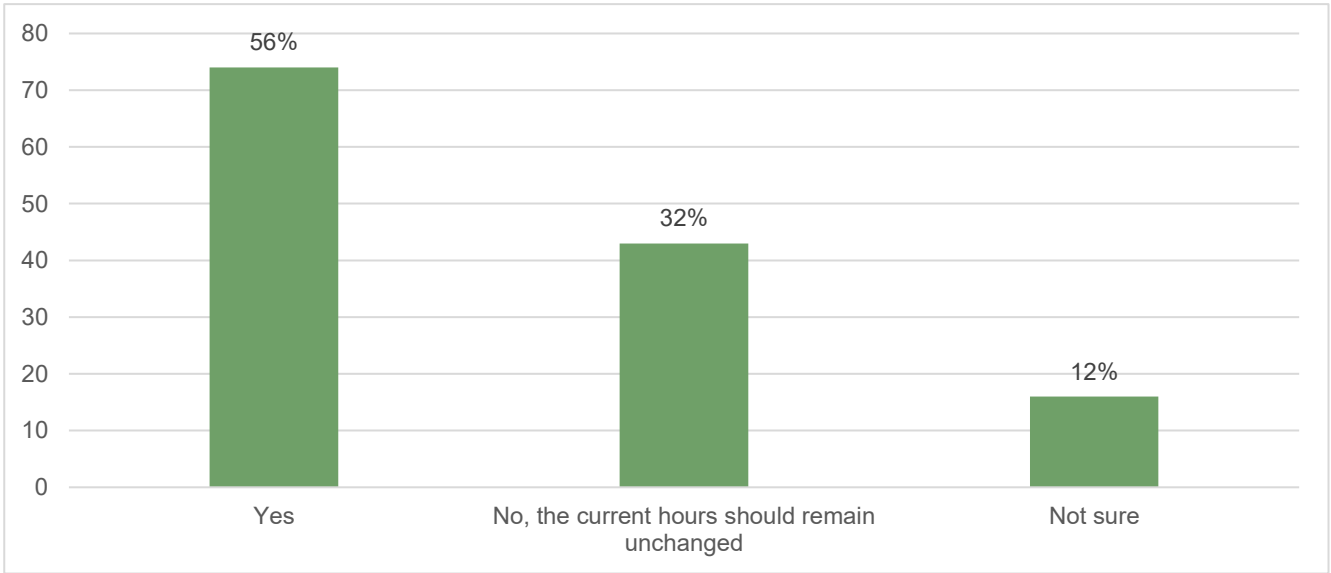


Figure 35: Do you support increasing the hours available for loading and unloading in Bridgend Town Centre?

4.4.2 Figure 35 shows that 56% of respondents support increasing loading and unloading hours in Bridgend Town Centre. 32% of respondents support the hours for loading and unloading remaining unchanged.

4.4.3 Figure 36 below shows responses from part 1, section B, question 1.

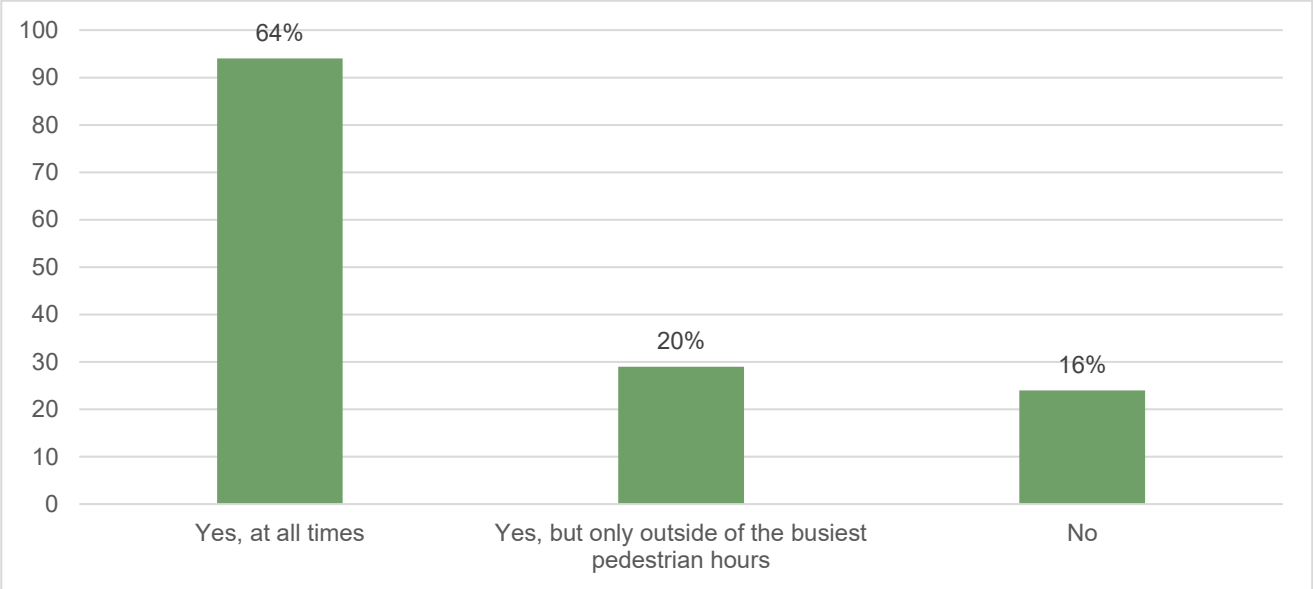


Figure 36: Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?

4.4.4 Figure 36 shows that 64% of respondents support opening Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street to all traffic. A further 20% support opening these streets to all traffic but only outside of the busiest pedestrian hours. 16% of respondents believe that no traffic should have access to these streets.

4.4.5 Figure 37 below shows responses from part 1, section C, question 1.

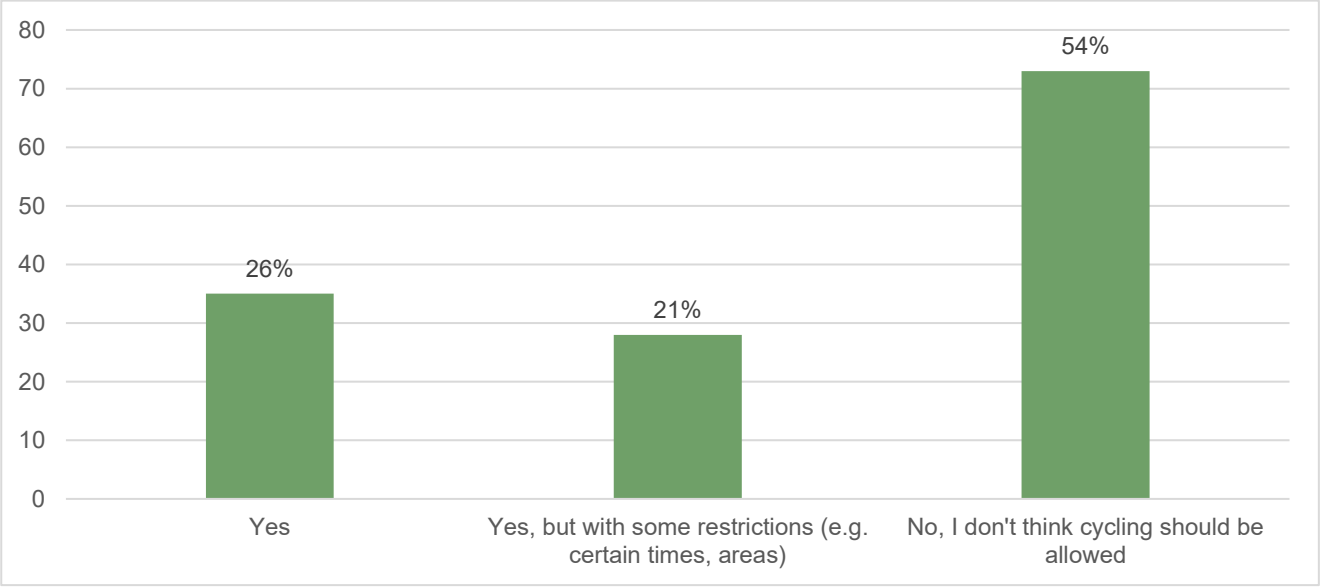


Figure 37: Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

4.4.6 Figure 37 shows that 54% of respondents do not support cycling in the town centre during pedestrianised hours. 26% of respondents support cycling in the town centre, and another 21% support cycling in the town centre but with some restrictions.

4.4.7 Figure 38 below shows responses from part 1, section D, question 1.

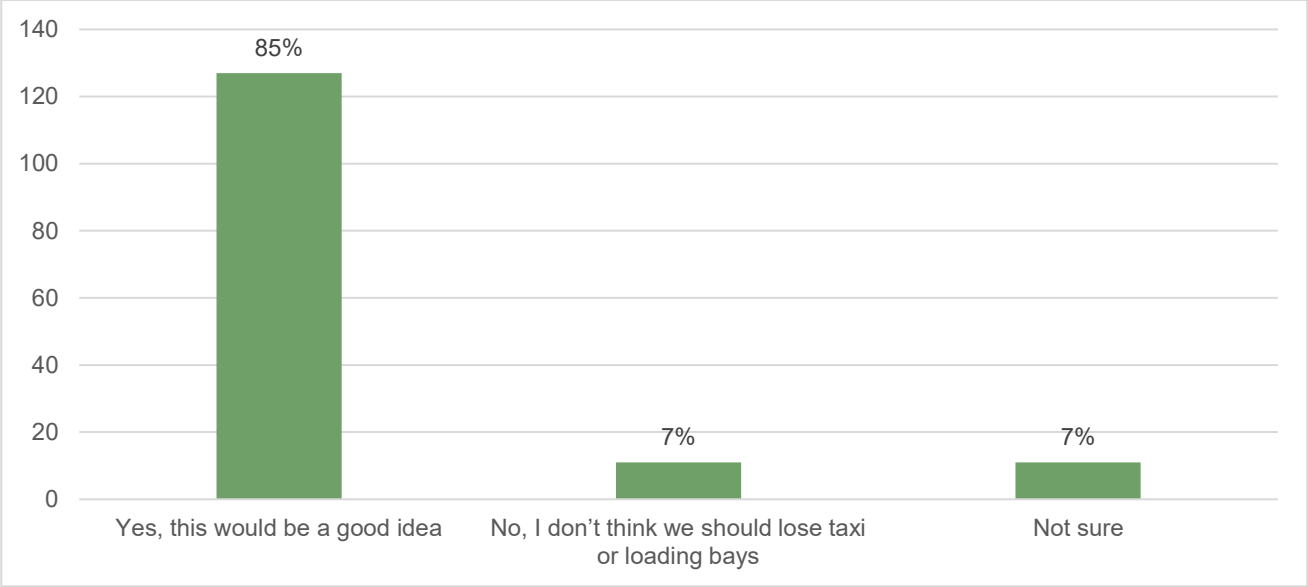


Figure 38: Do you think that we should create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used?

4.4.8 Figure 38 shows that 85% of respondents support the creation of disabled parking spaces along Derwen Road. 7% of respondents think taxi and loading bays should not be lost.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 This report presents the findings of a public consultation carried out between 4 April and 2 May 2025. The consultation generated 756 responses in total (754 online, 1 paper, 1 by email) and was supported by two in-person drop-in sessions attended by 17 people.

5.1.2 Key quantitative outcomes are:

- 64% support converting under-used taxi/loading bays to Blue Badge parking;
- 60% support extending loading/unloading hours;
- Public opinion on cycling during pedestrianised hours showed 56% are in favour of some form of cycling access (37% without restrictions and 19% with restrictions), while 37% remain opposed;
- On the question of re-opening Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street to general traffic, 75% – support some form of access (56% for full access and 19% for limited access), compared with 22% who oppose re-opening altogether.

5.1.3 The respondent profile is skewed towards older age groups (29% aged 55–64; 23% aged 65–74), is predominantly White (97%) and records 22% self-declared disability or a mobility-affecting health condition. The predominance of online responses and the low in-person turnout limit the representativeness of the sample; these factors should be considered when interpreting the results.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 The consultation findings provide material input for consideration but are not, on their own, determinative. They should form part of the broader evidence base Bridgend County Borough Council uses when deciding next steps and whether an intervention is appropriate.

Appendix A

Public Engagement Survey Form (English & Welsh Versions)

Bridgend Town Centre Access

GDPR Notice

All information received is stored using secure servers and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). When gathering data, it is our policy to take all necessary steps to ensure personal information is processed lawfully. Your personal information will never be shared externally.

The council will take all reasonable precautions to ensure confidentiality and to comply with data protection legislation. Your information will be retained in accordance with the Council's Data Retention Policy.

You have several rights under data protection legislation. You may also withdraw your consent and ask us to delete your personal information at any time by contacting us. Further information about this is available on our website or you may contact the Data Protection Officer.

If you are dissatisfied with the manner in which we process your personal data, then you have the option to make a complaint to the Data Protection Officer and the Information Commissioner's Office.



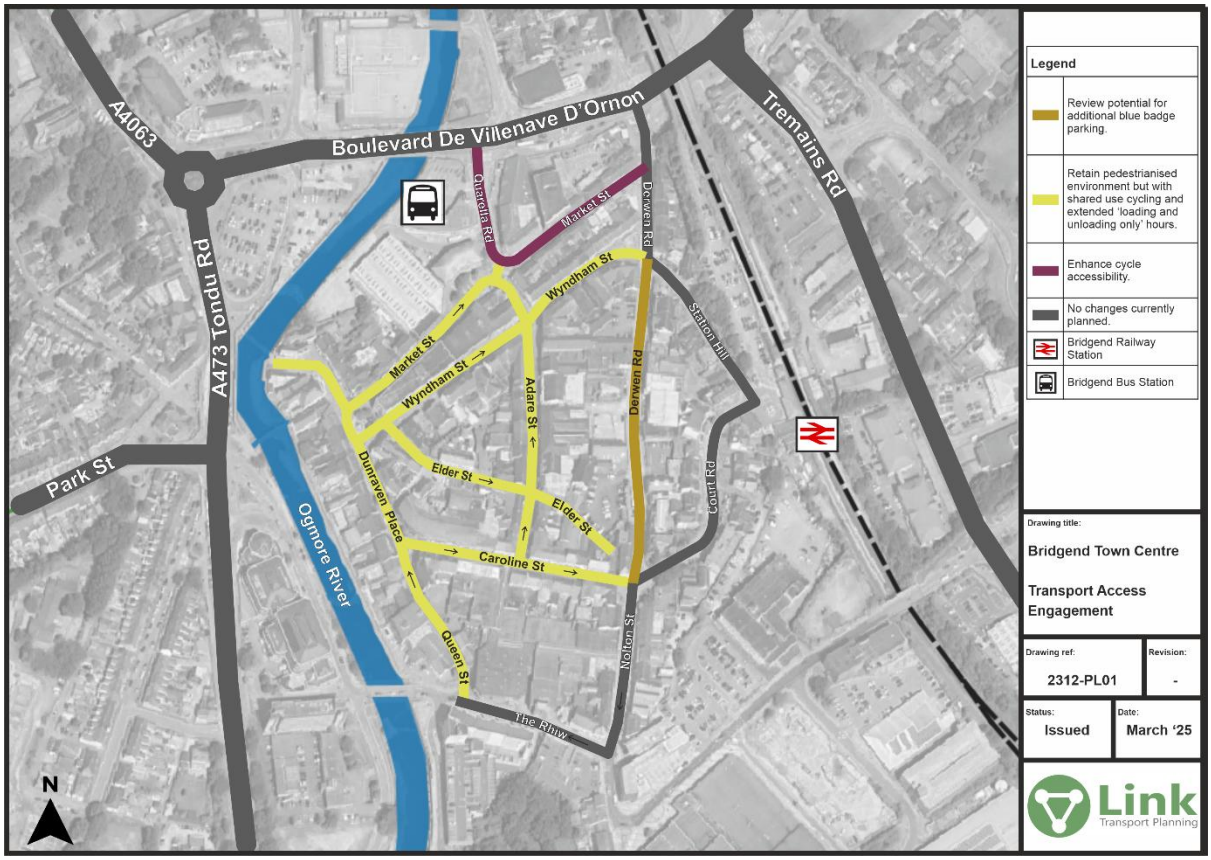
SURVEY

In recent years, there have been significant changes to how people use Bridgend town centre. These changes have been shaped by several factors, including the relocation of major stores to out-of-town retail parks, the growth of online shopping, the rise in remote services such as online banking, the shift towards home working, and challenges related to accessibility.

To address these evolving challenges, Bridgend County Borough Council is seeking your feedback on a range of potential improvements to enhance access to Bridgend town centre.

The proposed changes are shown in the overview map below and are summarised as follow:

- Extending loading and unloading hours throughout the town centre's pedestrianised areas to better support businesses and their customers.
- Allowing cycling in pedestrianised areas with the provision of enhanced cycle parking facilities.
- Increasing disabled parking opportunities by converting underutilised areas on Derwen Road.



These proposed changes are part of an initial phase aimed at improving the town centre's viability and resilience. We will closely monitor the impact and may consider further changes at a later date.

We recognise that some stakeholders favour allowing all traffic to use Queen Street, Dunraven Place, and Market Street. Although this is not included in the current proposal, we welcome all views via the survey, and your feedback will form an important part of our engagement analysis. This will help determine whether further investigation is needed for a potential follow-up phase.

You can choose to answer all sections of this questionnaire or just focus on the areas that matter most to you. Depending on which sections you choose to answer, the survey will typically take between 3 and 10 minutes to complete.

Your feedback in this survey is extremely valuable to help us shape a balanced plan that is safe, effective, and deliverable.

PART 1

Section A: Views on loading and unloading access to Bridgend town centre

Bridgend town centre is currently pedestrianised between 10 AM and 6 PM every day. Outside these hours, only vehicles that are loading or unloading can access the area. Traders in the town centre have shared feedback that they would prefer extended hours for loading or unloading, which would make it easier for suppliers and customers to deliver goods or collect goods.

This change would mean reducing the hours when the streets are fully pedestrianised. While this could help businesses, it is important to think about how it might affect pedestrians and the feel of the town centre.

Q1: Do you support increasing the hours available for loading and unloading in Bridgend town centre?

☐ Yes

☐ No, the current hours should remain unchanged

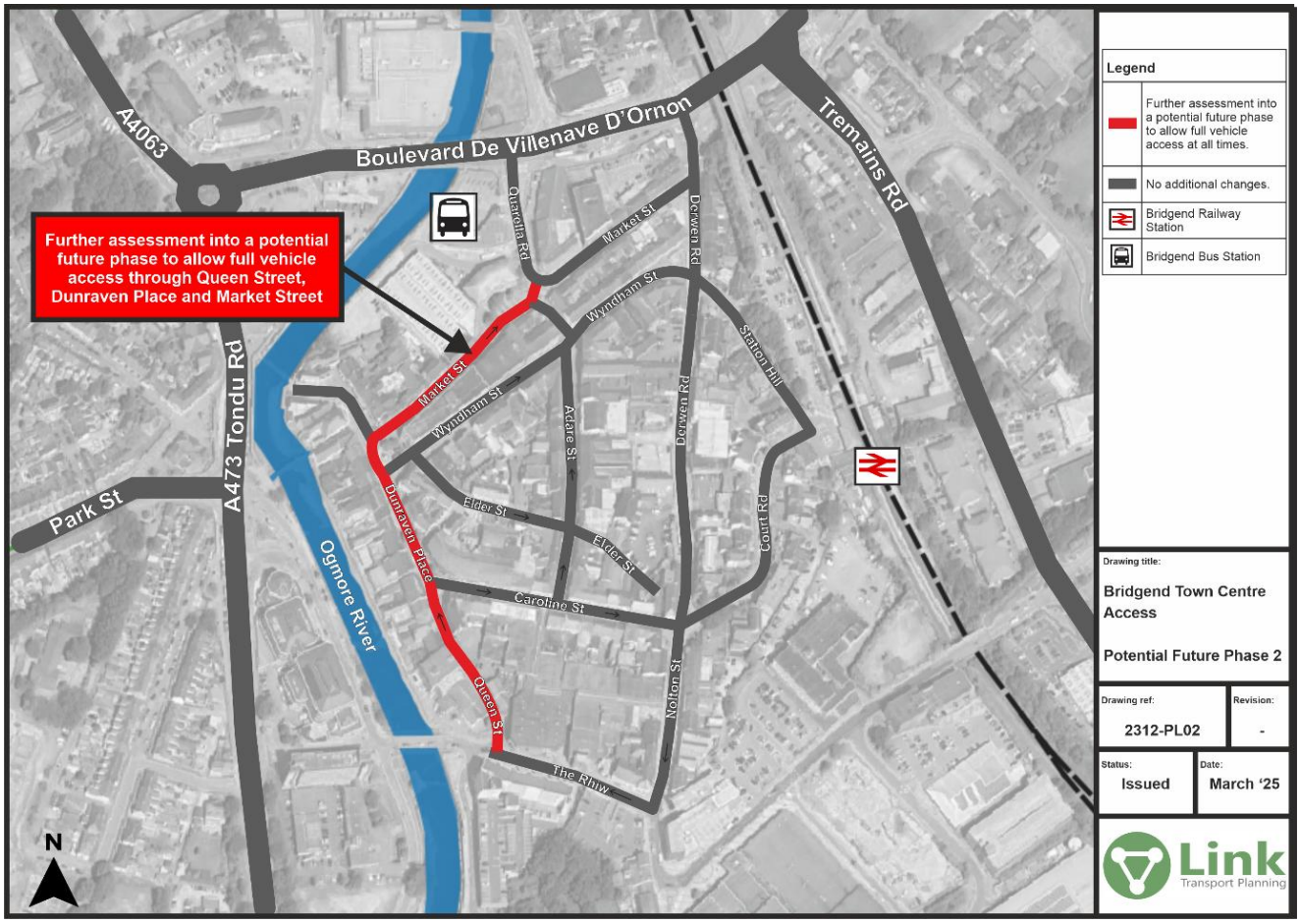
☐ No, the current hours should be reduced

☐ Not sure

Follow-up: If you answered *'yes'* or *'no, the current hours should be reduced'*, what loading and unloading only hours do you think should be in place and why?

Section B: Views on a potential future phase to allow full vehicle access through the peripheral town centre route of Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street

Some stakeholders have shared feedback that the peripheral town centre route of Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street should be opened up to all traffic, at all times. This does not form part of the current proposal, but we may undertake further assessment to determine if it could form a future follow up phase to the town centre's access arrangements. An overview map to highlight a potential future phase is provided below.



Q1: Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?

- ☐ Yes, at all times
- ☐ Yes, but only outside of the busiest pedestrian hours
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

Follow-up: Please add any further comments that you would like to make to explain your answer.

Section C: Views on cycling in the town centre

Cycling is a healthy, inclusive, low cost and zero emission form of transport. Current Welsh Government guidance states that consideration should always be given to allowing cycling through pedestrianised streets. However, cycling is not currently permitted through Bridgend town centre during pedestrianised hours. Please share your opinion on the following:

Q1: Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?

☐ Yes

☐ Yes, but with some restrictions *(e.g., certain times, areas)*

☐ No, I don't think cycling should be allowed

☐ Not sure

Follow-up: Why do you feel this way?

Q2: Do you think there should be improved cycle parking in the town centre?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Follow-up: If you answered *'Yes'* to *Q2*, please can you explain where additional or improved parking is required and what features are most important to you *(e.g. location near destination, personal and cycle security, weather protection)*

Section D: Views on disabled parking in the town centre.

Disabled parking in Bridgend town centre is available in Council car parks, private car parks, and marked blue badge bays on the street. Feedback has suggested that more blue badge spaces would make it easier for disabled users to get to places in the town centre. One idea is to add more blue badge spaces on streets like Derwen Road. This could be done by using areas currently set aside for taxis that are not often used.

Q1: Do you think that we should create more disabled parking spaces in place of taxi or loading bays that are not regularly used?

☐ Yes, this would be a good idea

☐ No, I don't think we should lose taxi or loading bays

☐ Not sure

Follow-up: Why do you feel this way?

Q2: Thinking more widely, do you think there is enough disabled parking available to allow access to the town centre?

☐ Yes, there are enough spaces

☐ No, more blue badge parking spaces are needed

☐ Not sure

Follow-up: Why do you feel this way?

PART 2 ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

We would greatly value your additional feedback on current access to the town centre and your priorities for improvement. This will help us better understand existing conditions and identify further areas for enhancement.

All questions are optional, and your feedback will still be used even if you do not answer the questions in this section.

Section A: About your use of the area

Q1: How do you usually travel to the town centre? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Cycle
- ☐ Public transport *(e.g., bus, train)*
- ☐ Private car
- ☐ Taxi or ride-sharing services
- ☐ I do not visit the town centre often
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*

Q2: How would you rate the ease of town centre access for walking, cycling or public transport?

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very poor
- ☐ Unsure

Follow-up: Why did you choose that option?

Q3: How often do you visit the town centre?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Several times a week
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Less than once a month
- ☐ I have never been

Q4: What is the main reason for your visits to the town centre? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ I live in the town centre
- ☐ I work nearby
- ☐ I go to school nearby
- ☐ Shopping

☐ Socialising or leisure

☐ Accessing services *(e.g., healthcare, public services)*

☐ I do not visit the town centre

☐ Other *(please specify):*

Q5: How would you like to travel to Bridgend town centre?

☐ Walk

☐ Cycle

☐ Bus

☐ Train

☐ Car *(driver)*

☐ Car *(passenger)*

☐ Wheel *(using a wheelchair or other mobility aid)*

☐ Taxi

☐ Other *(please specify):*

Follow-up: What prevents you from using your preferred mode of travel to the town centre?

Q6: What would encourage you to visit Bridgend town centre more often? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Improved walking, cycling, or public transport connections
- ☐ Improved car access *(e.g., more parking or fewer restrictions)*
- ☐ Better shops, restaurants, or entertainment options
- ☐ More events and activities in the town centre
- ☐ Improved safety and security
- ☐ Cleaner streets and public spaces
- ☐ Better facilities, such as public toilets or seating areas
- ☐ Nothing, I am satisfied with the current offer
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*

Q7: Do you have a health issue that affects your mobility?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Hearing Impairment
- ☐ Visual Impairment
- ☐ Restricted Mobility
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*

Equalities Monitoring

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. This question is optional.

How would these proposals affect you because of your:

Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Disability, Sexuality, Religion / belief, Gender identity, Relationship status, Pregnancy, Preferred language?

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?

Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be formulated or changed 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.

To help us ensure that we are providing services fairly to everyone who needs them, we would be grateful if you could answer a few more questions about yourself.

The information you supply will be kept confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of equalities monitoring.

Completion of these questions is not required as part of the questionnaire. You do not have to answer any of the questions if you do not wish to do so.

Alternatively, you can choose to answer some and not others by selecting the 'prefer not to say' options

Are you happy to answer a few more questions about yourself? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you consider yourself as disabled? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Please select your age category: *(Tick one option)*

☐ Under 18	☐ 35 – 44	☐ 65 - 74
☐ 18 – 24	☐ 45 – 54	☐ 75 +
☐ 25 – 34	☐ 55 – 64	☐ Prefer not to say

How would you describe your nationality? *(Tick one option)*

☐ Welsh	☐ Scottish	☐ English
☐ Northern Irish	☐ Prefer not to say	

☐ Other *(please specify):*

What is your ethnic group? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ White
- ☐ Asian/ Asian British
- ☐ Black/African Caribbean/Black British
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*

What is your religion or belief? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ No religion
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*

How do you describe your gender? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ In another way *(please specify):*

Are you pregnant? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to say

Have you given birth in past 26 weeks? *(Tick one option)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation? *(Tick one option)*

☐ Heterosexual/Straight ☐ Gay man ☐ Bisexual

☐ Gay woman/Lesbian ☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Other *(please specify):*

What is your marital status? *(Tick one option)*

☐ Single ☐ Divorced

☐ Partnered ☐ Widowed

☐ Married/Civil Partnered ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you able to? *(Tick all that apply)*

	Not at all	**A little**	**Fairly well**	**Fluently**	**Prefer not to say**
Speak Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Read Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Write Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return to:

Bridgend County Borough Council

Consultation Department

Civic Offices

Angel Street

BRIDGEND

CF31 4WB

Email: consultation@bridgend.gov.uk

Hysbysiad GDPR

Caiff yr holl wybodaeth a dderbynnir ei storio gan ddefnyddio gweinyddion diogel ac yn unol â'r Ddeddf Diogelu Data (1998). Wrth gasglu data, mae gennym bolisi ar waith i gymryd yr holl gamau priodol er mwyn sicrhau bod gwybodaeth bersonol yn cael ei phrosesu'n gyfreithiol. Ni fydd eich gwybodaeth bersonol yn cael ei rhannu'n allanol.

Bydd y cyngor yn cymryd yr holl gamau rhesymol i sicrhau cyfrinachedd ac i gydymffurfio â deddfwriaeth diogelu data. Bydd eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei chadw yn unol â Pholisi Cadw Data'r Cyngor.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau dan y ddeddfwriaeth diogelu data. Cewch hefyd dynnu eich caniatâd yn ôl a gofyn inni ddileu eich gwybodaeth bersonol ar unrhyw adeg drwy gysylltu â ni. Mae rhagor o wybodaeth ynglŷn â hyn ar gael ar ein gwefan, neu gallwch gysylltu â'r Swyddog Diogelu Data.

Os ydych yn anfodlon gyda'r modd yr ydym yn prosesu eich data personol, cewch gyflwyno cwyn i'r Swyddog Diogelu Data a Swyddfa'r Comisiynydd Gwybodaeth.



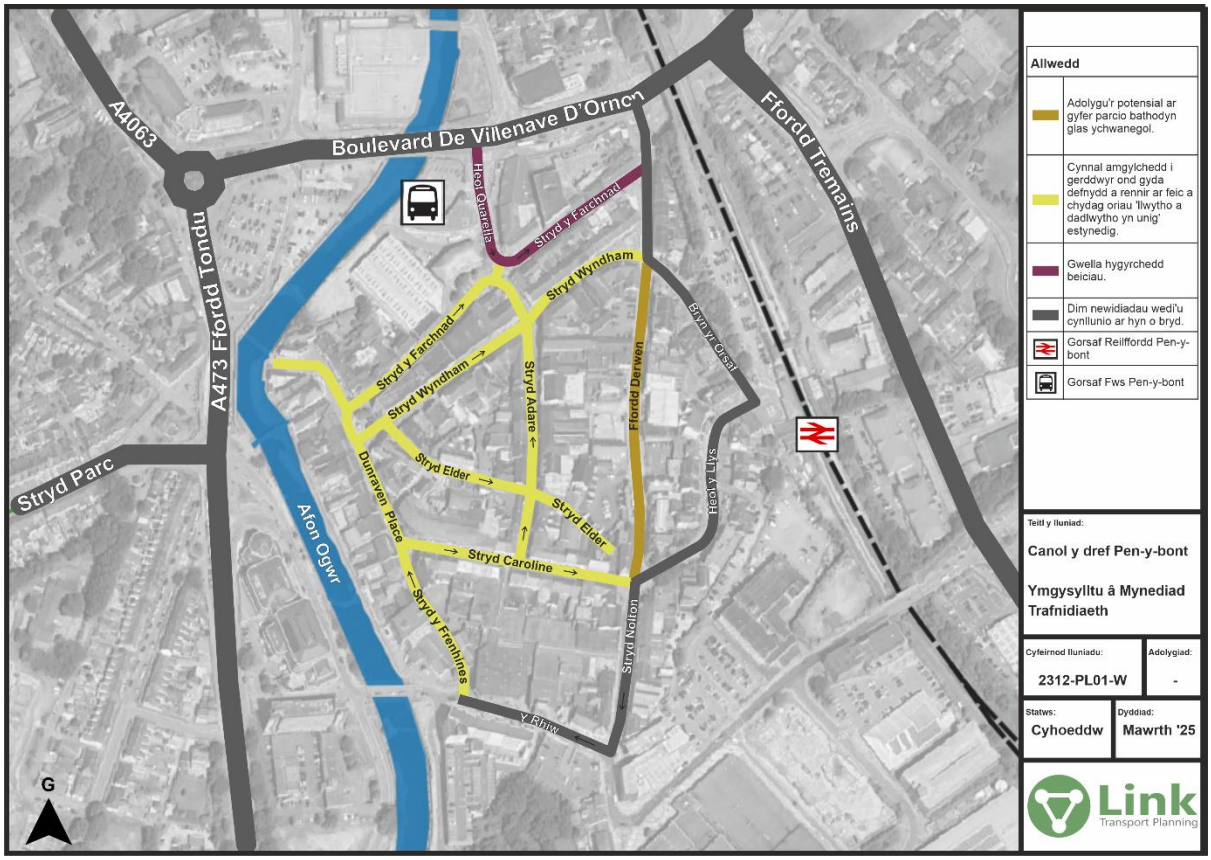
AROLWG

Yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf, mae newidiadau sylweddol wedi bod o ran sut mae pobl yn defnyddio canol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr. Mae'r newidiadau hyn wedi cael eu siapio gan nifer o ffactorau, gan gynnwys symud siopau mawr i barciau manwerthu y tu allan i'r dref, twf siopa ar-lein, cynnydd gwasanaethau o bell megis bancio ar-lein, a'r newid i weithio o gartref, a heriau sy'n gysylltiedig â hygyrchedd.

I fynd i'r afael â'r heriau esblygol hyn, mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr yn ceisio eich adborth ynghylch ystod o welliannau posibl i wella mynediad i ganol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr.

Crynhoir y newidiadau arfaethedig fel a ganlyn:

- Ymestyn oriau llwytho a dadlwytho ar draws ardaloedd i gerddwyr yn unig yng nghanol y dref i gefnogi busnesau a'u cwsmeriaid yn well.
- Caniatáu beicio mewn ardaloedd i gerddwyr yn unig gyda darpariaeth o well cyfleusterau parcio ar gyfer beiciau.
- Cynyddu lleoedd parcio anabl drwy drosi ardaloedd nad ydynt yn cael defnydd digonol ar Ffordd Derwen.



Mae'r newidiadau arfaethedig hyn yn rhan o gam cychwynnol sydd â'r bwriad o wella hyfywedd a gwytnwch canol y dref. Byddwn yn monitro'r effaith yn agos ac efallai y byddwn yn ystyried newidiadau pellach yn ddiweddarach.

Rydym yn cydnabod bod rhai rhanddeiliaid yn ffafrio caniatáu pob traffig gael defnyddio Stryd y Frenhines, Dunraven Place, a Stryd y Farchnad. Er nad yw hyn wedi'i gynnwys yn y cynnig presennol, rydym yn croesawu pob barn trwy'r gymhorthfa, a bydd eich adborth yn ffurfio rhan bwysig o'n dadansoddiad ymgysylltu. Bydd hyn yn helpu i benderfynu a oes angen ymchwiliad pellach ar gyfer cam dilynol posibl.

Gallwch ddewis ateb pob adran o'r holiadur hwn neu ganolbwyntio ar y meysydd sydd bwysicaf i chi. Yn dibynnu ar ba adrannau rydych chi'n dewis eu hateb, bydd yr arolwg yn cymryd rhwng oddeutu 3 a 10 munud i'w gwblhau.

