

# Team Caerphilly

## BETTER TOGETHER

### Annual Performance Report 2020/21



TRAFODAETH CAERFFILI  
THE CAERPHILLY CONVERSATION



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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# Section 1:

## A reflection on 2020/21 from the Leader of the Council & the Chief Executive

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We welcome this opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months and consider our performance locally against the backdrop of unprecedented global events.

2020/21 was, without doubt, a turbulent year which brought many challenges for the organisation as we navigated our way through the coronavirus pandemic.



First and foremost, we want to thank the whole community for everything you have done – and continue to do – to protect our people and our place from this deadly virus.

Your individual and collective efforts have helped reduce the spread of coronavirus and undoubtedly saved lives. Whether it's wearing your face mask, receiving a vaccine, or limiting unnecessary contact with others – you are all doing your bit to protect our people and our place.

The council is currently transitioning from 'coronavirus response mode' to 'coronavirus recovery mode' and we need to adjust our services accordingly.

The organisation has been significantly impacted over the past 12 months, but it's encouraging to see that things are gradually getting back to some sort of 'normality' and many of our affected services are now coming back online.

Public services have been at the forefront of the coronavirus response and we are so proud to lead this local authority and to witness the efforts of staff at every level across the organisation.

In addition, our colleagues and partners in health, the emergency services and the voluntary and charitable sectors have all gone that extra mile to provide support when our community needed it most.

Because our key focus over the past year has been on the Coronavirus response, it can be easy to forget about all the other positive things we have achieved as an authority.

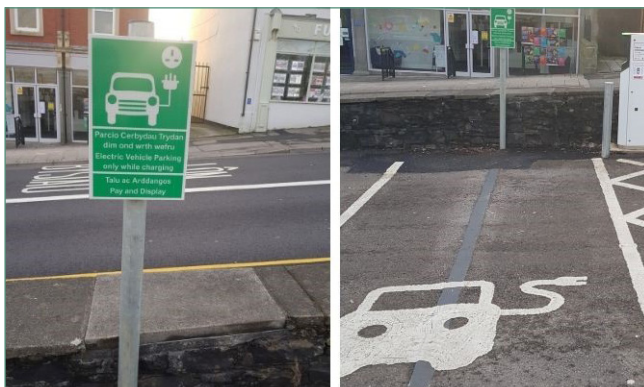


## Highlights include:

- Progressing major investment proposals totalling £231 million as part of our Place Shaping programme, signalling an exciting blueprint for the whole area in future.
- Giving the green light for the next phase of our 21st Century Schools Programme.



- Announcing a “zero cut” budget for 2021/22, together with one of the lowest council tax rises in Wales.
- Our £200 million programme of bringing our council properties to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), while also developing a brand new council house building initiative that is already taking shape.
- Supporting our tenants in claiming additional income in excess of £2.5 million.
- Recruiting 13 new foster carers, with a further 19 applications in progress – the highest number for some years.
- Our libraries service met all 12 of Welsh Government’s Core Entitlements for the first time.



- Embracing the use of electric vehicle and installing public electric vehicle charge points at 11 council owned car parks.
- Approving a package of investments in sporting facilities including a brand new running track and several sporting pitch upgrades.
- Endorsing regeneration masterplans which were developed in partnership with the community.
- Strengthening our Team Caerphilly ethos, with positive feedback from residents and colleagues alike in our recent surveys.

Looking ahead, we’ve got a busy agenda over the next 12 months that will deliver wide ranging improvements for the county borough.

## Some of these key priority areas from our forward work programme include:

- Implementing our bold and ambitious Place Shaping investment programme.
- Reviewing our waste strategy.
- Our ongoing Covid recovery plans.
- Leading the regional social care agenda.
- Progressing our exciting plans for regenerating Caerphilly town.
- WHQS Completion.
- Housing Strategy agreement and implementation - including new council house building.
- Extending our 21st Century Schools programme with 5 exciting projects to progress.
- Schools’ recovery improvement programme alongside the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

- Resolving single sex and surplus places in the Mid and Upper Rhymney Valley area.
- Last, but not least, agreeing next year's budget.

