

Caerphilly County  
Borough Council

Annual Performance  
Report 2017/18

A greener place to live, work and visit  
Man gwyrdach i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.  
This document is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.





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## Leader of Council, Cllr. David Poole

As the Leader of one of the largest local authorities in Wales, whenever I'm provided with an opportunity such as this to pause and reflect and consider the many achievements made over the last 12 months together with what lies ahead, I'm always impressed by the scale and diversity of what we have achieved.



The 2017/18 financial year was certainly an interesting and challenging year. A few of our key achievements include:

- Our ambitious 21st Century School programme is delivering huge benefit across the county borough.
- The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal continues to make good progress and I will continue to ensure that Caerphilly's economic opportunities are maximised through this collaborative approach.
- Significant progress continues to be made in the delivery of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme, with around £145 million having been invested in improving the condition of our council homes to date.
- We have also played our part in protecting our most vulnerable residents, with our social services team receiving positive inspection outcomes, which demonstrate the quality level of care and support our residents receive day in, day out.

It is impossible to list all our achievements and aspirations in such a limited space, but these are just a flavour of some of the key issues that we are involved with at present.

In the wider context, Local Government continues to struggle with the continued period of austerity and having previously made in excess of £80m of savings over recent years. The continued need to find further significant savings whilst maintaining our services is proving a very difficult challenge and is very much the focus of our current thinking.

My Cabinet colleagues and I have embarked upon a whole-encompassing journey of improvement and we recognise that in order for us to move forward we need a clear vision and a robust set of priorities that sets the tone for the whole organisation.

Forming a key part of this approach is the recent development of our new 'Cabinet Commitments' which set out 7 key pledges that will help us shape the way we deliver services in the future. This is a bold move and we are aware that we must be fully accountable by living up to these commitments in everything we do.

We have also adopted a new set of financial principles which will guide and influence the authority's decision-making process as we navigate the tough financial times that lie ahead.

We are also radically rethinking the way we deliver services to our communities. The council recognises that we can no longer do things the way we have always done in the past. Therefore we need to completely review our service provision in order to meet the changing requirements of our communities. A key part of this process will be engagement and consultation, so we plan to hold a series of conversations with our communities as they are instrumental in helping shape this new approach to public service delivery.

We are also considering the development of new 'community hubs' that will provide residents with the services and facilities they require in the heart of their own communities.

These are challenging but exciting times and there is a tangible feeling throughout the council that we are finally moving forward again after experiencing a difficult past few years.

I'm proud to be at the helm of this authority and I'm committed to making Caerphilly Council one of the leading local authorities in Wales, serving our residents and ensuring our communities remain resilient for our future generations.

**Cllr. Dave Poole**  
**Leader**



## A Year in Summary 2017/18

### From our interim Chief Executive Christina Harrhy

The past year has once again brought with it many challenges and achievements, which have all been set within the context of further reductions to our budgets as part of the ongoing austerity the UK continues to face. Since 2008/09 the Council has reduced its budgets by £82m and over the next 5 years a further £41m of savings will be required. The Council therefore needs to ensure we remain sustainable and able to provide the many services we currently provide to our citizens each and every day. We have set up a Business Improvement Portfolio, which is looking forensically at what we do and how we can do it differently. A number of key areas have already been identified which we will develop over the next 12 months.



Earlier this year, the Council approved its Corporate Plan which sets out clearly our key priorities, which we will focus upon delivering over the next 5 years. These are:

1. Improve education opportunities for all.
2. Enabling employment.
3. Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being.
4. Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment.
5. Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
6. Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.

We have already begun to make some progress with these priorities.

Earlier in the year full Council approved the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal joint working agreement as one of the 10 Councils in South East Wales that make up the CCR.

The City Deal includes an investment of £1.2 billion, which will be used to improve the economic performance of the region. For each pound of investment, we intend to lever in 4 times that amount from the private sector.

This investment will focus upon a number of themes, including the development of an integrated transport system to ensure people are able to travel across the region. The Welsh Government recently announced the successful bidder who will deliver the South Wales Metro, which will bring new trains and increased frequencies to rail services across the region, including the Rhymney line over the next few years. Other investment themes include support for innovation and digital infrastructure, developing skills and helping people back into work, promoting enterprise and business growth and wider regeneration activity in our valley communities. This will help to deliver 25,000 new jobs across the region. The activities we intend to focus upon across the region were set out in more detail in the Business Plan which all 10 councils recently agreed.

Plans are already being made to develop a housing investment fund to unlock sites that are currently unviable, particularly in the northern Heads of the Valley areas. A regional skills proposal is also being developed which aims to offer thousands of apprenticeships. Plans are also in place to improve Cardiff Central Station so that the station can absorb the additional trains which will be operated as part of the new "Metro" proposals for the valley rail lines.

We are also working to develop a strategic development plan that will supersede our local development plan. This plan will consider major infrastructure on a regional basis, ensuring the county borough and region are equipped with the required housing and employment infrastructure to support economic growth. The City Deal represents a very exciting opportunity for the county borough, its residents and businesses and we intend to maximise the benefits it can bring.

Following a lot of consultation, the Council recently published its new Regeneration Strategy 2018-2023 which sets out our plans to regenerate the county borough, focussing upon economic, environmental and social interventions. Working with Welsh Government a number of "growth hubs" across the county borough have been identified, which we intend to use to lever Welsh Government and other grant funding in order to deliver our growth plans.

The Caerphilly Basin Masterplan also sets out some exciting proposals that will anchor Caerphilly and the county borough as a whole as a key player and destination across the Cardiff Capital City Region.

The Council is investing over £200m in its housing stock, undertaking significant improvements to the internal and external fabric to over 10,000 Council properties to ensure that they meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). We are progressing well and are confident that we will meet the Welsh Government completion date of 2020. Areas are being completely transformed through this work which is complemented with local regeneration schemes that aim to improve the local area. Areas such as Lansbury Park in Caerphilly are looking very different as a result of this investment and the feedback from our tenants has been very positive.

The needs of our older population and those who are vulnerable are served really well by our dedicated social services team. A number of key pieces of national legislation have been introduced over the last 12 months which has triggered a number of changes to how we work. We know that the future demands for the service are significant and over the next year we will be looking at how we can work more closely with colleagues in the health service to ensure fully integrated services.



We were pleased to welcome the First Minister, Carwyn Jones, to formally open our new 4-18 year Idris Davies School in Rhymney early in 2018. This school is the latest result of the £56m 21st Century schools investment programme working with Welsh Government. We are currently consulting upon our future school investment programme which if approved, will bring further investment and improvements to our education provision over the next few years.

We have continued to work closely with Head teachers and their staff, together with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to drive up educational attainment standards. This does not happen overnight, but some positive changes are now beginning to emerge. This is certainly an area we will continue to focus upon over the next few years, as giving our children the best start to life is of paramount importance to us.

The road network across the county borough is our biggest asset and back in June 2017 we saw temperatures in excess of 30 degrees Celsius across the country. These high temperatures returned in the summer of 2018 and caused some of our newly surfaced roads to melt. During February 2018, we also experienced some of the coldest conditions felt for many years, which was accompanied by the deepest snow fall since 1982. Staff across the council responded exceptionally well, keeping the county borough safe and mobile during the inclement weather. Members of the public were very appreciative, and this was reflected in the significant number of positive comments received on social media.

In autumn 2017 we began work on the Pwll-y-Pant roundabout in Caerphilly. This is the most strategic junction we have in the county borough, serving hundreds of



thousands of vehicles every day. The introduction of major roadworks on the roundabout brought many complaints and after listening carefully to the local business community, the construction programme was completely redesigned to ensure the impact upon the community and businesses was minimised wherever possible. We are aiming to complete the works before Christmas 2018.

Over the past year we have been working closely with residents to support them with their recycling. Whilst our overall recycling performance is very good (currently at just over 66%), we continue to have a problem with high levels of contamination caused by residents placing wrong items in their recycling bin. When this happens, the recycling processing contractor rejects the recycling and it costs the Council hundreds of thousands of pounds to treat each year. So we are focussing really hard on reducing the contamination, as we simply can't sustain the levels of contamination any longer. Staff visited over 50,000 properties over the last year to offer advice and answer any questions, and we will continue with this approach over the next few months whilst a review of the service is undertaken by elected members and officers.

We are currently seeking the views from the public regarding our proposals for the future sports and active recreation service. The 10 year strategy sets out the full range of services we provide to support active living. Following the outcome of the consultation, the Council's Cabinet will consider the views obtained and decide how the service will be delivered. Our outdoor space is such an important asset to us. In recognition of the high standards that we maintain, six of our parks and open spaces (including one cemetery) retained their "Green Flag" status.





During 2017/18 1.89 million tourists visited the county borough, a 4.5% increase on 2016 figures. This activity supported 1645 jobs and contributed towards the overall economic impact of tourism in the area of £128.1million.

A number of events were hosted across the county borough, including the Caerphilly 10k, which took place in hot temperatures with local residents using their garden hoses to hose down competitors with some much needed cool water as they passed by. Just under 2,500 registered for the run.

A maximum of 700 entries were received for the 2k fun run - totalling just under 3,200 competitors, which is a record to date. We also host the 3rd largest 10k in Wales!

12,000 residents and visitors took to the streets of Caerphilly as the town hosted South Wales Armed Forces Day for the second time.

There was an impressive military parade through the town centre, a poignant Drumhead Service on the Owain Glyndwr Playing Fields, followed by a variety of family fun activities. The highlight of the afternoon was a Battle of Britain Spitfire fly-past.