Mae eich adborth yn yr arolwg hwn yn hynod werthfawr i'n helpu i lunio cynllun cytbwys sy'n ddiogel, yn effeithiol ac yn gyflawnadwy.

RHAN 1

Adran A: Barn ynghylch mynediad i lwytho a dadlwytho yng nghanol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

Mae canol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr ardal i gerddwyr yn unig rhwng 10 AM a 6 PM bob dydd ar hyn o bryd. Y tu hwnt i'r oriau hyn, dim ond cerbydau sy'n llwytho neu'n dadlwytho sydd â mynediad i'r ardal. Mae masnachwyr yng nghanol y dref wedi rhannu adborth y byddai'n well ganddynt ymestyn yr oriau ar gyfer llwytho a dadlwytho, a fyddai'n ei gwneud yn haws i gyflenwyr a chwsmeriaid ddanfon neu gasglu nwyddau.

Byddai'r newid hwn yn golygu lleihau'r oriau pan fo'r strydoedd yn fannau i gerddwyr yn unig. Er y byddai hyn yn gallu helpu busnesau, mae'n bwysig ystyried sut y gallai hyn effeithio ar gerddwyr ac awyrgylch canol y dref.

C1: A ydych chi'n cefnogi'r cynnig i ymestyn yr oriau lle caniateir llwytho a dadlwytho yng nghanol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr.

☐ Ydw

☐ Nac ydw, dylid cadw'r oriau presennol

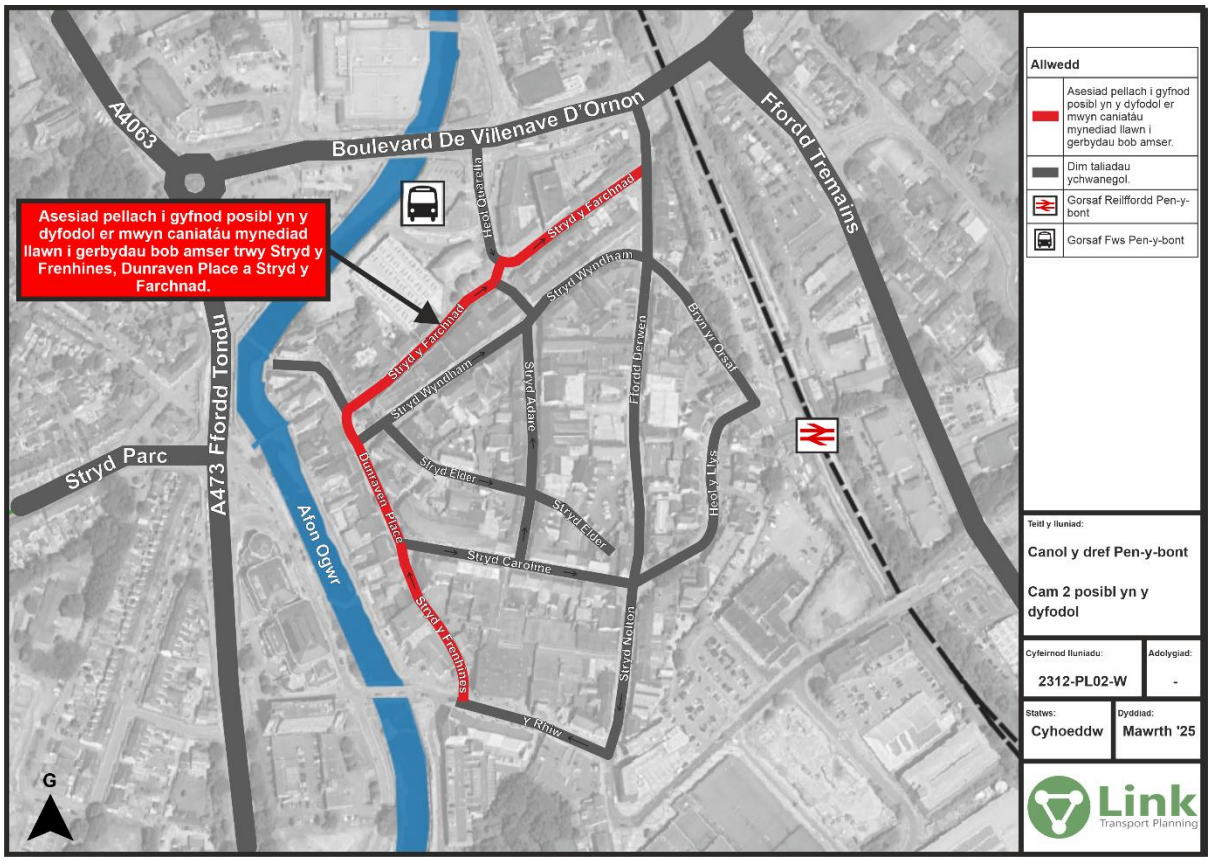
☐ Nac ydw, dylid lleihau'r oriau presennol

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Os wnaethoch chi ateb '*ydw*' neu *'nac ydw, dylid lleihau'r oriau presennol'*, pa oriau llwytho a dadlwytho ydych chi'n credu y dylid fod ar waith a pham?

Adran B: Barn ar gam posibl yn y dyfodol i ganiatáu mynediad llawn i gerbydau drwy'r llwybr sydd ar gyrion canol y dref, sef Stryd y Frenhines, Dunraven Place a Stryd y Farchnad

Mae rhai rhanddeiliaid wedi rhannu adborth y dylid agor y llwybr sydd ar gyrion canol y dref, sef Stryd y Frenhines, Dunraven Place a Stryd y Farchnad i bob traffig, bob amser. Nid yw hyn yn rhan o'r cynnig presennol, ond efallai y byddwn yn cynnal asesiad pellach i benderfynu a allai ffurfio cam dilynol yn y dyfodol i drefniadau mynediad canol y dref.



C1: A ddylai Stryd y Frenhines, Dunraven Place a Stryd y Farchnad fod yn fwy hygyrch i bob math o draffig?

☐ Dylent, drwy'r amser

☐ Dylent, ond dim ond y tu hwnt i'r oriau prysuraf o ran cerddwyr

☐ Na

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Nodwch unrhyw sylwadau pellach yr hoffech eu gwneud i esbonio eich ateb.

Adran C: Barn ar feicio yng nghanol y dref

Mae beicio yn ffurf o drafnidiaeth sy'n iach, cynhwysol, cost isel ac yn rhydd o allyriadau. Mae canllawiau presennol Llywodraeth Cymru yn datgan y dylid rhoi ystyriaeth bob amser i ganiatáu beicio drwy strydoedd sydd wedi'u dynodi ar gyfer cerddwyr. Fodd bynnag, ni chaniateir beicio drwy ganol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr ar hyn o bryd yn ystod oriau cerddwyr yn unig. Rhannwch eich barn am y canlynol os gwelwch yn dda:

C1: A ddylid caniatáu beicio drwy ganol y dref yn ystod oriau cerddwyr yn unig?

☐ Dylid

☐ Dylid, ond gyda rhai cyfyngiadau *(e.e., amseroedd, ardaloedd penodol)*

☐ Na, nid wyf yn credu y dylid caniatáu beicio

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Pam ydych chi'n teimlo fel hyn?

C2: A ydych yn credu y dylid gwella parcio ar gyfer beiciau yng nghanol y dref?

☐ Ydw

☐ Nac ydw

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Os wnaethoch chi ateb '*Ydw*' i *C2*, esboniwch ble mae angen rhagor neu well leoedd parcio a pha nodweddion sydd bwysicaf i chi *(e.e. lleoliad ger cyrchfan, diogelwch personol a diogelwch y beic, amddiffyn rhag tywydd).*

Adran D: Barn ar leoedd parcio anabl yng nghanol y dref

Mae lleoedd parcio anabl ar gael yng nghanol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr ym meysydd parcio'r Cyngor, meysydd parcio preifat, a lleoedd parcio bathodyn glas dynodedig ar y stryd. Mae adborth wedi cynnig y byddai rhagor o leoedd parcio bathodyn glas yn ei gwneud yn haws i ddefnyddwyr anabl fynd i leoedd yng nghanol y dref. Un syniad yw ychwanegu rhagor o leoedd parcio bathodyn glas ar strydoedd fel Ffordd Derwen. Gellid gwneud hyn drwy ddefnyddio ardaloedd sydd wedi'u neilltuo ar hyn o bryd ar gyfer tacsis nad ydynt yn cael eu defnyddio'n aml.

C1: A ydych yn credu y dylwn greu rhagor o leoedd parcio anabl yn lle cilfannau tacsis neu lwytho nad ydynt yn cael eu defnyddio'n aml?

☐ Ydw, credaf y byddai'n syniad da

☐ Nac ydw, nid wyf yn credu y dylem golli cilfannau tacsis neu lwytho

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Pam ydych chi'n teimlo fel hyn?

C2: Gan feddwl yn ehangach, a ydych chi'n credu bod digon o leoedd parcio anabl ar gael i alluogi mynediad at ganol y dref?

☐ Ydw, credaf fod digon o leoedd

☐ Nac ydw, mae angen rhagor o leoedd parcio bathodyn glas

☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Pam ydych chi'n teimlo fel hyn?

RHAN 2 CWESTIYNAU DEWISOL YCHWANEGOL

Byddem yn gwerthfawrogi eich adborth ychwanegol ynghylch y mynediad presennol i ganol y dref a'ch blaenoriaethau ar gyfer gwella. Bydd hyn yn ein helpu i ddeall amodau presennol yn well a nodi meysydd pellach i'w gwella.

Mae pob cwestiwn yn ddewisol a bydd eich adborth yn dal i gael ei ddefnyddio hyd yn oed os n: ad ydych yn ateb y cwestiynau yn yr adran hon.

Adran A: Ynghylch eich defnydd o'r ardal

C1: Sut ydych chi'n teithio i ganol y dref fel arfer? *(Dewiswch bob un sy'n berthnasol)*

- ☐ Cerdded
- ☐ Beicio
- ☐ Trafnidiaeth gyhoeddus *(e.e., bws, trên)*
- ☐ Car preifat
- ☐ Tacsi neu wasanaethau rhannu car
- ☐ Nid wyf yn ymweld â chanol y dref yn aml
- ☐ Arall *(nodwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

C2: Sut fyddech chi'n sgorio pa mor rhwydd yw cael mynediad i ganol y dref trwy gerdded, beicio a defnyddio trafnidiaeth gyhoeddus?

- ☐ Rhagorol
- ☐ Da
- ☐ Gweddol
- ☐ Gwael
- ☐ Gwael iawn
- ☐ Ddim yn siŵr

Cwestiwn dilynol: Pam wnaethoch chi ddewis yr opsiwn hwnnw?

C3: Pa mor aml ydych chi'n ymweld â chanol y dref?

- ☐ Yn ddyddiol
- ☐ Sawl gwaith yr wythnos
- ☐ Unwaith yr wythnos
- ☐ Unwaith y mis
- ☐ Llai nag unwaith y mis
- ☐ Nid wyf erioed wedi bod

C4: Beth yw'r prif reswm dros eich ymweliadau â chanol y dref? *(Dewiswch bob un sy'n berthnasol)*

- ☐ Rwyf yn byw yng nghanol y dref
- ☐ Rwyf yn gweithio gerllaw
- ☐ Rwyf yn mynychu'r ysgol gerllaw
- ☐ Siopa

☐ Cymdeithasu neu weithgareddau hamdden

☐ Defnyddio gwasanaethau *(e.e., gofal iechyd, gwasanaethau cyhoeddus)*

☐ Nid wyf yn ymweld â chanol y dref

☐ Arall *(nodwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

C5: Sut hoffech chi deithio i ganol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr?

☐ Cerdded

☐ Beicio

☐ Bws

☐ Trên

☐ Car *(gyrrwr)*

☐ Car *(teithiwr)*

☐ Olwyn *(gan ddefnyddio cadair olwyn neu gymorthyddion symudedd eraill)*

☐ Tacsi

☐ Arall *(nodwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Cwestiwn dilynol: Beth sy'n eich atal rhag defnyddio'r dull o'ch dewis i deithio i ganol y dref?

C6: Beth fyddai'n eich annog i ymweld â chanol tref Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr yn amlach? *(Dewiswch bob un sy'n berthnasol)*

- ☐ Gwell llwybrau cerdded, beicio, neu gysylltiadau trafnidiaeth gyhoeddus
- ☐ Gwell mynediad ar gyfer ceir *(mwy o leoedd parcio neu lai o gyfyngiadau)*
- ☐ Gwell siopau, bwytai, neu opsiynau adloniant
- ☐ Mwy o ddigwyddiadau a gweithgareddau yng nghanol y dref
- ☐ Gwell diogelwch
- ☐ Strydoedd a lleoedd cyhoeddus glanach
- ☐ Gwell cyfleusterau, megis toiledau cyhoeddus neu fannau eistedd
- ☐ Dim byd, rwyf yn fodlon gyda'r cynnig presennol
- ☐ Ddim yn siŵr
- ☐ Arall *(nodwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Cwestiwn dilynol: Pam ydych chi'n teimlo fel hyn?

C7: A oes gennych unrhyw broblemau iechyd sy'n effeithio ar eich symudedd?

- ☐ Nac ydw
- ☐ Nam ar y clyw
- ☐ Amhariad ar y golwg
- ☐ Symudedd cyfyngedig
- ☐ Byddai'n well gennyf beidio â dweud
- ☐ Arall *(nodwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Monitro cydraddoldeb

Dan Ddeddf Cydraddoldeb 2010 a Dyletswyddau Cydraddoldeb y Sector Cyhoeddus, mae gan y Cyngor ddyletswydd gyfreithiol i edrych ar sut mae ei benderfyniadau'n effeithio ar bobl oherwydd gallent fod â nodweddion penodol. Mae'r cwestiwn hwn yn ddewisol.

Sut fyddai'r cynigion hyn yn effeithio arnoch chi oherwydd eich:

Rhywedd, Oedran, Ethnigrwydd, Anabledd, Rhywioldeb, Crefydd / Cred, Hunaniaeth ryweddol, Statws perthynas, Beichiogrwydd, Dewis iaith?

Hoffem glywed eich barn ynghylch effaith y cynigion ar yr iaith Gymraeg, yn arbennig y cyfleoedd i bobl ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg ac i beidio trin yr iaith Gymraeg yn llai ffafriol na'r Saesneg.

Pa effaith fyddent yn ei gael yn eich barn chi?

Sut ellir cynyddu effeithiau cadarnhaol, neu liniaru effeithiau negyddol?

Eglurwch hefyd sut y credwch chi y gellir creu neu addasu'r cynigion fel eu bod yn cael effaith gadarnhaol ar y cyfleoedd i bobl ddefnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg, ac i beidio trin yr iaith Gymraeg yn llai ffafriol na'r iaith Saesneg, a sicrhau nad oes effeithiau niweidiol ar y cyfleoedd i bobl ddefnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg.

Er mwyn ein helpu i sicrhau ein bod yn cyflwyno gwasanaethau i bawb sydd eu hangen mewn ffordd deg, byddem yn ddiolchgar pe baech yn ateb ychydig mwy o gwestiynau amdanoch chi eich hun.

Bydd yr wybodaeth a ddarparwch yn cael ei chadw'n gyfrinachol a'i defnyddio at ddibenion monitro cydraddoldeb yn unig.

Nid oes yn rhaid ichi ateb y cwestiynau isod fel rhan o'r holiadur. Nid oes rhaid ichi ateb unrhyw un o'r cwestiynau os nad ydych eisiau gwneud hynny.

Fel arall, gallwch ddewis ateb rhai cwestiynau a pheidio ag ateb rhai eraill drwy ddewis yr opsiwn 'byddai'n well gennyf beidio â dweud'.

A ydych chi'n fodlon ateb ychydig mwy o gwestiynau amdanoch chi eich hun?

☐ Ydw

☐ Nac ydw

A ydych chi'n ystyried eich hun yn anabl?

☐ Ydw

☐ Nac ydw

☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

Dewiswch eich categori oedran:

☐ Dan 18 oed

☐ 18 – 24

☐ 25 – 34

☐ 35 – 44

☐ 45 – 54

☐ 55 – 64

☐ 65 – 74

☐ 75 +

☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

Sut fyddech chi'n disgrifio eich cenedligrwydd? *(Ticiwch un opsiwn)*

☐ Cymraeg

☐ Gwyddeleg Gogleddol

☐ Albanaidd

☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

☐ Saesneg

☐ Arall *(manylwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Beth yw eich grŵp ethnig? *(Ticiwch un opsiwn)*

- ☐ Gwyn
- ☐ Asiaidd/ Asiaidd Prydeinig
- ☐ Du/ Affricanaidd/ Caribïaidd/ Du Prydeinig
- ☐ Grwpiau cymysg/ aml-ethnig
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud
- ☐ Arall (manylwch os gwelwch yn dda):

Beth yw eich crefydd neu gred? *(Ticiwch un opsiwn)*

- ☐ Dim crefydd
- ☐ Hindŵaidd
- ☐ Iddewig
- ☐ Cristnogol
- ☐ Mwslimaidd
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud
- ☐ Bwdhaidd
- ☐ Sicaidd
- ☐ Arall *(manylwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Sut fyddech chi'n disgrifio eich rhywedd? *(Ticiwch un opsiwn)*

- ☐ Gwryw
- ☐ Benyw
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud
- ☐ Mewn ffordd arall *(manylwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

A ydych chi'n feichiog?

- ☐ Ydw
- ☐ Nac ydw
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

A ydych chi wedi rhoi genedigaeth o fewn y 26 wythnos ddiwethaf?

- ☐ Do
- ☐ Naddo
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

Beth yw eich cyfeiriadedd rhywiol? *(Ticiwch unrhyw opsiwn)*

- ☐ Heterorywiol/ Syth
- ☐ Dyn hoyw
- ☐ Deurywiol
- ☐ Menyw Hoyw/ Lesbiadd
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud
- ☐ Arall *(manylwch os gwelwch yn dda):*

Beth yw eich statws priodasol? *(Ticiwch un opsiwn)*

- ☐ Sengl
- ☐ Wedi ysgaru
- ☐ Gyda phartner
- ☐ Gweddw
- ☐ Priod/ Partneriaeth sifil
- ☐ Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud

A ydych chi'n gallu? *(Ticiwch unrhyw opsiwn perthnasol)*

	Ddim o gwbl	Ychydig	Yn weddol dda	Ydw, yn rhugl	Gwell gennyf beidio â dweud
Siarad Cymraeg	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Darllen Cymraeg	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ysgrifennu Cymraeg	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Diolch am roi o’ch amser i gwblhau'r arolwg hwn.

Dychwelwch at:

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

Yr Adran Ymgynghori

Y Swyddfeydd Dinesig

Stryd yr Angel

Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

CF31 4WB

E-bost:

consultation@bridgend.gov.uk

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APPENDIX 2

Notice of 'Call-In'

Committee: Overview & Scrutiny Committee

1. Decision Subject To Call-In:

Title: Details inc date Bridgend Town Centre Access – Tuesday 23rd September 2025

2. Member(s) of the Committee Wishing to Call the Decision In

Name
Cllr Steven Bletsoe
Cllr Steven Easterbrook
Cllr Freya Bletsoe – Chair Scrutiny Committee Social Services, Health and Wellbeing
Cllr Ian Spiller
Cllr Tim Wood

3. Reasons for the Call-In

Decision made:-

1. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities to:- (i) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the extension of loading and unloading hours to 11:00 and recommence it after 16:00, with additional flexibility allowed for emergency situations and events; (ii) pursue an 18-month ETRO to permit cycling within the pedestrianised area, subject to the satisfactory completion of the safety risk assessments; (iii) pursue an 18-month ETRO for the conversion of under-utilised taxi bays on Derwen Road to Blue-badge parking bays.

Various reasons including but not exclusive to those listed below:

- There was a general lack of professional curiosity throughout the questions from Cabinet in relation to the correlation of the details in the report from the consultants and recommendations from Officers, which they subsequently approved. For example:-
- Recommendation 9.1 (i) states "pursue an 18-month ETRO for the extension of loading and unloading hours to 11:00 and recommence it after 16:00, with additional flexibility allowed for emergency situations and events" and the Corporate Director states at 04:30 of the recording that "The Bridgend town centre pedestrianisation was first completed back in November 2004 and since that time traders have subsequently indicated that the associated access restrictions are affecting footfall and also economic performance of the town centre. Now the Bridgend town centre Plan assessed the findings from previous access studies and it concluded that we should look at options for improving town centre access and but these must take account of changes in national policy and guidance" However, this proposal of an 18 month ETRO from the extension of loading and unloading hours does not

increase access for those seeking to use Bridgend Town Centre shops, it simply increases the amount of time that people can load and unload vehicles. The definition of loading/unloading vehicles under UK legislation is "Loading and unloading vehicles involves the continuous process of moving goods to and from a vehicle, requiring the vehicle to be stopped for the time necessary to complete the task, including any necessary checks of the goods or paperwork. The activity must be continuous, and the vehicle must be moved as soon as loading or unloading is finished. Non-commercial activities like shopping or having a chat do not count as loading or unloading, and for commercial deliveries, the goods must be ready for collection or delivery" This ability to load and unload a vehicle in Bridgend Town Centre does **not** allow shoppers to shop in Bridgend Town Centre. The proposal to extend the hours that the barrier is "down" does not improve access for those who the traders are seeking to improve access. There is a 24 hour "no parking" and a "loading/unloading only" traffic order that covers Bridgend Town Centre and the fact that people park in the town is purely down to the decision of the authority not to enforce the traffic order in place, when the barrier is lowered. Currently during the hours of 6pm to 10am vehicles are parked in Bridgend Town Centre in contravention of that traffic order and the extension of the times of the barrier being lowered does nothing to address that. For this proposal to work, it requires a change to that order at the same time, not just the extension of time that the barrier is lowered. There was no questioning of the Officers over this point and there should have been.

- At 05:50 of the recording of the meeting the Corporate Directors states "Now the study concluded that options two and three, as set out in paragraph 2.2 of your report, would reintroduce significant traffic volumes into Bridgend, and it would also impact the street typology from pedestrian priority. And it would necessitate kerb up stands, and both of those thing's conflict, I'm afraid, with both national and local policy. So, option one was what they felt that we should go forward with, which was supported by complementary multimodal package." Firstly, there is no reference at all to the "National or Local Policies", at no point does the report detail how proposal 2 and 3 conflict with them. In the absence of this detail in the report, there were no questions from any Cabinet member as to the details of the policies and how the proposals conflict with them. Most importantly there were no questions from the Cabinet to why options 2 and 3 were included in the public consultation if they conflicted with national and local policies.
- The kerb height of the route along Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street is low in places, but it is not unique in Bridgend Town Centre. This kerb height is identical to the area of road/pavement on Nolton Street between Derwen Road and Rhiw Hill, in fact the kerbs on the proposed route are higher than that of the kerbs on Nolton Street, which was recently resurfaced and deemed to be a lawful and safe layout. From records, there have been no accidents between pedestrians and vehicles on this stretch of road and it remains open at present. There were no questions from cabinet on this matter and no scrutiny as to why options two and three were discounted on the basis that a road in the Town Centre, barely 100m away from the proposed scheme are of identical kerb height and are safe and lawful for vehicles and pedestrians to access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Current Cabinet members are aware of this fact as it was pointed out to them in a previous "walk around" Bridgend Town Centre with local members who cover the area. Cabinet, knowing this, should therefore have questioned this statement and received satisfactory answers before making their decision.
- Page 41 of the report shows that under the question "Should Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street be more accessible to all traffic?" 56% of respondents stated "Yes, at all times", 22% stated "No" and 19% "Yes, but only outside of the busiest pedestrian times." Therefore, the Officer's recommendations are based on the lowest supported option (other than "Not Sure"). There was no

questioning from Cabinet as to why the recommendation was for the lowest supported option and the public would rightly expect scrutiny of that decision. They were asked to voice their opinion and those who voted "Yes at all times" or "No" deserve an answer as to why their voice (which was the majority and second highest response" has been bypassed for the third highest answer. Failure of the Cabinet to ask this question and receive an adequate answer fails the public and undermines the findings of the entire survey. If, as the Corporate Director stated in the meeting, that options 2 and 3 were not possible to progress due conflicting with national and local polices then Cabinet should have questioned why two of the three options made available in the public consultation were not possible and that the public were in fact being given "Hobson's Choice" and only one of the three options was possible. Cabinet failed to ask this question when the public would rightly question this fact. An answer is needed on this important matter.

- Section 2.3 of the cover report on page 26 of the Cabinet Papers states "external funding for their implementation is unlikely to be available" in relation to options 2 and 3 available for reintroduction of traffic. No Cabinet member asked what work had been done in relation to coming to this conclusion, there is no reference to this matter in the consultation report. No Cabinet Member asked about the use of the word "unlikely" as it is not a definitive response. It is not a Yes or No, it is "unlikely" and needs full clarification before the Cabinet comes to their decision to approve the recommendation.

- It is stated in the report and reaffirmed by the Corporate Director that this proposal is to "introduce an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO)" although there is no reference in the report or during the presentation as to why a period of 18 months has been selected. During the meeting it is referenced that it is a "flexible order" that could see changes to the hours of the barriers status of being either "open or closed" but no reference at all to any other additional measures that could be implemented if the survey of effectiveness is not achieved. Cabinet should have questioned why a period of 18 months had been recommended as the timescales and what other options could be available to support the recommendations. They did not do this and therefore additional scrutiny of this is required through the call in process.
- During the scrutiny of the paper, Cabinet asked what the success of the proposals would be and how they would be measured. The answer was given that the lack of any accidents or incidents would be used to measure the success, however the view of those who have signed this "call in" is that there needs to be a view of residents as to whether they have seen improved access and the views of traders to whether they have seen improved trading should have been added as performance indicator. Whilst safety of pedestrians is paramount, the commercial impact of the ETRO should be considered as a measurement. It should have been requested by the Cabinet to be included into the recommendations and it wasn't. We ask that this matter is scrutinised properly and considered by the committee and that more detailed KPIs are attached to the period of review so that a greater understanding of the effectiveness of the experiment can be understood and acted on.

- Recommendation 9.1 (ii) states "pursue an 18-month ETRO to permit cycling within the pedestrianised area, subject to the satisfactory completion of the safety risk assessments" yet 3.4.1 of the consultant's report (page 42 of the papers shows that 37% of people stated "Yes" to the question "Should cycling be allowed in the town centre during pedestrianised hours?" an exactly similar amount of 37% stated "No" to that question and 19% stated "Yes, but with some restrictions e.g. certain times and areas".

On this basis, as many residents who took part in the survey stated that No, they would not like to see cycling allowed in the town centre as they stated Yes. Yet, the Cabinet did not challenge the Officers to justify why the recommendation was put forward on the basis that 37% of people (an equal amount) said No.

In relation to those who stated Yes, with restrictions, there were no questions from the Cabinet around the details of those restrictions would be and on the basis that the Yes was caveated with the need to control either the times or the locations, the Cabinet approved the decision without any clear detail on what those controls would be. There were general questions around the point, but nothing of any detail for those who voted in this way to understand what would be in place. That Yes would easily be a No if the respondents were not happy with the controls in place and the Cabinet should have sought details on the controls before accepting the recommendations. Failure to know what the restrictions are and whether they would be acceptable to that 19% could in fact lead to 56% of respondents saying No to this question, if they are unhappy with the restrictions in place. Cabinet should have sought answers to this and been happy with the responses on behalf of this 19% of respondents.

- There was a report on Bridgend Town Centre Access on 7th June 2016 which can be found at 160607 5 Bridgend Town Centre Access Report.pdf In that report the Cabinet of BCBC of the day approved the following recommendations:-

8.1.1 Consider the key findings of the Queen Street, Dunraven Place Market Street Access Study;

8.1.2 Note the recommendations contained therein; and if the recommendations are accepted, to:

8.1.3 Authorise officers to undertake the necessary consultation outlined in the report;

8.1.4 Authorise officers to consider external funding options to meet the implementation costs, in the event that the consultation process indicates a positive response to the proposal to change the pedestrianisation order;

8.1.5 Receive a further report upon completion of the consultation exercise together with the findings of the full EIA and any potential external funding options.

Despite reference being made to the recent motion of Full Council from Councillor Ian Williams, there is no reference in the report to the above resolution of Cabinet or acknowledgement of this public consultation that led to the report which also showed overwhelming support for the full re-introduction of controlled vehicles into the area proposed. Failure of the Cabinet to question this and make reference to the findings of that report and subsequent resolution is a failing of the public and their stated wishes

- Therefore, we believe that the decision has not been properly scrutinised or considered, the necessary questions have not been asked or answered and that the Cabinet have not shown proper scrutiny of a report to them that is not supported by the results of the public consultation included in it. On that basis we believe that it requires further scrutiny before a decision to approve the recommendations is reached.

4. **Date of Call-In:** 29th September 2025

Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) form

This document is a multi-purpose tool ensuring the appropriate steps are taken to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty Equality Impact Assessment legislation and to demonstrate that we have shown due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage when taking strategic decisions under the Socio-economic Duty. It also ensures consideration of the Welsh Language Standards.
Click here to access more information and guidance to help you complete this EIA.

- This assessment should be carried out **before your policy or proposal commences but after your engagement or consultation activities.**
- Your EIA screening form should have informed your consultation or engagement activities.
- If you are undertaking a full public consultation as part of your policy or proposal this form should be completed after the consultation has concluded.
- The results of your consultation and engagement activities will have helped you to gain a better understanding of the needs of those who may be impacted by the policy or proposal.
- **All sections and all questions require a response and must not be left blank even if they are 'not applicable'.**

Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed:	Bridgend Town Centre Access Study
Brief description and aim of policy or proposal:	The ETRO package includes: 1. Extension of loading/unloading until 11:00 and resumption from 16:00. 2. Permitting cycling in pedestrianised areas (with monitoring and potential restrictions if required). 3. Conversion of underutilised taxi/loading bays on Derwen Road to Blue Badge parking. General vehicular traffic will not be reintroduced at this stage, as this conflicts with planning and transport policy and would require major engineering interventions. This responds to the Town Centre Masterplan (2021) vision for a sustainable, vibrant centre, is consistent with the LDP 2018–2033 emphasis on active travel and inclusive design, and reflects Atkins' recommendation to pursue a "light-touch" approach rather than full de-pedestrianisation.
Who is responsible for delivery of the policy or proposal?	Bridgend County Borough Council
Date EIA screening completed:	18/12/2024

Evidence

Record of other consultation/engagement with people from equality groups, people who represent these groups, staff who work with groups, including any sessions run as part of a public consultation.

Group or persons consulted	Date/venue and number of people	Feedback/areas of concern raised	Action Points
Stakeholder Visioning Workshop (BCBC, BDP, external stakeholders)	11 March 2020, BCBC Civic Offices (approx. 30 participants)	Desire for active travel connections, flexible vehicular access, improved safety, café/cultural quarter, more residential opportunities.	Feed into Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan objectives and proposals.
Public drop-in sessions	23 April 2025 (1–7pm), 29 April 2025 (9am–4pm), The Bridge, Bridgend (17 attendees)	Concerns re: pedestrian safety if cycling allowed; strong support for more Blue Badge spaces; mixed views on reintroducing traffic.	Incorporate into EIA; further risk assessment and, if progressed, plan monitoring of cycling trial; progress Blue Badge conversion on Derwen Road.
Online / paper consultation survey	4 April – 2 May 2025; 756 responses (754 online, 1 paper, 1 email)	60% supported extended loading/unloading; 56% supported cycling (19% conditional); 64% supported additional Blue Badge bays; 75% some support for more traffic access, 22% opposed.	ETRO to extend loading, permit cycling with monitoring, and add Blue Badge bays; re-opening to all traffic not progressed due to policy misalignment.
Disability Wales, RNIB, Bridgend & District Visual Impairment Society	Contacted during April 2025 consultation (responses limited)	Raised concerns about conflicts between cyclists and visually/audibly impaired pedestrians; supported enhanced disabled parking.	Incorporate inclusive design principles; ensure signage, enforcement and monitoring of cycle use; deliver Blue Badge bays.
Age Cymru and Older People's Commissioner (invited)	Contacted April 2025	Limited direct participation; acknowledged accessibility and mobility issues.	Consider mobility/age-related impacts in EIA; continue targeted outreach for older people.
Race Council Cymru / African Community Centre	Contacted April 2025	Not able to participate directly; concern for inclusive communication and equal access.	Ensure bilingual and culturally inclusive materials; maintain outreach through voluntary sector channels.
Bridgend Youth Council / Youth Mayor	Contacted April 2025	Low engagement; feedback suggested improved safety and active travel links would encourage young people to cycle/walk more.	Promote safer routes and signage; include youth groups in monitoring stage.
Traders / Town Centre Business Forum	Engagement through survey and leaflets (400+ distributed, April 2025)	Requested longer loading/unloading periods; concern about footfall; some support for partial traffic access.	Extended loading/unloading adopted; traffic access reviewed but not advanced.

If you undertook a full public consultation please enter the details and a summary of the findings here:	

Please list any existing documents, reports, evidence from previous engagement, previous EIAs, service user information etc. which have been used to inform this assessment.	**Existing documents, reports and evidence used to inform this assessment** • **Equality Act 2010** – provides the statutory framework for Equality Impact Assessments, defining the nine protected characteristics and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. • **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards** – ensures the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English. • **Socio-economic Duty (Equality Act 2010, Part 1, Section 1 as commenced in Wales in 2021)** – duty to have due regard to reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. • **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** – statutory duty to contribute to the seven national well-being goals, including a more equal Wales and cohesive communities. • **Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013** and associated Guidance – places a duty on local authorities to promote walking and cycling, particularly within town centres. • **Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024)** – sets the sustainable transport hierarchy and requirements for inclusive place-making. • **Future Wales: The National Plan 2040** – regional framework emphasising sustainable accessibility and vibrant town centres. • **Bridgend Local Development Plan (2018–2033)** – local policy framework prioritising sustainable transport and inclusive regeneration. • **Bridgend Local Transport Plan (2015–2030)** – transport objectives for accessibility, active travel, and inclusive mobility. **Project-specific and local evidence:** • **Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan (2021)** – vision, objectives, and outcomes from extensive stakeholder workshops. • **Capita Town Centre Access Study (2016)** – assessment of road safety risks from de-pedestrianisation, identifying reduced collision rates after pedestrianisation. • **WSP Town Centre Access Study (2019)** – further review of de-pedestrianisation risks, supporting retention of pedestrian priority. • **AtkinsRéalis Bridgend Town Centre Access Study: Options Appraisal (2024)** – appraisal of three access options, inclusive design considerations, and policy alignment, recommending a light-touch ETRO approach. • **Equality Impact Assessment Screening (December 2024)** – identified potential negative impacts on disabled people, older people, and pregnant women, and confirmed the need for a full EIA. • **Public Engagement Consultation Report (Link Transport Planning & Sustrans Cymru, June 2025)** – 756 survey responses, bilingual engagement, equality monitoring and feedback from protected groups.