It's been a tough 12 months, but at the same time there is so much positivity for us to celebrate.

Caerphilly is a local authority with a big heart and big ambitions. With strength in leadership, we have reshaped our organisation, listened, and responded to residents' needs, supported communities through a pandemic and driven innovation, transformation, and high performance.

Hopefully this gives you a flavour of the positive progress we have made over recent months, despite the pressures of the pandemic.



**Philippa Marsden**  
Leader of the Council



**Christina Harrhy**  
Chief Executive



## Section 2:

# Introduction to our Well-being Objectives 2018/23

In 2018 we published our Corporate Plan for 2018-2023 with new longer-term Well-being Objectives and reviewed the Plan in 2019. These plans give considerable detail on why we chose the Well-being objectives that we chose, from the data we had and from the intelligence provided by a well-being assessment that included borough wide consultations with many members of the public.

You can find out more on the link below.

[Corporate Plan 2018-2023](#)

The next part of this report is to tell you how we have performed against our Well-being Objectives. Our assessment over the next few pages will tell you how we have performed against our objectives for 2020/21 under the following headings:

- **Summary of progress**
- **What difference have we made**
- **What went well in 2020/21**
- **What have we learnt and where do we need to improve**
- **Our focus for the future**

We are unable to provide the data results for the 2020/21 Public Accountability Measures. This is a voluntary set of performance indicators that are measured across Wales and used to compare our performance with other Authorities. Due to the Covid pandemic, the 2019/20 collection was postponed, and this year's collection, 2020/21, delayed. Therefore, the latest comparators for this set of measures have not been published by Data Cymru as of September 2021.

### Well-being Objective 1:

**Improve education opportunities for all.**

### Well-being Objective 2:

**Enabling employment.**

### Well-being Objective 3:

**Address the supply, condition, and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance, or support to help improve people's health and well-being.**

### Well-being Objective 4:

**Promote a modern, integrated, and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity, and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment.**

### Well-being Objective 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.**

### Well-being Objective 6:

**Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.**

# Well-being Objective 1:

## Improve education opportunities for all

### Summary of progress:

We are now 3-years into our 5-year Well-being Objective, which we judge to be progressing well. During the coronavirus pandemic, the education directorate has repurposed itself, providing support to all children and young people. A range of officers, including education welfare officers, educational psychologists, youth workers community education teams and school based counsellors, have been utilised to support the most vulnerable.

However, we are unable this year to measure some performance in the traditional method due to the pandemic and Welsh Government advice not to publish or compare. Therefore, our assessment on performance focuses on wider than just performance data and tells of how actions taken to support pupils and schools through the pandemic has been effective.

### What difference have we made:

- The education directorate's strategic response to the pandemic has been effective in meeting the needs of children and young people across Caerphilly. This has been verified through our own systems for self-evaluation as well as recognition from external sources. Importantly, the way we have cohesively used staff across the Local Authority, schools and other education settings exemplifies the principles as set out in the Shared Ambitions strategy, which can be found on our [website](#).



- Strong partnership working between agencies was considered a strength of the Local Authority prior to the pandemic and has contributed significantly to the work that has been achieved and we give some examples below of what went well.

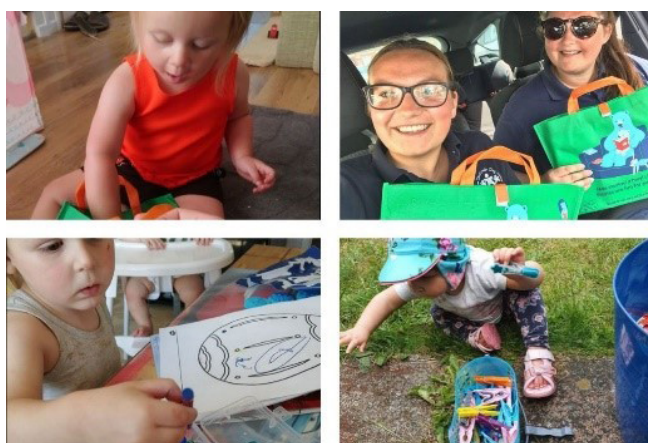
### What went well in 2020/21:

- The Local Authority responded swiftly to the demands of the pandemic. Officers have provided clear leadership with strong emphasis on supporting schools and other educational settings.