In July the annual Velothon cycle race returned to the roads across the county borough, welcoming some of the world's best professional cyclists as well as thousands of recreational riders and charity fundraisers.

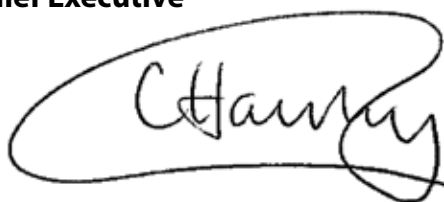
We also hosted a visit from HRH Prince Charles to Llancaiach Fawr in July to open a new exhibition. The Prince was met by local school children and escorted throughout his visit by staff who explained how the museum has been transformed and returned to how it originally was in 1645.

Over the last year the ongoing “local government reorganisation” discussion with Welsh Government continued. The Welsh Government set out their proposals in a “Green paper” that would have seen the number of local authorities in Wales reduce from 22 to 10 over the next few years. As part of these proposals, a merger between us and Newport Council was set out. These proposals have now been withdrawn and we have given a commitment along with all other councils across Wales to work with Welsh Government to develop and deliver reform for local government in Wales.

A Welsh Government bill will be brought forward in the autumn of 2018 to define the relationship between Welsh Government and local councils and collectively we will look at how our organisations can work together to drive forward reform. We certainly welcome this as we already work in collaboration with many partner organisations.

I hope this summary has provided you with a “snapshot” of what has been delivered for Caerphilly citizens over the last year. This really has been a collective achievement with every member of staff focused upon making a positive impact and difference to the county borough. Together we provide over 600 services each and every day and we are constantly reviewing and refining our approach to ensure we continue to deliver valued, cost effective and efficient public services for the people of Caerphilly.

**Christina Harrhy**  
**Interim Chief Executive**



# Summary Progress of our Well-being Objectives 2017/18

We reviewed our objectives in some detail at the start of 2018 and decided we needed to renew and refresh them based upon what citizens told us following the detailed consultation undertaken as part of the local assessment of our well-being.

As a result we have published a new Corporate Plan for 2018-2023 with new Well-being Objectives, further details of which you can find on the Council's website.

We are therefore now closing our 2017/18 objectives. The next few pages will tell you how we performed against them and whether we think they have been successful or not. This judgement is always reviewed, challenged and checked with the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

*More detailed information on each Well-being Objectives action plan and targets are available on the Caerphilly County Borough Council website.*

**1. TACKLING POVERTY BY MAXIMISING INCOME** to help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts - **was Successful**



**2. IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR ALL LEARNERS** particularly those that are vulnerable to achievement - **was Partially Successful**



**3. CLOSE THE GAP IN LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR RESIDENTS** between the most and least deprived areas in the borough, by promoting the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle - **was Successful**



**4. CARBON MANAGEMENT, REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT** by taking steps to reduce the Authority's Carbon Footprint and inform and assist others within the borough to do the same - **was Partially Successful**



**5. INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES** by taking steps to ensure the physical standard and condition of our housing stock, be improved and maintained to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), helping to improve the quality of life for the people who live in those homes - **was Partially Successful**




## WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 1

Tackling poverty by maximising income to help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts

### We chose this because

In our previous plans and reports we talked about how poverty harms people's prospects and damages their long-term future. It also places a burden upon public resources and services. It is in all our interests to tackle poverty. Common causes of problem debt are job loss, illness and relationship breakdown. Many are vulnerable to falling into problem debt following such life events, as too few have the financial resilience to cope. We know for example that problem debt can impact on good mental health, relationships, education and general well-being. The past few years has seen an unprecedented increase in the use of food banks in Wales. Energy prices have also risen, for those on low incomes this can be difficult. Those in poverty are more likely to be on prepaid meters, and can pay up to £253 more per year than those paying by direct debit.




Across Wales **98,350 three-day food bags** were given out from **April 2017 to March 2018** and **35,403** were to children. 29% of referrals were because people on low incomes or benefits were unable to make ends meet.\*

\*BBC Source - Trussell Trust

At **May 2018**, the dual fuel index was **9.7% higher than its 2015 level**. The electricity index is **19.7% higher** and the gas index is **0.1% higher**\*\*

\*\* Ofgen



### How we performed

Although national indications (such as foodbank use) continue to grow across the UK, we have judged ourselves successful against this objective because we completed all of our actions and more importantly, our performance measures improved from last year. We visited more tenants to advise them with their financial planning and because of this we were able to help them access benefits and generate savings of just under £1million on their behalf.



**£903,508 savings** generated for tenants as a direct result of face to face support to mitigate the effect of welfare reforms.

We visited **444** council tenants and provided them with advice regarding energy saving measures and energy use.

We visited almost **2000** council tenants affected by welfare reforms in their own homes and provided them with advice and support to minimise the impact of the changes.

We referred **51** council tenants for money and debt advice as a direct result of face to face support on the impact of welfare reforms.

We supported **1640** people to access the benefits they are entitled to. This included Personal Independence Payments (PIP), Attendance Allowance and access to cheaper utility costs.

Other ways in which we tackled poverty include making use of the Welsh Government tackling poverty programmes. For example the 'Supporting People' programme helped a further 1730 people to access the benefit they are entitled to and 620 children benefited from Flying Start Childcare provision.

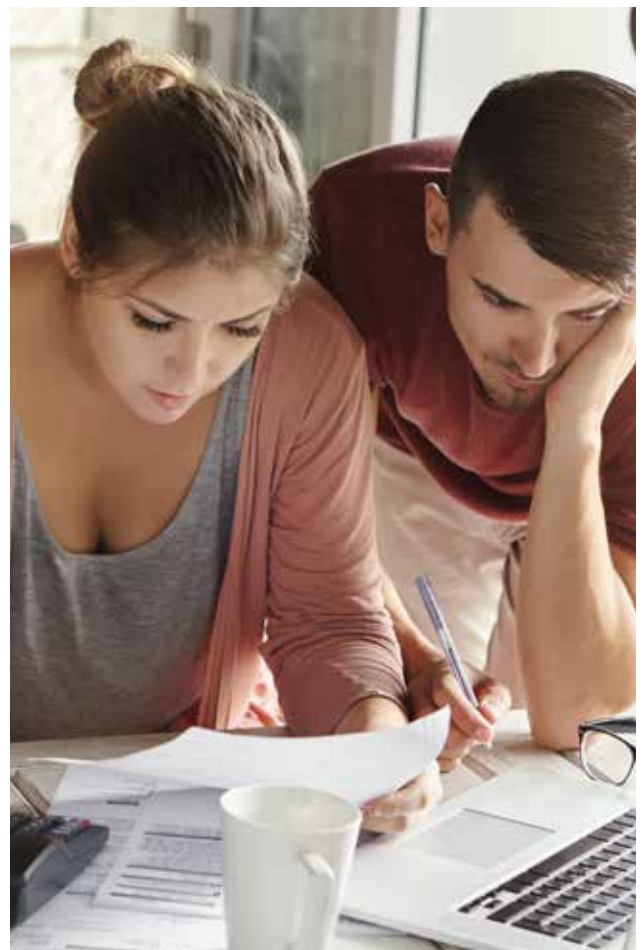
Childcare is often a barrier to parents returning to employment. During 2017/18 we were designated an early implementer local authority for the free Childcare Offer. To date 120 parents have signed up to deliver the offer, and up until March 31st 2018 374 children have accessed placements. Parental feedback has indicated this has made a significant difference to parents in low income working households.

Our Free School Meals take up for Secondary schools was 64 % of eligible pupils, which was a 1% reduction on last year, however due to inclement weather there were some school closures. Despite this, we maintained a performance of 73% take up of Free School Meals at Primary schools against a target of 70%. We continue to focus on maintaining and improving 'take up' so that children can have good quality nutritionally balanced food at no cost to themselves. This can save a family £427 over a school year.



### **Where are we now?**

We know that many of the potential causes and national initiatives such as the introduction of 'Universal Credit' are beyond the control of any one local authority. The work of the Welsh Government funded Anti Poverty Programmes continue (although their funding structure is changing) and our staff continue to visit people daily to help them access relevant benefits to reduce their fuel costs. As this has become part of the 'day job' we are no longer keeping it as a 'stand alone' objective, but rather moving parts of it into our longer term corporate plan. We also recognise we need to be more strategic and are working on plans with our partners to, for example, access apprenticeships to get people into employment to help them out of poverty.



## CASE STUDY

**CONFIDENT WITH CASH (CWC):** This project works with families on an individual basis through home visits and gives them the financial knowledge, skills, and confidence to improve their circumstances. A Welfare Benefits advisor can also assist with ensuring that a family has the correct financial entitlements.

**The Situation:** A couple with 3 children were struggling; mum has mental health issues, and had issues with budgeting. Rent arrears of £1600 were identified and the landlord was about to go to court for eviction.

There were also £550 gas and electricity arrears and £1500 water rates arrears. Understandably the couple were exceptionally worried and stressed, and whilst it wasn't an option they wanted, felt they would be better off financially if they separated and mum claimed benefit as a single parent.

The clients were referred by a Senior Education Welfare Officer as the children were consistently late for school.

**What we did:** We worked with the family and analysed their budget and identified where the family could make savings and cut down on their non priority debt. A Customer Assistance Fund application was made for water. Gas and electric arrears were negotiated at a more affordable rate of £5 each per week. No formal arrangement was in place for the repayment of rent arrears, so the project worker arranged for a standing order to be set up for weekly rent plus the arrears.