	• **Cabinet Report: Bridgend Town Centre Access (July 2025)** – summarised consultation outcomes, road safety audit findings, and Cabinet direction to proceed with an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO).

If you have identified any data gaps then you **MUST** undertake more consultation/engagement/research.

Data Gaps Identified:
A key data gap relates to the safety of cycling in pedestrianised environments, particularly regarding potential conflict with pedestrians, including those with disabilities and older people. While consultation responses and previous studies highlight both support and concern, there is limited *local evidence* on how shared use will operate in practice in Bridgend town centre.

Action to Address Data Gaps:
To address this, Bridgend County Borough Council has:

- Commissioned an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and ongoing safety risk assessments to test the proposed changes under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO).
- Committed to monitoring and reporting throughout the 18-month ETRO period to gather real-world evidence of interactions between cyclists and pedestrians.
- Commissioned and reviewed academic and industry research on shared space and cycling in pedestrian zones, to benchmark Bridgend against best practice examples.
- Ensured that further engagement with disability groups and access representatives will take place during the ETRO to capture lived experiences and inform any necessary adjustments.

Assessment of Impact

Mitigating Actions in the Final Proposal:

- **Reduce or remove unlawful or negative impacts / disadvantage**
  - Introduce an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) so changes can be trialled and adapted in response to monitoring.
  - Carry out independent Road Safety Audits and ongoing risk assessments to address concerns over cyclist–pedestrian interaction.
  - Provide clear bilingual signage and awareness campaigns to guide safe cyclist behaviour and reassure vulnerable users.
- **Improve equality of opportunity**
  - Convert underutilised taxi bays to Blue Badge parking on Derwen Road, improving access for disabled people and those with restricted mobility.
  - Extend loading/unloading times to better support traders, services, and customers, including those delivering to or collecting goods on behalf of vulnerable residents.
  - Permit adapted cycles and mobility aids to use the pedestrianised streets at all times.
- **Introduce positive change**
  - Enhance cycle parking facilities (secure, covered, well-located) to encourage sustainable and inclusive travel.
  - Improve wayfinding and street furniture to make the town centre more navigable and welcoming for all users, including children, older people, and disabled visitors.

- **Reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage**
  - Support cycling and walking as low-cost transport modes, ensuring residents without access to a car can reach jobs, shops, education, and leisure in the town centre.
  - Ensure consultation and monitoring activities continue to include seldom-heard groups (e.g. low-income families, homeless residents, young people).
- **Provide opportunities for people to use the Welsh language**
  - All signage, surveys, consultation materials, and public communications will be produced bilingually in Welsh and English.
  - Bilingual facilitators will support in-person engagement sessions to encourage participation from Welsh speakers.
- **Ensure the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English**
  - Welsh will be used in parallel with English across all communications, and contributions made in Welsh during engagement will be treated equally.
  - Ongoing monitoring of compliance with Welsh Language Standards will ensure parity.

Protected characteristics

Based on the data you have analysed, and the results of consultation or engagement, consider what the potential impact will be upon people with protected characteristics (negative or positive). Include any examples of how the policy or proposal helps to promote equality. If you do identify any adverse impact you **must seek legal advice as to whether, based on the evidence provided, an adverse impact is or is potentially discriminatory, and identify steps to mitigate any adverse impact – these actions will need to be included in your action plan.**

	What are the impacts of your policy or proposal? **Please place an X in the relevant box**			**Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation and any supporting evidence.**	**Considerations to mitigate negative impact(s) and/or secure positive impact(s)**
	Positive impact(s)	**Negative impact(s)**	**No impact**		
Gender			**x**	No evidence from consultation or engagement of different impacts for men or women. Access improvements (loading, parking, cycling) apply equally.	Continue gender-balanced engagement and ensure design takes account of women's safety in public spaces, particularly at night.
Disability	**x**	**x**		**Positive:** More Blue Badge parking on Derwen Road improves access for disabled drivers. Allowing adapted cycles supports independent mobility for some disabled users. **Negative:** Active Travel Act Guidance (2021) highlights that cycling in pedestrianised areas can cause concerns for people with sensory, physical or cognitive impairments who may not expect cyclists to be present. The screening EIA also noted potential	- Deliver Blue Badge bays before ETRO implementation. - Provide secure, well-located cycle parking to reduce obstruction and clutter. - Install clear bilingual signage and awareness campaigns to encourage safe cyclist behaviour. - Ongoing engagement with disability/access groups during ETRO monitoring to capture lived

				conflict for visually and hearing-impaired users if cycling volumes increase. While RNIB, Disability Wales and other groups were contacted during consultation, they did not provide detailed feedback.	experiences and adapt measures if required.
Race			**x**	Consultation profile was overwhelmingly White (97%). No specific disproportionate impacts identified, but low participation from ethnic minority groups.	Strengthen outreach through Race Council Cymru and African Community Centre. Ensure bilingual and culturally appropriate engagement and monitoring.
Religion and belief			**x**	No evidence of different impacts. Consultation included respondents of Christian, other faiths and no religion (47% no religion, 48% Christian). Neutral impact across faith groups.	Maintain equal access to parking/loading near places of worship and community venues.
Sexual Orientation			**x**	No evidence of disproportionate impact.	Ensure inclusive consultation continues. Apply “Secure by Design” principles to public realm to support perceptions of safety.
Age	**x**	**x**		**Positive:** Younger people benefit from inclusive cycling access, sustainable/low-cost travel, and more opportunities for active lifestyles. **Negative:** Older people raised concerns in consultation about safety and potential conflict with cyclists in pedestrianised areas. The Screening EIA (2024) also flagged potential hazards for elderly people due to increased cycling activity.	- Phase changes via ETRO with close monitoring of incidents and perceptions. - Deliver awareness campaigns/enforcement for safe cyclist behaviour. - Provide additional benches, seating and clear, accessible walking routes for older users.
Pregnancy & Maternity	**x**	**x**		**Positive:** Extended loading/unloading hours support expectant mothers and parents with prams, providing easier access to the town centre by car. **Negative:** The Screening EIA noted that pregnant women may feel more vulnerable in mixed-use pedestrian	- Carefully time and signpost loading periods to minimise conflict. - Use clear markings and signage to help manage pedestrian/cycle/vehicle interactions. - Monitor feedback from parents and

				environments where cyclists are present. Increased vehicle activity during permitted loading/unloading hours may also reduce pedestrian space and heighten perceived risk.	pregnant women during ETRO to identify and address issues early.
Transgender			**x**	No evidence of disproportionate impact identified.	Ensure inclusive communications and promote the town centre as a safe, welcoming environment.
Marriage and Civil partnership			**x**	No specific impacts identified.	Neutral – no mitigation required beyond maintaining equality of access.
Care Experienced			**x**	No evidence of disproportionate impacts. Low engagement levels among young people suggest under-representation in consultation.	Ensure ongoing engagement includes youth forums and care-experienced young people, particularly during ETRO monitoring.

Socio-economic impact

Does the evidence gathered suggest that your policy or proposal will have a disproportionate impact on people living in socio-economic disadvantage? This could include communities of place or communities of interest (i.e., where stakeholders, service users, staff, representative bodies, etc. are grouped together because of specific characteristics or where they live).

	What are the impacts of your policy or proposal? **Please place an X in the relevant box**			**Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation and any supporting evidence.**	**Considerations to mitigate negative impact(s) and/or secure positive impact(s)**
	Positive impact(s)	**Negative impact(s)**	**No impact**		
Socio-economic disadvantage	**x**			**Positive:** Allowing cycling in pedestrianised areas and providing more cycle parking supports low-cost, inclusive travel for people who may not own a car. This aligns with the Active Travel (Wales) Act guidance, which recognises active travel as a way to improve access to jobs, services and opportunities for	- Maintain engagement with disadvantaged groups through voluntary sector partners such as BAVO. - Monitor how changes affect affordability and accessibility of town centre access (active travel vs. car dependency). - Provide clear bilingual information on parking and access so low-income residents can make informed choices.

				people experiencing poverty or disadvantage. Converting underused taxi/loading bays to Blue Badge spaces improves access for disabled residents, some of whom are disproportionately affected by socio-economic inequality. Extended loading/unloading hours also support local traders, helping sustain employment and services important to lower-income households. **Evidence:** Consultation showed some support for improved walking, cycling and public transport connections (166 responses), though car access and town centre facilities were stronger priorities. The Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan and LDP both highlight that sustainable access is key to regeneration and tackling deprivation.	- Align ETRO monitoring with regeneration programmes to capture benefits for deprived areas.

Welsh language

Consider how your policy or proposal ensures that you are working in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011), to ensure the Welsh Language is not treated less favourably than the English Language, and that every opportunity is taken to promote the Welsh Language (beyond providing services bilingually) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community.

	What are the impacts of your policy or proposal for persons to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language? Please place an X in the relevant box			**Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation and any supporting evidence.**	**Record of mitigation in order to:** • **secure positive or more positive effects** • **avoid adverse effects or secure less adverse effects**
	Positive impact(s)	**Negative impact(s)**	**No impact**		
Will the policy or proposal impact on opportunities for	x			Consultation materials, surveys and publicity were provided in both Welsh	- Ensure all new TRO signage and information is fully bilingual. - Provide bilingual facilitators at in-person

people to use the Welsh language				and English. Around half of respondents reported being able to speak or read “a little” Welsh, showing a latent demand for bilingual provision. This proposal creates opportunities to continue normalising bilingual signage, communications and engagement in the town centre.	and virtual engagement events. - Maintain monitoring mechanisms to ensure Welsh speakers feel equally able to participate and that their contributions are valued.
Will the policy or proposal treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language	x			All statutory signage and consultation complied with the Welsh Language Standards. No evidence of adverse impact or of the Welsh language being treated less favourably.	- Continue compliance with Welsh Language Standards in all communications. - Encourage use of Welsh in town centre branding and wayfinding to promote cultural identity alongside access improvements.

Wider impact

Cumulative impact

What is the cumulative impact of this policy or proposal on different protected groups when considering other key decisions affecting these groups made by the organisation? (You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making, eg, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, eg, disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc)

Overall, the ETRO package (extended loading/unloading, cycling within pedestrianised hours, and additional Blue Badge bays on Derwen Road) interacts with—and generally supports—wider Council objectives on inclusive regeneration, active travel and well-being. In combination with other decisions, the cumulative effects are mixed: there are clear positives for access and affordability, alongside manageable risks concentrated on some groups.

Positive cumulative effects (reinforcing impacts):

- Disabled people & people with limited mobility: Additional Blue Badge provision strengthens equitable access to shops and services; extended loading/unloading helps carers and people transporting medical equipment or bulky items. These align with the Masterplan's focus on an inclusive, people-first centre and with the ETRO intent recorded in the Cabinet paper.
- Young people & lower-income residents: Allowing cycling and improving cycle parking supports low-cost mobility and access to jobs, education and leisure, complementing the Masterplan and policy emphasis on active modes.
- General equality & Welsh language: Continued bilingual engagement, signage and reporting normalises the use of Welsh alongside English in town-centre access changes, supporting participation by Welsh speakers.

Adverse or at-risk cumulative effects (to be monitored/mitigated):

- Disabled people (especially visually or hearing impaired), older people, and pregnant women/parents with prams: Introducing cycling in pedestrianised hours and more vehicles during permitted loading times could increase perceived (and, if unmanaged, actual) conflict in shared spaces. These risks are recognised in national active travel guidance and were reflected in consultation feedback from older respondents. The Atkins options work also cautions that increases in traffic alter street typology away from "pedestrian priority" unless design measures are upgraded.
- Multiple disadvantage (e.g., older/disabled and low-income): Where several vulnerabilities overlap, even small changes to space sharing can deter visits; if combined with any separate budget or service changes, impacts may compound.

Wider organisational context (how other decisions might combine):

- The ETRO approach is experimental and adjustable, which reduces cumulative risk compared with a permanent change. It also supports Corporate Plan outcomes on healthier travel and thriving towns without the significant engineering outlay and policy conflicts associated with re-introducing general traffic (Options 2/3), which Atkins judged misaligned with policy and likely to require costly physical works.

How we will manage cumulative risk and lock in positives:

- Design & management: Clear bilingual signage/markings; secure, well-located cycle parking to prevent pavement clutter; careful timing and stewarding of loading windows.
- Safety assurance: Independent Road Safety Audit and ongoing safety risk assessments; incident/perception monitoring focused on disabled people, older people and pregnant women/parents with prams. Adjust the ETRO (restrictions, timings, layout tweaks) if issues emerge.
- Targeted engagement: Continued outreach during the ETRO to disability/access groups, older people's forums and parents/carers; work with BAVO and community partners to reach seldom-heard and lower-income groups.
- Alignment with regeneration: Coordinate ETRO monitoring with Masterplan projects (wayfinding, seating, public realm) so improvements for vulnerable users are delivered in step with access changes.

Conclusion (cumulative):
Taken together with current regeneration and policy directions, the package is net-positive for equality and inclusion if the identified risks (primarily for disabled people, older people and pregnant women/parents) are actively managed through the ETRO's built-in monitoring and adjustment powers. This approach provides a controlled pathway to realise benefits while preventing compounded disadvantage.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty and specific duties, which help authorities to meet the general duty.

The aim of the general equality duty is to integrate considerations of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of public authorities. In summary, those subject to the equality duty, must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't

How does this policy or proposal demonstrate you have given due regard to the general equality duty?

This proposal has been developed in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and demonstrates due regard to the three elements of the general duty as follows:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- The proposals retain a pedestrian-priority environment and do not reintroduce unrestricted general traffic, avoiding disproportionate risks to vulnerable road users identified in the Atkins options appraisal.
- Road Safety Audits and ongoing risk assessments are being commissioned to ensure that measures (e.g. cycling access, extended loading) are safe for disabled people, older people and parents with prams.
- Bilingual signage and public information campaigns will be introduced to ensure rules and restrictions are clear, reducing scope for discriminatory outcomes through misuse or misunderstanding.

2. Advance equality of opportunity

- Additional Blue Badge bays on Derwen Road will make the town centre more accessible for disabled people.
- Permitting adapted cycles supports inclusion for people who use cycling as a mobility aid.
- Promoting active travel and cycle parking provides low-cost travel options for residents who may not have access to a car, reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.
- Engagement has been designed to be accessible (bilingual surveys, paper copies, drop-ins) and will continue through the 18-month ETRO to ensure seldom-heard groups are included.

3. Foster good relations

- Public consultation and targeted outreach to equality groups (including disability organisations, Race Council Cymru, older people's groups and youth forums) support dialogue between different groups and the Council.
- The experimental nature of the ETRO encourages collaboration and co-production of solutions, with adjustments possible in response to concerns raised during monitoring.
- Embedding the Welsh Language Standards ensures that Welsh speakers feel equally valued and able to participate in town centre life.

Conclusion:
The ETRO package has been designed to both advance equality of opportunity and inclusion (through active travel, adapted cycles and disabled parking) and to manage risks (through safety audits, signage, engagement and monitoring). This demonstrates due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in policy design, decision-making and ongoing delivery.

Procurement and partnerships

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires all public authorities to consider the needs of protected characteristics when designing and delivering public services, including where this is done in partnership with other organisations or through procurement of services. The Welsh Language Standards also require all public authorities to consider the effects of any policy decision, or change in service delivery, on the Welsh language, which includes any work done in partnership or by third parties. We must also ensure we consider the Socio-economic Duty when planning major procurement and commissioning decisions to consider how such arrangements can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.

Will this policy or proposal be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or partners?

	Please place an X in the relevant box:
Yes	X
No	

If yes what steps will you take to comply with the General Equality Duty, Welsh Language Legislation and the Socio-Economic Duty in regard to procurement and/or partnerships?

	Steps taken to ensure compliance:
General Equality Duty	• Bridgend County Borough Council uses consultants and contractors to support design, consultation and safety auditing. All partners are required to operate in line with the Equality Act 2010 and adopt inclusive approaches to engagement. • Engagement processes have included accessible venues, bilingual digital and paper survey formats, and targeted outreach to disability organisations, older people's groups and voluntary sector representatives. • Contractors and partners will be required to ensure that equality considerations remain embedded throughout ETRO implementation and monitoring.
Welsh Language legislation	• All communications, signage, and engagement materials will comply with the Welsh Language Standards, being provided bilingually in Welsh and English. • Partners have committed to providing bilingual facilitators at engagement events and to using qualified translators for written and digital content. • Consultation and reporting outputs will continue to be published in both languages to ensure parity.
Socio-economic duty	• Engagement plans were designed to include disadvantaged groups, with support from BAVO and other voluntary sector networks. • Active travel measures (cycling, walking, public transport connections) are specifically targeted at widening low-cost access to the town centre, reducing reliance on car ownership and helping to address inequalities of outcome. • Procurement and delivery contracts will include expectations to minimise barriers for lower-income residents (e.g. ensuring free participation in engagement, accessible digital and in-person channels).

Record of recommendation and decision

What is the recommendation for the policy or proposal based on assessment of impact on protected characteristics, Welsh Language and socio-economic impact?

If you chose to continue with the policy or proposal in its current form even though negative impacts have been identified a full justification should be provided and actions should be identified with the aim to reduce negative impacts.

	Please place an X in the relevant box	**Please explain fully the reasons for this judgement.**
Continue with the policy or proposal in its current form as no negative impacts have been identified		
Continue with the policy or proposal in its current form even though negative impacts have been identified	X	The consultation, technical studies and equality analysis identified some potential negative impacts, particularly for disabled people, older people and pregnant women/parents who may feel more vulnerable where cycling is introduced into pedestrianised areas and during extended loading/unloading times. Some vulnerable users specifically value the fully pedestrianised environment, meaning the additional hours of vehicle access for loading and unloading must be carefully monitored to ensure their safety and confidence in using the town centre are not diminished. However, these risks can be managed and mitigated through: • Delivery of additional Blue Badge parking on Derwen Road to improve disabled access. • Careful timing and management of loading/unloading periods to limit pedestrian–vehicle conflict. • Provision of clear bilingual signage, cycle parking and awareness campaigns to guide safe cyclist behaviour. • Commissioning of independent Road Safety Audits and safety risk assessments to identify and address issues. • Continuous monitoring under the 18-month ETRO, with powers to adjust, restrict or revoke measures if significant adverse impacts emerge.

		At the same time, the proposals create clear positive impacts by improving access for disabled people, widening affordable travel options, supporting local businesses, and promoting sustainable, inclusive travel. On balance, the scheme aligns with the Equality Act 2010, the Active Travel (Wales) Act, the Well-being of Future Generations Act and Welsh Language Standards. Proceeding with the ETRO in its current form ensures the authority fulfils statutory duties while retaining flexibility to adapt if risks materialise.
Do not continue with this policy or proposal as it is not possible to address the negative impacts.		

Monitoring action plan and review

Equality Impact assessment Action Plan

It is essential that you now complete the action plan. Include any considerations you have identified to mitigate negative impact(s) and/or secure positive impact(s) on protected characteristics, socio-economic impact and Welsh Language. Once your action plan is complete, please ensure that the actions are mainstreamed into the relevant Service Development Plan.

Action	Lead Person	Target for completion	Resources needed	Service Development plan for this action
Deliver additional Blue Badge bays on Derwen Road	BCBC Multi-department	Before ETRO comes into force	Cost for markings/signage TBC; staff time	TBC
Install clear bilingual signage and road markings for cycling and loading/unloading	BCBC Multi-department	Before ETRO implementation	Cost for signage/markings TBC; staff time	TBC
Provide secure, well-located cycle parking (including adapted cycle provision)	BCBC Regeneration	Within first 6 months of ETRO	Capital cost TBC; grant funding; staff time	TBC
Carry out independent Road Safety Audit (Stage 1) and	Appointed consultants	Ongoing – initial audit pre-ETRO; follow-up at 6 and 12 months	Consultant fees (grant funded where possible)	TBC

ongoing safety risk assessments				
Monitor and evaluate ETRO impacts (pedestrian comfort, cyclist behaviour, reported conflicts, perception of safety by disabled, older people and parents with prams)	BCBC Regeneration / Equalities Team / appointed consultants	Continuous through 18-month ETRO; interim report at 9 months	Staff time; monitoring equipment; engagement workshops	TBC
Targeted engagement with disability groups (e.g. RNIB, Disability Wales, Bridgend Visual Impairment Society) and older people's forums	BCBC Equalities Officer / Engagement Team	Quarterly during ETRO	Staff time; meeting costs	TBC
Engage with voluntary sector (e.g. BAVO) to ensure representation of socio-economically disadvantaged groups	BCBC Regeneration / Engagement Team	At each consultation/review stage	Staff time; venue/digital platform costs	TBC
Ensure all communications, surveys and monitoring reports are bilingual and meet Welsh Language Standards	BCBC Communications / Welsh Language Officer	Throughout ETRO	Translation budget; staff time	TBC
Produce and publish Cabinet report with final ETRO evaluation and equality review	Corporate Director Communities	End of 18-month ETRO	Staff time	TBC

Please outline how and when this EIA will be monitored in the future and when a review will take place:

Monitoring arrangements:	**Date of Review:**
Continual monitoring of equality impacts during the 18-month ETRO, with specific indicators including: • Traffic surveys (vehicle/cycle flows and pedestrian–cycle interactions) • Footfall monitoring in key streets • Shop vacancy rates as a measure of economic vitality • Road Safety Audits and ongoing safety risk assessments	Formal documented reviews every 6 months • First review: 6 months after ETRO implementation • Second review: 12 months after ETRO implementation

• Equality-focused user feedback (disabled people, older people, parents with prams) • Welsh language compliance checks on signage/communications	• Final review: 18 months (to inform Cabinet decision on permanency)

Approval

Date Full EIA completed:	14.08.25
Name of the person completing the Full EIA:	
Position of the person completing the Full EIA:	

Approved by (Head of Service or Corporate Director):	
Date Full EIA approved:	

Publication of EIA and feedback to consultation groups

It is important that the results of this impact assessment are published in a user friendly accessible format.

It is also important that you feedback to your consultation groups with the actions that you are taking to address their concerns and to mitigate against any potential adverse impact.

When complete, this form must be signed off and retained by the service and a copy should also be sent to equalities@bridgend.gov.uk

Where a full EIA has been completed this should be included as an appendix with the relevant cabinet report and therefore will become available publically on the website.

If you have queries in relation to the use of this toolkit please contact the Equalities Team on 01656 643664 or equalities@bridgend.gov.uk

Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**REINSTATEMENT OF BUS SERVICE VIA MAWDLAM/KENFIG POOL**
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES & CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.**
Responsible Officer:	**MARTIN MORGANS INTERIM HEAD OF OPERATIONS COMMUNITY SERVICES**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**Extension of provision on existing bus Service No. 63, funded through the Welsh Government's Bus Network Grant in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 3.6A**
Executive Summary:	**MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT No. B879, IN ORDER TO REINSTATE A BUS SERVICE VIA MAWDLAM/KENFIG POOL, USING THE EXISTING SERVICE No. 63 NETWORK, CURRENTLY OPERATING UNDER CONTRACT, FUNDED BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT'S BUS NETWORK GRANT (BNG).**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to modify the Supported Public Bus Routes Contract for the Bridgend to Porthcawl Service No. 63, in order to reinstate a bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool, which ceased operating in August 2019.

2. Background

2.1 Requests have been received from Cornelly ward members and residents, for the reintroduction of a bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool.

2.2 The previous bus service that operated via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool was Service No. 861, operated by Peyton Travel Ltd, which was part funded by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC). Although Service No. 861 still continues to operate, the BCBC funded element of the route via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool ceased operating in August 2019, due to Council approving a budget reduction proposal for Subsidised Bus Routes as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-20 to 2022-23. As a result, Peyton Travel Ltd cancelled this section of the route, as it was not deemed commercially viable.

2.3 Prior to this, Service No. 63B operated hourly via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool, as part of the Service No. 63 network, operated by First Cymru Buses Ltd, with part funding

from BCBC to operate hourly via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool. This service ceased in November 2019, based on an operational decision by First Cymru Buses Ltd.

2.4 Despite efforts by Officers to encourage other bus operators to take over the route, at present, no other bus operator has registered to operate a local bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool, deeming it as non-commercially viable.

3. Current situation/ proposal

3.1 Following the request to reintroduce a bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing and Officers approached First Cymru Buses Ltd to see if there would be any scope to reinstate a bus service via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool. As a result, First Cymru Buses Ltd identified an opportunity to reinstate Service No. 63B, using the current Service No. 63 network/timetable, which is operated under the Supported Public Bus Routes Contract. See Appendix 1 and Appendix 3.

3.2 The proposal from First Cymru Buses Ltd is to divert an hourly journey via Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool, between the hours of 09:41 to 15:39 (Monday to Saturday). See Appendix 2 and Appendix 4.

3.3 The Supported Public Bus Routes Contract was awarded to First Cymru Buses Ltd following an open procurement process carried out under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The contract commenced on 1st April 2024 for an initial term of three years and an option to extend for a further two years. The estimated value of the contract over the potential five year term is £6,600,000 and is funded through the Welsh Government Bus Network Grant (BNG).

3.4 Rule 3.6A of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules provides that, subject to the prior approval of the Monitoring Officer, an existing contract procured under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 may be modified in accordance with the regulatory grounds available under regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. One such ground would be regulation 72(1)(b) which permits a modification of a procured contract where all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- additional services have become necessary and were not included in the initial procurement;
- a change of contractor cannot be made for economic or technical reasons (such as requirements of interchangeability or interoperability);
- a change of contractor would cause significant inconvenience or substantial duplication of costs for the contracting authority; and
- any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract.

Where a contracting authority relies upon the above ground to modify a public contract it must publish a contract modification notice after the modification is made in accordance with regulation 51 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

3.5 It is considered that the modification meets all of the conditions in 3.4 for the following reasons:

- The addition of service provision has been identified as an improvement to the bus network, which had not been identified in the initial procurement of bus services funded by the Welsh Government's Bus Network Grant (BNG).
- As an existing contractor is already providing the majority of the route, the introduction of a separate contract would not be practical in operational terms.
- To cease the existing contract and introduce a bespoke new service would cause substantial inconvenience for the Local Authority and the travelling public, and come at an increased cost to the Local Authority.
- The increase in contract cost does not exceed 50% of the original value of the contract.

3.6 First Cymru Buses Ltd have advised that the additional cost to reinstate the service is £64,566.00 per annum (£211.00 per day), which equates to £214,798.00 from 01 December 2025 to 31 March 2029 (remaining term of the contract). The current cost per annum for Service No. 63 is £421,580.30, operating Monday to Saturday. Officers approached the South East Wales Region for additional BNG funding, which has been granted for the remaining 2025-2026 financial year, and for the length of the current contract, which ends on 31 March 2029.

3.7 The proposal is to reinstate the route as soon as feasibility possible, with the commencement date to be confirmed and publicised, allowing sufficient time for Officers to agree a start date with First Cymru Buses Ltd, and allowing for the statutory 56 days' notice for First Cymru Buses Ltd to register the changes with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 This modification meets the five ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

- **Long Term.**
  Reinstating a bus service which currently doesn't exist, provides a community with numerous benefits for short term and long-term future generations, by promoting social equity, improving environmental quality, and fostering economic development.

- **Prevention**
  A bus service aims to create a more sustainable, accessible, and efficient mode of transport, improving network planning and integration.

- **Integration**
  A bus service creates well-connected neighbourhoods where people can easily access essential services and amenities. Also, aims to create a more sustainable, accessible, and efficient mode of transport, improving network planning and integration.

- **Collaboration and Involvement**
  Working with First Cymru Buses Ltd, Welsh Government and Ward Members to develop a bus service which creates well-connected neighbourhoods where people can easily access essential services and amenities create.

5.2 The Council's Wellbeing Objectives:

- **Wellbeing Objective One - A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable:**
  A bus service contributes to safeguarding and well-being of passengers, especially children, young people and adults, as well as creating a safer environment for vulnerable individuals.

- **Wellbeing Objective Two – A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns:**
  Reinstating a bus service links communities and local businesses for employment, training and education.

- **Wellbeing Objective Three – A County Borough with thriving valleys communities:**
  Reinstating a bus service in a community offers numerous benefits for future generations by promoting social equity, improving environmental quality, and fostering economic development. It provides accessible and affordable transportation options, connecting people to essential services and opportunities while reducing reliance on private motor vehicles, thus contributing to a healthier and sustainable planet.

- **Wellbeing Objective Four – A County Borough where we help people meet their potential:**
  A bus service creates a sustainable and accessible transport system that reduces its environmental impact and promotes social equity, both locally and regionally. This involves integrating modes of public transport, reducing carbon emissions, and ensuring affordability and accessibility for all.

- **Wellbeing Objective Five – A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency:**
  A bus service creates a sustainable and accessible transport system that reduces its environmental impact, while reducing reliance on private motor vehicles.

- **Wellbeing Objective Six – A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community:**
  The reintroduction of this bus service has been a result of requests received from Ward Members and residents.

- **Wellbeing Objective Seven – A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives:**
  A bus service creates well-connected neighbourhoods where people can easily access essential services and amenities.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 Reintroducing a bus service through Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool provides an alternative means of travel, instead of the reliance on private motor vehicles and their associated emissions.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 Reintroducing a bus service in Mawdlam/Kenfig Pool contributes to safeguarding and well-being of passengers, especially children, young people and adults, as well as creating a safer environment for vulnerable individuals.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The South East Wales Region have approved additional BNG funding, which has been granted for the remaining 2025-2026 financial year, and for the length of the current contract, which ends on 31 March 2029. There are therefore no financial implications for BCBC as a result of this proposal.

9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- considers the content of the report and approve the modification of the existing contract for Service No. 63;
- delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Communities, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy, to agree the terms of and enter into any documents or deeds necessary to effect the modification.

Background Documents

- None

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Traveline Cymru

Page 1559

Bridgend - Porthcawl via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Bank Holiday Mondays (Inbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	0944	1044	1144	1244	1343	1445	1544	1645	1743
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0953	1053	1154	1254	1352	1454	1553	1655	1752
Pyle, Ffald Road	1004	1104	1205	1305	1403	1505	1604	1705	1802
Heol Llan Junction	1016	1116	1217	1316	1414	1516	1615	1716	1813
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1019	1119	1220	1319	1417	1519	1618	1719	1816
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1029	1129	1230	1329	1427	1529	1628	1729	1826

Porthcawl - Bridgend via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Bank Holiday Mondays (Outbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0835	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0846	0947	1047	1147	1247	1347	1447	1547	1647	1747
Heol Llan Junction	0849	0950	1050	1150	1250	1350	1450	1550	1650	1750
Pyle, Ffald Road	0900	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1601	1701	1801
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0911	1013	1112	1212	1313	1413	1512	1611	1711	1810
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	0922	1024	1123	1223	1323	1423	1522	1621	1721	1821
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0931	1032	1131	1231	1332	1432	1531	1629	1729	1829

Bridgend - Porthcawl via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Monday to Friday (Excluding Bank Holidays) (Inbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0655	0715	0730	0750	0815	0835	0855	0915	0935	0955	1015	1035	1055	1115	1135	1155	1215	1235	1255
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	0703	0723	0740	0800	0824	0844	0904	0924	0945	1005	1025	1045	1105	1124	1144	1204	1224	1244	1304
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0712	0732	0749	0809	0833	0853	0913	0933	0954	1014	1034	1054	1114	1133	1153	1213	1233	1253	1313
Pyle, Ffald Road	0724	0745	0802	0822	0844	0904	0924	0943	1004	1024	1044	1104	1124	1143	1203	1223	1243	1303	1323
Heol Llan Junction	0736	0757	0814	0834	0856	0916	0936	0955	1016	1036	1056	1116	1136	1155	1215	1235	1255	1315	1335
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0739	0800	0817	0837	0859	0919	0939	0958	1019	1039	1059	1119	1139	1158	1218	1238	1258	1318	1338
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0749	0810	0827	0847	0909	0929	0949	1008	1029	1049	1109	1129	1149	1208	1228	1248	1308	1328	1348

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	1315	1335	1355	1415	1435	1455	1520	1540	1600	1620	1640	1700	1730	1755	1815	1845	2020
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	1324	1344	1404	1424	1444	1504	1531	1551	1610	1630	1650	1709	1739	1804	1824	1854	2029
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	1333	1353	1413	1433	1453	1513	1541	1601	1621	1640	1700	1718	1748	1813	1833	1903	2038
Pyle, Ffald Road	1343	1403	1423	1444	1504	1528	1553	1612	1632	1652	1712	1730	1800	1823	1843	1913	2047
Heol Llan Junction	1355	1415	1435	1456	1516	1540	1607	1624	1646	1706	1724	1742	1811	1834	1854	--	2058
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1358	1418	1438	1459	1519	1543	1610	1627	1649	1709	1727	1745	1814	1837	1857	--	2101
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1408	1428	1448	1509	1529	1553	1620	1637	1659	1719	1737	1755	1823	1846	1906	--	2110

Traveline Cymru

Porthcawl - Bridgend via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Monday to Friday (Excluding Bank Holidays) (Outbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0615	0631	0651	0711	0731	0751	0811	0831	0851	0911	0931	0951	1011	1031	1051	1111	1131	1151	1211	
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0627	0643	0703	0723	0743	0803	0823	0843	0903	0923	0944	1004	1024	1044	1104	1124	1144	1204	1224	
Heol Llan Junction	0630	0646	0706	0726	0746	0806	0826	0846	0906	0926	0947	1007	1027	1047	1107	1127	1147	1207	1227	
Pyle, Ffald Road	0641	0657	0718	0738	0759	0819	0839	0859	0918	0938	0959	1019	1039	1059	1119	1139	1159	1219	1239	
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0651	0707	0728	0751	0812	0832	0852	0912	0931	0949	1010	1030	1050	1110	1130	1150	1210	1230	1250	
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	0701	0717	0738	0802	0824	0843	0903	0922	0943	1001	1022	1042	1102	1122	1142	1202	1222	1242	1302	
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0709	0725	0746	0811	0833	0852	0912	0931	0953	1011	1032	1052	1111	1131	1151	1211	1231	1251	1311	

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1231	1251	1311	1331	1351	1411	1431	1451	1511	1531	1555	1625	1645	1705	1725	1745	1805	1830	1850	
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1244	1304	1324	1344	1404	1424	1444	1504	1524	1544	1608	1638	1658	1717	1737	1757	1817	1842	1902	
Heol Llan Junction	1247	1307	1327	1347	1407	1427	1447	1507	1527	1547	1611	1641	1701	1720	1740	1800	1820	1845	1905	
Pyle, Ffald Road	1259	1319	1339	1359	1419	1439	1459	1520	1540	1600	1623	1653	1713	1732	1752	1811	1831	1856	1916	
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	1310	1330	1350	1410	1430	1451	1511	1534	1553	1612	1635	1704	1725	1744	1804	1821	1841	1906	1926	
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	1320	1340	1400	1420	1441	1502	1523	1545	1604	1623	1646	1715	1736	1755	1814	1831	1851	1916	1936	
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	1329	1349	1409	1429	1450	1512	1533	1556	1614	1633	1656	1724	1745	1804	1822	1839	1859	1924	1944	