- Effective communication has been a strong feature of the Local Authority's response. This includes interaction with headteachers, families, trade unions and leaders across the council.
- Despite the high numbers of pupils required to self-isolate, classroom closures have been kept to a minimum in the endeavour to maintain continuity of learning.
- School leaders and staff have demonstrated significant resilience in adapting the ways in which they practice. This included implementing a range of blended and remote approaches to learning, such as online learning.

- Headteachers have worked very collaboratively throughout the pandemic. This ensured there was a collective and cohesive response to management of the pandemic. Schools also worked effectively across sectors to run childcare hubs.
- Vulnerable pupils with complex physical and learning needs were offered childcare provision during the lockdown periods.
- The distribution and quality of free school meals delivered to families during the pandemic has been recognised as an example of outstanding practice.
- The Local Authority provided strong support to schools and the PRU around management of health and safety during the covid pandemic. This included bulk ordering of resources that schools would need including signage, cleaning products and personal protective equipment (PPE), which alleviated pressure on schools. Health and safety officers supported schools to complete robust risk assessments.
- A total of 1,948 childcare placements were delivered for children aged 0-5years, through the Childcare Offer, C-CAS, Flying Start and Assisted and Supported places schemes. 2589 children aged 0-3years were supported in the Flying Start programme.



- There are currently no schools placed in the category of special measures by Estyn.
- Implementation of the Welsh Government funded Edtech programme has accelerated

as a result of the needs of learners during the pandemic. This programme aims to improve pupils' readiness for the future world of work by equipping them with necessary digital skills.

- Network infrastructure installations have been completed on 86 school sites.
- A total of 7717 Chromebooks have been allocated and delivered to schools, with appropriate sustainability plans in place.
- 842 mifi devices were allocated to schools to support digitally disadvantaged learners during lockdown.
- A range of measures have been implemented to improve bandwidth and connectivity across all schools.
- The development of the 21st Century Schools Band B programme, which is the second phase of a joint investment initiative between the Welsh Government and the Local Authority, has been progressing at pace with five proposals currently active at various stages in the process. These include a new Welsh Medium Primary School for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High School site, a new build extension to Trinity Fields Special School, a new replacement Plas-y-felin Primary School, the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llancaeath Infants School to create a new Primary School and finally the creation of a Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit) on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School Site. These developments will result in improving learner opportunities and wellbeing, opening up buildings for greater community usage, developing Welsh Language provision to achieve our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and substantial improvements to the educational estate within the Borough contributing to the decarbonisation agenda.
- Investment into Welsh Medium provision has been strong in the borough with the Welsh Medium Capital Grant in region of £6.8 million resulting in improvement and expansion of five Welsh Medium Schools.



- In addition, through the Local Authority Annual Capital Maintenance Programme of £1.4 million and the Welsh Government Capital Maintenance Grants £7.8 million, investment into school building has reduced backlog maintenance, improved heating, lighting, insulation and energy efficiency.
- Significant investment has been made into outdoor play, 3G and Multi Use Games Area provision available for educational and recreational use. The Authority has also successfully established a new Athletics Hub in the borough which can be accessed by all schools and the wider community to increase engagement in physical activity and support health and well-being
- The Inclusion Compendium and Engagement and Progression Strategy were introduced in 2021. This is aimed at ensuring the most vulnerable learners make progress and have some form of education, employment or training when leave school. Both strategies will need to be embedded within daily practice to ensure our vulnerable learners achieve their potential. An indicator of success includes the reduction of pupil exclusions over time.
- The Local Authority needs to ensure that the resources distributed through the Edtech programme are utilised effectively in order to impact on pupils' acquisition of digital skills. This can be achieved through strong partnership working with the Education Achievement Service.