**Outcomes:** Gas and Electric arrears are now being covered, along with rent being paid by standing order, therefore court action for eviction was prevented. The children had been late for school as the client was dropping their partner off to work then taking the children to school.

The children were enrolled in breakfast club, so they would be dropped off first therefore, the partner would be on time for work, the couple are staying together.

They say they are feeling more confident about the future. The landlord also said that had it not been for the involvement of the CWC project, there would have been court action for eviction and they are pleased that the rent payments are being made on time and the arrears are decreasing.



## WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 2

Improve outcomes for all learners, particularly those that are vulnerable to achievement

### We chose this because

We aimed to address the gap in attainment between vulnerable children and young people and others who are more disadvantaged so that all our young people can benefit from the best education, by promoting more equal opportunities and removing barriers specific to this group of our citizens.

Our aim is that “every child should have the best start in life and the opportunity to achieve success as a young person and as an adult”. In achieving this we recognise that small groups of children and young people can face more challenges than others. Vulnerability in education can be determined by a number of different factors including deprivation. It can also be determined by whether the child or young person has an additional learning need, or is a looked after child. Our data identified that there is a performance gap between those within these groups and that of the overall population. We wanted to undertake some intensive work in this area to try and reduce that gap, and ensure that all young people are provided with appropriate opportunities to help them achieve success, both in the classroom and beyond.

### How we performed

We think we were partially successful because we delivered all our actions and even though we have made a real difference to those involved, we are still not satisfied that we have achieved the standards that we want. Some of our performance information which we use to monitor progress shows a mixed picture with

some data not showing an improvement on last year. The exam results achieved for academic year 2017/18 will not be reported until late Autumn /Winter of 2018. Therefore we are not able to judge at this point in time if attainment has improved. However for the academic year 2016/17 some key results were:



Higher number is preferred

% of pupils in receipt of free school meals achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 2 was 78.90%, down from 80.80% in 2015/16.



Higher number is preferred

% of pupils in receipt of free school meals achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 3 68.50%, up from 65.10% in 2015/16.



Lower number is preferred

% of pupils (including those in local authority care) in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification was 1.2%, compared to 1.10% in 2015/2016.







Lower number is preferred

2 out of 25 pupils that were 'looked after' left school without approved external qualification, training or work based learning. This equates to 8% which is an improvement on 2015/16 result of 18%.



Higher number is preferred  
\*\*

% of year 11 pupils who achieved a level 2 threshold including GCSE grade A\*- C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics was 49% (982 pupils out of the 1966 on roll at the time of the annual census).

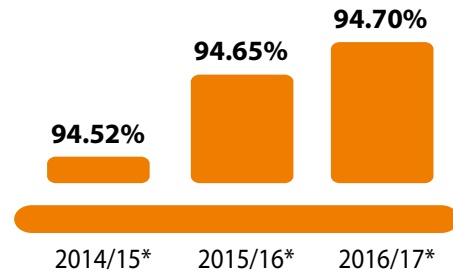
\*\* Cannot be compared to last year as the method of counting changed.



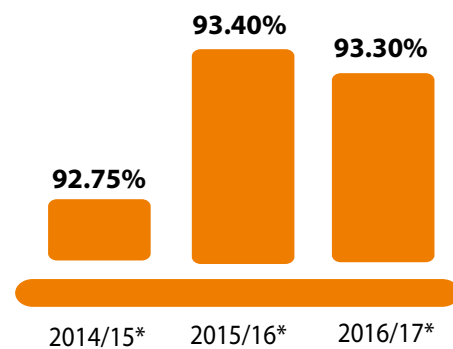
**Year 11 leavers not in education training or employment** - there were **1,959** year 11 leavers **50** were known not to be in education, training or employment.

Attendance is critical factor in obtaining good academic results. Research has shown that in the early years of a child's life, non attendance (approved by parents) can become a pattern that establishes a poor attitude to school. We have improved attendance at Primary school and have broadly maintained it at Secondary school, but there is more to do. There is more about this in our Corporate Plan 2018-2023 under our new Education objective.

**PAM/007**  
**% of pupil attendance in primary schools**



**PAM/008**  
**% of pupil attendance in secondary schools**



\* Academic year

All schools have established targets for summer 2018, and undertaken intervention work with support from both local authority and Education Achievement Service (EAS) staff to improve on a range of measures. This result will be reported to our scrutiny members later in the year or very early in 2019.

Previously there were different ways for families to access support from different agencies, each organisation had different forms, different processes and different levels of waiting times. In collaboration with our partners we set up a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) which streamlined all documents and processes, for example the use of just one form has reduced the previous

bureaucracy and given people a central point of contact. This contact helps identify, in a quicker way, what service is the best fit for the family and is now being widely used by schools to refer people to preventative services.

The current local work has focussed on finding joint projects across grant funding streams to enable wider access to support, and joint funded posts to widen the access to families and offer continuity for the most vulnerable families.

An important project this year and for the future is the Children First project which, to date, has been working to provide improved learning opportunities within the Lansbury Park area of the St James ward. The work is to identify their needs and co-produce solutions with the community to make an impact for children and young people. This is very important because the community must be part of identifying the solutions they need and not be 'done too'.

The initial engagement and mapping phase is concluding and moving towards planning and implementation, which is why this is partly completed and remains an action in the Public Services Board 5 year Well-being Plan. The family support worker has had some initial success in delivery of parenting programmes across the age range with positive feedback for increased confidence of both parents and children. This work will progress in more detail as we move into 2018/19.

We are jointly working with The Parent Network to develop a social enterprise called 'Parents Engaging to Raise Aspirations' project, known as PETRA. The Hengoed parent forum was the first group, 3-4 years ago, to work with an author and illustrator to create their own children's book 'Petra'. Since then other small groups of parents started to work with authors and illustrators and received training on storytelling, construction of stories, and specific topic areas, such as dementia, loan sharks, speech, language and communication, transgender issues and so forth. The purpose is to develop aspirations, skills and confidence to bring books into their homes, communities, schools and libraries and in so doing, change the future for our children.

During this time the project has created over 40 books including some for older adults. The project is essentially a literacy project that brings many wider benefits including social community benefits like peer support, friendship, resilience, as well as more individual development, such as confidence, self-esteem, literacy skills, and increased aspirations to try other things like volunteering, training or applying for jobs.

Parents came together as strong support for each other and their new story telling skills, confidence and love of books has developed an enthusiasm in other parents and in their children. This is improving parental and child literacy and has shown significant outcomes for families to date. The Welsh Book Council has commissioned four books to be sympathetically translated and will distribute these across Wales.

## CASE STUDY

### **FAMILIES LEARNING TOGETHER:**

The purpose of this project is to support families to develop their literacy, numeracy and promote early language development through groups in the community and through individual sessions in the home.

The project allows the whole family to gain in confidence & skills, and enables parents to support their children at home and school.

**Main issue:** The family were referred by Social Services into Families Learning Together. The children were on the Child Protection Register and the family needed support from a variety of services.

The project was asked to provide home sessions to work with the youngest child who was in Year 2 of Primary school (age 6). She needed literacy support and the parents needed to gain ideas in how to support their children. The school initially reported that the parents didn't complete any homework including spelling and reading practice.

**Work carried out:** A tutor was appointed to the family. They worked closely with the social worker and the class teacher to build a scheme of work to benefit the family.

The main focus of support was literacy but it was evident that the family needed support with a number of soft outcomes.

The tutor planned activities that focused on supporting the targets from the class teacher, the dietician and social services.

**Outcomes:** The family have bonded well as a unit and engaged well throughout the programme. Initially the parents lacked confidence and were reluctant to participate in sessions. With regular and consistent support they soon overcame their worries and are now working well with the tutor on a weekly basis.

The youngest child has shown significant improvement in skills, with the class teacher reporting the improvement and confidence of the child during a recent meeting. The child is now working towards an Outcome 6 (Foundation Phase).

The feedback received was that "Kathryn the tutor is a very helpful and kind person. She is easy to talk to, she tries to help in any way she can. Everyone will be lucky to have Kathryn to help them.

She has helped my daughter and myself loads, more than I ever thought possible and without her we wouldn't have come as close as a family. We will miss her when the term is over, I cannot thank her enough."



**Where are we now?**

Parts of this objective have been carried forward into our Corporate Plan 2018-2023 but has been made wider to cover more aspects. For example often Education is judged solely on the exam results, when the work that goes on is much wider (as the case study shows) and there are often complex areas around quality of life, aspirations, health and well-being, homelessness and so forth. Although nationally we are judged on exam results we wanted to focus on other things, for example what help can we give for those who don't or can't follow a traditional education path?

What about getting young people into training and employment? What does automation mean for the skills we are trying to teach now? What about the learning environment (the actual bricks and mortar), how do we make that better? All these questions have led us to widen our education objective actions for 2018-2023, and whilst it still has a strong focus on helping vulnerable learners we are closing this specific objective and picking up these aspects in the new 5 year objective.



## WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Close the gap in life expectancy for residents between the most and least deprived areas in the borough by promoting the benefits of a active and healthy lifestyle

### We chose this because

The main intention of this priority is to improve the lifestyles of our local population so that people recognise and take responsibility for their own health and well-being. In turn this will reduce the variation in healthy life expectancy so that health and well-being of individuals experiencing disadvantage improves to the levels found among the more advantaged.