Operator:	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	2115
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	2126
Heol Llan Junction	2129
Pyle, Ffald Road	2139
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	2148
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	2158
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	2204

Bridgend - Porthcawl via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Saturday (Inbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0655	0715	0735	0755	0815	0835	0855	0915	0935	0955	1015	1035	1055	1115	1135	1155	1215	1235	1255	
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	0703	0723	0743	0803	0823	0843	0903	0923	0944	1004	1024	1044	1104	1124	1144	1204	1224	1244	1304	
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0712	0732	0752	0812	0832	0852	0912	0932	0953	1013	1033	1053	1113	1133	1153	1213	1233	1253	1313	
Pyle, Ffald Road	0722	0742	0802	0822	0842	0902	0922	0943	1004	1024	1044	1104	1124	1144	1204	1224	1244	1304	1324	
Heol Llan Junction	0734	0754	0813	0833	0854	0914	0934	0956	1017	1037	1057	1117	1137	1157	1217	1237	1257	1316	1336	
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0737	0757	0816	0836	0857	0917	0937	0959	1020	1040	1100	1120	1140	1200	1220	1240	1300	1319	1339	
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0747	0807	0826	0846	0907	0927	0947	1009	1030	1050	1110	1130	1150	1210	1230	1250	1310	1329	1349	

Traveline Cymru

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	1315	1335	1355	1415	1435	1455	1520	1540	1600	1620	1640	1700	1730	1755	1815	1845	2020
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	1324	1344	1404	1424	1444	1504	1530	1550	1610	1630	1650	1709	1739	1804	1824	1854	2029
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	1333	1353	1413	1433	1453	1514	1540	1600	1620	1640	1700	1718	1748	1813	1833	1903	2038
Pyle, Ffald Road	1344	1404	1424	1444	1504	1525	1551	1611	1631	1651	1711	1729	1759	1823	1843	1913	2048
Heol Llan Junction	1356	1416	1436	1456	1517	1538	1604	1623	1643	1703	1723	1741	1811	1835	1855	--	2059
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1359	1419	1439	1459	1520	1541	1607	1626	1646	1706	1726	1744	1814	1838	1858	--	2102
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1409	1429	1449	1509	1530	1551	1617	1636	1656	1716	1736	1754	1823	1847	1907	--	2111

Porthcawl - Bridgend via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Saturday (Outbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0615	0631	0651	0711	0731	0751	0811	0831	0851	0911	0931	0951	1011	1031	1051	1111	1131	1151	1211	
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0627	0643	0703	0723	0743	0803	0823	0843	0903	0923	0944	1004	1024	1044	1104	1124	1144	1204	1224	
Heol Llan Junction	0630	0646	0706	0726	0746	0806	0826	0846	0906	0926	0947	1007	1027	1047	1107	1127	1147	1207	1227	
Pyle, Ffald Road	0641	0657	0717	0737	0757	0817	0837	0859	0918	0938	1000	1020	1040	1100	1120	1140	1200	1220	1240	
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0651	0707	0727	0747	0807	0828	0848	0910	0928	0950	1012	1032	1052	1112	1132	1152	1212	1232	1252	
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	0701	0718	0738	0758	0818	0839	0859	0921	0939	1001	1023	1043	1103	1123	1143	1203	1223	1243	1303	
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0708	0725	0746	0806	0826	0846	0906	0929	0948	1010	1032	1052	1112	1132	1152	1212	1232	1252	1312	

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1231	1251	1311	1331	1351	1411	1431	1451	1511	1531	1555	1625	1645	1705	1725	1745	1805	1830	1850	
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1244	1304	1324	1344	1404	1424	1444	1504	1524	1544	1608	1638	1658	1717	1737	1757	1817	1842	1902	
Heol Llan Junction	1247	1307	1327	1347	1407	1427	1447	1507	1527	1547	1611	1641	1701	1720	1740	1800	1820	1845	1905	
Pyle, Ffald Road	1300	1320	1340	1400	1420	1440	1459	1519	1539	1559	1623	1654	1713	1732	1752	1811	1831	1856	1917	
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	1311	1331	1351	1411	1431	1451	1510	1530	1550	1610	1634	1705	1723	1742	1802	1821	1841	1906	1927	
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	1322	1342	1402	1422	1442	1502	1521	1541	1601	1621	1645	1716	1734	1753	1813	1832	1852	1916	1937	
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	1331	1351	1411	1431	1451	1511	1530	1550	1610	1630	1653	1724	1742	1801	1821	1840	1900	1924	1945	

Operator:	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	2115
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	2125
Heol Llan Junction	2128
Pyle, Ffald Road	2139
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	2149
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	2158
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	2204

Traveline Cymru

Bridgend - Porthcawl via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Sunday (Inbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735
Derwen, Sarn Odeon	0944	1044	1144	1244	1343	1445	1544	1645	1743
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0953	1053	1154	1254	1352	1454	1553	1655	1752
Pyle, Ffald Road	1004	1104	1205	1305	1403	1505	1604	1705	1802
Heol Llan Junction	1016	1116	1217	1316	1414	1516	1615	1716	1813
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	1019	1119	1220	1319	1417	1519	1618	1719	1816
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	1029	1129	1230	1329	1427	1529	1628	1729	1826

Porthcawl - Bridgend via Pyle

Service 63 (FCAO063)

Sunday (Outbound)

Timetable valid from 27th April 2025 until further notice

Operator:	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM	FCYM
Porthcawl Metrolink 3	0835	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735
South Cornelly, Hawthorn Drive	0846	0947	1047	1147	1247	1347	1447	1547	1647	1747
Heol Llan Junction	0849	0950	1050	1150	1250	1350	1450	1550	1650	1750
Pyle, Ffald Road	0900	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1601	1701	1801
Cefn Cribbwr Cross	0911	1013	1112	1212	1313	1413	1512	1611	1711	1810
Derwen, Sarn Sainsbury	0922	1024	1123	1223	1323	1423	1522	1621	1721	1821
Bridgend Bus Station Stand 6	0931	1032	1131	1231	1332	1432	1531	1629	1729	1829

Timetable report

(Printed Date: 2025-06-26)

63

Bridgend - Porthcawl

Days	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF	MTWHF
Tendered	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code																																								
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	06:55	07:15	07:35	07:55	08:15	08:35	08:55	09:20	09:40	10:00	10:20	10:40	11:00	11:20	11:40	12:00	12:20	12:40	13:00	13:20	13:40	14:00	14:20	14:35	14:50	15:10	15:30	15:50	16:10	16:30	16:55	17:25	17:50	18:10	18:40	20:15				
Pines Centre (Odeon Cinema)	07:03	07:23	07:43	08:04	08:24	08:44	09:04	09:29	09:49	10:09	10:29	10:49	11:09	11:29	11:49	12:09	12:29	12:49	13:09	13:29	13:49	14:09	14:29	14:44	14:59	15:21	15:41	16:01	16:20	16:40	17:05	17:34	17:59	18:19	18:49	20:24				
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	07:12	07:32	07:52	08:13	08:33	08:53	09:13	09:38	09:58	10:18	10:38	10:58	11:18	11:38	11:58	12:18	12:38	12:58	13:18	13:38	13:58	14:18	14:38	14:53	15:08	15:31	15:51	16:11	16:30	16:50	17:15	17:44	18:09	18:28	18:58	20:33				
Pyle (Cross)	07:23	07:43	08:04	08:25	08:45	09:05	09:24	09:49	10:09	10:29	10:49	11:09	11:29	11:49	12:09	12:29	12:49	13:09	13:29	13:49	14:09	14:29	14:49	15:04	15:21	15:44	16:04	16:23	16:42	17:02	17:26	17:55	18:20	18:38	19:08	20:42				
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	07:36	07:56	08:17	08:38	08:58	09:18	09:37	10:02	10:22	10:42	11:02	11:22	11:42	12:02	12:21	12:41	13:01	13:21	13:41	14:01	14:21	14:41	15:01	15:17	15:34	15:57	16:17	16:36	16:55	17:14	17:38	18:07	18:32	18:50		20:53				
Kenfig Nature Reserve							09:41			10:46			11:46			12:45			13:45			14:45																		
South Cornelly	07:39	07:59	08:20	08:41	09:01	09:21		10:05	10:25		11:05	11:25		12:05	12:24		13:04	13:24		14:04	14:24		15:04	15:20	15:37	16:00	16:20	16:39	16:58	17:17	17:41	18:10	18:35	18:53		20:56				
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	07:49	08:09	08:30	08:51	09:11	09:31	09:55	10:15	10:35	11:00	11:15	11:35	12:00	12:15	12:34	12:59	13:14	13:34	13:59	14:14	14:34	14:59	15:14	15:30	15:47	16:10	16:30	16:49	17:08	17:27	17:51	18:20	18:44	19:02		21:05				

Days	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Tendered	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code																																								
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	06:55	07:15	07:35	07:55	08:15	08:35	08:55	09:20	09:40	10:00	10:20	10:40	11:00	11:20	11:40	12:00	12:20	12:40	13:00	13:20	13:40	14:00	14:20	14:35	14:50	15:10	15:30	15:50	16:10	16:30	16:55	17:25	17:50	18:10	18:40	20:15				
Pines Centre (Odeon Cinema)	07:03	07:23	07:43	08:04	08:24	08:44	09:04	09:29	09:49	10:09	10:29	10:49	11:09	11:29	11:49	12:09	12:29	12:49	13:09	13:29	13:49	14:09	14:29	14:44	14:59	15:21	15:41	16:01	16:20	16:40	17:05	17:34	17:59	18:19	18:49	20:24				
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	07:12	07:32	07:52	08:13	08:33	08:53	09:13	09:38	09:58	10:18	10:38	10:58	11:18	11:38	11:58	12:18	12:38	12:58	13:18	13:38	13:58	14:18	14:38	14:53	15:08	15:31	15:51	16:11	16:30	16:50	17:15	17:44	18:09	18:28	18:58	20:33				
Pyle (Cross)	07:23	07:43	08:04	08:25	08:45	09:05	09:24	09:49	10:09	10:29	10:49	11:09	11:29	11:49	12:09	12:29	12:49	13:09	13:29	13:49	14:09	14:29	14:49	15:04	15:21	15:44	16:04	16:23	16:42	17:02	17:26	17:55	18:20	18:38	19:08	20:42				
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	07:36	07:56	08:17	08:38	08:58	09:18	09:37	10:02	10:22	10:42	11:02	11:22	11:42	12:02	12:21	12:41	13:01	13:21	13:41	14:01	14:21	14:41	15:01	15:17	15:34	15:57	16:17	16:36	16:55	17:14	17:38	18:07	18:32	18:50		20:53				
Kenfig Nature Reserve							09:41			10:46			11:46			12:45			13:45			14:45																		
South Cornelly	07:39	07:59	08:20	08:41	09:01	09:21		10:05	10:25		11:05	11:25		12:05	12:24		13:04	13:24		14:04	14:24		15:04	15:20	15:37	16:00	16:20	16:39	16:58	17:17	17:41	18:10	18:35	18:53		20:56				
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	07:49	08:09	08:30	08:51	09:11	09:31	09:55	10:15	10:35	11:00	11:15	11:35	12:00	12:15	12:34	12:59	13:14	13:34	13:59	14:14	14:34	14:59	15:14	15:30	15:47	16:10	16:30	16:49	17:08	17:27	17:51	18:20	18:44	19:02		21:05				

Days	$								$
Tendered	B879/8	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/8
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code									
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	09:35	07:15	07:35	07:55	08:15	08:35	08:55	09:15	17:35
Pines Centre (Odeon Cinema)	09:42	07:23	07:43	08:04	08:24	08:44	09:04	09:24	17:43
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	09:51	07:32	07:52	08:13	08:33	08:53	09:13	09:33	17:52
Pyle (Cross)	10:01	07:43	08:04	08:25	08:45	09:05	09:24	09:44	18:02
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	10:13	07:56	08:17	08:38	08:58	09:18	09:37	09:57	18:13
Kenfig Nature Reserve									
South Cornelly	10:16	07:59	08:20	08:41	09:01	09:21	09:40	10:00	18:16
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	10:26	08:13	08:34	08:55	09:15	09:35	09:54	10:14	18:26

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Timetable report

(Printed Date: 2025-06-26) 63

Porthcawl - Bridgend

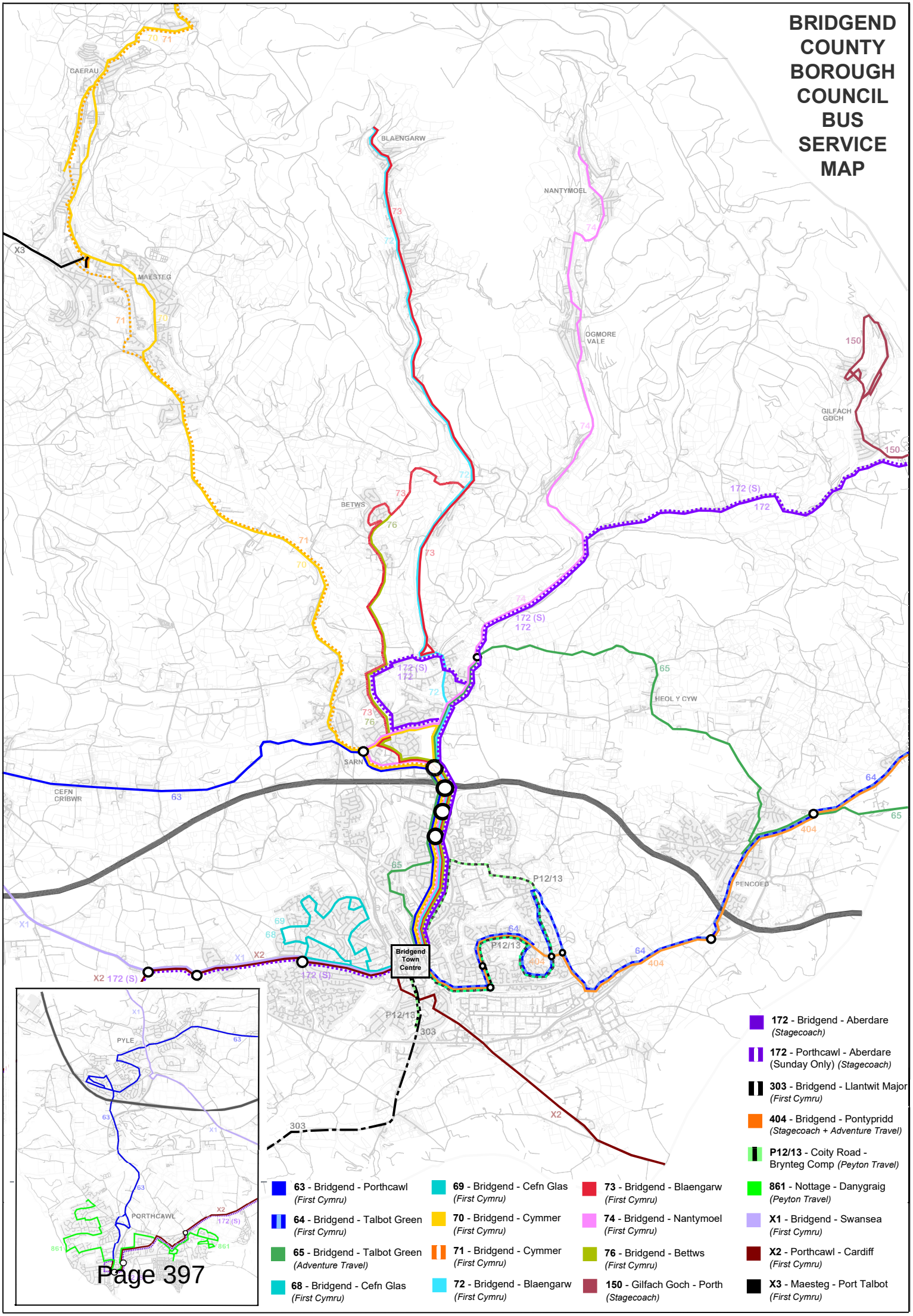
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Tendered	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code																																								
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	06:15	06:31	06:51	07:11	07:31	07:51	08:11	08:31	08:51	09:11	09:31	09:46	10:06	10:24	10:46	11:06	11:24	11:46	12:06	12:24	12:46	13:06	13:24	13:46	14:06	14:23	14:46	15:06	15:24	15:50	16:20	16:40	17:00	17:20	17:40	18:00	18:25	18:45	21:10	
South Cornelly	06:27	06:43	07:03	07:23	07:43	08:03	08:23	08:43	09:03	09:23	09:44	09:59	10:19		10:59	11:19		11:59	12:19		12:59	13:19		13:59	14:19		14:59	15:19		16:03	16:33	16:53	17:12	17:32	17:52	18:12	18:37	18:57	21:21	
Kenfig Nature Reserve														10:39			11:39			12:39			13:40			14:39			15:39											
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	06:30	06:46	07:06	07:26	07:46	08:06	08:26	08:46	09:06	09:26	09:47	10:02	10:22	10:43	11:02	11:22	11:44	12:02	12:22	12:44	13:02	13:22	13:44	14:02	14:22	14:43	15:02	15:22	15:43	16:06	16:36	16:56	17:15	17:35	17:55	18:15	18:40	19:00	21:24	
Pyle (Cross)	06:42	06:58	07:19	07:39	08:00	08:20	08:40	09:00	09:19	09:39	10:00	10:15	10:35	10:56	11:15	11:35	11:57	12:15	12:35	12:57	13:15	13:35	13:57	14:15	14:35	14:56	15:15	15:35	15:56	16:19	16:49	17:09	17:27	17:47	18:07	18:26	18:51	19:11	21:35	
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	06:52	07:08	07:30	07:50	08:12	08:32	08:52	09:12	09:31	09:51	10:12	10:27	10:47	11:08	11:27	11:47	12:09	12:26	12:46	13:08	13:26	13:46	14:08	14:26	14:46	15:07	15:27	15:47	16:08	16:31	17:01	17:20	17:38	17:58	18:18	18:36	19:01	19:21	21:44	
Pines Centre (Sainsbury's)	07:03	07:19	07:41	08:01	08:23	08:43	09:03	09:23	09:42	10:02	10:23	10:38	10:58	11:19	11:38	11:58	12:20	12:37	12:57	13:19	13:37	13:57	14:19	14:37	14:57	15:18	15:38	15:58	16:20	16:43	17:13	17:32	17:50	18:10	18:29	18:47	19:11	19:31	21:53	
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	07:11	07:27	07:49	08:10	08:32	08:52	09:12	09:32	09:51	10:11	10:32	10:47	11:07	11:28	11:47	12:07	12:29	12:46	13:06	13:28	13:46	14:06	14:28	14:46	15:06	15:28	15:48	16:08	16:30	16:53	17:22	17:41	17:59	18:19	18:37	18:55	19:19	19:39	21:59	

Days	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Tendered	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63B	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code																																								
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	06:15	06:31	06:51	07:11	07:31	07:51	08:11	08:31	08:51	09:11	09:31	09:46	10:06	10:24	10:46	11:06	11:24	11:46	12:06	12:24	12:46	13:06	13:24	13:46	14:06	14:23	14:46	15:06	15:24	15:50	16:20	16:40	17:00	17:20	17:40	18:00	18:25	18:45	21:10	
South Cornelly	06:27	06:43	07:03	07:23	07:43	08:03	08:23	08:43	09:03	09:23	09:44	09:59	10:19		10:59	11:19		11:59	12:19		12:59	13:19		13:59	14:19		14:59	15:19		16:03	16:33	16:53	17:12	17:32	17:52	18:12	18:37	18:57	21:21	
Kenfig Nature Reserve														10:39			11:39			12:39			13:40			14:39			15:39											
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	06:30	06:46	07:06	07:26	07:46	08:06	08:26	08:46	09:06	09:26	09:47	10:02	10:22	10:43	11:02	11:22	11:44	12:02	12:22	12:44	13:02	13:22	13:44	14:02	14:22	14:43	15:02	15:22	15:43	16:06	16:36	16:56	17:15	17:35	17:55	18:15	18:40	19:00	21:24	
Pyle (Cross)	06:42	06:58	07:19	07:39	08:00	08:20	08:40	09:00	09:19	09:39	10:00	10:15	10:35	10:56	11:15	11:35	11:57	12:15	12:35	12:57	13:15	13:35	13:57	14:15	14:35	14:56	15:15	15:35	15:56	16:19	16:49	17:09	17:27	17:47	18:07	18:26	18:51	19:11	21:35	
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	06:52	07:08	07:30	07:50	08:12	08:32	08:52	09:12	09:31	09:51	10:12	10:27	10:47	11:08	11:27	11:47	12:09	12:26	12:46	13:08	13:26	13:46	14:08	14:26	14:46	15:07	15:27	15:47	16:08	16:31	17:01	17:20	17:38	17:58	18:18	18:36	19:01	19:21	21:44	
Pines Centre (Sainsbury's)	07:03	07:19	07:41	08:01	08:23	08:43	09:03	09:23	09:42	10:02	10:23	10:38	10:58	11:19	11:38	11:58	12:20	12:37	12:57	13:19	13:37	13:57	14:19	14:37	14:57	15:18	15:38	15:58	16:20	16:43	17:13	17:32	17:50	18:10	18:29	18:47	19:11	19:31	21:53	
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	07:11	07:27	07:49	08:10	08:32	08:52	09:12	09:32	09:51	10:11	10:32	10:47	11:07	11:28	11:47	12:07	12:29	12:46	13:06	13:28	13:46	14:06	14:28	14:46	15:06	15:28	15:48	16:08	16:30	16:53	17:22	17:41	17:59	18:19	18:37	18:55	19:19	19:39	21:59	

Days	$							$	$	$
Tendered	B879/8	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/1	B879/8	B879/8	B879/8
Service No	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63
Trip Note Code										
Porthcawl Metrolink (3)	08:35	06:38	06:58	07:18	07:38	07:58	08:18	15:35	16:35	17:35
South Cornelly	08:46	06:52	07:12	07:32	07:52	08:12	08:32	15:47	16:47	17:47
Kenfig Nature Reserve										
North Cornelly (Heol Llan)	08:49	06:55	07:15	07:35	07:55	08:15	08:35	15:50	16:50	17:50
Cefn Cribbwr (Cefn Cross)	09:11	07:18	07:39	08:00	08:21	08:41	09:01	16:11	17:11	18:11
Pines Centre (Sainsbury's)	09:21	07:29	07:50	08:11	08:32	08:52	09:12	16:21	17:21	18:21
Bridgend Bus Station (6)	09:28	07:37	07:59	08:20	08:41	09:01	09:21	16:29	17:29	18:29

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL BUS SERVICE MAP



63 - Bridgend - Porthcawl *(First Cymru)*

64 - Bridgend - Talbot Green *(First Cymru)*

65 - Bridgend - Talbot Green *(Adventure Travel)*

68 - Bridgend - Cefn Glas *(First Cymru)*

69 - Bridgend - Cefn Glas *(First Cymru)*

70 - Bridgend - Cymmer *(First Cymru)*

71 - Bridgend - Cymmer *(First Cymru)*

72 - Bridgend - Blaengarw *(First Cymru)*

73 - Bridgend - Blaengarw *(First Cymru)*

74 - Bridgend - Nantymoel *(First Cymru)*

76 - Bridgend - Bettws *(First Cymru)*

150 - Gilfach Goch - Porth *(Stagecoach)*

172 - Bridgend - Aberdare *(Stagecoach)*

172 - Porthcawl - Aberdare (Sunday Only) *(Stagecoach)*

303 - Bridgend - Llantwit Major *(First Cymru)*

404 - Bridgend - Pontypridd *(Stagecoach + Adventure Travel)*

P12/13 - Coity Road - Brynteg Comp *(Peyton Travel)*

861 - Nottage - Danygraig *(Peyton Travel)*

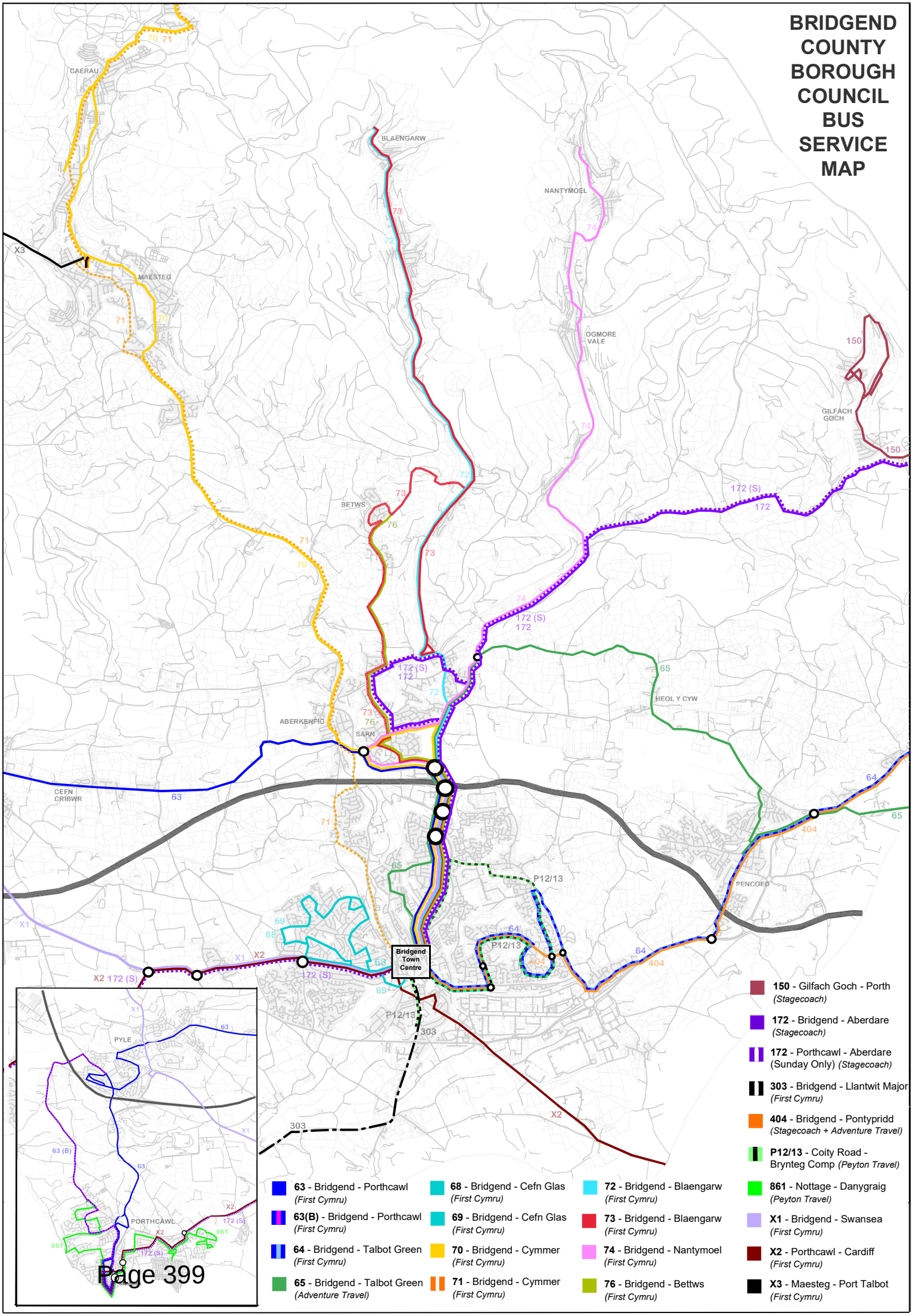
X1 - Bridgend - Swansea *(First Cymru)*

X2 - Porthcawl - Cardiff *(First Cymru)*

X3 - Maesteg - Port Talbot *(First Cymru)*

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL BUS SERVICE MAP



63 - Bridgend - Porthcawl *(First Cymru)*

63(B) - Bridgend - Porthcawl *(First Cymru)*

64 - Bridgend - Talbot Green *(First Cymru)*

65 - Bridgend - Talbot Green *(Adventure Travel)*

68 - Bridgend - Cefn Glas *(First Cymru)*

69 - Bridgend - Cefn Glas *(First Cymru)*

70 - Bridgend - Cymmer *(First Cymru)*

71 - Bridgend - Cymmer *(First Cymru)*

72 - Bridgend - Blaengarw *(First Cymru)*

73 - Bridgend - Blaengarw *(First Cymru)*

74 - Bridgend - Nantymoel *(First Cymru)*

76 - Bridgend - Bettws *(First Cymru)*

150 - Gilfach Goch - Porth *(Stagecoach)*

172 - Bridgend - Aberdare *(Stagecoach)*

172 - Porthcawl - Aberdare (Sunday Only) *(Stagecoach)*

303 - Bridgend - Llantwit Major *(First Cymru)*

404 - Bridgend - Pontypridd *(Stagecoach + Adventure Travel)*

P12/13 - Coity Road - Brynteg Comp *(Peyton Travel)*

861 - Nottage - Danygraig *(Peyton Travel)*

X1 - Bridgend - Swansea *(First Cymru)*

X2 - Porthcawl - Cardiff *(First Cymru)*

X3 - Maesteg - Port Talbot *(First Cymru)*

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**BUDGET MONITORING 2025-26 – QUARTER 2 REVENUE FORECAST**
Report Owner/ Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member:	**CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE** **CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE**
Responsible Officer:	**JOANNE NORMAN** **GROUP MANAGER – BUDGET MANAGEMENT**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**As required by section 3 (budgetary control) of the Financial Procedure Rules; Chief Officers in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member are expected to manage their services within the approved cash limited budget and to provide the Chief Finance Officer with such information as is required to facilitate and monitor budgetary control.**
Executive Summary:	• **The net revenue budget for 2025-26 is £383.226 million. The overall projected position at 30th September 2025 is a net under spend of £5.897 million (1.54% of the net revenue budget).** • **There continues to be an underlying projected over spend of £453,000 on directorate budgets primarily due to ongoing pressures within Children's Services and the Chief Executive's Directorate.** • **The overall projected net under spend is mainly due to the projected under spend of £6.350 million on Council wide budgets. This primarily relates to additional interest anticipated from current investments, additional grant from Welsh Government towards the teachers' pay award 2025-26, the confirmed National Joint Council (NJC) pay awards being lower than budgeted for and the Council not seeing the increases in Consumer Price Index (CPI) impact as expected on contractual arrangements to date in 2025-26.** • **The budget approved for 2025-26 included budget reduction proposals totalling £8.379 million. The current position is a projected shortfall on the**

	savings target of £858,000, or 10.24% of the overall reduction target.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the Council's revenue financial position as at 30th September 2025.

2. Background

2.1 On 26th February 2025, Council approved a net revenue budget of £383.338 million for 2025-26 based on the provisional local government settlement announced by Welsh Government on 11th December 2024. The Welsh Government announced its final settlement on the 20th February 2025. The Final Local Government Settlement for Bridgend was £112,234 less than provided in the Provisional Settlement mainly due to data changes in the Non-Housing Revenue Account (HRA) element of Welsh Government's funding formula. This decreased the net revenue budget for 2025-26 to £383.226 million. The updated revenue budget was outlined in a report to Council on 12th March, where it was also confirmed that no changes were made to the levels of council tax, or budget pressures and reductions approved by Council on 26th February 2025.

2.2 As part of the Performance Management Framework, budget projections are reviewed regularly and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The delivery of agreed budget reductions is also kept under review and reported to Cabinet as part of this process.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Summary financial position at 30th September 2025

3.1.1 The Council's net revenue budget and projected outturn for 2025-26 is shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1- Comparison of budget against projected outturn at 30th September 2025

Directorate/Budget Area	Original Budget 2025-26 £'000	Revised Budget 2025-26 £'000	Projected Outturn Q2 2025-26 £'000	Projected Over / (Under) Spend 2025-26 £'000	Projected Over / (Under) Spend Qtr 1 2025-26 £'000
Directorate					
Education, Early Years and Young People	154,862	157,073	156,784	(289)	(572)
Social Services and Wellbeing	115,909	119,451	119,334	(117)	626
Communities	33,754	34,429	34,506	77	(185)
Chief Executive's	24,815	25,762	26,544	782	858
Total Directorate Budgets	**329,340**	**336,715**	**337,168**	**453**	**727**
Council Wide Budgets					
Capital Financing	5,958	5,907	4,680	(1,227)	(87)
Levies	10,209	10,209	10,209	0	0
Apprenticeship Levy	750	869	869	0	92
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	17,054	17,054	17,268	214	221
Insurance Premiums	1,363	1,363	1,375	12	0
Repairs & Maintenance	670	670	670	0	0
Pension Related Costs	430	430	462	32	0
Other Council Wide Budgets	17,452	10,009	4,628	(5,381)	(55)
Total Council Wide Budgets	**53,886**	**46,511**	**40,161**	**(6,350)**	**171**
Total	**383,226**	**383,226**	**377,329**	**(5,897)**	**898**

3.1.2 The overall projected position at 30th September 2025 is a net under spend of £5.897 million comprising £453,000 net over spend on directorates and a net under spend of £6.350 million on Council wide budgets. A detailed analysis of the more significant projected under and over spends is set out in section 3.3.

3.1.3 During quarter 2, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) received confirmation of the following funding:-

- Contribution of £4.447 million from Welsh Government (WG) towards the increased costs of employer NI contributions for staff directly employed by BCBC, and for staff employed by the Fire and Rescue Authority – this was a shortfall of £390,000 compared with the actual cost of the increased contributions.
- Social Care Workforce grant - £2.005 million
- Eliminating Profit grant - £1.129 million
- Contribution towards teachers' pay award 2025-26 - £521,736

The detailed narrative in section 3.3 of the report refers to where these have impacted on the quarter 1 projections.

3.1.4 During quarter 2, pay awards for 2025-26 were agreed for Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Officers, National Joint Council (NJC) employees, along with Teachers' pay awards from September 2025. The agreed pay awards for JNC and NJC staff were lower than budgeted for and the projected under spend on this budget has been recognised under other Council wide budgets. Even a

variance of 1% on the pay settlement for NJC staff can result in a swing of required funding of over £1.5 million per annum. However, the ongoing uncertainty over future pay awards means that it is likely that the provision set aside in the MTFS for 2026-27 will need to be supplemented by any funding not committed from the central pay budget this financial year.

3.1.5 The Teachers' pay award was confirmed at 4% for implementation from September 2025, higher than the assumptions made by Welsh Government when they set their budget for 2025-26. WG announced additional funding via the Local Authority Education Grant and post-16 grant to be allocated specifically against teachers' pay. BCBC received a contribution of £521,736 as set out in paragraph 3.1.3.

3.1.6 The main financial pressures remain in the Chief Executive's Directorate and within Children's Services in the Social Services and Wellbeing (SSWB) Directorate.

3.1.7 The projected net over spend for the Chief Executive's directorate is mainly due to delays in implementing Medium Term Financial Strategy budget reduction proposals. There is a projected shortfall of £220,000 on prior year budget reductions along with an £79,000 shortfall on current year budget reduction proposals.