## What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:

- Although the Local Authority has responded well in the short-term, there is a lack of knowledge and understanding around the long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on learning. As a result, there will be a requirement to revisit the education strategy and revise based on the future needs of children and young people across Caerphilly.
- There is no current data set for standards across all phases in Caerphilly. Therefore, the revised strategy will need to identify a set of milestones and measures that can be utilised effectively to make a judgement on the quality of standards and provision across all schools and educational settings.
- Schools will need to be ready for the implementation of the new curriculum and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act, and therefore, it is important to identify the support that will be required. A robust process of information gathering will be necessary in order to attain a clear understanding of the range of support and resources required.
- Three Welsh medium schools have currently been identified by Estyn as requiring 'significant improvement'. The Local Authority and the Education Achievement Service must ensure that support provided accelerates progress and meet all recommendations.
- The 21st Century Schools team has a proven record of making good use of a range of sources of capital funding to improve both the quality and efficiency of its school estate as demonstrated through the delivery of the £56.5 million Band A of the 21st Century Schools programme which resulted in the creation of our first 3-18 school, a new Secondary school, expansion of Welsh Medium provision and enhancements to our award winning Special School which caters for our most vulnerable pupils.



## Our focus for the future:

- **Standards:** Re-ignite, recover, and reform learning in order to raise standards of learning. This is about recognising the effect Covid may have on attainment and progress, so we will be revisiting the current education strategy to ensure its purposeful for these times, and this will involve partnerships with many agencies including our Education Achievement Service and work has already started on this.
- **Inclusion:** Improve the aspiration, engagement, and progress of vulnerable learners. This is about recognising that our most vulnerable have been disproportionately affected by Covid, and in collaboration with schools we will want to offer additional support to those learners.
- **Education other than at school (EOTAS):** Develop the strategic vision for EOTAS. This is about further improving the quality of support for this group, include making sure settings are ready for curriculum reform in 2022 and developing a clear mechanism to measure progress at each EOTAS provision.
- **Not in education, employment or training (NEETS):** This is about further reducing the number of young people who at the point of leaving compulsory education and beyond, may become NEET. This includes reviewing the current support and introducing intervention at an earlier stage as we know this makes a difference to prevention of young people becoming NEET in the first place.
- **Attendance:** Improve pupil attendance. Attendance also includes supporting pupils who may be nervous about returning to school following lock down and the pandemic, supporting pupils for example who may have anxieties and sign posting to other agencies who can also support them.

- **21st Century Schools:** Progress the 21st Century Schools Programme. Place Shaping the Educational estate and enabling increased opportunities for Learners and the wider community through improving the learning environment across the borough will continue to be the focus of works moving forward. In the short term, the team will continue to progress the 21st Century Schools Band B programme and manage the Capital investment programme to maximise benefits and ensure value for money, exploiting all avenues of investment, working flexibly to respond to changing need as it arises.

# Well-being Objective 2:

## Enabling employment

### Summary of Progress:

The 2020-21 delivery year has been unprecedented, and the Covid-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges for the economy, with far-reaching consequences for both employers and employees. The first quarter of the year saw an almost total stall in employment across many sectors, followed by a slow and intermittent recovery throughout the remainder of the year, which was impacted by further lockdowns.

Although the Furlough scheme has provided security for many employees, mass redundancy and unemployment has been an inevitable feature of the economic fallout from the pandemic. Internally, the initial onset of the pandemic also saw large sections of the Council's workforce redeployed to priority service areas, for example employment programme staff were redeployed to support foodbanks and free school meals. This resulted in unavoidable effects on employment support capacity. Unsurprisingly, these major external factors have had a significant impact on the progress of the Well-being Objective within the reporting period. However, at an overall level and taking into account the challenges of the pandemic, this objective is judged to be progressing satisfactorily, particularly in relation to employment support.