Our vision is that Caerphilly county borough is a better place to live, work and visit. This must be for all residents. This is a long-term aim as residents living in areas of high deprivation have statistically significantly higher levels of ill-health including death from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, death from lung cancer, diabetes, mental illness and respiratory disease. Data released from Public Health Wales (2011) covering the years 2001-2005 and 2005-2009 showed health inequalities across the county borough that were alarming. Data provided in 2016 showed an improving picture, but there were still health inequalities.

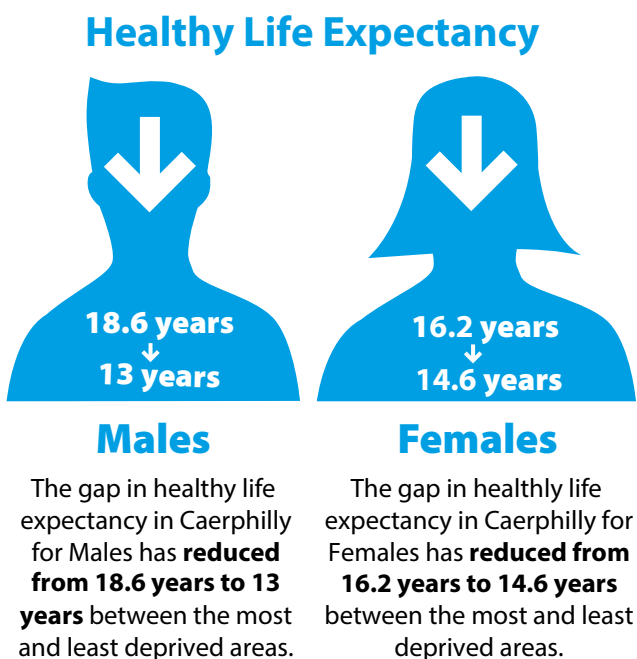
### How we performed

Although the Public Health indicators show there is more to do, we believe our objective was successful because for both Wales as a whole and in the county borough, health in general is improving. The objective to reduce

the gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas has been achieved to date.

People are living longer and mortality rates from cancer and heart diseases are reducing. Since the publication of this objective the latest data released in 2016 by Public Health Wales shows an improving picture for Caerphilly residents.

Data from Welsh Government and Public Health Wales will provide evidence to show if our residents' health is improving further.

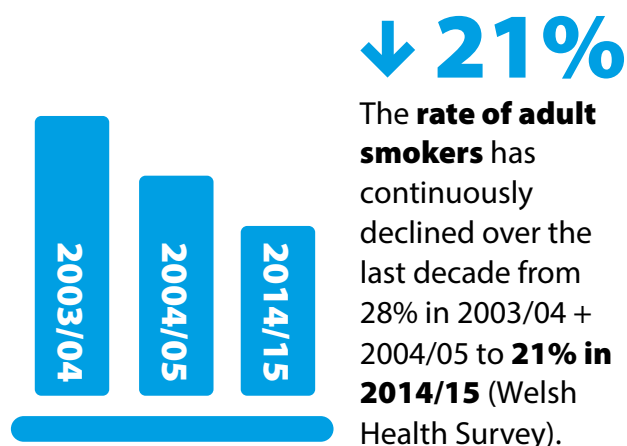


Unhealthy lifestyles arise, at least in part, due to the inequalities in the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live and work and there is still much work to be done to reduce these inequalities. It is important to note that there has been a reduction in resources for this work and significant change to programmes since this objective was set, so we need to keep an eye on this to see that progress is maintained.

One main outcome we wanted to achieve was to reduce smoking rates, and the proportion of adult smokers have steadily decreased over the last decade.

There has been collaborative, system wide action to reduce smoking prevalence across the county borough over recent years. Initiatives delivered at a local level are vital to see any successful reduction in smoking. Crucial work delivered, via a collaborative nature, within Caerphilly county borough includes:

- Illicit/illegal tobacco enforcement.
- Underage test purchases.
- Support to stop smoking via Help Me Quit including targeted support to:
  - pregnant mothers/parents.
  - pre operative patients/individuals with lung disease/individuals with mental health conditions.
  - those living in the most disadvantaged areas.
- Parenting Programmes.
- Welsh Network of Healthy Schools.
- Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme.
- Smoke Free Playgrounds, Schools, Childcare Settings and Hospitals.
- Smoke Free premises & Youth Service interventions.



The **rate of adult smokers** has continuously declined over the last decade from 28% in 2003/04 + 2004/05 to **21% in 2014/15** (Welsh Health Survey).

*The way this data is collected has now transferred into the National Survey for Wales*

The first round of the National Survey for Wales (NSW) indicated that our prevalence rate has reduced further to 18%, but it is not possible to compare the two sets of data as the NSW uses different definitions and a smaller sample size. Future data will be available from the new National Survey for Wales. Smoking prevalence projections show an ongoing decline although the Welsh Government’s Tobacco Control Action Plan for Wales (2012) set a target to reduce adult smoking to 16% by 2020. Achieving this target remains very challenging and will require an ongoing, collaborative effort by all partners if it is to be met.

As part of unhealthy lifestyles one of our actions was to help reduce obesity by launching an initiative called ‘The Daily Mile’ with one simple aim - to help children get fit by walking or running for 15 minutes a day. It encourages children to be more active and helps them understand the benefits of physical and mental health & well-being. This is gaining momentum across our schools and the Gwent region. Since the launch of the Daily Mile in 2017 more than 50% of our infant and primary schools have adopted this initiative.



**8500**

Over 8500 **pupils** taking part in **regular exercise** as part of their daily routine.

More schools are due to start the Daily Mile in September 2018. We have one of the highest participation rates in Wales. This initiative is now embedded into the core work of both our Healthy Schools team and Sport Caerphilly.

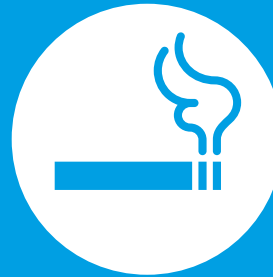
We supported Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Public Health Wales (PHW) to implement the Living Well Living Longer programme (LWLL) across the county borough. Delivery of this programme was completed in 2016/17. Over 8,700 residents were invited to attend a cardiovascular risk assessment, "a midlife MOT" at 32 local venues in the county borough's most deprived communities. Just under 4000 residents attended with 514 receiving further support to access onward interventions to improve their health.

We have also worked in partnership with ABUHB, PHW, Sport Wales, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Councils in a large scale change programme in the Heads of the Valleys area, which has targeted females aged 14-40 with the aim of securing behaviour change to improve physical activity. This programme has been very successful with some excellent results where individuals have started, and maintained or grown a range of physical activity initiatives in their own communities.

An important part of this overall work is increasing residents knowledge in health literacy as this is about people making good choices and to do this they need to have the

right information. Part of this is to start early where we can support children and young people to have the best start in life.

The last 12 months included:



All of the secondary schools identified as eligible for the Public Health Wales programme 'JustB' engaged in school based prevention programme for Year 8

(12+13 year olds) students to discuss the risks of smoking and the benefits of being smoke free. **8 schools** have received "What's in a cigarette" workshops delivered by the Healthy Schools Team.



The Healthy Schools Team delivered two 'cooking together' sessions for teachers

**(30 delegates attended)**. This upskills staff to deliver healthy cooking sessions within the school environment. In addition to the training, all schools have received healthy cooking in the classroom resources.



**6 schools** (all teaching staff) received **sex and relationships education (SRE)** training and all relevant resources needed to deliver a comprehensive SRE programme.

**ADDITIONALLY**

**45** 45 schools received **hygiene training sessions**.

**17** 17 delegates attended an **Eating Disorders awareness** training session.


**3** 3 schools have received a **well-being workshop** with high attendance.

**1** 1 school had all pupils attend **Helmet Safety training**.

Measures	Result
Number of settings that have completed the Healthy & Sustainable Pre-Schools Scheme.	<b>17</b> (target 5)
Number of schools achieving the final phase of the Health Schools Scheme - 'the Welsh Government's National Quality Award'.	<b>9</b> (target 9)
Number of childcare settings in Healthy Early Years Scheme - schools.	<b>74</b> (target 50)
% Schools that have achieved Healthy Schools accreditation at phase 3.	<b>98%</b> (target 95)
% of schools working towards the National Quality Award.	<b>80%</b> (target 20)

The Caerphilly Healthy & Sustainable Schools Scheme and the Healthy and Sustainable Early Years Scheme are achieving their Welsh Government targets in 2017/18.

Whilst different projects like the 'Daily Mile' have been successful, there is still a lot more to do particularly to reduce obesity, as the following information shows:-



**26%**  
active on 5 or more days

% **Physically active on 5 or more days** in the past week - Age standardised percentage of adults - **Caerphilly 26%**. This has decreased from 28% in 2010/11.

*This is lower than the rest of Gwent and the Wales average.*



**26%** 

**% of Adults** who reported **eating five or more fruit and vegetables** the previous day **26% decreasing** from 29% in 2011/12.

**Where are we now?**

Unhealthy lifestyle choices are significantly higher in more deprived areas and this creates risk factors that could impact upon the health of our residents especially smoking, obesity, physical inactivity and unhealthy diet.

It is a priority of Welsh Government (Fairer Outcomes for All 2011) that by 2020 we need to improve healthy life expectancy for everyone and close the gap between each level of deprivation by an average of 2.5%.