3.1.8 There continues to be pressure in learning disabilities and physical disability/sensory impairment services driven by the complexity of need and demand across these services. There is also significant pressure in children's residential placements. The Social Services Improvement Board is overseeing a number of actions to address the pressures in line with the 3 year Plans for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults and for Children and Family services.

3.1.9 It is too early in the financial year to provide a realistic indication of projected council tax income for this financial year, and whether the Council is likely to see a reduction in council tax income over the 2025-26 financial year as more people have suffered financial hardship due to the cost of living crisis, or whether additional income will be collected from council tax premiums on empty properties and second homes. A 1% reduction in the council tax income collection rate could result in an additional pressure to the Council of around £1 million. Council tax collection rates will be monitored continuously throughout the year and reported accordingly.

Budget virements/technical adjustments

3.1.10 There have been a number of technical adjustments between budgets since the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in February 2025.

3.1.11 The main technical adjustments are outlined below:

Technical Adjustments

Service vired from / to	Amount
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of National Joint Council (NJC) pay award for 2025-26 for school employees – confirmed July 2025	£1,094,080
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of National Joint Council (NJC) pay award for 2025-26 for directorate employees – confirmed July 2025	£3,058,169
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) pay award for 2025-26 for Chief Officers – confirmed July 2025	£96,226
Transfer of inflationary uplifts not confirmed when the Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed that are held centrally until evidence of the uplift is provided by the service areas (detailed in paragraph 3.1.12).	£708,915

Pay/Price Inflation

3.1.12 When the budget was set, very little funding was allocated to directorates for pay and price inflation, as most had not been determined for the forthcoming year. The majority of the price provision has been retained centrally within Council wide budgets, to be allocated as further information is known about specific contractual price increases. Amounts released during quarter 2 are shown in paragraph 3.1.11 and include £143,365 for Home to School Transport contracts and £115,160 for Prevention and Wellbeing contracts (Awen and Halo) in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase along with £119,000 increase to the Apprenticeship Levy budget.

3.1.13 The Teachers' pay award from September 2025 onwards was also agreed in July 2025. As noted in 3.1.5, additional grant funding of £521,736 was announced by Welsh Government in September. Allocation of this grant and the funding retained centrally in respect of the Teachers' pay award will take place during quarter 3.

3.1.14 The uncertainty regarding the funding of the increases to the rate of employers' national insurance contributions was referenced in the quarter 1 revenue monitoring report. During quarter 2, Bridgend County Borough Council received a grant of £4.192 million for BCBC staff, a post-16 grant of £96,000, and a grant of £159,199 towards Fire and Rescue Authority NI increases. The grant was £390,000 short of the actual increase needed. Bridgend has also had to fund the cost of NI increases for commissioned services from its own budget.

Budget Reduction Proposals

3.1.15 The net budget for the financial year has been set assuming full implementation of the current year budget reduction requirements across the Council's budget, which amount to £8.379 million. Where proposals to meet this requirement have been delayed or are not achievable directorates have been tasked with identifying alternative proposals to meet their requirements such as holding additional vacancies, or bringing forward alternative budget reduction proposals.

3.1.16 In February 2025 Council approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025-26 to 2028-29. This identified the need to develop recurrent budget reduction proposals, based on the most likely scenario, amounting to £39.516 million over the next four years. Against that background it is essential that expenditure is kept within the overall approved budget and that longer term proposals continue to be developed so that the Council has as much flexibility as possible to meet the challenges which lie ahead.

3.1.17 At year end consideration will be given to any budget over spends to determine whether these should be carried forward as a first call on the directorate budget for the following year. Similarly, consideration will be given to requests from directors to carry forward any planned directorate under spends for specific purposes into the following year, in line with the Council's Reserves and Balances Protocol, as long as these can be met from within the Council's cash limited budget for 2025-26. This is in line with the reports to Cabinet and Council on the MTFS, and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

3.2 Monitoring of Budget Reduction Proposals

Prior Year Budget Reductions

3.2.1 The Revenue Budget Outturn report was presented to Cabinet on 24th June 2025. In the report it was highlighted that there were £415,000 of prior year budget reduction proposals that were not met in full, with a total outstanding balance to be met of £290,000. In addition, of the 2024-25 budget reduction proposals of £13.045 million, it was reported that there was a total outstanding balance to be met of £1.569 million. Directors have been asked to identify if any of these proposals are still not likely to be achieved in full during the 2025-26 financial year, and to identify mitigating actions that will be undertaken to achieve them. All remaining outstanding prior year budget reductions are outlined in **Appendix 1** with a summary per directorate provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Outstanding Prior Year Budget Reductions

	Total Budget Reductions Required	Total Budget Reductions Likely to be Achieved	Shortfall
DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**
Education, Early Years and Young People	291	149	142
Social Services and Wellbeing	501	501	0
Communities	464	296	168
Chief Executives	1,567	1,347	220
TOTAL	**2,823**	**2,293**	**530**

Note: The total budget reductions required in Table 2 represents the full original budget reduction targets.

3.2.2 **Table 2** shows that of the £2.823 million outstanding reductions, £2.293 million is likely to be achieved in 2025-26 leaving a shortfall of £530,000. Proposals still not likely to be achieved include:

- EDFS19 – Communication and Relationships Team (£142,000 shortfall). A service review has started with a new Team Manager in place from 1 September 2025.
- COM 2 2021-22 – Re-location of Community Recycling Centre from Tythegston to Pyle (£60,000 shortfall). The new site in Pyle opened in quarter 4 of 2023-24. Once the exit terms of the lease in Tythegston have been finalised the full saving will be made.
- COM2 2023-24 – Charging Blue Badge Holders for parking (£40,000 shortfall). The Traffic and Transport Team are progressing with the order making process and have carried out an initial engagement on the proposal which is currently being evaluated prior to progressing.
- CEX22 – Review of ICT Services (£87,000 shortfall). Saving was not met in full due to the timing of the re-procurement exercise on telephony budgets across the Council.
- CEX25 – Staff savings from Finance senior management team – (£70,000 shortfall). Shortfall in savings target due to failure to implement the proposed Finance Senior Management restructure. The service is now considering alternative budget saving proposals.

3.2.3 As outlined in the MTFS reports to Cabinet and Council, MTFS Principle 7 states that *"Savings proposals are fully developed and include realistic delivery timescales prior to inclusion in the annual budget. An MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency Reserve will be maintained to mitigate against unforeseen delays".* An MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency reserve is in place to offset shortfalls on specific budget reduction proposals on a one-off basis where circumstances to achieving them are outside of the directorate's control. During the financial year, the Section 151 Officer will consider applications from Directorates to the MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency reserve to mitigate some of the shortfalls.

Budget Reductions 2025-26

3.2.4 The budget approved for 2025-26 included budget reduction proposals totalling £8.379 million, which is broken down in **Appendix 2** and summarised in **Table 3** below. The current position is that £5.593 million has been achieved to date with an additional £1.928 million to be achieved by year end, leading to an overall projected shortfall on the savings target by year end of £858,000, or 10.24% of the overall reduction target.

Table 3 – Monitoring of Budget Reductions 2025-26

	Total Budget Reductions Required	Total Budget Reductions Achieved to date	Total Budget Reductions Likely to be Achieved	Shortfall
DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**
Education, Early Years and Young People	1,428	382	1,011	417
Schools	1,186	1,186	1,186	0
Social Services and Wellbeing	1,817	682	1,617	200
Communities	717	356	556	161
Chief Executive's	688	444	609	79
Corporate/Council Wide	2,543	2,543	2,543	0
TOTAL	**8,379**	**5,593**	**7,522**	**857**

3.2.5 The most significant budget reduction proposals unlikely to be achieved in full are (> £100,000 shortfall):-

- EEYYP5 – Reduction in Strategy, Performance and Support Group (£109,000 shortfall). The staff consultation process is due to commence in quarter 3 of 2025-26. Saving will be made in full in 2026-27.
- SCH1 – Efficiency saving against School Delegated Budgets – 1% in 2025-26 (£1.186 million). Whilst the saving is referenced as having been achieved due to the overall reduction in the Individual Schools Budget (ISB), as referenced in paragraph 3.3.1, the reduced budgets have resulted in total projected deficit balances for schools at year end of £5.087 million. Officers are working with schools to bring this overall deficit down.
- SSW8 – Reduction in provision of number of Supported Living Accommodation units (£190,000 shortfall). The service area is actively seeking means to achieve this budget reduction proposal. Updates will be provided in future revenue monitoring reports.

3.2.6 **Appendix 2** identifies the projected amount of saving against these proposals in detail and action to be taken by the directorate to mitigate the shortfall. Directors continue to work with their staff to deliver their proposals or alternatives and this is reflected in the forecast outturn for the year. During the financial year the Section 151 Officer will also consider applications from directorates to the MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency reserve to mitigate some of the shortfalls.

3.2.7 In the longer term, these proposals must be realised or must be met through alternative budget reduction proposals in order to deliver a balanced budget position.

3.3 Commentary on the financial position at 30th September 2025

Financial position at 30th September 2025

A summary of the financial position for each main service area is attached in **Appendix 3** to this report and comments on the most significant variances are provided below.

3.3.1 **Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate**

The net budget for the Education, Early Years and Young People (EEYYP) Directorate, including school delegated budgets, for 2025-26 is £157.073 million. Current projections indicate an under spend of £289,000 at year end compared to the quarter 1 projected under spend of £572,000. The main variances are:

EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTORATE	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
Inclusion Group	8,765	9,505	740	8.44%
EEYYP Support Unit (EDSU)	545	579	34	6.19%
Home to School Transport	10,892	10,498	(393)	-3.61%
Catering Services	1,863	1,369	(494)	-26.54%

Schools' delegated budgets

Total funding delegated to schools in 2025-26 is £124.897 million.

The schools' delegated budget is reported as balanced as any under spend or over spend is automatically carried forward into the new financial year before being considered by the Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People in line with the 'Guidance and Procedures on Managing Surplus School Balances'.

The Financial Scheme for Schools requires schools to obtain permission from both the Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People and the Section 151 Officer to set a deficit budget. Schools with deficits of greater than £50,000 in a primary school or greater than £150,000 in a secondary or special school are requested to attend termly support and challenge meetings with senior local authority officers. In addition, any unplanned deficits that occur within the financial year due to unforeseen circumstances must be reported as soon as they become known to the school.

At the start of 2025-26, projections indicated an overall deficit balance for school delegated budgets of £5.206 million at year end. At quarter 2 this has slightly reduced to a projected deficit of £5.087 million. There are 35 primary schools, 5 secondary schools and 2 special schools (71% of all schools) projecting a deficit balance at year end.

Central Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate budgets

Inclusion Group

- There is a projected net over spend of £740,000 across Inclusion Group budgets compared with a projected net under spend of £345,000 at quarter 1.
- The main reason for the projected over spend is that there continues to be significant demand for additional learning needs (ALN) support at schools resulting in a projected over spend of £536,000 at quarter 1 compared with £78,000 at quarter 1. The demand is high in particular for pupils requiring neurodevelopmental, behavioural, communication and complex medical support. The number of pupils supported in the spring term was 303, increasing to 345 in the summer term.
- Recoupment expenditure has projected to increase by £533,000 since quarter 1. Numbers have remained stable in inter-authority recoupment placements, with 20 at Summer 2025, down to 18 in Autumn 2025. The pressure is due to additional support being provided at Heronsbridge School and Ysgol Bryn Castell to mitigate further external placements. The projected costs for the support provided by the special schools alone are currently £422,000, however this approach prevents higher costs that would have been incurred with external providers.
- The projected over spend has been partly mitigated by current staff vacancies held across Inclusion Group budgets (£212,000).

Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Support Unit (EDSU)

- There is a projected over spend of £34,000 at quarter 2 compared with the projected over spend of £159,000 at quarter 1. The underlying reason for the projected over spend relates to delays in implementing MTFS proposals requiring restructures which will be finalised later in 2025-26, including EEYYP5 – Strategy, Performance and Support Group – shortfall of £109,000, EEYPY 6 – Pupil Services – shortfall of £26,000 and EEYYP8 – Business Support – shortfall of £70,000. The improved projections reflect additional vacancies within the Support Unit since quarter 1.

Home-to-school transport (HtST)

- There is a projected under spend of £393,000 on the HtST budget at quarter 2 compared with the projected under spend of £101,000 at quarter 1. This has been achieved through efficiencies in contracts for the first half of the year.
- The projected under spend reflects that the MTFS budget reduction proposal in this service area for 2025-26 of £675,000 will be met in full – EEYYP 2 – review of HtST. The improved projection from quarter 1 reflects the ongoing review of HtST budgets.
- If the projected under spend is maintained for the remainder of the financial year, the service is in a strong position to meet the 2026-27 MTFS proposal of £417,000.

Catering Services

- Catering Services is projecting an under spend of £494,000 in quarter 2 which is comparable to the projected under spend of £518,000 in quarter 1.
- The projected under spend continues to be based on the full implementation of the Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFMS) by Welsh Government and the accompanying grant funding to support the initiative.
- The provision of UPFSM in 2025-26 will continue to be monitored closely to determine whether the positive projections are sustainable and whether Catering

Services can contribute to future MTFS budget reduction proposals for the EEYYP Directorate.

- The projected under spend is slightly lower than 2024-25 due to the delay in the implementation of MTFS budget reduction EEYYP1 – Cessation of the meals at home service which is currently reporting a shortfall of £56,000. The service has now ceased so no further costs should be incurred.

3.3.2 **Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate**

The Directorate's net budget for 2025-26 is £119.451 million. Current projections indicate an under spend of £117,000 at year end compared to the quarter 1 projected over spend of £626,000. The detailed narrative below sets out the main service areas where projections have improved, including learning disability, physical disability/sensory impairment home care, learning disabilities residential care, homes for older people, prevention and wellbeing and children's social care commissioning and social work.

Two significant grants have been confirmed since the quarter 1 projections – Social Care Workforce grant (£2.005 million) and Eliminating Profit (£1.129 million). The detailed narrative below refers to where these have positively impacted on the projections.

Council approved budget pressures of £8.800 million for the SSWB Directorate in February 2025 as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The funded pressures include £3.250 million to mitigate the ongoing pressures of Care Experienced Children and insufficient numbers of foster carers, £2.020 million for the implications of Real Living Wage (RLW) uplifts on commissioned contracts, £1.282 million for learning disabilities services, £679,000 for mental health services and £540,000 for Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment services.

As noted in the quarter 1 report, there continues to be pressures in learning disabilities and physical disability/sensory impairment services driven by the complexity of need and demand across these services. There is also significant pressure in children's residential placements. The Social Services Improvement Board is overseeing a number of actions to address the pressure in the adult services budget, including accelerating the work to transform learning disabilities. Further actions have been developed into a 3 year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in BCBC that was approved by Cabinet on 19th November 2024. This plan sits alongside the 3 year strategic plan for children and family services which was approved by Cabinet in September 2023.

The most significant variances for the directorate are :

SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING DIRECTORATE	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
Adult Social Care	79,138	78,382	(756)	-0.96%
Prevention and Wellbeing	6,380	6,187	(193)	-3.03%
Childrens Social Care	33,933	34,765	832	2.45%

Adult Social Care

There is a projected net under spend of £756,000 on the Adult Social Care budget, an improvement of £232,000 from the £524,000 projected under spend at quarter 1.

The most significant variances contributing to the under spend are:

ADULT SOCIAL CARE	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000
Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Home Care	225
Learning Disabilities Residential Care	203
Older People Home care	151
Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Residential Care	110
Mental Health Residential Care	(87)
Older People Direct Payments	(108)
Mental Health Supported Accommodation	(256)
Learning Disabilities Direct Payment	(266)
Homes for Older People	(770)

- Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Home Care - there is a projected over spend of £225,000 compared to £397,000 at quarter 1. This is based on the current demand for the service which is 99 packages of support (101 at quarter 1). The projected over spend is mainly due to increased costs for existing placements, due to changing needs. The projection has improved from quarter 1 due to a £151,000 allocation of the Social Care Workforce (SCW) grant.

- Learning Disabilities Residential Care – there is a projected over spend of £203,000 compared to £361,000 at quarter 1. Whilst the projection has improved from quarter 1 due to a £400,000 allocation of the SCW grant the service has seen an increase of two placements since quarter 1 and a reduction in projected joint funded income as further clarification was received during quarter 2 as to the split of funding with health for one placement. Therefore the overall projections have only improved by £158,000 and not the full value of the SCW grant.

- Older People Home Care – there is a projected over spend of £151,000 compared to £47,000 at quarter 1. Whilst the service has been allocated £51,000 of the SCW

grant in quarter 2 the projected over spend has increased due to an increase in placement numbers within Independent Domiciliary Care.

- Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Residential Care – there is a projected over spend of £110,000 which is comparable to the £106,000 projected over spend at quarter 1. The projected over spend is due to higher placement numbers than budgeted for.

- Mental Health Residential Care – there is a projected under spend of £87,000 compared to a projected under spend of £218,000 at quarter 1. The reduction in projected under spend is due to an increase in placement numbers to 48 current placements compared to 46 at quarter 1.

- Older People Direct Payments – there is a projected under spend of £108,000 compared to a projected under spend of £161,000 at quarter 1. The reduction in projected under spend is due to an increase in the number of Direct Payment cases to 107 current cases compared to 93 at quarter 1.

- Mental Health Supported Accommodation – there is a projected under spend of £256,000 compared to a projected under spend of £242,000 at quarter 1. This continues to be as a result of staffing vacancies with the service.

- Learning Disabilities Direct Payments – there is a projected under spend of £266,000 across the Direct Payments budgets in this area compared to a projected under spend of £241,000 at quarter 1. This is based on the current demand for packages of support of 137 (143 at quarter 1).

- Homes for Older People – there is a projected under spend of £770,000 compared to a projected under spend of £441,000 at quarter 1. Since quarter 1 there has been an increase in projected client contributions for internal residential homes. All contributions towards residential care are financially assessed in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 but the average income received each year will vary in total depending on the financial position of the people needing care during the financial year – e.g. if there are a large number of people who have savings or assets and are therefore not reliant on the local authority paying their contribution in full, then this will increase the overall average income received per person.

Prevention and Wellbeing

- There is a projected under spend of £193,000 compared to a projected under spend of £41,000 at quarter 1. The movement is due to an allocation from the central price inflation budget to this service area during quarter 2 which has improved the projections by £115,160 as the revised management fee costs had been built into the quarter 1 projections. The service has also maximised the Play Works Sufficiency grant (£46,000).
- The underlying reason for the projected under spend is mainly due to maximisation of grant funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund (£643,000). This is also mitigating the following MTFS saving whilst public engagement is undertaken with a view of what a long term sustainable cultural services looks like:-
    - SSW13 (2024-25) – £360,000 - Council to reduce its investment into cultural services.

Children's Social Care

There is a projected net over spend of £832,000 on the Children's Social Care budget compared with the projected net over spend of £1.191 million at quarter 1. The most significant variances contributing to this over spend are:-

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000
Care Experienced Children	1,050
Early Help & Edge of Care	(143)

- The projected over spend of £1.050 million for Care Experienced Children has decreased from the £1.266 million reported at quarter 1. The budget has had £606,000 of Social Care Workforce grant allocated during quarter 2. The underlying over spend is due to a combination of factors:-

  - The Independent Residential Care budget has a projected over spend of £880,000 (quarter 1 - £946,000).
  - The quarter 1 projections were based on 26 care experienced children in independent residential care – this has increased to 28 placements at quarter 2.
  - In addition, there continues to be insufficient foster carer placements to meet needs and children requiring specialist provision, sometimes with high staffing ratios to keep them safe and protected. It should be noted that this budget area can be volatile and small changes in demand can result in relatively high costs being incurred.

  - Children's Internal Residential Care has a projected net over spend of £280,000 compared to £324,000 in quarter 1. This is mainly due to increased usage of agency workers to address safeguarding issues which require additional staffing across the service.

  - Fostering - There is a projected under spend in this area of £438,000. This is primarily due to a projected under spend of £335,000 on the Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) budget based on 33 placements. This is due to alternative, lower cost, placement options being fully utilised, including Special Guardianship Orders. It should be noted, however, that some of the children in costly independent residential provision would ideally be with foster carers who can manage complex needs. There is insufficient capacity in-house and in IFAs which means that some children's needs are being met in a higher, more expensive, tier of service.

  - Children's Supported Living – There is a projected over spend of £562,000 which is comparable with the £594,000 projected over spend at quarter 1. This is currently mitigated by the projected under spend in Fostering noted above. The pressure is due to increases in the number of placements (21 in quarter 1 of 2024-25 compared to 27 currently).

- Early Help & Edge of Care – There is a projected under spend of £143,000 compared with the projected under spend of £188,000 at quarter 1. This is due to a projected under spend of £38,000 on staffing and £105,000 on running costs across the service while a review of the service is progressed.

3.3.3 **Communities Directorate**

The net budget for the Directorate for 2025-26 is £34.429 million. The current projection is an anticipated over spend of £77,000 compared with the projected under spend of £185,000 at quarter 1. The main variances are:

COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
Highway Services	9,168	9,401	233	2.54%
Fleet Services	205	797	592	289.35%
Traffic & Transport	1,341	837	(504)	-37.59%
Parks, Playing Fields & Bereavement	2,807	2,991	184	6.55%
Corporate Landlord	3,647	3,279	(368)	-10.09%

Highway Services

- There is a projected over spend of £233,000 at quarter 2 compared with a projected over spend of £73,000 at quarter 1. The service area is not anticipated to meet its vacancy management MTFS saving of £93,000 based on current staffing projections. The balance of the over spend is due to the projected over spend on hire charges for vehicles and equipment.

Fleet Services

- There is a projected over spend of £592,000 compared to the projected over spend of £520,000 at quarter 1. The fleet services team operate on a break-even basis with re-charges for work undertaken on directorates, South Wales Police (SWP) and the general public's vehicles, generating income to support staffing and overhead costs. Productivity levels continue to be impacted by long term sickness and ongoing issues with recruitment and retention difficulties. A market supplement has been introduced in line with the corporate Market Supplement Policy following comparisons with neighbouring authorities and remuneration of HGV technicians, which has seen some limited success in filling vacancies. A report outlining options for service operating models to mitigate the budget position of fleet services was delayed due to officer availability but an external review is now proceeding and is anticipated in the latter half of the 2025-26 financial year. The one-off anticipated costs of the review have been built into the quarter 2 projections.

Traffic and Transport

- There is a projected under spend of £504,000 compared with a projected under spend of £380,000 at quarter 1. Whilst the service area has benefitted from an MTFS budget pressure of £360,000 approved by Council for 2025-26 towards the shortfall in car park income and the staff car pass scheme which has been impacted by hybrid working, the Council continues to benefit from the temporary income

raised from the Salt Lake Car Park in Porthcawl. The enhanced position from quarter 1 is mainly due to improved projections for car park income across the Borough and maximisation of grant income.

Parks, Playing Fields & Bereavement Services

- There is a projected over spend of £184,000 on Parks, Playing Fields & Bereavement services. There are projected over spends on grounds maintenance at cemeteries within Bereavement services (£91,000) and maintenance budgets on Pavilions (£143,000). These have been partly mitigated by staffing vacancies.

Corporate Landlord

- There is a projected under spend of £368,000 compared to the projected under spend of £249,000 at quarter 1. This is primarily due to staff vacancies as the service continues to experience recruitment difficulties. The quarter 1 projections anticipated posts to be filled by 1st October 2025, however this has now been revised to 1st January 2026.

3.3.4 **Chief Executive's**

The net budget for the Directorate for 2025-26 is £25.762 million. Current projections indicate a projected over spend of £782,000 at year end compared to the quarter 1 projected over spend of £858,000. The main variances are:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S	Net Budget £'000	Projected outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
ICT	4,323	4,553	230	5.3%
Partnerships	2,306	2,498	192	8.3%
Housing & Homelessness	4,855	4,830	(25)	-0.5%
Finance	4,401	4,702	301	6.8%

ICT

- There is a projected net over spend of £230,000 across ICT budgets compared to a projected net over spend of £265,000 at quarter 1.
- As noted in the quarter 1 report the projected over spend is mainly due to MTFS saving proposals from 2024-25 and 2025-26 not being fully achieved. There is a shortfall of £87,000 against the 2024-25 MTFS budget reduction proposal CEX 22 – Review of ICT services and a shortfall of £58,000 against the 2025-26 MTFS budget reduction proposal CEX 10 – Restructure of the ICT service, pending a restructure of the service.
- The balance of the projected over spend is primarily due to historic SLA income from schools no longer being realised as the Welsh Government School Hwb project now includes the services previously being re-charged.
- The projection has improved by £35,000 since quarter 1 mainly due to staff vacancies.

Partnerships

- There is a net projected over spend of £192,000 across the Partnerships budgets compared to a projected net over spend of £239,000 at quarter 1.
- There continues to be a projected over spend against the CCTV budget (£73,000) which is mainly due to a reduction in projected income as a result of the contract with the Vale of Glamorgan ending (£71,000).
- There is a projected over spend in Communications and Marketing of £56,000 which is mainly due to increased staffing costs while the service underwent a restructure. The restructure became effective from the 1st October 2025.
- There is a projected over spend against Pest Control services of £34,000 – this is due to the shortfall in the 2024-25 MTFS budget reduction proposal, CEX 8 - Charging for PEST control services. There continues to be a reduced uptake in the service resulting in a projected income shortfall for 2025-26.
- The balance is mainly due to a shortfall against the historic vacancy management factor target across Partnership budgets.

Housing & Homelessness

- There is a projected net under spend of £25,000 on Housing & Homelessness compared to a net projected under spend of £78,000 at quarter 1.
- The overall budget for housing and homelessness has been increased by £400,000 in 2025-26 due to Council approving a MTFS budget pressure to support pressures on the homelessness budget. In addition there has also been an increase of £970,000 due to transfers from Welsh Government into the settlement from previous grant funding.
- Projected spend on Homelessness accommodation in 2025-26 is £4.200 million. As well as the core budget (£3.274 million) the service has also seen an increase in rental income relating to Housing Benefits claimed by tenants who have been supported with homelessness accommodation (£460,000). The net impact is a projected over spend on accommodation of £466,000.
- This has been offset by projected under spends on the Brynmenyn Homeless Centre (£158,000) and the three new Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) properties acquired in 2024-25 (£196,000) due to projected increases in Housing Benefit income. Further projected under spends include maximisation of Supporting People grant (£121,000) and grant funding received for Asylum Seeker Dispersal (£99,000).

Finance

- There is a projected over spend of £301,000 on Finance budgets which is comparable to the quarter 1 projected over spend of £299,000.
- This firstly relates to failure to implement historic MTFS proposals requiring restructures (the service is now considering alternative budget saving proposals) and delays to in-year restructures which will be finalised later in 2025-26 (CEX25 (2024-25) – Staff savings from Finance senior management team - shortfall of £70,000 and CEX5 – review support capacity across finance – shortfall of £23,000).
- There is also a shortfall of £91,000 on Department for Work and Pension (DWP) subsidy contributions towards housing benefit payments in Bridgend. Any Housing Benefit award paid over the subsidy level is borne by the Council as the DWP does not fully fund all Housing Benefit expenditure – for example, there are a number of tenancy arrangements whereby the subsidy is limited to historic local housing allowance rates or restricted by rent officer determinations.
- The balance is mainly due to a shortfall against the historic vacancy management factor target of £115,000 across Finance budgets.

3.3.5 **Council Wide budgets**

This section includes budgets, provisions and services which are council wide, and not managed by an individual directorate. The net budget for 2025-26 is £46.511 million. Current projections anticipate an under spend against this budget of £6.350 million which has improved from the projected over spend at quarter 1 of £171,000. The main variances are:-

COUNCIL WIDE BUDGETS	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
Capital Financing	5,907	4,680	(1,227)	-20.78%
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	17,054	17,268	214	1.25%
Other Council Wide budgets	10,009	4,628	(5,381)	-53.76%

Capital Financing

- The projected under spend of £1.227 million mainly relates to additional interest anticipated from current investments. Interest rates started to fall from the high of 5% in November 2024, with further reductions to the current rate of 4%. Further interest rate reductions are expected, however the timing of these are uncertain and are subject to economic factors and in particular the position of inflation against the Bank of England's 2% target.
- It should also be noted that this will not be a recurring under spend. As noted in the Treasury Management Quarter 1 Report 2025-26 to Cabinet on 23rd September 2025, the Council has loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) maturing within the next 3 financial years that it will need to repay and, given the anticipated level of expenditure within the capital programme over the current and next financial years, including the new rolling fleet replacement programme for waste service vehicles, it is likely that new borrowing will be required to replace these maturing loans.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- There is currently a projected over spend of £214,000 on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which is comparable with the £221,000 projected over spend at quarter 1. This is a demand led budget and take-up is difficult to predict. The projected take-up for 2025-26 is higher than in 2024-25 when the gross spend in this budget area was £16.326 million. This is partly due to the increase in council tax in 2025-26 of 4.5%, plus work undertaken by the Benefits Team to ensure citizens are aware of and claiming the benefits they are entitled to. The budget will be closely monitored in 2025-26 as there could be additional calls on the scheme with the ongoing cost of living crisis with the potential for an increase in the number of benefit claimants.

Other Council wide budgets

- The projected under spend of £5.381 million has improved from the £55,000 projected under spend at quarter 1. The main areas contributing to this projected under spend are:-

- As referred to in paragraph 3.1.3, during quarter 2 Welsh Government provided a grant of £521,736 towards the teachers' pay award 2025-26 that was not anticipated at budget setting.
- As referred to in paragraph 3.1.11 during quarter 2 allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of National Joint Council (NJC) pay awards was vired to directorate and school budgets. The confirmed pay award was lower than budgeted for. The ongoing uncertainty over future pay awards means that it is likely that the provision set aside in the MTFS for 2026-27 will need to be supplemented by any funding not committed from the central pay budget this financial year.
- Inflation rates have fluctuated since the budget was set – CPI was 2.8% when the budget was set in February 2025, increasing to 3.8% in August 2025. The majority of the budget estimated for price inflation is retained centrally within council wide budgets and allocated to directorates/schools as further information is known about specific contractual price increases – CPI allocations during quarter 2 can be found in paragraph 3.1.11. The majority of the projected under spend on the price inflation budget relates to reductions in requirements to allocate price budgets to service areas in-year as the Council has not seen the increases in CPI impact on contractual arrangements to date in 2025-26. There is, however, ongoing uncertainty on energy cost increases in 2026-27 and the general trajectory of CPI, therefore it is likely that the provision set aside in the MTFS for 2026-27 will need to be supplemented by any funding not committed from the price inflation budget this year.
- There is also a projected reduction in corporate support required to fund redundancy costs as there are fewer staffing related MTFS proposals for 2025-26.

- The uncertainty regarding the funding of the increases to the rate of employers' national insurance contributions was referenced in the quarter 1 revenue monitoring report. During quarter 2, Bridgend County Borough Council received a grant of £4.447 million for BCBC staff and towards Fire and Rescue Authority NI increases. The grant was £390,000 short of the actual increase needed. Bridgend has also had to fund the cost of NI increases for commissioned services from its own budgets.

3.4 Earmarked Reserves

3.4.1 The cumulative revenue draw down by directorates is £898,000 as shown in **Table 4** below. The majority of the draw down from earmarked reserves takes place in the later stages of the financial year, especially on capital and grant funded schemes. In addition, school balances are not adjusted until the year end – an overall draw down in year of £4.468 million from school balances is currently projected, which would continue to leave a negative balance to be managed by the Council.