### What difference have we made:

- Despite falling below profile (primarily due to the lower numbers of participants who chose to engage), employment programmes still achieved the following headline outcomes in 2020/21, representing very real successes for those customers who felt able to engage throughout the pandemic. The impact of gaining employment is significant and presents a very clear route out of poverty and social exclusion for many participants in deprived communities. For those participants who may have become unemployed as a result of the pandemic and were then supported back into employment, these outcomes may have prevented a long-term reliance on benefits and potential other issues including debt and housing concerns which may arise from longer-term unemployment. The following figures represent stats from all of the Council's employment programmes (funded by Welsh Government and European Social Fund):

<b>Total Participants Supported</b>	<b>718</b>
<b>Qualifications Gained</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Vocational Training</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Voluntary Placements</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Job Entries</b>	<b>256</b>

*(Please note: these figures may include some double counting of participants due to customers becoming eligible for different programmes at different stages; however, each outcome claimed represents a separate event).*

- **Procurement** - Successful suppliers, service providers & contractors continued to deliver community benefit / social value initiatives as part of contract arrangements, which include but are not limited to Targeted Recruitment & Training, Community, Educational and Supply Chain initiatives. A number of initiatives have been delivered and supported throughout the year as part of various projects and programmes of work.



## What went well in 2020/21:

- **256 participants supported into employment** - Despite the major challenges to employment presented by the pandemic, the Council's employment programmes continued to deliver a high-quality employment support service which supported customers into employment throughout the year. Whilst these challenges did ultimately result in outcomes falling below target across the various employment programmes, this can be justified given the unprecedented circumstances of the reporting period. Employment managers from other authorities have also confirmed that this is indicative of performance levels across Wales over the past year.

### Employment programmes

Please note, these figures include all employment programmes, including those European Social Fund (ESF) programmes that sit within Education (Bridges into Work2, Inspire 2 Work, Working Skills for Adults 2, Nurture, Equip and Thrive).

- **Positive Outcomes for 16-24 age group** – The picture in terms of young people (aged 16-24) was far more positive, with delivery generally running according to profile. This is of particular importance given that this age group were determined to have been most at risk with regards to employment prospects as a result of the pandemic.
- **40% "Into Employment" conversion rate** (as an average across all programmes) - Figures for job entries must also be considered in the context of lower engagement figures generally. Engagement of new participants in general was a significant challenge over the past year, due to issues including shielding, childcare and limitations to public transport. When this lower rate of engagement is considered, the conversion rate of engagements to job entries is extremely positive.

- **Support for participants with disabilities and work limiting health conditions** – Employment programmes also continued to provide excellent support for participants with disabilities and work limiting health conditions, despite the fact that the pandemic and subsequent increased risks to health exacerbated barriers for many of these individuals. For example, the Communities for Work Plus programme met Welsh Government targets for supporting those with disabilities, with 20% of all job entries relating to participants with either a disability or work limiting health condition.



- Staff members from employment teams have been flexible in adapting and responding to the challenges of the pandemic and remote working. With face to face contact severely limited, employment mentors have had to adjust to supporting customers via remote means (phone and video calls), whilst maintaining the same quality of service.
- The restrictions of lockdowns have also led to the emergence of new barriers for participants in relation to remote working considerations. A shift to remote communication has resulted in increased demand for online training and interviews, meaning that employment staff have had to adapt their services to support participants in developing new digital skills to enable them to participate in the labour market.



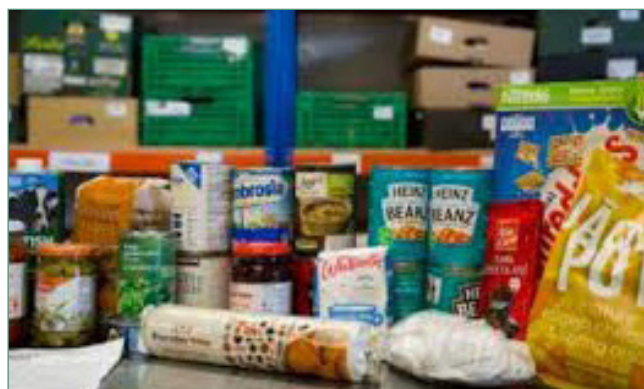
■ **Social Media engagement** – As a response to the challenges presented by the pandemic, all employment programmes within the Authority have worked closely together to adapt and develop an updated and co-ordinated approach to engagement in our most deprived communities. Most notably, in the latter part of the year this engagement activity had a focused effort to greater expand our social media presence, which resulted in real outcomes of increased engagement.