There is still a long way to go to reduce these inequalities and this is why data from the Caerphilly County Borough Area Assessment of Local Well-being 2017 has been used to review and redirect this objective, focusing on the areas we can have the most impact.

The renewed focus will look at our role in providing a supportive environment for residents to make healthy choices and to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

**63%** 

**% of Adults who are overweight or obese** in Caerphilly is **63%**. This is the **highest rate in Gwent** and higher than any region in England.

**27%** 

**% Children aged 4/5 years** categorised as overweight or obese in Caerphilly is 27%. **This is higher than the Gwent average** and higher than any regions in England.



## WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4

Carbon Management, reduce our Carbon Footprint by taking steps to reduce the Authority's Carbon Footprint and inform and assist others within the borough to do the same

### We chose this because

Our climate is undergoing changes partly as a result of green-house gas (GHG) emissions from human activity. One of the most prevalent GHG's is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) which is emitted from the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas. We have over 480 sites which produce carbon emissions and an annual carbon emission in excess of 26,000 tonnes. We have an obligation to take steps to reduce and minimise our carbon emissions and strongly consider the associated negative impact on our environment. This objective has been set within the sustainable development principles as long-term and our carbon reduction actions extend over multiple years. Some 'invest to save' schemes have a payback under 10 years, but a technology lifespan of up to 30 years.

Our objective was broken down into four sections under:

- Good housekeeping.
- Invest to Save.
- Design and Asset Management.
- Renewable Technology.



### How we performed

We believe this was partially successful because two of our five key actions were not fully completed, for example a trial of electric vehicles was delayed. However we exceeded targets for 3 of our 5 key indicators and carried out 104 awareness raising activities. We carried out training to 31 schools, such as boiler controls training (for greater energy efficiency) and carried out awareness raising on minimising water usage, all of which are building blocks to good energy and water conservation techniques.

We continued to reduce our carbon emissions as our Invest to Save projects reduced carbon emissions by 61 tonnes per year.

In 2017/18 we made £161k available for implementing three medium scale photovoltaic (PV) schemes (solar panels) at Tredomen Business and Technology Centre, Risca Leisure Centre and Ystrad Mynach Centre for Sporting Excellence.

So far we have up to 19 revenue generating schemes rated circa 594kW, saving in excess of 267 tonnes of carbon each year. Our solar panel schemes will reduce electrical consumption from the national grid, reduce carbon emissions and safeguard the premises against future price increases.

**8**  
**years**

Installed PV arrays estimated to pay back within **8 years** and will continue to offset grid electricity consumption for **20+ years**.

**51**  
**tonnes**

The annual carbon emission saved for the 3 sites is calculated to **51 tonnes**.

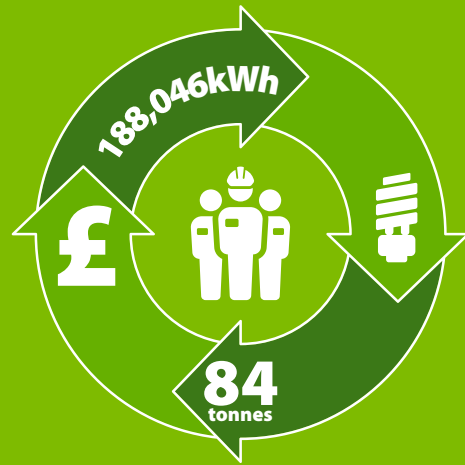
**20**  
**years**

We will claim Feed In Tariff for **20 years**. (Helping to offset anticipated electricity cost increases making our buildings more economical long term).

Our everyday actions consume energy and produce carbon emissions, such as driving, flying and heating buildings. Carbon offsetting is used to compensate for our emissions by funding an equivalent carbon dioxide saving elsewhere.

Carbon off-setting also reduces our annual carbon taxes which are currently priced at £17.70 per tonne. All of the schemes we chose are designed to deliver the following:

- Drive down carbon emissions.
- Drive down utility costs.
- Drive down carbon taxes.
- Improve the working and teaching environment.
- Create better understanding of carbon and water management generally.
- Aim to meet internal and national targets for carbon reduction.



Through a funding mechanism (available to public bodies nationally) **we invested in energy efficient LED lighting** for our Head Office and used local contractors to install and provide local employment. **Anticipated annual carbon savings are 84 tonnes** and **188,046kWh**. The scheme will pay for itself in within 8 years.

We have installed multiple overnight slow electric vehicle charging power points at our depots and head office. The Meals on Wheels service trialled an electric vehicle last summer and feedback was very positive.

We secured funding to install one or two additional 'fast charge' power point units at Penallta House. This will further support the services using electric vehicles, as they will be able to top up charges during the day as well as using the slow charge points overnight.

We are working towards electric vehicles for both our fleet and pool cars and are promoting the use of pool bikes for short work based journeys for staff to commute to and from work.

### CASE STUDY

We have closed four older schools and replaced them with two new “state of the art buildings” (Idris Davies Primary and Islwyn High) which are significantly more energy efficient, with high levels of insulation, LED lighting throughout and both have their own solar panels and energy management systems.

For example, Islwyn High is providing net energy and carbon savings compared to the two older schools it replaced, there are some periods when the building draws no electric from the electricity grid.



In addition to our larger scale PV projects, tenders were submitted for small scale PV systems of up to 4kW to be installed on 21 schools. However, due to funding and logistics only 17 installations took place, which has an overall carbon saving of approximately 32 tonnes per year. These will be used to teach school pupils about sustainable energy.

### Where are we now?

The risk going forward is that funding is a challenge to support projects and not all projects reviewed were progressed, as we rejected six possible projects based on poor or low levels of payback criteria.

This objective is not going forward in its current form as sustainability and climate change continue to be mainstreamed within other priorities. For example, carbon reduction is a consideration within our new Housing and Transport objectives. Work continues with electric vehicles, greater use of bikes, reduction in carbon through less energy use and a significant awareness raising programme. Furthermore, we are focusing on the priorities that people said were important to them within the new Corporate Plan.



## WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 5

Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities by taking steps to ensure the physical standard and condition of our housing stock, be improved and maintained to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, helping to improve the quality of life for the people who live in those homes

### We chose this because

The long-term affordability of housing; the effects of low incomes, fuel poverty and improving the quality of housing in the social sectors, are some of the main challenges facing the Authority. Affordable and safe housing is important beyond bricks and mortar, the benefits that community focused housing programmes can bring in terms of cost savings, income generation and local economic development can be overlooked. The potential role of housing within poverty elimination programmes is beginning to have greater recognition and this is shown in the connections to our 'tackling poverty' objective. Decent, affordable housing is important to families and fulfils a basic human need for shelter, but also contributes to the well-being of both parents and children. Studies show that children in stable housing do better in school and are less likely to experience disruption in their education due to unwanted moves. Good housing can reduce stress and lead to fewer physical and mental health problems, so there are many benefits to our citizens in having this as a priority. Getting housing right addresses demand across the whole of the public sector.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is a major flagship programme that is a boost to the local economy. We set an ambition that money spent improving homes would benefit more than bricks and mortar,

but provide wider regeneration benefits, for example sustain local jobs and offer skills development and training opportunities.

### How we performed

We believe this objective was partially successful because we made reasonable progress during the year with our investment programme to meet the WHQS for all our social housing stock by 2020.

This investment has also been used to target support for local businesses, training, employment and the local economy as a whole, as well as improving standards within our tenants' homes.

However due to the complexity of home improvement works required, the programme is being delivered in a phased approach, which does not target 'whole home units' in one go, and so, we were not able to deliver 'whole home compliance' in the early programme years.

As this method of works progresses and overlaps (area by area), there will be an incremental and noticeable increase in 'whole home unit compliance' as we approach the latter years of the programme.

Internal works have progressed well and are in-line with the planned programme but external works experienced slippage over the

past 3 years due to a number of difficulties such as resource and materials availability, availability of contractors (contractor performance and a contractor going out of business), accessibility to properties in a timely manner and bad weather conditions such as snow in December 2017 and March 2018. Positively, liaison and tenant satisfaction for internal works continues to be good with good customer satisfaction rates, however, liaison and tenant satisfaction for external works has not been as good due to complexities experienced with delays in service delivery as noted above.

## INTERNAL WORKS

**73%**

72% of **housing stock** is now up to the WHQS = **7806** properties



**86%**

**Satisfaction with internal works**

**1800 returns**

Out of approx 4000 sent out there have been **approx 1800 survey returns**

The Council has a housing stock of **10,801 homes** and approx **13,000 tenants**

## EXTERNAL WORKS

**46%**

46% of **housing stock** is up to the WHQS = **4969** properties

**70%**

**Satisfaction of external works** (based on responses between Sept-Dec 17)

267 surveys were sent out. Out of the 79 returned, 55 were satisfied

Our **Planned Investment**

**£166m**

In addition to the mainstream WHQS improvements programme, additional home 'adaptations' have taken place in recent years and we have completed 1,713 adaptations to meet specific needs of the tenants since the programme started in 2013.

These include for example; bathroom conversions, ramps, specialised kitchens such as Royal National Institute of Blind People 'Visually Better' kitchens and bathrooms for tenants with a visual impairment, and installation of electrical appliances such as lifts.

## CASE STUDY

**The Situation:** Rowan Place is an estate situated in the north of Rhymney located within the Twyn Carno 1 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). Twyn Carno 1 is the second most deprived area within the Caerphilly county borough, and according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014, lies within the top 10% of the most deprived LSOAs in Wales in relation to income, employment, health, education and community safety. It ranks as sixth within the overall index.