Table 4 – Usable Revenue Earmarked Reserves (Excluding Council Fund) – Quarter 2

Opening Balance 01 Apr 25	Reserve	Net Additions/ Reclassification	Draw-down	Unwound	Closing Balance 30 Sep 25
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Corporate Reserves:				
2,290	Asset Management Reserves	-	(209)	-	2,081
1,830	Major Claims & Insurance Reserves	-	-	-	1,830
1,892	Service Reconfiguration	-	-	-	1,892
2,294	Change Management/Digital Transformation	-	-	-	2,294
500	Economic and Future Resilience Fund	-	-	-	500
3,179	Other Corporate Reserves	-	-	-	3,179
11,985	**Total Corporate Reserves**	**-**	**(209)**	**-**	**11,776**
	Directorate Reserves:				
1,919	Education & Family Support	-	(38)	-	1,881
1,856	Social Services & Wellbeing	-	(265)	-	1,591
1,835	Communities	-	(182)	-	1,653
1,966	Chief Executives	-	(123)	-	1,843
7,576	**Total Directorate Reserves**	**-**	**(608)**	**-**	**6,968**
	Equalisation & Grant Reserves:				
316	Education & Family Support	-	-	-	316
47	Social Services & Wellbeing	-	-	-	47
2,478	Communities	(355)	(81)	-	2,042
47	Chief Executives	310	-	-	357
2,888	**Equalisation & Grant Reserves:**	**(45)**	**(81)**	**-**	**2,762**
(619)	School Balances	-	-	-	(619)
21,830	**TOTAL RESERVES**	**(45)**	**(898)**	**-**	**20,887**

3.4.2 In addition to the usable revenue reserves in **Table 4**, there are currently £46.083 million of other earmarked reserves funding schemes within the capital programme.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 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 well-being objectives are designed to complement each other and are part of an integrated way of working to improve well-being for the people of Bridgend. The allocation of budget determines the extent to which the Council's well-being objectives can be delivered. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of the well-being goals or objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 These are reflected in the body of the report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- note the projected revenue position for 2025-26

Background documents: Individual Directorate Monitoring Reports

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PRIOR YEAR BUDGET REDUCTIONS CARRIED FORWARD INTO 2025-26

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Original Reduction and RAG £000	Total amount of saving likely to be achieved in 2025-26 £000	Reason why not achievable	Proposed Action in 2025-26 to achieve

RAG STATUS KEY	
RED	Not likely to be achieved **at all** in this financial year or less than 25%.
AMBER	Reduction not likely to be achieved in full in financial year but greater than 25%
GREEN	Reduction likely to be achieved in full

EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

EDFS9 (2024-25)	Cessation of Adult Community Learning (ACL) provision	149	149	The outcome of the consultation process for the cessation of the ACL service was finalised in quarter 3 of 2024-25.	None required - saving will be made in full in 2025-26
EDFS19	Communication and Relationships Team - Referrals only accepted for pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion and placement breaking down. No longer completing observations for the ND Pathway	142	0	Saving not met in 2024-25 due to the overall increase in pupils needing the service	A Service review has started with a new Team Lead in place from 1 September 2025. Further updates to Cabinet will be provided as the review progresses.
	Total Education, Early Years and Young People	**291**	**149**		

SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

SSW7 (2024-25)	Review opportunities to amend the current energy payment arrangements for the leisure contract	45	45	On 22 October 2024, Cabinet approved modification of the existing contractual terms to vary the expiry date from 31 March 2027 to 31 March 2032. Work is ongoing to enter into a variation agreement.	None required - alternative saving identified and has been achieved in 2025-26
SSW13 (2024-25)	Council to reduce its investment into cultural services including the availability of buildings, services or resources relating to its libraries, supported employment, community venues and arts programmes	360	360	Cabinet report in May 2024 approved reductions of £65K, along with public engagement over how future savings can be achieved. Further reports will be presented to Cabinet to enable the outcome of consultation exercises to be taken into account when finalising any proposed changes.	The saving of the remaining £295,000 will be covered by maximising grant funding opportunities in 2025-26. However a long term plan to achieve the additional £295,000 needs to be explored. We are commencing public engagement at present with a view of what does long term sustainable cultural services look like.
SSW17 (2024-25	BCBC consider efficiency savings from Third Sector Contracts - bereavement services	5	5	Notice was served covering a 10 months saving in 2024-25.	None required - saving will be made in full in 2025-26
SSW18 (2024-25)	BCBC consider efficiency savings from Third Sector Contracts - dementia services	57	57	Notice was served covering a 10 months saving in 2024-25.	None required - saving will be made in full in 2025-26
SSW22 (2024-25)	BCBC consider efficiency savings from Third Sector Contracts - substance misuse services	34	34	Notice was served covering a 10 months saving in 2024-25.	None required - saving will be made in full in 2025-26
	Total Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate	**501**	**501**		

COMMUNITIES

COM2 (2021-22)	Re-location of Community Recycling Centre from Tythegston to Pyle resulting in cessation of lease payments at existing site	60	0	The new site opened during quarter 4 of 2023-24. The timing of the opening meant that exit terms of the lease were being finalised in 2024-25. Once these have been finalised, the full saving will be made.	Once the exit terms have been finalised, the full saving will be made. The service will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
COM4 (2022-23)	Remove Business in Focus from running Enterprise Centres in Bridgend	20	5	Review of Business in Focus operating model explored to identify operating efficiencies with a view to restructuring the management agreement with Business in Focus to deliver this saving.	Savings have been made elsewhere in Corporate Landlord, mainly due to staff vacancies.
COM5 (2022-23)	Commercially let a wing of Ravens court to a partner organisation or business	50	50	Building was not commercially let during 2024-25. Sale of the freehold took place in the final quarter of 2024-25.	Full saving is anticipated to be met in 2025-26
COM2 (2023-24)	Charging Blue Badge Holders for parking	40	0	The Traffic and Transport Team are progressing with the order making process and have carried out an initial engagement on the proposal which is currently being evaluated prior to progressing	Shortfalls against this savings target will be met through one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
COM3 (2023-24)	Commercially let two wings of Ravens court to a partner organisation or business	120	120	Building was not commercially let during 2024-25. Sale of the freehold took place in the final quarter of 2024-25.	Full saving is anticipated to be met in 2025-26
COM1 (2024-25)	Reduction in staff mileage budgets	34	34	Achieved 58.8% of the proposed saving in 2024-25 - saving increased as year progressed.	Full saving is anticipated to be met in 2025-26
COM10 (2024-25)	Review of Porthcawl Marina berthing fees with a view to it operating on a full cost recovery basis	32	5	The service was subject to unforeseen salary costs to cover sickness.	Savings have been identified elsewhere within the Economy, Natural Resources & Sustainability department in 25-26.
COM14 (2024-25)	Office Rationalisation to include closing Raven's Court and the Innovation Centre and sharing accommodation in Civic Offices with the MASH and SWP.	73	73	Raven's Court was not commercially let during 2024-25. Sharing of accommodation in Civic Offices did not take place until the final quarter of 2024-25.	Full saving is anticipated to be met in 2025-26

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Original Reduction and RAG £000	Total amount of saving likely to be achieved in 2025-26 £000	Reason why not achievable	Proposed Action in 2025-26 to achieve
COM28 (2024-25)	Letting of former Woodmat Property, Brynmenyn Estate	35	9	Opportunities were sought to achieve this budget reduction proposal, but let not agreed by end of 2024-25.	Corporate Landlord are currently finalising the terms to lease this unit, therefore part-year saving should be achieved
	Total Communities Directorate	**464**	**296**		

Chief Executives

CEX8 (2024-25)	Charging the public for Pest Control Services	67	33	Due to reduced uptake of the service, the saving was only partly achieved in 2024-25.	Income levels will continue to be monitored closely with further updates provided to Cabinet in future revenue monitoring reports. If there continues to be a shortfall in income levels, Partnerships will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
CEX12 (2024-25)	Increased income from Registrars' Ceremonies	43	43	Due to reduced uptake of the service, the saving was only partly achieved in 2024-25.	Full saving is anticipated to be met in 2025-26 as first half of the year has seen an increase in bookings.
CEX13 (2024-25)	Restructure of Legal Services	154	154	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to the timing of implementation of the Legal restructure	The restructure of Legal Services has been completed therefore the savings will be made in full from 2025-26.
CEX14 (2024-25)	Reconfiguration of Business Support	160	160	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to the timing of implementation of the Business Support restructure	The restructure of Business Support has been completed therefore the savings will be made in full from 2025-26.
CEX15 (2024-25)	Increase income generated from legal fees for property transactions, S106 Agreements and Highway Agreements	20	0	Legal Services are reliant on the instructions that come through from Directorates. Due to reduced uptake of the service, the saving was not achieved in 2024-25	Legal Services will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
CEX16 (2024-25)	Restructure of HR Service	289	289	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to the timing of implementation of the HR restructure	The restructure of HR has been completed therefore the savings will be made in full from 2025-26.
CEX17 (2024-25)	Household Canvas - Reduction / Limited Canvass Door Knocking	9	0	Saving not achieved due to increased costs associated with canvassing.	Elections will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
CEX19 (2024-25)	Restructure of Democratic Services	96	96	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to the timing of implementation of the Democratic Services restructure	The restructure of Democratic Services has been completed therefore the savings will be made in full from 2025-26.
CEX20 (2024-25)	Restructure of Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Team	45	45	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to the timing of implementation of the Corporate Policy and Public Affairs restructure	The restructure of Corporate Policy and Public Affairs has been completed therefore the savings will be made in full from 2025-26.
CEX22 (2024-25)	Review of ICT Services	398	311	Saving not met in full due to the timing of re-procurement exercise on telephony budgets across the Council	ICT Services will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
CEX23 (2024-25)	Review the provision of Partnerships and Customer Services	216	216	Saving partly achieved in 2024-25 due to delays in confirmation of alternative external funding towards 2 posts.	Confirmation of funding has been finalised, therefore full saving anticipated to be made in 2025-26.
CEX25 (2024-25)	Staff savings from Finance senior management team	70	0	Shortfall in savings target due to failure to implement proposed Finance senior management restructure.	Finance will endeavour to meet any shortfall in the saving through alternative one off efficiencies in 2025-26 to deliver a balanced budget position.
	Total Chief Executives Directorate	**1,567**	**1,347**		

	GRAND TOTAL OUTSTANDING REDUCTIONS	**2,823**	**2,293**		
	REDUCTIONS SHORTFALL		**530**		

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable

RAG STATUS KEY	
RED	Not likely to be achieved **at all** in this financial year or less than 25%.
AMBER	Reduction not likely to be achieved in full in financial year but greater than 25
GREEN	Reduction likely to be achieved in full

EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CENTRAL EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

EEYYP1	Cessation of the Meals-at-Home Service	While there could be a significant redundancy cost, redeployment options could be explored to mitigate this risk. A public consultation would be required prior to determination by Cabinet.	56	0	0	Whilst the service has now ceased there are some residual costs in 2025-26. Full saving should be achieved in 2026-27.
EEYYP2	Review of Home to School Transport	While transport for Nursery children is non-statutory, if this were to be removed, there could be negative impact on pupils attending Welsh-medium and faith school nursery settings in particular although numbers are relatively low (<100). Home-to-school transport for Post-16 students is non-statutory. This could result in an increased number of young people not in education, employment or training. These cuts could impact on school attendance.	675	200	675	The new Home-to-School Transport Policy was implemented on 1 September 2025. The efficiency savings are ongoing and contracts have been adjusted to take into account the change of eligibility for pupils.
EEYYP3	Reduction in Counselling services	Should a decision be made to reduce counselling services this would have a negative impact on the wellbeing of children and young people. A reduction in this area would limit the access to support for children and young people.	50	50	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
EEYYP4	Reduction in Early Years and Childcare	Some functions would need to be removed from the team, for example, the ability to • quality assure childcare providers in the community (with associated safeguarding risks); • complete the statutory childcare sufficiency assessments and associated statutory work; and • support and develop childcare within the community.	90	0	23	The outcome of the consultation process for the Early Year service is likely to be finalised during quarter 3 of 2025-26.

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
EEYYP5	Reduction in Strategy, Performance and Support Group	This proposed reduction relates to a number of posts in the Strategy, Performance and Support Group. The reduction will present a significant impact (and associated serious risk) in the implementation of the Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate's main management information systems. This reduction will limit the way in which the directorate is able to record, manage and report on sensitive data relating to vulnerable children. This reduction would also impact on the local authority's ability to dispense its statutory home-to-school transport duties. This reduction will mean that our capacity to maintain procurement and contract procedure responsibilities will be diminished and that the School Transport Team's ability to respond to complaints and issues will be more limited.	146	0	37	Staff consultation due to begin in quarter 3 of 2025-26.
EEYYP6	Reduction in Pupil Services	There would be a significant risk to the local authority being able to ensure school admission arrangements are in place and school places are offered in line with national legislation and local policy arrangements. The child employment function would likely need to cease, to compensate for the reduced capacity within the team. Furthermore, the team would not be able to have oversight and administer applications for discretionary transport which would likely leave the local authority open to legal challenge.	35	0	9	Staff consultation due to begin in quarter 3 of 2025-26.

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
EEYYP7	Reduction in the Corporate Health and Safety Unit	The local authority has, within the last few years, provided significant additional revenue budget to expand the number of Health and Safety advisors to support the local authority in delivering its functions safely. The Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU) ensures that both staff and the public are kept safe where they are affected by the local authority's undertakings. •The team's ability to promote a positive health and safety culture would likely be compromised. •Significant reduction in proactive work and active monitoring, mentoring and coaching for the "responsible person" •Significant increased pressure on managers at all levels with more limited advice available and less time from the CHSU to support •Significant increased reactive work. •Inability to offer training without support from the private sector (at cost) •Potential increase in insurance cost, and the cost to services to address failings in general, or which has been identified by the HSE (for example, fees for intervention) •Increased in costs to cover work would normally be completed by the CHSU but will likely require contractors to provide •Potential serious failings under the current health and safety legislation, potentially leading to prosecution (corporate and personal liability for senior officers, in particular Corporate Management Board) •A poorer health and safety culture across the organisation in general •Poorer health and safety systems •Increase level of criticism from services users, members of public and elected members There are significant health and safety risks that the current team has limited capacity to address that could potentially mean regulatory interventions by the HSE. There have been several HSE interventions within the last two years. A reduction in the human resources would add exponentially to the risk of the local authority failing its health and safety duties, where the potential for intervention by the HSE, prosecutions and fines would significantly outweigh any MTFS efficiency.	76	0	19	Staff consultation due to begin in quarter 3 of 2025-26.

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
EEYYP8	Reduction in Business Support	The directorate's centralised support function is responsible for providing business support to teams and to the central EDSU function that is responsible for all complaints, reports (for example Cabinet), statutory meeting support such as SACRE, member referrals, FOI requests, subject access requests, managing referral and inputting information into the directorate's central management information systems. A reduction of staff would mean there would likely be delays in input of referrals which would increase waiting times for children and families to receive support from family support services. Delayed communication with schools following receipt of Police Protection Notifications (PPNs) involving pupils within Bridgend schools. There would be an impact on the Youth Justice Service's (JYS) statutory requirements, for example notification of overnight arrests / custody, invites to Bureau and capturing data in relation to education provision for children open to YJS. This could also affect statutory Youth Justice Board key performance indicators. Freedom of information and subject access requests would likely not meet statutory timelines and there would be delays in Cabinet and scrutiny reports being progressed, as EDSU support the approvals process. Delegated power administration support could be delayed and could miss call-in timescales. There would likely be poor customer service to complainants who raise complaints via EDSU. This could escalate to more complaints and member referrals. There would likely be poorer customer service to children, young people and families who access any service within the Education, Early Years and Young People portfolio, including Learner Support, School Support, Pupil Services, Early Years and Young People and School Admissions. Inaccurate or missing data could contribute to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) breaches, for example, if an address change has not been updated in a timely manner. Lastly, there will be significantly increased pressure on practitioners, senior practitioners and team managers.	93	0	23	Staff consultation due to begin in quarter 3 of 2025-26.
EEYYP9	Reduction of staff in Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Statutory Team	Failure to meet the Welsh Government deadline for ALN Implementation Plan 2023-2025. The risk of failure to determine, capture, and disseminate processes relating to the ALN Code and the Education Tribunal in Wales and comply with statutory duties of the local authority. This includes individual development plans (IDP) requirements of the ALNET Act 2018.	44	44	44	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
EEYYP10	Reduction in Education Other Than At Schools (EOTAS) support	Increasing demand and waiting list for specialist support at The Bridge Alternative Provision has resulted in a higher need for bespoke timetables. If there is no lead post overseeing this area the risk appropriate education not provided to those pupils who cannot attend mainstream or special school the local authority would not be fulfilling its statutory duty. Capacity of staff to identify appropriate accredited, vocational packages to meet individual need will be reduced resulting in an increase in number of pupils who are on a waiting list for suitable education. Delays in meeting the needs of learners and significant placement breakdowns will lead to an increase in out of authority specialist placements requested at significant additional cost. Further challenge placed on mainstream schools to identify and agree alternative packages on a case by case basis at significant additional cost. Pupils would not receive the support they require resulting in lower exam outcomes and an increase in those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) post statutory school age. Possible increase in number of permanent exclusions from mainstream schools.	75	0	43	Shortfall in savings due to the timing of the restructure. Saving will be made in full in 2026-27.

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
EEYYP11	Reduction in contribution to Central South Consortium	Depending on where this funding is cut (either from the grant received by the local authority and immediately passported to Central South Consortium) or from the funding allocated for Principal / Improvement Partners it will either: •Reduce curriculum reform support and professional learning and leadership support at a time when the new curriculum is being extended to examination classes; or •Result in a decrease in the number of improvement partners (IP) to work in partnership with school leaders, staff and governing bodies. Each IP would be required to work with more schools with less time in each school. This would mean a reduction in the support available to schools to support pre-inspection and post inspection planning and a reduction in the time available to support senior leader recruitment processes. It will also coincide with anticipated changes as a result of the Middle Tier Review which may create additional work / responsibility for headteachers and senior leaders in relation to school improvement functions without the expected funds to support any such transition.	88	88	88	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
	Total Education, Early Years and Young People		**1,428**	**382**	**1,011**	

SCHOOLS

SCH1	Efficiency savings against School Delegated Budgets - 1% for 2025-26 and 1% thereafter.	It is important to note that some of this impact may be mitigated by the financial support provided to schools from the local authority in assisting schools to meet cost pressures in relation to pay and pensions, and energy. Further to discussion with headteachers, the following potential impacts have been identified: 1. Risk of increased school deficit positions; 2. Potential to result in some teacher and other staff redundancies; 3. Increase in class sizes; 4. Loss of interventions; 5. Increase in staff absence; 6. Low staff morale; 7. Increased workload; 8. Reduced curriculum offer; 9. Reduced leadership / strategic thinking time; 10. Potential inability to meet statutory requirements; 11. Decrease in adult support in classrooms; 12. Increase in pupil exclusions; 13. Decline in standards; 14. Reduction in ability maintain school buildings; 15. Limited extra-curricular activity; 16. Increase in referrals for behaviour support; 17. Reduced support for learners with additional needs; 18. Reduction in professional learning opportunities; 19. Loss of expertise due to teachers and senior leaders leaving the profession.	1,186	1,186	1,186	Savings achieved due to overall reduction in Individual Schools Budget (ISB). However, reduced budgets have resulted in quarter 2 total projected deficit balances for schools at year end in excess of £5.087m.
	Total Schools		**1,186**	**1,186**	**1,186**	

	Total Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate	**2,614**	**1,568**	**2,197**	

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING						
SSW2	Redevelop the indoor bowls arena space and explore redevelopment for other purposes that offer increased income generation	The operation of the indoor bowls hall at Bridgend Life Centre generates operating costs that are difficult to cover based on the seasonal usage by the indoor bowls club. Any changes to indoor bowling would not be popular and may have a negative impact on the Council's wellbeing goals. The development of the wellbeing hub inside the bowls hall has improved usage by downsizing the number of bowling rinks already. With investment there may be possibilities for seasonal increased income generation. Potential need for alternative community venue for indoor bowls. Feasibility study would be required during 2024-25.	10	0	0	A feasibility study is currently in process to provide potential opportunities for seasonal usage of the Bowls hall. This saving being achieved will depend on the outcome of the study therefore not likely to be achieved at present. Further updates will be provided in future budget monitoring reports.
SSW4	Consider the transition of currently shared facilities at five school sites (Dual Use Assets), to whole school operation in line with many primary and secondary schools across BCBC	BCBC supports community access of school assets including Pencoed sports centre, Brackla sports centre, Ysgol Bryn Castell, Porthcawl sports hall and Parc Dderwen 3G pitch. The sites are busy with 110 organisations utilising the different spaces available. These are partnership arrangements with schools including cost sharing and often have linked to external funding support. The proposal has been to increase prices for hirers to offset increases in staffing and premises costs / school contributions whilst also creating a saving from increased income generation. There are considerable numbers of junior groups and activities within the usage data for the sites and targeted population groups also. If achieved the proposal will supports sustainability via maximising value for existing assets beyond the school day for community benefit. In particular the model links to 21st century schools and Welsh government aspiration for community use and connection beyond the school day. The school benefit during the day and community beyond, the main risks would be the school not having the opportunity to use the asset outside school hours, having a negative impact on community opportunities.	71	36	71	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW5	Staffing restructure within Prevention and Wellbeing Services	The Prevention and Wellbeing service would be reliant on external grant funding to support its service. If grant funding ceases there will be no meaningful prevention and wellbeing offer in Bridgend significantly increasing pressure on statutory services. There will be a reduction in the number of staff by 3, redundancy costs will need to be funded. In order to achieve this the service is in the process of redesigning to ensure that it is fit for purpose with clear functions and objectives established which will mitigate any significant impact and risks.	147	0	147	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW6	Increase in income charges by increasing standard charges by 10 % across all non residential services	Review of the service pricing model and increasing unit costs for all non residential services with a view to generating additional income. Based on unit cost increase of 10%. Services are provided to vulnerable adults following an assessment of need. There is risk that individuals will cancel care packages and not have their needs met which could result in higher packages of care required in the future cost and / or an increase in debt recovery. In terms of flat rate charges such as Transport and Meals, no additional income can be generated under the current regulations.	100	50	100	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

APPENDIX 2

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2025-26 £'000	Value achieved to date 2025-26 £'000	Value likely to be achieved 2025-26 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
SSW7	Implementation of the Home remodelling programme across adult services	The support at home remodelling programme across whole of adult services has determined that the service will move to a locality based delivery model which will result in non care staffing savings of £198k. This will result in 5 staff members being made redundant •The model aims to maximise reablement and short-term capacity to support hospital discharge and avoiding hospital admission. The service has been working towards increasing those individuals who go through the short-term services to ensure we maximise independence before we commission long term care packages our current performance is that 53.98% of individuals who completed a package of reablement during quarter 1 2024-25 had no ongoing service need. In 2023-24 38.6% of people had a short term service prior to have a long term package, the service has been working towards increasing this number to 80% of people, in July the figure had increased to 60% of people who had a short term service prior to have a long term package people. To be able to achieve this target the service will no longer be providing long term packages of care in the main to older people, so all future long term packages would be commissioned via independent providers. This should reduce the overall support at home spending levels by £300k.	198	0	198	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW8	Reduction in provision of number of Supported Living Accommodation units	Close one supported living accommodation. Suitable alternative provision would need to be identified. Achieving these savings is dependent on tenant with rights being agreeable to moving to an alternative provision. Review the waking nights expenditure.	190	0	0	Service area actively seeking means to achieve budget saving proposal. Updates will be provided in future revenue monitoring reports.
SSW9	Review of Caswell Clinic social work budget (clinic based at Glanrhyd Hospital)	BCBC host the regional social work team based in the Caswell clinic. All costs are reimbursed so no impact on this small budget reduction	3	3	3	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW10	Apply 4% vacancy factor to social work teams and increase the vacancy factor on non frontline staff from 3% to 4%	In 2024-25 a vacancy factor of 3% was applied to non frontline teams in Social Services and Wellbeing. Care worker and social work posts were excluded due to an assessment of risk that all posts need. There is now greater stability in social work teams which means an assessment of risk means that the vacancy factor can be applied in these teams in adults and children's social care. This will require the step down of agency by the end of the financial year, and it is highly improbable there will be no vacant posts covered by agency due to safeguarding reasons meaning achievement of the full 3% represents a significant risk.	697	349	697	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW11	Reduction of Social Care Workforce Development Partnership (SCWDP) spend.	External training courses / conferences to be supported only where there is an identified need that cannot be met by in-house resources. Use of internal staff to facilitate training workshops. External trainers bring specialist knowledge and skills that internal trainers could not replicate so the impact on statutory training essential to regulatory requirements will need to be closely monitored.	50	0	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26

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SSW12	Business efficiencies in support services through reviewing structures in business support, performance and commissioning.	The commissioning team is at full capacity with all colleagues on permanent contracts, so any MTFS saving / restructure will result in redundancy costs. The team are also driving forward key transformational change linked to MTFS savings, so any reduction on capacity will impact our ability to deliver targeted savings elsewhere in the MTFS. There is also a risk that we will not be able to meet essential requirements of the newly implemented WG Code of Practice for commissioning care and support, nor our own internal Contract Procedure Rules, where there is a risk that tenders cannot be undertaken within required timescales. Business support has been restructured to provide a support office model which ensures that statutory minutes linked to safeguarding are completed and distributed in a timely manner and to ensure social work tasks are carried out by support officers, thus maximising the amount of time that social workers spend with children, adults, families and carers. Reduction in this resource will increase the administrative burden on social work staff. Any reduction in the performance team will impact on the ability to complete statutory performance returns. There is a high probability reductions in these teams will result in compulsory redundancies.	129	129	129	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW13	Removal of Safeguarding capacity	Would result in a compulsory redundancy situation. Corporate safeguarding is a statutory duty having no dedicated resource, there is risk of criticism that people will come to harm through no one being available to drive the implementation of safeguarding across the Council. There is also a significant risk of criticism from regulators.	57	0	57	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW14	Reduction in staff within Children's Services	This proposal is to reduce Independent Reviewing Officer numbers by 1 linked to the reduction in the child protection register. This is currently achievable whilst maintaining reasonable caseloads but there is a risk there will be insufficient workforce if the numbers of children subject to registration increase again. It is also proposed that social work assistants in IAA undertake young carers assessments meaning that the Young Carers Worker would be redundant. Finally a review of senior management arrangements can result in some savings. This will need to be monitored closely given the CIW serious concerns in August 2022 which included concerns at management oversight arrangements.	50	50	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW15	Reduction in family group conferencing service contract value. Due to the continued implementation of signs of safety (including family network meetings) and new ways of working less families will need to be referred to the family group conferencing service.	The risks are minimal as we have already begun to lower our usage with the full implementation of Signs of Safety. We have set an expectation that family meetings will be run by Social Workers until it is felt independence from the LA is required. We currently have the criteria: children who have been subject to Child Protection Register (CPR) for longer than three months or subject to Public Law Outline (PLO). We could reduce this to only include those children who become subject to pre-proceedings PLO or are in court.	60	60	60	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
SSW16	Removal of Corporate Parenting Events budget	Low impact as utilising "Just Giving" to raise funds to support the Corporate Parent responsibilities of this Council and partners.	5	5	5	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

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SSW17	Management efficiencies	A review of senior management in adult and children's social care will be undertaken to identify efficiencies whilst ensuring there continues to be effective leadership and management capacity which is key to delivering the changes and transformation required to deliver the rest of the MTFS savings and to retain the confidence of regulators who in 2022 had serious concerns regarding management oversight in children's social care and regulated care services	50	0	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
	Total Social Services and Wellbeing		**1,817**	**682**	**1,617**	

COMMUNITIES

COM1	Reduction in staff mileage budgets	During the pandemic most meetings were arranged virtually, instead of in person. This arrangement has continued in the main since then with hybrid working, although there are clear cases where in-person meetings are essential, with the result that spend on mileage is less than pre-pandemic levels, and budgets can be reduced accordingly with no impact on service provision, but positive benefits for achieving net carbon zero.	32	6	18	There was a similar budget reduction proposal in 2024-25 which was not met in full and has been carried forward into 2025-26 (see COM1 - Appendix 1). The historic target will be met in 2025-26, however it is anticipated there will a shortfall against the in-year proposal. Alternative budgets will have to be identified if the value likely to be achieved does not improve in future revenue monitoring reports.
COM2	Review of cleaning specifications and frequencies on BCBC Operational assets.	Will impact cleaning standards and visibility of cleaning frequencies but change is considered feasible. Will need to review cleaning staff numbers and potential for redundancies however aim will be to implement changes through staff redeployment and recruitment changes across the wider cleaning contract thus avoiding redundancy issues.	35	35	35	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
COM3	Further review of cyclical servicing and maintenance contracts dialling back maintenance items to safety critical and statutory compliance only.	Reduction of cyclical maintenance activity counter productive for long term asset operation. Potential for reduction in Business Support staff as a result of the reduction in cyclical orders although savings to Business Support already form part of current MTFS.	45	0	0	Due to ongoing pressures on the property revenue maintenance budgets the budget reduction proposal is unlikely to be achieved in 2025-26. However, savings from staff vacancies in Corporate Landlord have supported the shortfall against this specific proposal.
COM4	Increase income across the commercial property portfolio	Change will take time to implement and require additional surveyor resource over time.	15	0	0	Due to staff vacancies the additional income target will not be met in 2025-26. However savings from the staff vacancies have supported the shortfall against this specific proposal.
COM5	Review Legionella and Asbestos officer structure.	Savings identify the option of creating a newly combined legionella and asbestos team reducing the overall staffing budget	10	10	10	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
COM6	Removal of funding from Southern Wales Tourism Group	Removal of BCBC contribution of funding from external tourism group. Will impact on reduction in marketing activities for BCBC.	9	9	9	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
COM7	Further reduction in Porthcawl Programme budget	Further reduction in Porthcawl Programme budget - reduction excluding post and minimal development spend.	35	35	35	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

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COM8	Increase bulky waste charges from £30 for 3 items to £35	Potential increase in fly tipping. Increase would not result in full cost recovery under the current contract, but recyclable tonnages contribute to an improved recycling level against Welsh Government targets to reduce the likelihood of penalties.	10	3	10	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
COM9	Increase fees on Bereavement services, i.e. burial charges by 20%	Income target has been based on historic income levels achieved and the application of a 20% increase to current charges. This will be the second year that bereavement charges have increased. There is a risk to achieving the income target if there is a reduction in burials compared with the last two years if they return to pre-pandemic levels, or if relatives seek alternative services from neighbouring authorities. This has been reflected in the target income.	100	0	100	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
COM10	Reduction in the size of the waste enforcement team.	Reduction in staff who undertake enforcement activities relating to waste. There is a risk that the ability to react to issues will be reduced.	156	38	119	Shortfall in savings due to the timing of the restructure. Saving will be made in full in 2026-27.
COM11	Commercially let Pandy Depot	Would require existing BCBC archive storage to be condensed or relocated to other location and take time to ready for commercial letting. Reduce the amount of depot facilities for BCBC operations. Will require capital to ready for letting. Full savings unlikely until 2025-26, but partial savings are a possibility in 2024-25.	50	0	0	Ongoing opportunities being sought to achieve this budget reduction proposal, but let not agreed by end of quarter 2. Projections will be updated throughout the financial year as opportunities continue to be sought.
COM12	Stop bi-annual supply of blue refuse sacks to all residents.	This saving is agreed & will be implemented from April 2025. This would mean residents would have to provide their own bags for containment of refuse. Likely to be an unpopular change for residents who currently have these delivered with food waste liners. The amount of the saving is now slightly reduced in 2025-26 because of the contactors expenditure on the bags already ordered but will be realised in full from 2026-27.	220	220	220	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
	Total Communities Directorate		**717**	**356**	**556**	

Budget Reduction Proposals 2025-26 to 2028-29

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CHIEF EXECUTIVES						
CEX1	Remove vacant grade 6 post (0.5) - Democratic Services	Will result in increased demand on other staff members. Statutory work will need to be prioritised. Service will be operating at minimum provision.	20	20	20	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX2	Reduction in payment to Shared Regulatory Services (SRS)	SRS have been asked to make a reduction to their budget. This will need to be agreed by the Joint Committee in February. This will impact on core service provision and authority specific services.	153	153	153	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX3	Review of the current Learning and Development provision	Reduces the available training support for employees and may impact on learning and development opportunities.	84	42	84	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX4	Reduction in Corporate Apprenticeship budget - 15%	The budget has been underspent due to the turnover of apprentices. The reduction in budget will lead to approx. one less corporate apprentice per annum and periods of inactivity between recruitment rounds.	58	58	58	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX5	Review support capacity across finance	The service will be unable to respond in a timely manner to requests for information or support with budget information	31	0	10	Shortfall in savings target due to timing of implementation of restructure. Saving will be achieved in full by 2026-27.
CEX7	Review the capacity within the customer services team.	This is a non statutory service. This proposal is to review the work in the team which will increase response times to callers who contact the Authority either by phone or in person, will reduce capacity to deal with emails from the public and blue car badge applications.	67	34	67	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX8	Extend further the use of Houses in Multiple Occupation to provide temporary accommodation for single homeless individuals	This will reduce the Council's reliance on more expensive accommodation options such as tourism style properties.	120	60	120	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX9	Management restructure across the Chief Executive's Directorate	This will result in reduced capacity across the directorate and reduced responsiveness	77	77	77	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
CEX10	Restructure the ICT service	This will reduce the capacity within the team to deal with business as usual and to support service configurations in other service areas	78	0	20	Shortfall in savings target due to timing of implementation of restructure. Saving will be achieved in full by 2026-27.
	Total Chief Executive's Directorate		**688**	**444**	**609**	
CORPORATE / COUNCIL WIDE						
CW1	Change the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy from a straight line to annuity method. The MRP is the charge to revenue made in respect of paying off the principal sum of the borrowing undertaken to finance the capital programme	The change in policy will improve the Council's ability to make prudent provision as it helps to distribute the MRP more fairly when factoring that the value of money decreases with time due to its earning potential. The annuity method provides a fairer charge than equal instalments as it takes account of the time value of money.	1,000	1,000	1,000	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26

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CW2	Removal of uncommitted funding set aside in the MTFS 2024-28 towards emerging budget pressures and as a contingency against non-deliverability of budget reduction proposals. The original allocations were £550k and £1.08 million respectively. Only £87k has been allocated during the year resulting in a balance of £1.543 million as a contribution to continuing budget pressures	There will be no negative impact on service delivery, these budgets were set aside in 2024-25 to meet new and continuing budget pressures. A number of these are recurring and this funding will help to reduce overspends in future years. It does mean, however, that there is less headroom corporately to deal with unexpected financial pressures going forward.	1,543	1,543	1,543	Full saving should be achieved in 2025-26
	Total Corporate / Council Wide		**2,543**	**2,543**	**2,543**	
	GRAND TOTAL REDUCTIONS		**8,379**	**5,593**	**7,522**	
	REDUCTION SHORTFALL				**857**	

3,722	**3,382**	**5,930**
2,167	**2,131**	**893**
2,490	**2,866**	**1,556**
8,379	**8,379**	**8,379**

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL	Budget 2025-26 Expenditure Budget £'000	Income Budget £'000	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance
EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE						
School Delegated Budgets	148,344	(23,447)	124,897	124,897	-	0.0%
Inclusion Group	9,912	(1,147)	8,765	9,505	740	8.4%
Early Years and Young People	3,479	(545)	2,934	2,843	(91)	-3.1%
Strategic Performance and Support	18,029	(4,265)	13,764	12,998	(766)	-5.6%
Schools Support	1,691	(829)	862	723	(139)	-16.1%
Sustainable Communities For Learning	4,039	(3)	4,036	4,004	(32)	-0.8%
Other Education and Family Support	1,879	(64)	1,815	1,814	(1)	-0.1%
TOTAL EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT	**187,373**	**(30,300)**	**157,073**	**156,784**	**(289)**	**-0.2%**
SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING						
Adult Social Care	105,425	(26,287)	79,138	78,382	(756)	-0.96%
Prevention and Wellbeing	7,323	(943)	6,380	6,187	(193)	-3.03%
Childrens Social Care	35,177	(1,244)	33,933	34,765	832	2.45%
TOTAL SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING	**147,925**	**(28,474)**	**119,451**	**119,334**	**(117)**	**-0.1%**
COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE						
Planning & Development Services	2,544	(1,663)	881	841	(40)	-4.5%
Strategic Regeneration	1,910	(969)	941	883	(58)	-6.2%
Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability	7,847	(6,231)	1,616	1,601	(15)	-0.9%
Cleaner Streets and Waste Management	15,787	(2,430)	13,357	13,419	62	0.5%
Highways and Green Spaces	27,797	(14,106)	13,691	14,187	496	3.6%
Director and Head of Operations - Communities	300	(4)	296	296	-	0.0%
Corporate Landlord	14,783	(11,136)	3,647	3,279	(368)	-10.1%
TOTAL COMMUNITIES	**70,968**	**(36,539)**	**34,429**	**34,506**	**77**	**0.2%**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S						
Chief Executive Unit	520	(2)	518	528	10	1.9%
Finance	39,809	(35,408)	4,401	4,702	301	6.8%
HR/OD	2,347	(441)	1,906	1,952	46	2.4%
Partnerships	3,894	(1,588)	2,306	2,498	192	8.3%
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	7,344	(1,116)	6,228	6,258	30	0.5%
Elections	190	(3)	187	218	31	16.6%
ICT	5,584	(1,261)	4,323	4,553	230	5.3%
Housing & Homelessness	12,682	(7,827)	4,855	4,830	(25)	-0.5%
Business Support	1,175	(137)	1,038	1,005	(33)	-3.2%
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S	**73,545**	**(47,783)**	**25,762**	**26,544**	**782**	**3.0%**
TOTAL DIRECTORATE BUDGETS	**479,811**	**(143,096)**	**336,715**	**337,168**	**453**	**0.1%**
Council Wide Budgets	47,912	(1,401)	46,511	40,161	(6,350)	-13.7%
NET BRIDGEND CBC	**527,723**	**(144,497)**	**383,226**	**377,329**	**(5,897)**	**-1.5%**

NB: Differences due to rounding of £000's

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Meeting of:	**CABINET**
Date of Meeting:	**21 OCTOBER 2025**
Report Title:	**EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY 2025 - 2030**
Report Owner Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member:	**CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING** **CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING & CHANGE**
Responsible Officer:	**MARTIN MORGANS** **INTERIM HEAD OF OPERATIONS, COMMUNITY SERVICES**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**This strategy replaces the Bridgend County Borough Council Empty Property Strategy 2019–2023. It builds on the progress made under the previous framework and introduces updated measures that reflect current priorities, consultation feedback, and housing need across the borough.**
Executive Summary:	**This report seeks Cabinet approval for Bridgend County Borough Council's Empty Homes Strategy 2025–2030, which outlines a targeted and sustainable approach to reducing long-term empty properties across the borough. The strategy has been shaped by a public consultation held in 2024, with feedback from residents, stakeholders, and property owners helping to identify key priorities and improve the way the Council works with empty homes. It builds on the progress of the previous 2019–2023 strategy.** **Empty homes represent a wasted housing resource at a time of growing housing pressure. The strategy focuses on methods of engagement, financial support, and targeted enforcement. A range of initiatives are in place to support property owners, including access to grants, loans, and leasing schemes. Where informal approaches are unsuccessful, enforcement action will be considered. This allows the Council to prioritise properties for action.** **A detailed Empty Homes Action Plan sets out clear responsibilities and ensures delivery is supported**

	through a coordinated approach, involving both internal departments and external partners. **This strategy also supports wider objectives to increase affordable housing, tackle homelessness, regenerate town centres, and address climate change by promoting the reuse of existing buildings and improving energy efficiency.** **Performance will be monitored through national and local indicators, with an annual review and a full assessment in 2030 to ensure the strategy remains effective and relevant.** **Approval of this strategy will enable the Council to take a proactive, collaborative approach to bringing empty homes back into use and supporting stronger, more sustainable communities.**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Empty Homes Strategy 2025-2030 attached as **Appendix A**.