Rowan Place was an area characterised by high levels of anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse and short-term tenancies. The immediate environment was poor, with residents having very little personal outdoor space. The outdoor space that was available comprised of unused and neglected grassed areas, parking and thoroughfares which were closed to prevent criminal behavior, but later became a magnet for litter and anti-social behaviour.

One particular area on the estate had become seen as a 'no go zone'. It had become home mainly to transient single people and families with particular challenges, including antisocial behaviour, criminal records, drug and alcohol issues, which led to potential tenants refusing offers of accommodation and resulted in a large number of empty properties. As well as encouraging anti-social behaviour, these 'long-term' void properties also had a negative impact on the aesthetics of the area. The estate had 80 properties, with a large proportion (48) being flats.

**What did we do:** Enhanced WHQS improvements were carried out to council tenants' homes in Rowan Place; this included new kitchens, bathrooms, heating upgrades, electrical rewires, new roofs and external wall insulation. Investment from Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places.

Tackling Poverty fund also enabled external works to be undertaken to private homes in Rowan Place, thereby reducing fuel poverty for all whilst also improving the aesthetics of the whole estate. The local community were heavily engaged throughout the regeneration programme and played a key role in decision-making around wider environmental improvements on the estate.

Rather than simply undertake a home improvement programme in Rowan Place, the council's Housing Division saw this as an opportunity for much wider regeneration of the area. It also recognised that collaboration with partner agencies was key if the investment being made was to be maximised in order to deliver wider benefits to the local community and leave a lasting legacy.

The additional funding from Welsh Government was used to refurbish the Hafod Deg Resource Centre on Rhymney High Street; creating a community hub providing a range of services to help address the socio-economic issues experienced locally.

New approaches were used to market vacant flats on the estate, including the use of 'Rightmove'. A 'sensitive letting policy' was also introduced for the area to ensure a balanced mix of occupants and a more sustainable community.

**The benefits were:**

- 4 apprenticeships and 10 new employment opportunities in the construction phase.
- 72 homes benefitting from improved energy efficiency via new boilers and the installation of external wall insulation.
- 79 people supported into employment via Lift and Communities for Work support programmes.
- 180 people have undertaken employment related courses (including grounds maintenance in Rowan Place and via a 'Men in Sheds' project delivered from Hafod Deg).
- 345 categorised as economically inactive have benefitted from the services based at Hafod Deg.
- An estimated 15 people accessing services provided by Gwent Specialist Substance Misuse Service (GSSMS).
- 18 initiatives aimed at improving access to education and training.
- 57 initiatives aimed at promoting greater health and well-being.
- 8 initiatives aimed at specifically supporting young people.
- 370 accessing Citizens Advice Bureau outreach services.

Findings of a consultation event carried out after completion of the programme at Rowan Place was that;

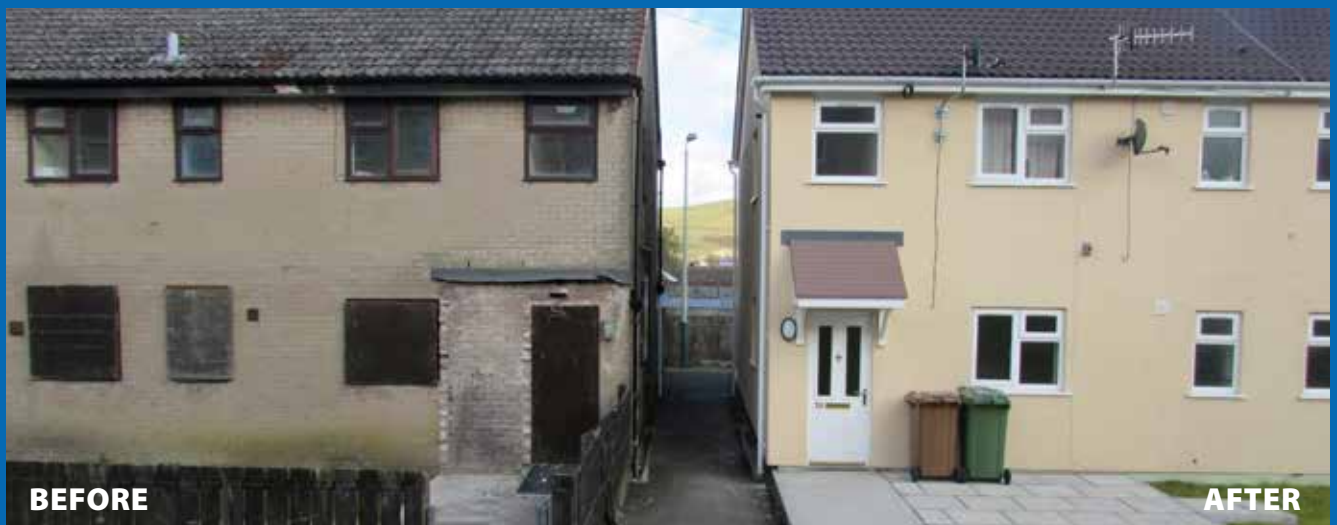
**71%** of residents said they were very satisfied overall with the improvements; the remaining 29% said that they were satisfied.

**100%** of residents at the event said that they felt better about Rowan Place since completion of the improvement programme.

**100%** of those who responded said that the improvements had made a difference to their day to day lives.

**79%** of residents who attended the event stated their energy bills had reduced as a result of external improvements.

**93%** of those who responded said that anti-social behaviour had reduced in Rowan Place since the regeneration programme was carried out.





The WHQS programme continues to be financially viable, with some borrowing likely to be required towards the end of the programme. Since the start of the WHQS programme, to the end of 2017/18 financial year, our planned investment was £166million and we have spent in excess of £110million.

In delivering home improvements, we have thought about improvements to localised environments and wider communities surrounding the homes. The WHQS Environment Programme will see approximately £10million invested in council estates throughout the borough, for example with a series of clean-ups, public furnishing refurbishments, communal bin storage facilities and additional parking spaces in some areas.

In 2017, the Wales Audit Office completed a programme review and provided a series of recommendations to the Council, which are now being addressed to further improve programme delivery. As a result we set an action plan and have made good progress in completing this.

**Where are we now?**

The programme remains challenging, but improved progress achieved throughout 2017/18 (with some new arrangements introduced to ensure momentum) has improved the opportunity to deliver the full WHQS programme and meet the standard by 2020.

We have kept this objective and it now forms a smaller part of our new Well-being Objective in our Corporate Plan 2018-2023. The new objective is more holistic and makes connections with wider community benefits, from providing apprenticeships to how we help people to keep their tenancies through a range of work to improve mental health, fuel poverty, access to benefits and promoting affordable homes.



## Performance Comparisons 2017/18

Every year all 22 Authorities across Wales submit a set of data called PAMs (Public Accountability Measures) to Data Cymru. Data Cymru compile this information to help authorities compare their performance. Not all measures can be compared as the way they are counted can change year-on-year. There are 20 measures of which 18 can be compared at the time of publishing.



**8** of Caerphilly's 18 PAM indicators are in the upper quarters when compared to Wales, some of those include:



**1st in Wales** for successfully preventing 75.7% of the 570 households threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless.



**3rd in Wales** for clearing fly tipping reported by residents across Caerphilly in 5 working days. We remain in the top quarter with 99.8%.



**6th in Wales** for the condition of our principal B roads at 3.6%. Across Wales 4.3% of all B roads are overall poor condition.



**9th in Wales** as 96.4% of our inspected highways were of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness, compared to an All Wales Average of 95.8%.



Although our number of visits to libraries moved down from 4th place to **11th in Wales** it remains in the upper quarter.



**10** of our 18 PAM indicators that can be compared are in the lower quarters when compared to other authorities across Wales, some of those include:



**21st in Wales** for Secondary school attendance which is 0.8% below the All Wales Average of 94.1% (although primary attendance moved up one place to 16th).



**21st in Wales** down from 17th for the average number of calendar days it took to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant. (292 days against an All Wales average 213)



**\*20th in Wales** down from 16th for the number of visits to our local sports & leisure facilities per 1,000 population.  
\* Centre closures due to refurbishments.

*Social Services indicators are not included as the Welsh Government has not yet decided to publish performance data as they are new and subject to validation checks across all authorities.*

Every year we analyse our performance of this data set to see where improvements can be made. You can view more performance information in a range of different views at [www.mylocalcouncil.info](http://www.mylocalcouncil.info)

## Managing your Money 2017/18

The Council is the largest employer in the area with 8,767 staff providing approximately 600 services to our communities. We also maintain 826 buildings, including 89 schools, 10 leisure centres and 18 libraries. These vital public services are funded from the Council's Revenue and Capital budgets, which for 2017/18 totalled £434million.



The Council plans and approves its budgets on a 5-year financial planning cycle, which takes account of historical trends and spending patterns, national and local initiatives and access to multiple funding sources, some of which change year-on-year.

Due to the ongoing programme of austerity and increasing demand for a number of services, the financial position for local government has been very challenging in recent years. During the period 2008/09 to 2017/18 the Council has delivered savings of £82.16m to address reductions in funding and inescapable cost pressures. This has not been an easy task; however, the Council has approached the challenge proactively and prudently and previously agreed a number of financial planning principles to help guide its decision-making.