2. Background

2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council's previous Empty Homes Strategy concluded at the end of 2023. Although the development of such strategies is not a statutory requirement for local authorities, the Welsh Government strongly encourages their adoption as best practice to support housing and regeneration objectives.

2.2 To ensure the strategy reflects local needs, a consultation was undertaken in 2024 the results of which are attached in **Appendix B**. In collaboration with the consultation team, the consultation was divided into two streams to enable more targeted questioning. One stream focused on empty property owners whose homes had been vacant for 12 months or more. This approach aimed to gather detailed insights into why these properties remain vacant and explore ways to prevent long-term empties in the future.

2.3 As part of the empty property owners' consultation, bilingual Welsh and English letters were sent to 650 empty property owners inviting them to complete an online survey. This consultation ran over a twelve-week period and concluded on 9th September 2024.

2.4 The second stream was a residents' consultation, made available online in both English and Welsh via Bridgend Council's website. To maximise participation, this consultation was promoted through social media and newsletters. It was open for six weeks and concluded on 16th September 2024.

2.5 A total of 170 online responses and one written response were received from the residents' survey, along with 40 responses from empty property owners. Respondents were asked about the strategy's aims, the effectiveness of current Council communications such as mailouts, websites, and reporting mechanisms, and invited to suggest improvements and ways the Council could better support empty property owners.

2.6 The feedback received was key to shaping the final strategy. The Council has developed an Empty Homes Action Plan to guide efforts over the next five years, focusing on reducing long-term vacancies, returning empty properties to use, and supporting broader community and housing goals.

2.7 The development of the new Empty Homes Strategy has also been made with consideration to Bridgend County Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2023–2028, particularly supporting Wellbeing Objective Seven: 'to improve the way we work with empty properties.'

3. Current situation/ proposal

3.1 Bridgend County Borough continues to face high levels of long-term empty properties, which places pressure on housing supply and negatively impacts communities. The previous strategy made progress in reducing these numbers, but further action is needed to respond to increasing demand for housing and associated social and environmental impacts.

3.2 The proposal is to approve and implement the new Empty Homes Strategy 2025–2030. This updated strategy outlines a coordinated, multi-service approach focused on early engagement, financial assistance, targeted enforcement, and improved data sharing. It includes an action plan that prioritises high-risk properties and aims to return more empty homes to use.

3.3 The Empty Homes Strategy has been developed and agreed upon through the Empty Homes working group, with input received from all relevant departments involved in managing empty properties across the Authority.

3.4 Performance will be monitored through national and local indicators, with an annual review and a full assessment due in 2030 to ensure the strategy remains effective and relevant.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 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 disadvantages or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 **Long Term:** The strategy aims to reduce the number of long-term empty properties, creating much-needed accommodation for individuals and families. By addressing current housing need while making best use of existing stock, the strategy supports the development of sustainable communities and balances short-term actions with long-term impact.

5.2 **Integration:** The strategy supports the Council's well-being objectives by improving homes in disrepair, positively impacting families and communities. It also contributes to wider goals by creating housing opportunities and enhancing neighbourhoods in line with wider authority objectives.

5.3 **Involvement:** A public consultation helped shape the strategy's priorities, with respondent feedback leading to improvements now embedded in the five-year action plan. Ongoing engagement continues through internal working groups and external outreach to empty property owners, ensuring the strategy remains responsive to local needs and supports inclusive, community-led solutions.

5.4 **Collaboration:** Delivery of the Empty Homes Strategy's action plan requires close collaboration across multiple internal departments, including housing, planning, environmental health, and regeneration, to successfully implement the proposals. Additionally, the Council will work in partnership with external stakeholders such as landlords, Welsh Government, and housing associations. This coordinated approach maximises resources, expertise, and community engagement, ultimately supporting improved housing outcomes and the development of stronger, more resilient communities.

5.5 **Prevention:** The Empty Homes Strategy supports the principle of prevention by proactively addressing vacant properties before they deteriorate or cause wider community issues. Through early intervention, the strategy aims to help avoid costly repairs, reduce risks of antisocial behaviour and crime, and protect neighbourhood amenity. By bringing empty homes back into use, it also increases housing supply, alleviating pressure on homelessness services. This preventative approach ultimately reduces long-term costs and contributes to safer, more sustainable communities**.**

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 The strategy supports the Council's commitment to addressing climate change by promoting the re-use and restoration of existing empty homes, rather than relying solely on new development. Re-using existing buildings reduces demand for undeveloped land and helps to preserve green spaces.

6.2 Where possible, the strategy also encourages the delivery of energy efficiency improvements as part of refurbishment works, supporting long-term sustainability by ensuring that housing meets future environmental standards and helps to alleviate fuel poverty.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The Empty Property Co-Ordinator role enables the delivery of the frontline elements of the service and is funded from existing revenue budgets within the Chief Executive's Directorate. However, the anticipated increase in activity around empty properties will place additional pressure on other departments across the Authority. Any associated work will need to be absorbed within existing departmental resources.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Empty Homes Strategy 2025-2030.

Background documents

None.

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EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

2025-2030

Bridgend County Borough Council

In conjunction with Shared Regulatory Services.

Empty Homes Strategy 2025-2030

Table of Contents

Foreword 3

1. Introduction and Strategy Overview 4
2. Scope of the Strategy..... 4
3. Strategic Context..... 4
4. Understanding Empty Properties..... 5
    - 4.1 Definition of an Empty Property..... 5
    - 4.2 Unbanded Properties..... 5
    - 4.3 Council Tax Premiums..... 5
    - 4.4 Reasons Why Properties Become Empty..... 6
    - 4.5 Tracing Property Owners..... 6
    - 4.6 Problems Associated with Empty Homes..... 7
    - 4.7 Spotting the Signs of a Long-Term Empty Property..... 7
    - 4.8 To Report an Empty Property 7
    - 4.9 How the Council Handles Empty Property Complaints..... 8
    - 4.10 Performance Monitoring..... 8
5. Why Bring Empty Properties Back into Use..... 9
    - 5.1 Housing Need in Bridgend..... 9
    - 5.2 Increasing Housing Supply 10
6. Empty Property Action Plan 10
    - 6.1 The Empty Property Action Plan objectives..... 10
    - 6.2 Our Approach..... 11
    - 6.3 Proactive Engagement..... 11
    - 6.4 Incentivising Owners..... 11
    - 6.5 How Do We Prioritise Empty Homes 12
    - 6.6 Determining the Best Course of Action..... 13
7. Contact Us..... 13
8. Accessibility 13

Appendix 1: Action Plan..... 15

Appendix 2: Enforcement Options Available to Tackle Empty Properties..... 24

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Foreword:

As the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing, I am proud to introduce our Empty Property Strategy — a vital step forward in our commitment to building stronger, more vibrant communities.

Empty homes are more than just bricks and mortar left unused; they represent missed opportunities. At a time when the demand for housing continues to grow, every empty property is a potential home for a family in need, a chance to revitalise a neighbourhood, and a way to support our local economy.

This strategy sets out our shared vision for addressing the issue of empty properties across our area. It reflects our ambition to work collaboratively with property owners, residents, and partners to find practical, innovative solutions. It also recognises the complex reasons why properties become and remain empty, and the need for a collaborative, compassionate, and practical approach to bringing them back into use. Sometimes we must take enforcement action where other approaches have failed, with formal enforcement action always being a last resort.

For property owners, this strategy offers guidance, support, and clear pathways to help unlock the potential of their assets. For residents, it outlines how we aim to improve neighbourhoods and reduce the negative impacts of long-term vacancies. For officers and elected members, it provides a framework for action — grounded in evidence, shaped by local priorities, and driven by partnership.

This strategy reaffirms our commitment to bringing empty properties back into use to meet housing needs and strengthen our communities.

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1. Introduction and Strategy Overview

Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to reducing the high number of empty homes across the borough by ensuring they are brought back into use. This strategy outlines the Council's approach to addressing the issue and details the initiatives available to support property owners in reoccupying vacant properties. Bringing empty homes back into use will have a positive impact on residents in housing need and the wider community, for whom such properties often cause disruption and concern.

The strategy has been shaped by a public consultation held in September 2024, during which key stakeholders, empty property owners, and residents shared their views on the most effective ways to tackle this issue. Their feedback has been instrumental in shaping a plan that reflects local priorities and delivers practical, actionable solutions.

Building on the progress made during the 2019–2023 strategy, the updated approach incorporates new and innovative methods, including enhanced financial incentives, stricter enforcement measures, and stronger partnerships through the Empty Properties Working Group. It sets out a broad range of initiatives aimed at supporting owners to return their properties to use and highlights the Council's commitment to tackling the issue strategically and sustainably.

The implementation of this strategy will be continuously monitored and formally reviewed in 2030 to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

2. Scope of the Strategy:

This strategy primarily focuses on empty private sector homes and buildings with the potential to provide residential accommodation and only extends to commercial properties that are suitable for partial or full residential conversion.

3. Strategic Context:

This strategy aligns with the priorities set out in the Council's corporate vision, Delivering Together: Bridgend County Borough Council Strategic Plan 2023–2028, and the Corporate Delivery Plan for 2025-20/26. The strategy contributes directly to several key wellbeing objectives, including:

- **THRIVING** - A prosperous place with thriving communities.

By encouraging energy-efficient renovations through financial incentives.

Through improvements to our town centres, making them safer, more attractive, and better positioned to attract investment.

- **EMPOWERING** - Supporting our most vulnerable.

By supporting people facing homelessness to secure stable housing.

By increasing the availability of affordable and suitable accommodation.

By revitalising neglected properties and strengthening community resilience.

- **MODERNISING** - Creating modern, seamless public services.

By improving community engagement and access to information and advice.

This strategy also supports the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, contributing to three of the seven national well-being goals:

DRAFT

1. A Healthier Wales – by helping people access secure, quality housing that supports physical and mental wellbeing.

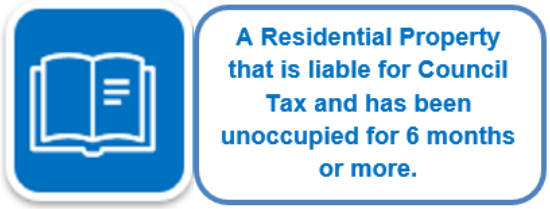
2. A Prosperous Wales – by stimulating investment in housing and creating local employment opportunities through renovation.

3. A Wales of Cohesive Communities – by reducing the negative impacts of long-term empty homes and fostering stronger neighbourhoods.

4. Understanding Empty Properties

4.1 Definition of an 'Empty Property':

For the purposes of this strategy and in terms of how the Council reports performance to Welsh Government, an empty property is defined as:



4.2 Unbanded Properties

In addition to properties that are liable for council tax, the Council also monitors and takes action in cases where properties have been unbanded by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

An unbanded property is a council tax property which has either :

- Had the banding removed by the VOA because the property is in poor condition or major building work is taking place, so it is taken off the council tax list, or
- Is a newly built property which has yet to be banded by the Valuation Office. These properties are given a provisional band until the Council are notified of the offical band, in order for the council tax payer to make payment on the account.

The Empty Property section monitors and gets involved in cases where properties have been unbanded by the VOA due to serious disrepair, partial demolition, or being derelict.

The Council Tax section monitors the new properties that need to be added to the council tax list and those that have been removed. They check when building work is finished and refer the property back to the VOA so it can be added to the list again.

4.3 Council Tax Premiums:

In Bridgend, properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of more than 12 months, are classified as long-term empty properties. To encourage owners to return these properties back into use, the Council applies a Council Tax premium, in accordance with powers detailed in the Housing (Wales) Act, 2014.

Since 1st April 2023, long-term empty properties (for 12 months or more) are subject to a Council Tax charge of 200% of the annual council tax amount for the first 2 years, after which the premium will increase to 300% of the annual charge.

Certain exemptions to the premium apply. For further information please refer to the Council Tax guidance **here**:

Alternatively, enquiries can be directed to: premiums@bridgend.gov.uk

4.4 Reasons Why Properties Become Empty:

There are a wide range of reasons why properties become and remain empty. Through engagement with property owners, the Council has identified several recurring factors that contribute to long-term vacancy:

- **Transitions In Ownership:** The natural process of buying, selling, or letting properties.
- **Poor Physical Condition:** Properties that are challenging to rent or sell due to their physical condition, requiring renovation beyond the owner's financial capability.
- **Challenging Marketability:** Properties that are difficult to rent or sell because of their location, limited facilities, or inadequate infrastructure.
- **Regulatory Challenges:** Navigating local regulations i.e. planning/building.
- **Changes In Personal Circumstances**: Older property owners may move into care or support accommodation and choose not to sell, resulting in their properties remaining vacant either temporarily or for the long term.
- **Legal Complications**: The legal process to resolve ownership issues can be lengthy. For example, where ownership is unclear or disputed following the death of the previous owner, delaying the property's return to use.
- **Abandonment**: Where owners cannot be traced or are unwilling to engage.
- **Property Holding for Investment Purposes**: Where owners retain the asset vacant in anticipation of market gains or redevelopment opportunities.
- **Surplus Ownership:** Where partners co-habit leaving the second property empty.
- **Adjoining Business Premises:** Where the property is adjoined to a business and the owner does not wish to let or sell.

Understanding these reasons enables the Council to tailor its support and guidance, helping owners overcome barriers and facilitating the reoccupation of long-term empty homes.

4.5 Tracing Property Owners:

One of the key challenges in tackling long-term empty properties is identifying and contacting the legal owner, particularly where ownership details are unclear or outdated. We recognise that in such cases, without local authority intervention the properties are likely to remain vacant for the long-term.

To address this, the Council employs a range of methods to trace and engage property owners including:

- Reviewing official records, including Council Tax data, Land Registry information, probate records, and the electoral register.
- Engaging with the local community, such as neighbours, local councillors, and others who may have knowledge about the property or its ownership.

- Issuing public notices, including advertisements in local newspapers, inviting the owner, or anyone with relevant information, to come forward.

- Appointing a professional tracing agent, when all other reasonable attempts have been exhausted. This measure is taken as a last resort.

If after all reasonable efforts, the owner remains untraceable, all correspondence will be served directly on the empty property.

4.6 Problems Associated with Empty Homes:

Property owners have a duty to ensure that vacant homes do not pose a risk or become a source of nuisance to the wider community. Long-term empty properties can have a significant and negative impact on their surroundings, often resulting in:

- Reduced property values for nearby homes.
- The increased risk of attracting pests and vermin.
- The potential for vandalism and anti-social behaviour (i.e. graffiti and trespassing).
- Opportunities for unauthorised entry, which may lead to illegal activities (i.e. squatting).
- An increased risk of fly tipping and illegal waste disposal in and around the property.
- The potential to cause structural and damp issues, which may affect adjoining or nearby buildings.
- Impact on the visual amenity of an area.

If left unaddressed, these properties can impose considerable burdens on the Council, emergency services, local residents, and the environment. Owners remain financially responsible for their upkeep and are strongly encouraged to take early, preventative action before issues escalate.

Properties deteriorate more rapidly when left empty, meaning even a short-term empty property can quickly become an unsightly burden, that becomes increasingly difficult and costly for owners to manage.

4.7 Spotting the Signs of a Long-Term Empty Property:

Long-term empty properties are often easily identifiable, especially when they show signs of neglect or deterioration. Some of the most common indicators include:

- A noticeable build-up of unopened post behind the front door or in external letterboxes.

- An overgrown garden or unmaintained outdoor area, including the accumulation of refuse or fly-tipped waste.

- Visible signs of disrepair, such as broken windows, damaged roofing, or internal damage.

- The property being boarded up or otherwise visibly secured.

- Lights left on continuously with no signs of anyone visiting over an extended period.

If several of these signs are present, the property may be long-term vacant. Reporting such properties enables the Council to investigate and take steps to encourage their return to use—helping to improve local housing availability and enhance neighbourhood appearance and safety.

4.8 To Report an Empty Property:

The Council welcomes reports from members of the public regarding concerns or issues associated with empty residential properties. These may include impacts on

neighbouring homes or the wider community.

To support this, the Council's website contains a dedicated enquiry form, which can be accessed **here**.

Please Note: The Council does **NOT** investigate anonymous complaints.

This form allows individuals to notify the Empty Property Coordinator of any suspected long-term vacancies or associated problems.

Please Note: While all reports are taken seriously, the Council is not able to pursue enforcement action in every case. Each report will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with priority given to properties that pose the greatest risk to public health, safety, or amenity. Wherever possible, the Council will seek to work collaboratively with property owners, encouraging voluntary action before initiating any formal enforcement measures.

4.9 How the Council Handles Empty Property Complaints:

Upon receipt of a complaint, the matter is referred to the Council's Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) department, where it is allocated to an Officer for further investigation. Common complaints include issues such as refuse accumulation, disrepair issues (e.g. dampness) or unauthorised access.

Where complaints fall outside the remit of SRS, the matter may be escalated to other Council departments. For example, Building Control may become involved if a property's condition presents a potential health and safety risk. In these instances, SRS can offer support in coordinating the appropriate response across services.

The Council's investigative approach is twofold: it addresses any immediate public health or safety concerns, while also working with the property owner to identify long-term solutions that can return the property to use. Officers will always seek to resolve issues informally in the first instance, encouraging owners to take voluntary action wherever possible.

However, where cooperation is not forthcoming, or where a property poses significant risk, formal enforcement measures may be pursued. These actions can include the serving of legal notices. If compliance is not achieved, the Council may initiate prosecution or undertake necessary works in default, with all associated costs recovered from the owner.

For details of the full range of enforcement tools available, please refer to **Appendix 1.**

Please Note: Addressing empty property issues is often a complex and time-consuming process. Some cases may take several years to resolve.

4.10 Performance Monitoring:

The Council's performance in tackling empty homes is measured through two nationally recognised indicators, as defined by Welsh Government and submitted to Data Cymru annually. These indicators are used to compare performance across Local Authorities in Wales.

- **EMH0001 – Percentage of Empty Private Sector Properties Brought Back into Use (6+ Months Vacant):** This indicator measures the proportion of empty private sector homes that are returned to use during the financial year as a direct result of local authority action. The figure is calculated using:

- The number of empty private properties brought back into use through Council intervention, and

- The total number of private sector properties that had been vacant for more than six months as of 1 April.

- **EMH0002 – Percentage of Empty Private Sector Properties Brought Back into Use (12+ Months Vacant):** Similar to EMH0001, this indicator reflects the Council's direct impact on long-term vacancy but focuses exclusively on properties empty for more than twelve months at the start of the financial year. The metric is based on:

  - The number of empty private sector dwellings brought back into use through Council action, and
  - The total number of such properties vacant for over 12 months as of 1 April.

As well as this, the Council also monitors progress to inform its business planning[1] and ensure alignment with both local and national objectives. The internal data collection focuses on the following metrics:

- The number of empty properties in the top 20 that are subject to local authority intervention resulting in positive progress[2].

- The number of top 20 properties returned to use with local authority intervention.

- Total number of empty properties returned to use with local authority intervention

- Total number of empty property actions across the local authority.

All relevant departments (e.g. Council Tax, Regeneration, Planning) will be required to submit timely and accurate data to support the annual Welsh Government return and internal reporting cycles. The Empty Property Coordinator will lead the coordination of this process and ensure outcomes are fed back into service planning.

5. Why Bring Empty Properties Back into Use

5.1 Housing Need in Bridgend

Bridgend Council is facing significant pressure on its housing market. Several complex and interrelated factors are contributing to this strain, including:

- Rising level of homelessness.
- Extended waiting times on the Common Housing Register.

[1] Bridgend Council Corporate Plan

[2] ***(* Positive progress is defined as a significant change likely to result in the property being brought back into beneficial use such as those on the market for sale; sold and in new ownership; under renovation; subject to enforcement notices or other enforcement action; work in default, progressing through probate (or other legal route) as a result of intervention)***

- A severe shortage of affordable housing.

- Private sector rental costs exceeding Local Housing Allowance rates, making homes inaccessible for many residents.

Over the course of our previous strategy, the number of applicants on the Common Housing Register increased from 816 at the end of 2019/2020 to 3,254 at the end of August 2024[3]. This surge in demand reflects the combined impact of the cost-of-living crisis and an increasing challenges in the private rented sector.

While demand for housing continues to far exceed supply, a significant number of empty homes remain across the borough. Although returning these properties back into use will not, on its own, resolve all of Bridgend's housing issues, it can play a valuable role in easing pressure.

Returning empty homes to the market can increase the overall supply of accommodation and supports the Councils wider efforts to respond to housing need.

5.2 Increasing Housing Supply

A key priority for the Council is to increase the housing supply within the borough. This not only includes bringing long-term empty properties back into use but also maximising the potential of underutilised buildings as a source of providing additional homes.

A key area of opportunity is the conversion of vacant or underused space above commercial and retail premises. These spaces are often overlooked despite offering considerable potential—particularly for creating smaller units suited to single-person households.

By making better use of such spaces, the Council can support more efficient land use, enhance town centres, and help meet the growing demand for affordable accommodation.

6. Empty Homes Action Plan

To support the effective return of empty properties back into use, the Council has developed a targeted Empty Homes Action Plan (See Annex 1).

This plan outlines the strategic objectives of the Council's Empty Homes Strategy and clearly defines the responsibilities assigned to members of the Empty Property Working Group, ensuring a collaborative and coordinated approach in delivering key outcomes.

6.1 The Empty Property Action Plan Objectives:

The Action Plan is underpinned by three core objectives:

Objective 1: Promote, Educate, and Support – To engage empty property owners, prospective purchasers, and developers by delivering clear and effective communication. The Council will provide tailored advice, raise awareness of available support, and encourage voluntary action to return properties to use.

Objective 2: Prioritisation And Targeted Approach – To address empty properties using a strategic, evidence-based approach. This involves prioritising properties that pose the highest risk to the public or environment, or those which cause the greatest impact on communities

[3] HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS POSITION STATEMENT - SEPTEMBER 2024

Objective 3: Taking Proportionate and Effective Enforcement Action – Where informal engagement proves unsuccessful and voluntary measures fail, the Council will use its statutory powers to take appropriate, proportionate, and transparent action.

6.2 Our Approach:

To achieve our objectives, the Council adopts a proactive and strategic approach by allocating dedicated resources to address empty properties. This includes providing tailored advice and offering financial assistance to encourage empty property owners to take meaningful action. By intervening, the Council aims to reduce the number of properties being left vacant for prolonged periods and to minimise their impact on the community.

6.3 Proactive Engagement

Fostering positive, collaborative relationships with empty property owners and developers is essential to the Councils efforts in bringing properties back into use. The Council is committed to offering support, guidance, and education to encourage positive engagement. To support this, a range of initiatives have been developed to support this goal, including:

- Annual Mailout: Annual communication with up-to-date advice and support offers.
- Empty Property Landlord Information Pack: A resource that includes key information on support schemes available, to help empty property owners understand the options available to them.
- Empty Property Survey – An online self-referral tool allowing empty property owners to tell us about their empty property and request tailored advice.
- Social media campaigns
- Attendance at landlord forum meetings – Regular participation to support knowledge-sharing
- Collaborative working with other council departments, and other local authorities to share best practices and align approaches.
- Partnership working with Private Sector Housing to deliver the leasing scheme to provide secure accommodation.
- Engagement with Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) to identify opportunities to bring properties into use through trusted housing partners.

6.4 Incentivising Owners:

The Council offers a range of targeted support packages designed to assist empty property owners in bringing their properties back into use. The current assistance includes:

- Interest Free Loans: Available to help owners renovate or improve properties for either sale or letting.
- The Leasing Scheme: Offers a grant incentive to improve property conditions, after which the Council leases the home from the owner at Local Housing Allowance rates.
- The National Empty Homes Grant: Aimed at supporting properties being renovated for owner-occupier use.
- Transforming Towns Programme: Focused on converting town centre underused upper floor spaces into residential units.

* Find out about the latest vacant town centre empty properties here.

DRAFT

- Bridgend Valleys and District Centres Placemaking Property Improvement Grant: Supports the conversion of upper floor spaces above commercial premises into residential accommodation. *

* **Disclaimer:** *This grant is currently available, however funding beyond 2025/26 is not yet confirmed. We will provide updates as further information becomes available.*

The Council will actively seek to maximise any available financial opportunities, by working in partnership with other council departments and external organisations to help owners restore and bring their empty properties back into use.

To find out more about these schemes, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, please visit our website here.

6.5 How Do We Prioritise Empty Homes:

Tackling empty properties is a complex and resource-intensive challenge. To ensure efficient and strategic use of available capacity, the Council has adopted a targeted, evidence-based framework for prioritising intervention. This approach enables the Council to focus its efforts on properties that present the highest risk to the community or the greatest potential for positive reuse.

Each year, Council Tax data is reviewed to identify residential properties that have been empty for extended periods, with particular attention given to those unoccupied for more than six or twelve months. These properties are then risk assessed, upon receipt of a complaint, to determine their priority for further action.

Please note: When resources allow the Council will carry out proactive inspections in line with the empty property action plan **– Annex 1.**

Higher concern is typically given to properties that meet one or more of the risk assessment criteria:

- Length of Vacancy
  Higher priority is assigned to properties that have remained unoccupied for over 12 months.
- Outstanding Debt
  Includes Council Tax arrears or other charges registered against them such as enforcement or works carried out in default.
- Condition of the Property
  Visible signs of disrepair, structural deterioration, or internal damage.
- Complaint History
  Properties that have been the subject of multiple complaints to departments such as Planning, Building Control or Environmental Health.
- Enforcement History
  A previous record of formal enforcement action by the Council.
- Environmental Neglect
  Issues such as overgrown gardens, fly-tipping, pest infestations, or vermin activity.
- Anti-Social Behaviour
  Reports of vandalism, graffiti, unauthorised access, squatting, or other criminal activity linked to the property.
- Strategic Location
  Properties situated in areas of high housing demand or within key regeneration zones, including town centres.

Each property is assigned a score based on these factors. Properties with the highest score are prioritised for enforcement or intervention. This approach

ensures decisions are proportionate, transparent, and aligned with broader regeneration goals.

To maximise impact and ensure efficient use of available resources, the Council prioritises the top 20 highest-scoring properties for targeted action. This list is routinely reviewed and updated to reflect new information and successful interventions, ensuring efforts remain focused on where they are most needed.

6.6 Determining the Best Course of Action:

The Council seeks to resolve issues relating to empty properties through informal means in the first instance. However, the type of inventions officers take escalate in severity depending on the risk posed and the responsiveness of the property owner.

The types of invention taken by the Council include:

- Proactive Identification and Inspection of Empty Properties.

Note: If the owner is unwilling to engage or is untraceable the Council can obtain a legal warrant to facilitate an inspection and to allow works in default.

- Providing Tailored Advice and Support
- Administering Financial Assistance
- Serving Statutory Notices
- Carrying out Works in Default
- Securing Properties
- Initiating Enforced Sale Proceedings
- Compulsory Purchase Order

Note: The Council is unable to enforce a sale against every property; this measure is reserved for only the most extreme cases.

The Council faces challenges where high priority properties fall into a state of disrepair, but the owner takes steps to avoid enforcement action. When the owner ensures there are no ongoing public health risks or outstanding debts registered against the property it can limit the Councils legal options. Although the complexity of these cases is acknowledged, it does not deter the Council from its engagement efforts to bring the property back into use.

When formal enforcement action is being considered, the Council's 'Empty Property Working Group' plays a role in the process. The group will review each priority case and recommend the most appropriate course of action to take against the property.

7. Contact Us:

If you have any queries about the strategy or you would like further information on the support available to empty property owners, please contact us either by:

Post:
Empty Property Assistance
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend.
CF31 4WB

By email**:** emptyproperties@bridgend.gov.uk

8. Accessibility

Bridgend Council wants to ensure our information is accessible. This policy has been published in English and Welsh on our website https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/ and in hard copy. We are also able to provide the document in alternative formats including audio tape, large print and in community languages. We have access to interpreter services where required. Requests

for copies in other formats or other languages should be addressed in writing to –

Post:
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend.
CF31 4WB

Or by **email:** talktous@bridgend.gov.uk

Or by **telephone:** 01656 643643

DRAFT

Appendix One: Action Plan				
The goal is to optimise the re-use of empty properties within Bridgend County Borough Council, increasing the availability of homes for both rent and ownership.				
ACTION What are we going to do?	**WHAT WE WILL DO** How are we going to do it?	**BY WHOM?**	**BY WHEN?**	**MONITORING / MEASURE / TARGET**
Continue to coordinate the Bridgend Empty Homes Working Group to deliver the aims and objectives of the Empty Homes Strategy.	Maintain the Empty Homes Working Group Meeting – chaired by the Empty Property Coordinator from Shared Regulatory Services Continue to meet every quarter to implement and monitor the strategy. The meeting format has transitioned from a fully online model to a hybrid approach.	All members of the Working Group.	Quarterly 2025-2030.	Group continued and attended by members.
Continue active participation in regional working groups, such as the SE Wales Empty Homes Working Group, to promote shared learning and continuous service improvement	Maintain membership in key housing-related regional forums and attend scheduled meetings to exchange best practice, discuss operational challenges, and explore new approaches adopted by peer authorities. Use insights gained to inform local service delivery and ensure Bridgend's empty homes approach remains responsive, collaborative, and evidence-based	Empty Property Coordinator and Housing Policy Officer	Ongoing	Number of meetings attended

Coordinate annual reporting on empty property performance	Compile an annual performance report detailing the number of empty properties brought back into use as a direct result of local authority interventions. All relevant departments (e.g., Housing, Council Tax, Regeneration, Enforcement,) will contribute timely and accurate data regarding their actions.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the Empty Property Working Group	Annually from March 2025-2030.	Report submitted to Data Cymru each year. Local data collection carried out to complete internal performance monitoring.
Objective 1: Promote, Educate, and Support – To engage empty property owners, prospective purchasers, and developers by delivering clear and effective communication. The Council will provide tailored advice, raise awareness of available support, and encourage voluntary action to return properties to use.				
Revise and Maintain an Empty Property Information Pack.	Revise and update the Authority's 'Empty Property Information Pack' with key information including advice and financial assistance available to help bring empty properties back into use. Collaborate with the Regeneration team to include information that supports brining commercial properties back into use for both business use and residential accommodation.	Housing Policy Officer Grants Building Surveyor/Support Officer Regeneration Officer Empty Property Coordinator	April 2026	The production of an updated Empty Property Information Guide. The number of Empty Property Guides sent. The number of Empty Property Guides downloaded from the website.
Review current information on the 'Empty Homes'	Continue to ensure a user-friendly website for empty property owners.	Housing Policy Officer	Ongoing	Webpage Views

webpage and ensure up to date advice is readily available.	Conducting a periodic audit of the current webpage reviewing content for relevance and accuracy. Update content, as needed, to reflect latest policies and services for empty properties. Collaborating with other departments to ensure cross-linking between webpages. Regularly monitor links to ensure ongoing connectivity. Create user-friendly web forms for the expression of interests.	Empty Property Coordinator		Number of Redirect Links Accessed
Enhance the Annual Mailout by trialling a targeted and innovative outreach method to engage empty property owners more effectively.	Explore and introduce theme-based messaging informed by property data. Improve readability and relevance. Test varying delivery formats and track response rates to help inform future communications.	Empty Property Coordinator Housing Policy Officer	Ongoing – (First Trial commenced June 2025.) To be reviewed and refined annually.	Response rates from property owners.
Launch a regular in-person monthly open surgery to provide dedicated support to empty property owners.	Implement a scheduled appointment-based system at Bridgend Civic Offices, allowing owners to meet face-to-face with relevant officers. Appointments will be triaged to ensure attendees are matched with the most appropriate support. Sessions will offer one-to-one guidance. Promotion through digital channels to raise awareness. The frequency of surgeries will be monitored and reviewed regularly to align with demand and effectiveness.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the Empty Property Working Group.	Ongoing – from 2026.	Number of appointments booked and attended. Measure outcomes such as follow-up engagement, applications for support schemes, and properties returned to use

DRAFT

				following consultation.
Organise and host an annual Empty Homes Open Day to engage directly with property owners and promote available support.	Plan and deliver a multi-agency in-person event at a central location, starting with annual frequency from April 2026. The event will bring together council departments, estate agents, Rent Smart Wales, and other key stakeholders to offer guidance on bringing empty properties back into use. Owners will be able to discuss their individual circumstances and access expert advice in one place. The frequency of future events will be reviewed based on attendance, stakeholder feedback, and overall effectiveness.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the Empty Property Working Group.	Ongoing – to commence September 2026.	Number of attendees; qualitative feedback from participants and stakeholders; properties re-engaged or supported following the event; event frequency reviewed annually based on success.
Create an annual Councillor newsletter to update Members on assistance available for empty property owners.	Develop and distribute a digital annual newsletter summarising the latest support packages, initiatives, performance highlights, and success stories relating to empty properties. The content will be designed to help Councillors understand current interventions so they can cascade information into their communities and encourage referrals.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the Empty Property Working Group.	First release July 2026. Annually thereafter.	Newsletter issued annually. Feedback from Councillors on usefulness and reach.
Deliver a monthly communications campaign led by different departments to promote the Empty Homes Programme and	Develop an annual communications plan. Assign themed messaging to a different department each month (e.g., Housing, Council Tax, Regeneration, SRS) to spotlight various aspects—such as financial assistance, leasing schemes, premium charges). Content to be promoted via digital channels, local media, newsletters, and print. Performance will be reviewed monthly and adjusted based on reach, engagement, and alignment with wider housing objectives	Communications Team Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the	Launch from January 2026; ongoing and reviewed quarterly	Monthly tracking of engagement (e.g. social media interactions, website traffic, enquiries received); annual campaign review; adjustments made based on audience response

DRAFT

related support schemes.		Empty Property Working Group		and operational priorities
Improve Communication with Internal and External Stakeholders to strengthen collaborative opportunities and support for empty property solutions.	Engage with the Climate Change Officer to explore potential collaboration opportunities for Empty Properties such as funding opportunities (e.g. retrofit initiatives, decarbonisation grants that could be applied to empty homes). Establish a regular communication channel with local estate agents to ensure they are informed about the latest support schemes, including the National Empty Homes Grant and financial assistance for developers—enabling them to advise prospective buyers and clients effectively	Housing Policy Officer Empty Property Coordinator	Engagement with Climate Change Officer by March 2026. Initial engagement with estate agents by March 2026; ongoing thereafter	Meeting held with Climate Change Number of communications issued to estate agents. Feedback received from estate agents
Partnership working with Housing Solutions to deliver the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme.	Partner with Housing Solutions to identify eligible empty properties and support owners through the leasing process; coordinate with Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) to carry out timely property inspections and ensure compliance with the elimination of Category 1 hazards. Provide follow-up support to ensure all remediation work is completed before leasing. Maintain a joint operational protocol and regular liaison to ensure seamless delivery.	Housing Solutions Shared Regulatory Services Empty Property Coordinator	Ongoing	Number of properties assessed and enrolled in the leasing scheme. Number of properties inspected and confirmed free of Category 1 hazards. Number of properties successfully tenanted through the scheme.