These principles have recently been refreshed and are now as follows:

- We will seek to protect services for the most vulnerable whilst continuing to evaluate all other services.
- We will limit the impact of cuts on front-line services where we can whilst continuing to reduce expenditure and explore opportunities to generate new sources of income.
- We will adopt a longer-term approach to financial planning that considers the impact on future generations.
- We will need to accept that we will not be able to maintain existing levels of service but will introduce more innovative ways of working through the use of emerging technologies.
- We will engage with our communities to understand their needs and explore options to deliver some services through collaboration, partnerships, community trusts etc. to ensure that communities remain resilient and sustainable in the longer-term.

In 2017/18 the Council received a small increase of 0.12% in the funding it receives from the Welsh Government (WG), however it also had to deal with a range of additional unavoidable cost and service pressures.

As a consequence of these pressures, the Council agreed savings totaling £9.046m for the 2017/18 financial year. The savings were selected on the basis that they would have a limited impact on front-line services and would protect the priorities agreed by the Council.

### Where does our money come from?

The majority of the money that the Council receives comes from the Welsh Government in the form of a Revenue Support Grant.

Added to this is the money we collect from our residents and businesses in the form of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates). The table below shows the income received for the 2017/18 Financial Year.

Income	2017/18	
	Budget £m	Actual £m
Revenue Support Grant	205.96	205.96
Business Rates	57.67	57.67
Council Tax	60.40	62.02
Contribution from Reserves	1.40	1.40
<b>Total (£m)</b>	<b>325.43</b>	<b>327.05</b>

### How do we spend our money?

Revenue	2017/18	
	Budget £m	Spend £m
Corporate Services	66.83	59.16
Education & Lifelong Learning	124.76	124.63
Communities	44.01	43.44
Social Services / Public Protection / Policy	89.73	89.52
<b>Total (£m)</b>	<b>325.43</b>	<b>316.75</b>

# 96.9%

2017/18 the Council collected 96.9% of the Council Tax due during the year.



# £1.62m surplus

Council Tax collection has generated an overall surplus of £1.62m for 2017/18.

Arrears over typical 3-year period has a collection rate of **99.5%**, which means that the vast majority of residents do pay in full.

The Council manages two main categories of expenditure i.e. **revenue** (everyday running costs for services) and **capital** (specific costs for updating and maintaining key assets and implementing major new projects).

For the 2017/18 financial year the council's revenue budget was £325.43million. During the year budget holders have been mindful of the continuing programme of austerity and expenditure has been curtailed in a number of areas to support anticipated savings requirements for future years. This prudent approach has resulted in a number of savings being achieved in advance and underspends therefore being higher than would normally be the case.

The reported revenue budget underspend for 2017/18 was £8.68million. This includes an underspend of £4.07million for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is a separate statutory ring-fenced account representing the rent paid to the Council for its housing stock and the expenditure to fund the upkeep of these properties.

The HRA underspend will be carried forward into 2018/19 and used to partially fund the £200m investment being made by the Council to achieve the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2020.

2017/18 saw an overspend of £0.29m for schools; this has been funded from accumulated school balances held from previous financial years.

Capital Expenditure varies year-on-year and budgets are allocated from specific funding sources. The table below provides a summary of capital budgets and capital expenditure for the period 2017/2018.

Capital	2017/18	
	Budget £m	Spend £m
Education	13.81	11.94
Highways	11.4	6.23
Housing Stock (Public)	53.57	42.21
Private Housing Grants	3.95	2.42
Social Services	3.51	0.28
Community & Leisure	3.52	1.00
Other	19.33	6.25
<b>Total (£m)</b>	<b>109.09</b>	<b>70.33</b>

The 2017/18 capital underspend of £38.8m is mainly due to delays in progressing schemes and this funding has been carried forward into the 2018/19 financial year to enable schemes to be completed.

Full details of the 2017/18 underspend for the Authority is available on our website [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)

# How we are working towards improved equalities and the well-being of our Future Generations

After an intense development period, this year the Public Services Board (PSB) launched its five year Well-being Plan of which we are a key partner along with other public sector bodies. The Plan sets out objectives that are designed to improve the county borough for its residents and maximise how the Caerphilly PSB contributes to the well-being goals for Wales.

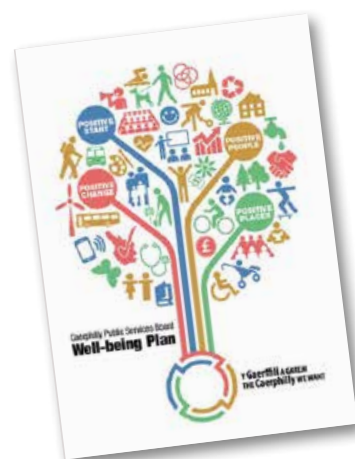
The Well-being Plan has 4 themes, Positive Change, Positive Start, Positive People and Positive Places. We have developed a Delivery Plan which details what actions we will put in place to deliver on these overall themes.

There are 4 building blocks called Enablers, these are things that are a means to an end or a way of working to help deliver sustainable actions. The 4 Enablers are:

1. Working together - across all partner organisations to minimise duplication and share resource and join up work for the best outcome for the public.
2. Communications and engagement - so we jointly communicate and share messages.
3. Procurement and commissioning - to ensure we work together to get value for money across joint purchasing and maximising community benefits wherever possible.
4. Asset management - making best use of all our joint assets and in ways that reduces energy use.

There are 5 Action Areas for cross public sector delivery:

1. The Best Start in Life - investing in the early years of a child's life.
2. Volunteering and apprenticeships - develop a co-ordinated programme of volunteering and establishing an all age apprenticeship programme.
3. Good health and well-being - improve joint working with an emphasis on prevention of current and future health challenges.
4. Safer, resilient communities - support our most disadvantaged communities to be resilient and help them to help themselves, support housing partners to deliver sustainable homes, create safe and confident communities.
5. Protect and enhance the local natural environment - protect and promote our natural environment, encouraging community involvement and removing barriers to accessing green spaces.



We are now building our action plans and will be reporting on how we are delivering on these actions and more importantly the difference they are making.

Following the launch of the Plan, our priority now for the next 2 years is to focus upon harnessing the culture within the organisation to maximize the '5 ways of working' (below) and embed them fully into decision making. This will include delivering a wide range of training and development opportunities for people to embed the sustainable principles within their thinking.

The 5 ways of working are:

1. Involvement
2. Collaboration
3. Long Term
4. Integration
5. Prevention

Other work this year has focused on reducing carbon emissions and there is more about how we have progressed in our Well-being Objective 4.

Additionally we are carrying out activities like offering free breakfasts during National Bike week to encourage staff to give commuting to work by bike a go.

Environmental Health have supported National Clean Air Day for staff cycling/walking or using public transport to commute to work. It all helps to encourage people to try other forms of commuting.

We have electric bikes (and normal bikes) available on our Cycle to Work Salary Sacrifice Scheme, this has recently been relaunched with Cycle Solutions, our new provider.

We are working towards integrating electric vehicles into our fleet and have trailed electric pool vehicles. We have pool bikes for short work based journeys along with shower and storage facilities.

We started a partnership with Sirhowy Valley Honeybee Company, ourselves and Ynysddu Primary school and introduced an interactive beehive as a way to educate people through eco schools about the importance of bees as pollinators.

More bee hives have been put on the roof of the Council Head office at Ty Penallta and in 2017 they celebrated their 1st Birthday.



### CASE STUDY

The resident honey bees at Caerphilly County Borough Council's headquarters, Penallta House, celebrated their first anniversary in their home.

We worked with the Sirhowy Valley Honeybee Company to help increase the bee population in the county borough, helping to fight the impact climate change has upon them. As part of this commitment, the 80,000 honey bees that were moved to the grounds of Penallta House in August 2017 were re-located to the roof of Penallta House. Re-locating the honey bees to the roof of Penallta House will give the bees the opportunity to forage for plants in the local area and ensure the hives stayed safe and secure. The bees will fly up 3 miles away from their hive and each bee visits approximately 3,000 flowers in a single day, continuously visiting the same area until the nectar is finished.

The bees have improved the grounds of Penallta House through pollinating the resident plants and foliage and produced approximately 50lb of honey, which is sold to staff at Penallta House. The honey jars are returned and recycled to be used again by the Sirhowy Valley Honeybee Company, which is a social enterprise.\*

As part of the project, 'bee awareness' workshops have also taken place to educate staff on the importance of bees and life inside the hive, as well as know how to behave around the bees.

*\*A Social enterprise is a business that changes the world for the better. Like traditional businesses they aim to make a profit (or can be non-profit making), but it's what they do with their profits that set them apart by reinvesting or donating them to create positive social change.*





**Equalities Update 2017/18**

We have and continue to work on improving our provision of greater Welsh Language choices and are progressing well on the Five Year Welsh Language Strategy. We enrolled 141 new learners and ran over 135 courses, both taster and long-term courses. We will be updating our Recruitment and Selection Guidance to give clearer information to managers when recruiting around undertaking a Welsh language Skills Assessment to employ a greater number of Welsh Language speakers.

In 2017/18 we lost 31 Welsh speaking members of staff at a time when we would ideally increase the number of Welsh speaking staff to help us deliver services. However on a positive note there is a slight increase in the number of people accessing Welsh language training, up from 59 to 74. The number is increasing significantly so far for 2018/19.

We occasionally receive complaints about the use of Welsh language, and these are used to make improvements. For example we received a complaint about Library signage and tannoy announcements which breached two of the Welsh Language Standards. The Library Service have now audited all their signage and replaced any non-compliant ones and ensured that all tannoy announcements to the public are now bilingual.

Another area of improvement was the electronic subscription to gov.delivery email bulletins. We asked subscribers to inform us of their language preference and now have a list of Welsh subscribers, which has increased by 101.9% over the last year. We currently have 319 subscribers who want to receive communication in Welsh and this number is increasing.



We have celebrated a number of significant dates;

- Pride Cymru (August 2017)
- Diwrnod Shwmae (October 2017)
- Black History Month (October 2017)
- Holocaust Memorial Day (January 2018)
- LGBT History Month (February 2018)
- International Women’s Day (March 2018)

In addition to the Welsh language we have provided a diverse range of training and education in topics such as, Anti Slavery, British Sign Language, equalities awareness, Mindfulness and Prevent (counter-terrorism programme to prevent radicalisation).

The Education Equality Index run by Stonewall is the only nationwide tool which is used to benchmark progress of ensuring measures are in place and positive steps are being taken to support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans young people living in the local community. It is a great way to demonstrate good practice but also to realise and understand the gaps where improvement is needed.

Caerphilly County Borough Council’s first submission to the Education Equality Index was in 2016 where we received special recognition for the work we had done to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools. It also saw us ranked in 1st position out of the 10 Welsh local authorities that submitted a return and 21st in the UK.

For 2017 we maintained 1st place position out of the Welsh local authorities and also maintained our position of 21st in the UK for the second year.

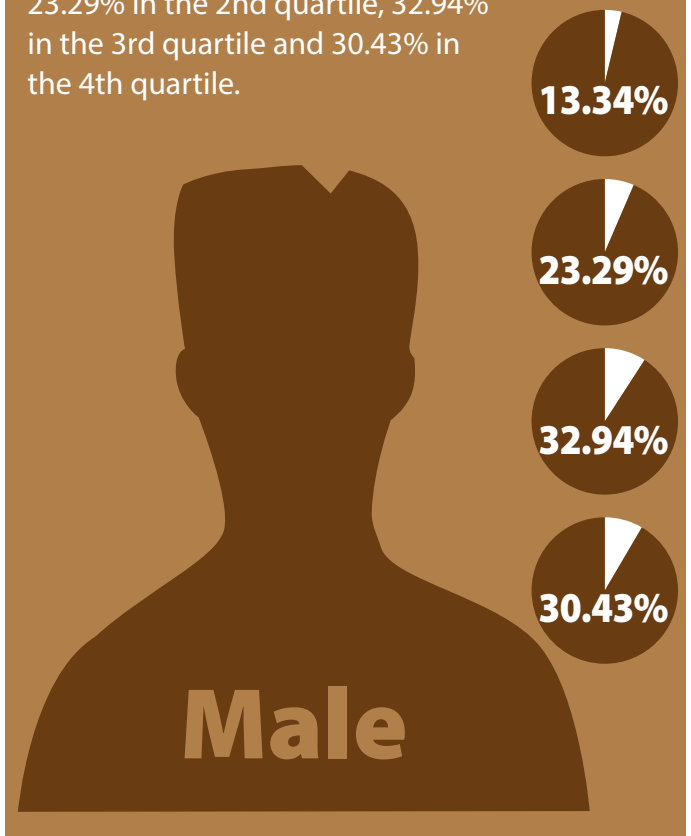
For more information you can visit [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

### Gender Pay Gap Statement 2017

This year was the first year government legislation required organisations to publish their pay by gender and our first statement was published at the end of March 2017. The data identified that there are significantly more women than men occupying posts in every quartile of the data due to the predominantly female workforce of the Council.

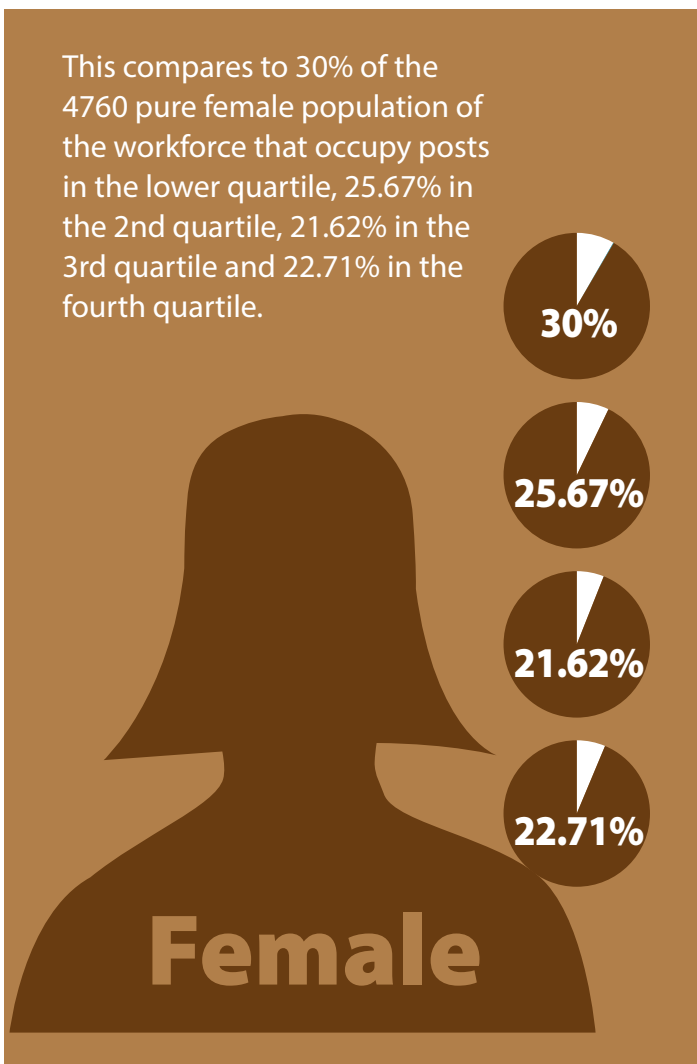
The Council is confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work.

The data shows against the pure male population of the workforce that 13.34% of the 2031 employed occupy posts in the lower quartile, 23.29% in the 2nd quartile, 32.94% in the 3rd quartile and 30.43% in the 4th quartile.



The gender pay gap is the result of roles in which male and females currently work and the salaries that these roles attract. Our gender pay gap is reflective of the causes of the gender pay gap at a societal level. For example, research has identified that although parents are increasingly flexible, the responsibility of childcare still falls disproportionately upon women. It is a fact within this data that the vast majority of part time posts are held by females and that these are the posts that attract salaries in the lower quartiles.

To view the full statement please visit our website [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)



### Disability Access Work Programme

This year we spent £104,000 on a number of different projects as listed;

- **Leisure Centres** - £13,000 including improved access into Swimming pools.
- **Education** - £52,000 including Automatic Doors and Ramps.
- **Countryside** - £13,000 which includes Accessible Picnic Benches.
- **Parks** - £5,000 contribution towards Accessible Toilets within Morgan Jones Park.
- **Community Centres** - £8,000 accessible toilet improvements.
- **Social Services** - £13,000 included improved external access works and handrail improvements.

To monitor our progress towards greater inclusivity we produce an Equalities Annual Plan and an update on the Welsh Language through progress reports every year. These can be found on our website [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)



## What our regulators told us

In the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Annual Improvement Report for 2017/18 (issued August 2018) our regulators concluded “The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement”.

During the course of the year the Auditor General did not make any formal recommendations, however there were a number of proposals for improvement in the “Scrutiny: Fit for Future?” report. This is noted below.

### **April 2017 - Review of the Council’s published plans for delivering on improvement objectives**

*WAO noted the Council has complied with its statutory improvement planning duties.*

### **November 2017 - Annual Assessment of Performance Audit**

*WAO concluded that the Council had complied with its statutory reporting duties and there were no proposals for improvement.*

### **December 2017 - Annual Audit letter 2016/17**

*WAO concluded we had complied with our responsibilities relating to financial reporting and had appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy and efficiency and effectiveness of our use of resources.*

### **July 2018 (Review 2017/2018) Scrutiny: ‘Fit for the Future?’**

*WAO concluded that the Council values its overview and scrutiny function but for it to improve and meet future challenges, members need more focussed training, development and support to better understand and undertake their scrutiny roles effectively.*

There are three outstanding Performance Audits that are part of the audit work programme for 2017/18, and these will be completed after this report goes to publication. They are:

- A service user perspective review, which sought the views of over 500 tenants and leaseholders on their satisfaction with the quality of services they received from the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme. This is due to be published September 2018.
- Local work on providing constructive feedback on our Business Improvement Board and how we are delivering on our major programmes. This is due to be concluded in December 2018.
- A follow up on whether we are meeting our commitments to deliver on our Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme to upgrade Council homes to the standard. This is due to be concluded February 2019.

The WAO will report on these pieces of work in their next Annual Improvement Report and we will report on the outcomes within our next Performance Report.

The proposals for improvement and recommendations are monitored twice a year at the Council’s Audit Committee. The reports can be found on our website [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)

# How to contact us and how you can be involved

Your views and opinions on the content of our performance reports and the priorities that we set each year are important to us. We welcome your input so that we can continue to provide meaningful information that helps inform you of the service focus, ensuring that we are working on the things that are important to making a difference to you, our citizens and our communities.

You can contact us by:  
Email: [PMU@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:PMU@caerphilly.gov.uk) or via the Council Performance webpage and follow the instructions on screen.

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You can contact us via social media



You can get involved in many ways. Please have a look at our website. [www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)



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