DRAFT

Objective 2: Prioritisation And Targeted Approach – To address empty properties using a strategic, evidence-based approach. This involves prioritising properties that pose the highest risk to the public or environment, or those which cause the greatest impact on communities.				
Explore the feasibility of a working partnership with Probate Genealogists to trace ownership of long-term empty properties where the owner is unidentifiable.	Initiate engagement with Fraser & Fraser; complete and implement a Data Processing Agreement to support information exchange and owner tracing activities; integrate a referral process for complex cases.	Empty Property Coordinator	April 2026	Number of long-term empty properties contacted where ownership was previously untraceable. Monitor percentage of successful ownership traces facilitated via Fraser & Fraser
Conduct joint street-view surveys of key town centre areas to identify commercial and residential properties with regeneration potential.	Collaboratively survey priority town centre zones through coordinated walkabouts involving relevant departments (e.g. regeneration, conservation, housing). Identify underused or vacant properties that may benefit from financial packages or support schemes such as regeneration funding, or empty property loans. Data gathered will inform targeted engagement.	Empty Property Coordinator Regeneration Officer Conservation Officer Housing/Grants Officer Town Centre Manager	To commence from Mid-2026, then ongoing (subject to resource availability)	Number of properties surveyed and targeted. Number of properties identified as eligible for support. Number of properties subsequently brought back into use or improved through financial assistance uptake

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Data-Led Targeting of Priority Property Types or Areas	Analyse Council Tax data to identify long-term empty properties by area, property type (e.g. terraces/flats)	Empty Property Coordinator Housing Policy Officer	Annually (subject to resource)	Number of priority properties identified.
Undertake proactive visits to long-term empty properties using the risk assessment tool to monitor condition and review prioritisation	Conduct regular site visits to reassess the physical and environmental condition of long-term empty properties using the Council's risk assessment form. Document evidence of worsening conditions to inform changes in property scores. Use findings to update and review the Top 20 list. Identify emerging priority cases for enforcement or engagement action.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator	Ongoing – Annually review top 20 properties	Number of proactive visits undertaken and properties assessed.
Objective 3: Taking Proportionate and Effective Enforcement Action				
Investigate all reactive complaints relating to empty residential properties and respond with appropriate intervention	Log and assess all complaints received regarding empty homes. Assess any risk to public safety and determine the need for enforcement action. Officers will attempt to work with the owners to bring them back into beneficial use.	Empty Property Coordinator Shared Regulatory Services: Environmental Health and Technical Officers. Planning and Building Control	Ongoing	Number of complaints received regarding empty homes.
Publicise successful enforcement actions to reinforce the	Work in partnership with the Communications Team to develop and release timely media content—such as press releases, articles, and social media posts—showcasing key enforcement cases where statutory powers have been used	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all	After successful enforcement action has been taken.	Number of enforcement-related stories published; community

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Council's commitment to addressing long-term empty properties	successfully. Highlight the outcomes, community impact, and Council's firm stance as a deterrent to property neglect. Increase public engagement and awareness.	members of the Empty Property Working Group. Communications Team	Ongoing	engagement (e.g. views, shares).
Strengthen collaboration with Council Tax	Provide targeted advice and assistance to owners of empty properties on Council Tax exemptions and premium charges Maintain and share accurate data on empty and second homes Continue to review, monitor, and provide feedback on the effectiveness of Council Tax premiums.	Empty Property Coordinator Council Tax	Ongoing	Number of queries responded to and number of communications in relation to targeted advice.
Explore the potential implementation of an internal referral process to facilitate shared working across departments on empty property cases	Engage key departments (e.g., Housing, Council Tax, Regeneration, SRS) to identify opportunities where shared information would benefit case progression. Develop a simple internal referral protocol that considers existing workflows and data sensitivities. If resources allow, explore the feasibility of creating a shared database of empty properties accessible to relevant departments to update as new information becomes available.	Led by Empty Property Coordinator and supported by all members of the Empty Property Working Group.	Ongoing	Number of referrals made.

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Apply proportionate enforcement action to bring priority empty properties back into use, utilising the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Empty Property Enforcement Fund	Identify long-term empty properties causing significant community impact and assess them for potential enforcement action, including Works in Default, Enforced Sale, or Compulsory Purchase Orders. Actions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, with careful consideration of each property's circumstances, funding eligibility, and alignment with regeneration objectives. Officers will work cross-departmentally to prepare enforcement cases and funding applications	Led by Empty Property Coordinator Legal Services	Ongoing	Number of successful funding bids Number of properties brought back into beneficial use through formal action

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Appendix 2: Enforcement Options Available to Tackle Empty Properties

Local authorities have a range of enforcement powers to address the negative impact of long-term empty properties. The key legislative tools include:

- **Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Section 80** Abatement Notices can be served under section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in respect of statutory nuisances caused by a property's structure or associated land.
- **Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 – Section 4** enables the Council to serve Notices on the owner of the land to ensure the premises are free from rodents.
- **Building Act 1984** Can be used to address structural defects, dangerous buildings, or defective drainage at empty properties.
- **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 – Section 29** Enables Councils to secure empty buildings against unauthorised access if they are open to entry and pose a risk.
- **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 215** Where a property's condition adversely affects the amenity of the neighbourhood, a notice can be served requiring improvement works.
- **Housing Act 2004 – Part 1: Housing Health and Safety Rating System** Provides powers to assess residential properties for 29 potential hazards and take enforcement action where Category 1 hazards are present.
- **The Law of Property Act 1925 – Enforced Sale** Where a local authority has incurred recoverable costs (e.g. through default works) and secured a financial charge, it may enforce sale to recover debt.
- **Housing Act 1985 – Section 17: Compulsory Purchase Orders** Allows local authorities to acquire properties in order to provide housing accommodation by agreement or with the consent of the secretary of state.
- **Housing Act 1985 – Section 265: Demolition Orders** Enables the Council to order the demolition of properties deemed unfit for habitation and beyond reasonable repair.
- **Housing Act 2004 – Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)** Subject to tribunal approval, these allow Councils to take over the management (not ownership) of empty residential dwellings in order to bring them back into use.

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Bridgend Empty Homes Strategy Consultation Report

September 2024

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1. Methodology:

1.1. Bridgend Council's previous Empty Homes Strategy expired at the end of 2023. Although not a statutory requirement for local authorities, the Welsh Government recommends that councils adopt and implement such strategies as best practice. The new strategy will shape the council's approach to tackling empty homes over the next five years.

1.2. In collaboration with the consultation team, it was decided that two separate consultations would be conducted to enable a more targeted questioning approach.

1.3. As part of the empty property owner's consultation, bilingual Welsh and English letters were sent to 650 empty property owners, inviting them to complete an online survey. The consultation took place over a twelve-week period and concluded on the 9th September 2024.

The consultation targeted empty property owners whose homes had been vacant for 12 months or more. This approach aimed to gather insights on why these properties remain vacant and explore ways to prevent long-term empties in the future.

1.4. The residents' consultation was made available online in both English and Welsh through Bridgend Council's website. To maximise participation, the consultation was promoted via the social media and newsletters. The consultation took place over a six-week period and concluded on the 16th September 2024.

1.5. A written submission on the proposal was received from a representative body of estate agents. This submission is considered within a separate Schedule of Consultation Responses and is not included within the scope of this report.

2. Findings of the Empty Property Owners Consultation

2.1. A total of 40 online responses were collected from the survey, producing a response rate of 6.5%.

2.2. Empty property owners were asked if they owned a long-term empty property[1] in Bridgend. The majority, 35 respondents (87.5%), indicated that they did own such property, while 5 respondents (12.5%) reported they did not.

[1]A dwelling is a long-term empty home if it has been unoccupied for 6 months or longer.

2.3. To gain a better insight into the profile of empty property ownership in Bridgend, respondents were asked how they acquired their property. The majority, 52.5% had purchased the property, while 27.5% inherited. A significant proportion of respondents chose ‘other’, citing reasons such as ‘divorce’, ‘self-build’ and ‘acting as an executor.

2.4. It is important that the strategy is tailored to accommodate the needs of all empty property owners, whether they own a single property or multiple. To further understand the profile of empty property owners, respondents were asked how many properties they owned. The majority, 85%, reported owning between one and three properties, while 2.5% owned between four and nine. Lastly 7.5% indicated they owned more than 10 properties.

2.5. To understand why properties in Bridgend remain vacant, we asked empty property owners to provide their reasons for the unoccupied status of their properties. The responses, shown in Figure 1, will inform how best to support owners in the development of the new strategy.

The most common reason stated, by 35% of respondents, was that the property was undergoing repairs or renovations. Similarly, 13% indicated the property required repairs or renovations, while 14% reported a lack of financial resource to address the issues. Additionally, 11% of respondents selected ‘other, citing reasons such as;

‘The annexe if not suitable for renting out to non a family member. All utilities are provided by the adjoining farmhouse.’

‘Money is owed as my father had a grant on the house, we can’t afford to pay what is owed so we have been advised to wait 2 years until the money is paid off to sell it’.

‘Lack of support from authorities and the weighting in favour of the tenant makes me reluctant to place it on the rental market. The last tenant cost me £5000 to remove from the property and that does not include the non-payment of rent’.

Notable reasons also included lack of experience (6%), Building Control (2%) and Planning (3%).



Figure 1: *Reasons for Empty Properties: Consultation Responses Highlighting Key Factors*

2.6. To better understand how we can support empty property owners in bringing their properties back into use, we asked them to rate the importance of various methods used by the council. Respondents ranked each method on a scale from 'extremely important' to 'not important at all'.

The method with the strongest support was the provision of empty property grants, with 72% of respondents rating it as important, of which 50% marked it as extremely important. Following this, 35% of respondents rated empty homes loans as extremely important and 32% considered assistance with finding contractors to be extremely important.

Enforcement action received the least support as a method for the council to implement. However, a deeper analysis of the responses shows more diverse views. While 23% of respondents rated enforcement action as extremely unimportant, when combined with those who rated it as somewhat unimportant, the overall figure rose to 30%. Additionally, 30% of respondents remained neutral on the issue and another 30% viewed enforcement action as important.

2.7. As part of the previous strategy, an empty property webpage was created. To evaluate its success and effectiveness, we asked empty property owners if they were aware of Bridgend Council's webpage for empty homes. A significant majority, 87.5%, responded that they were not aware, while 12.5% indicated they knew about the webpage.

Among those who were aware, 80% had used the webpage.

2.8. To assess the effectiveness of our current communication with empty property owners, we asked if they felt the Council keeps them informed about updates on financial assistance, legislation or policy changes related to empty properties. A majority of 72.5% responded 'No', while 27.5% felt the Council did provide regular updates.

One of Bridgend's current communication tools is an empty property (residential) information pack. We asked empty property owners whether they would find this resource useful, a majority, 82.5%, said 'Yes', while 17.5% said 'No'.

Among those who would find the information pack useful, 51.5% preferred to receive this information by post, 36.4% chose email and 12.1% opted to access the pack via the website.

2.9. To explore potential avenues for additional support, we asked empty property owners about their participation in landlord forums. The first question we asked was whether they attended a landlord forum[2] prior to the pandemic. The results showed that 92.5% had not attended, while only 7.5% had.

When asked whether a landlord forum should be reintroduced by Bridgend Council, the responses were mixed. While 42.5% of empty property owners expressed support for the idea, a significant portion, 55% remained unsure, and only 2.5% were opposed.

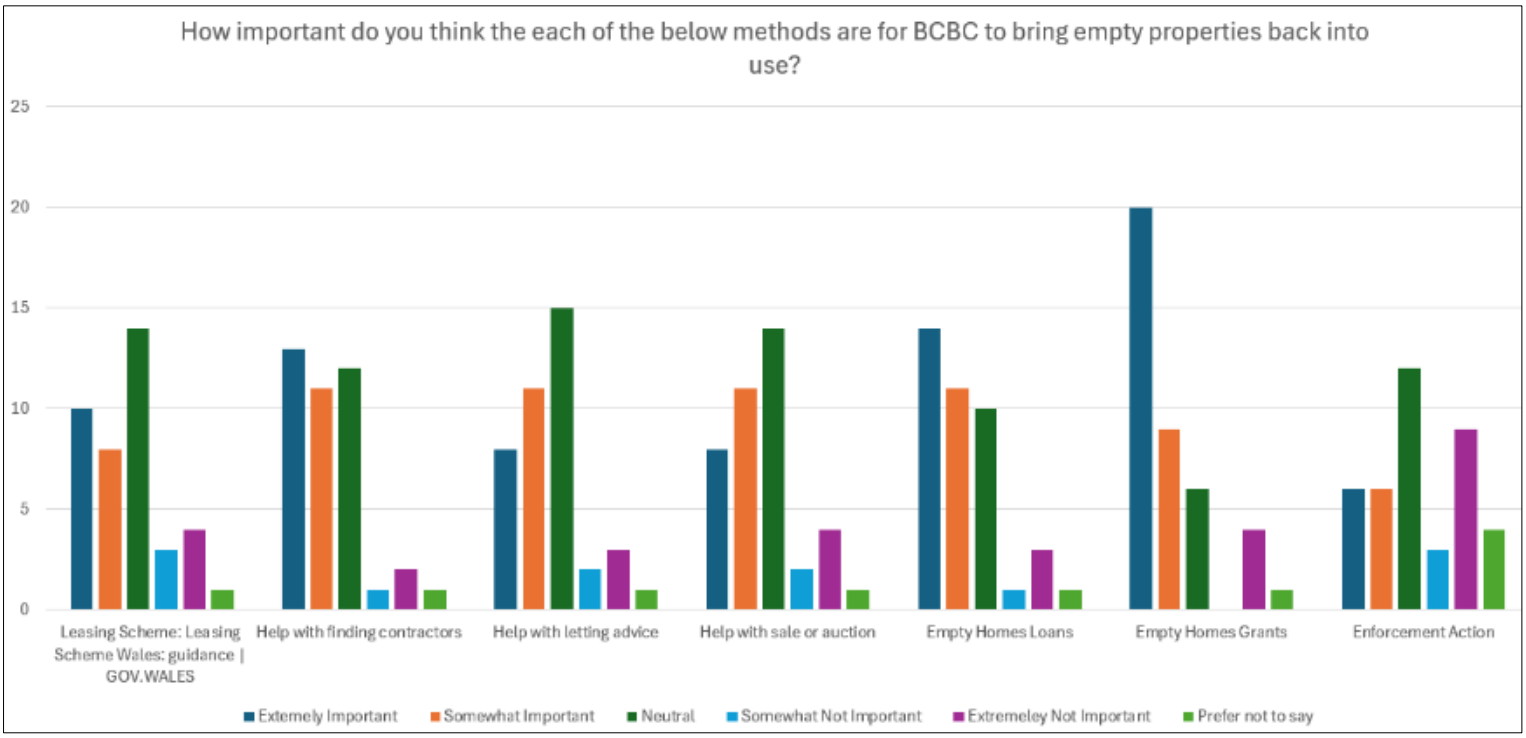


***Figure 2**: Empty property owners' perception on the importance of methods available to Bridgend Council to bring empty properties back into use.*

[2] Landlord forum: An opportunity for the landlords to share thoughts, opinions, and experiences and to keep up to date with the local private rented sector scene around Bridgend.

For those who supported reintroducing the forum, we explored preferences for its frequency. Many respondents (44.4%) favoured holding the forum quarterly. Another 27.8% preferred monthly meetings while 16.7% suggested the forums should be held biannually. Meanwhile 11.1% felt an annual forum would suffice.

2.10. The previous empty property strategy focused on identifying and sharing success stories through the empty property webpage and social media platforms. To assess the interest in these case studies, we asked empty property owners if they would like to see more of this content. Of those who responded, only 35% expressed a desire to see more case studies, while 40% indicated they were not interested. The remaining 25% of respondents were unsure.

2.11. As part of assessing awareness of available support, we asked property owners if they knew, before receiving the consultation letter, that Bridgend Council provides financial assistance to help bring properties back into use. The results showed that 65% were unaware of this support, while 35% indicated they were aware.

2.12. To evaluate awareness of available support, we asked empty property owners if they knew that properties vacant for two years or more may qualify a reduced 5% VAT rate on renovation costs. The findings revealed that 82.5% were unaware of this benefit, while 17.5% indicated they were.

2.13. We asked empty property owners, whether they would consider implementing energy-efficient measures, such as an air source heat pump, when bringing a property back into use. Among the respondents, 40% said they would, 35% were unsure and 25% said they would not. However, when asked about their awareness of available financial packages for energy efficiency improvements, the majority (82.5%) were unaware, while only 17.5% were informed.

2.14. To determine public opinion on a collaborative approach to deliver the next empty property strategy, we asked whether they agreed that working closely with internal and external partners is necessary. Half of the respondents (50%) agreed that such collaboration is essential, while 35% were unsure and 15% disagreed.

2.15. Empty property owners were asked how the Council could help bring their properties back into use. The most popular approaches were for the Council to offer larger loans for repairs (21%), aid in finding contractors (19%), and ‘Other’ (20%) where respondents were able to input their own suggestions.

Many responses were centred around Council Tax. Some of the key comments have been highlighted below.

‘Premium council tax rates should be assessed case by case not as a general rule. Although a reprieve from paying the council tax for up to 18 months is very helpful and beneficial to landlords when renovating a property. However, if repairs take longer the premium rate is debilitating to landlords and slows them

down with renovations. Especially landlords who don't own several properties and aren't builders themselves.'

'Start by listening to why the property is empty. Stop charging double council tax. Do you think this will help?'

Stop charging extra council tax - it is unfair and unhelpful to those of us trying to renovate property and bring them back to market.'

'Increase the 12 months council tax exemption to 24 months when extensive'.

'Incentivise it! What do you think would make me let an empty property? Some financial incentive or guarantee'

'Improve the speed of the planning process.'

'Meeting the owners to discuss the actual problems their having not just fining and emailing them, face to face meetings real support and help'.

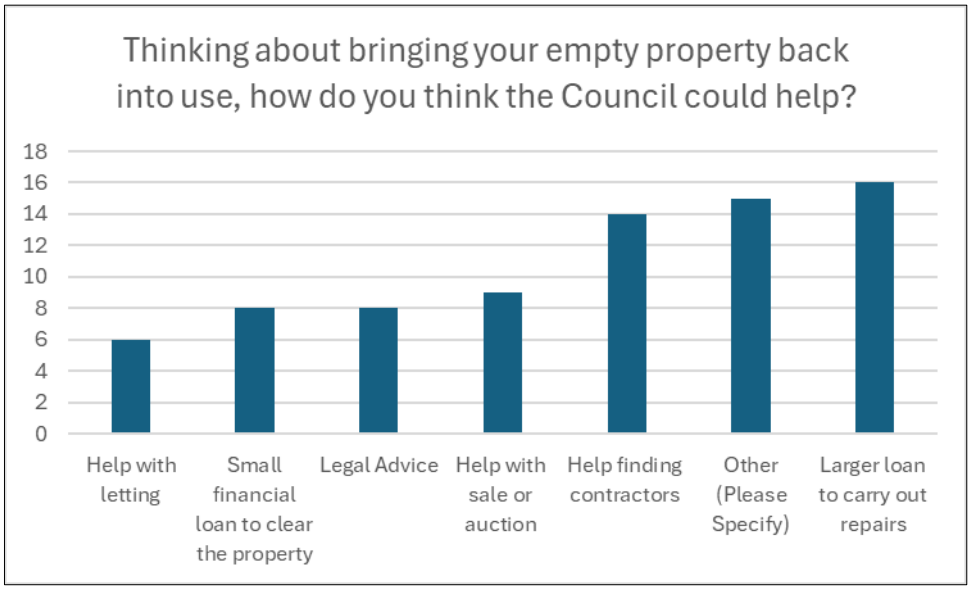


Figure 3: *Empty property owners' response on how the Council can assist in bringing empty properties back into use.*

2.16. Lastly, empty property owners were asked if they had any other suggestions on how Bridgend Council can help bring empty properties back into use.

A variety of responses were received, and they mainly related to the following themes: Council Functions, Council Tax, Enforcement Action, Housing (Local Housing Allowance), No Council Involvement, Raising Awareness/Signposting and Further Support.

A full list of the responses can be found in Appendix A.

3. Findings of the Empty Property Public Consultation

3.1 A total of 170 online responses and one written response were collected from the survey. The results showed that the majority, 87.1%, identified as local residents, 4.1% private landlords, 2.4% business owners, 2.4% empty property owners and 1.8% councillors. The remaining classified as 'other'.

3.2 We sought to understand the impact of empty homes on daily life in Bridgend. When asked if they were aware of empty homes in the borough, 66.5% of respondents answered, 'Yes' while 33.5% said 'No'.

3.3 As part of the previous empty property strategy, a confidential online reporting service was introduced for the public to report empty properties and related issues. To assess awareness of this service, we asked if the public knew about this platform. The results showed that the vast majority, 88.8%, of people were unaware, while only 11.2% were.

We then asked those who were aware how they had heard about the service. The majority, 48%, heard about this service through Bridgend Council's website, 26% through word of mouth, 21% from a Local Authority officer and 5% via social media.

3.4 Under the previous strategy to improve communication, an empty property webpage was created. To evaluate its success and effectiveness, we asked the public if they were aware of Bridgend Council's webpage for empty homes. A significant majority, 91.2%, responded that they were not aware, while only 8.8% indicated they knew about the webpage.

Among those who were aware, only 20% had used the webpage.

3.5 To assess public awareness of available support, we asked respondents whether they knew that Bridgend Council offers financial assistance to help bring empty properties back into use. The findings revealed that 78.2% were unaware of this support, while 21.8% indicated they were aware.

We also inquired if public was aware that properties vacant for two or more years may be eligible for a reduced VAT rate of 5% on renovation costs. The findings revealed that 90% of respondents were unaware of this benefit, while 10% indicated they were.

Additionally, we explored awareness of financial packages available for energy efficiency improvements. The results showed that the majority, 89.4%, were unaware of the incentives available, while just 10.6% were informed.

3.6 The previous empty property strategy focused on identifying and sharing success stories through the empty property webpage and social media platforms. To assess the interest in these case studies, we asked the public if they would like to see more of this content. Of those who responded, a majority

of 68.2%, expressed a desire to see more case studies, while 23% indicated they were not interested. The remaining 8.8% of respondents were unsure.

3.7 To determine public opinion on a collaborative approach to deliver the next empty property strategy, we asked whether they agreed that working closely with internal and external partners is necessary. The majority 79.4% agreed that such collaboration is essential, while 7.6% disagreed, and 13% were unsure.

3.8 To ensure the new strategy meets public needs and expectations, we asked the public to rate the importance of potential different methods Bridgend Council could use to help bring empty properties back into use. Respondents ranked each method on a scale from definitely agree to definitely disagree.

The most supported approach was for the Council to take enforcement action against empty property owners, with 77% of respondents deeming it as important. There was also strong support for the Council to help with lettings, sales, and auction advice. The leasing scheme received the highest neutral response, with 31% of respondents expressing now clear opinion on its importance.

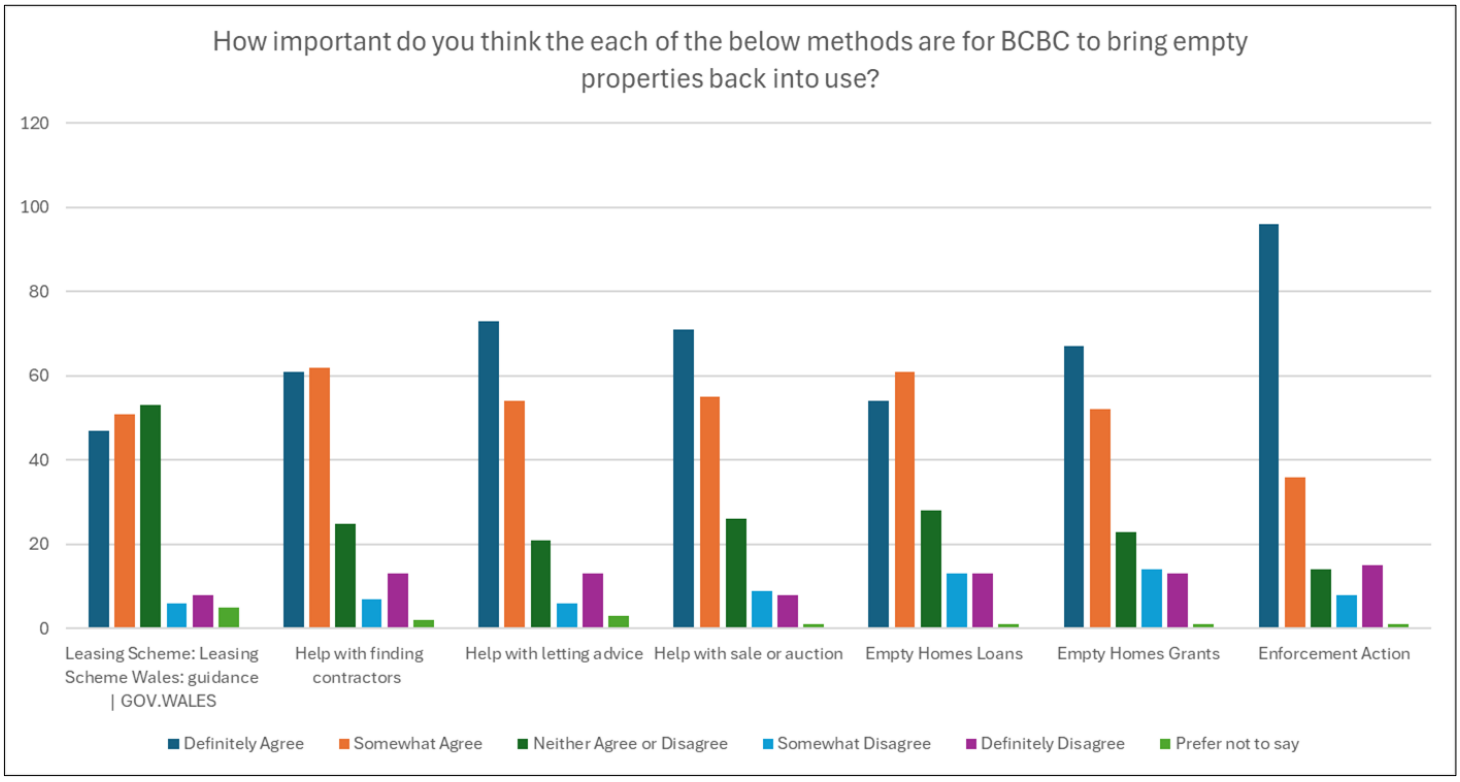


Figure 4: *Public perception on the importance of methods available to Bridgend Council to bring empty properties back into use.*

3.9 Lastly, respondents were asked if they had any other suggestions on how Bridgend Council can help bring empty properties back into use.

A variety of responses were received, and they mainly related to the following themes: Buy Back Schemes, Council Functions, Council Tax, Developer, Enforcement Action, Financial Assistance, Housing, No Council Involvement, Raising Awareness/Signposting, Training Schemes and Further Support.

Notably, some responses also addressed issues relating to Bridgend's commercial properties.

A full list of the responses can be found in Appendix A.

4. Consultation Results Combined: Key Aims

4.1 Both empty property owners and the public were surveyed regarding their perceptions of Bridgend Council's approach to managing empty properties. A series of four questions were posed, each receiving majority support from respondents, as outlined below.

- 86% of respondents agreed that bringing empty homes back into use should be a priority for the Council.
- 67% of respondents agreed that enforcement action should be used to bring an empty property back into use.
- 79% of respondents agreed that the Council should prioritise action on long-term empty properties over short-term empty properties.
- 76% of respondents think the Council should target its enforcement action on the most problematic of empty properties.

However, the opinions varied significantly on the issue of enforcement action. Nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents expressed disagreement with using enforcement measures to bring empty properties back into use.

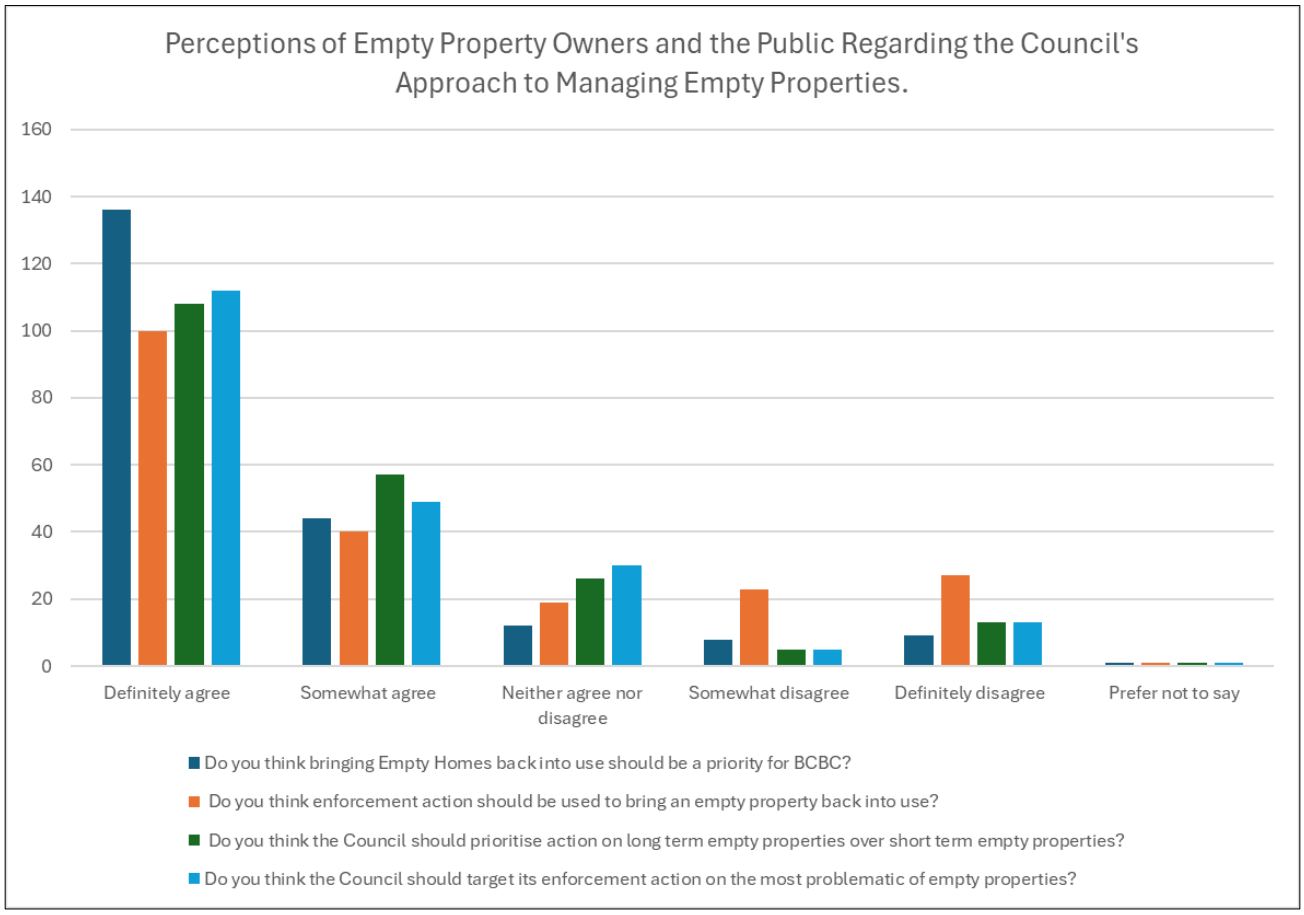


Figure 5: *Consultation opinions on the Council's approach to dealing with empty properties.*

4.2 Both empty property owners and the public were asked about the impact they believe empty homes have on the local community of Bridgend. A significant 91% of respondents agreed that empty properties have a negative or very negative effect.

Notably, the 2% who viewed the impact as positive or very positive were mostly empty property owners.

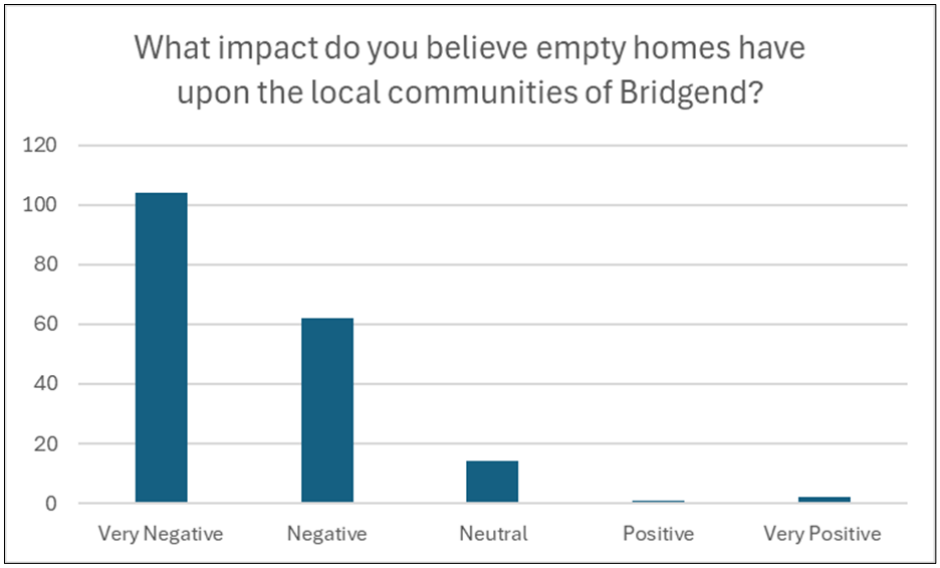


Figure 6: *Consultation response to the impact of empty homes upon the community.*

By virtue of paragraph(s) 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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