■ **Business Liaison** – With the economic challenges of the past year, maintaining contact with employers has been more important than ever. The ongoing work of the Business Liaison Team, based within the employment programmes, has ensured that employment officers have been able to respond quickly to changes in labour market demand. An ongoing dialogue with local employers has enabled employment teams to anticipate upcoming opportunities and plan participant training, accordingly, supporting employers to recruit successfully at each stage of the economy's re-opening after each lockdown.

■ **Procurement** - Creating Social Value via our third party spend is seen as an integral part in supporting economically viable communities and enabling local employment. We have implemented a new measurement framework to further unlock, maximise and capture Social Value and is known as Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs). The TOMs methodology provides a consistent approach to measuring and reporting Social Value and Community Benefits within our procurement processes and includes a number of outcomes such as but not limited to creating training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities and the use of local supply chains. From early 2020/21 the TOMs methodology is being included in all relevant procurement processes in line with the Programme for Procurement (2018-2023). In addition, the team continue to be actively involved with a National TOMs Framework for Wales via the Welsh Local Government Association

(WLGA) and supported by the National Social Value Taskforce Wales (NSVT Wales). Caerphilly County Borough Council specific and National TOMs for Wales have been designed to help Caerphilly and other organisations measure and maximise the Social Value they create through the delivery of their services across the Well-being goals for Wales and importantly they will allow organisations to report value created as a financial contribution to society. A draft of the Council's Social Value Policy has been developed and is being readied for consultation.

■ An exceptional response was received from suppliers and contractors for the annual Food Bank appeal despite the current pandemic. Donations were received from 56 of our suppliers and contractors totalling over £8,000.



■ In addition to the above the team were awarded winners status at the Go Awards Wales 2020 for the Social Value category and recognised at the National Go Awards.

■ **City Deal Alignment** - In March 2020 a Full business Case was approved by the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet for Homes for all the Region through the Housing Investment Fund (HIF). The HIF will provide capital funding for housing sites that are unviable due to the high cost of remediation and or infrastructure costs. In January 2021 the Council submitted 3 applications for funding, 2 of which have been successful and progressed to the next stage of assessment.

- The Planning Team are also working closely with colleagues in Housing and Property to identify potential small sites for redevelopment. Several sites have been assessed to determine their suitability for development and are working with colleagues to market these sites as development plots for individuals that would like to build their own home. Interested individuals can look for plots of land on the Council's web page.

## What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:

### Employment Programmes

- Employment programme outcomes have fallen below profile within 2021/21, as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic. There are many factors that have contributed to this profile variance, from the effect of lockdowns on individuals through to the wider impact on the economy in general. Poor IT access, low digital skills and lack of equipment has hampered delivery as many participants either do not have access to or are unable to use the internet.
- In particular, outcomes relating to Economically Inactive participants, those aged 25+ and those from the most deprived communities have been the most negatively impacted. Whilst all participants have experienced increased barriers as a result of the pandemic, these groups in particular have been disproportionately impacted due to factors including childcare/home schooling considerations and also by shielding due to increased medical vulnerability.
- Referrals to employment programmes from Job Centre Plus (JCP) have fallen dramatically over the course of the pandemic, due to JCP office closures, staff redeployment and a removal in the condition for customers to demonstrate job seeking activity as a requirement of their claim. This has contributed significantly to general lower engagement numbers across the employment programmes, given that JCP has always been the main referrer into these programmes. Consequently, this has highlighted the problem of an over-reliance on one dominant referral source; and forward planning for the employment programmes will include a focus on how teams can grow additional referral sources moving forward.
- We identified the need to further build relationships and promotion of programmes internally within the council to maximise the number of internal referrals we receive.
- Training outcomes for the period were also low. Many training providers were not running courses during the earliest lockdown phases; and the limited provision that was available was delivered online, excluding those with lack of digital skills and/or appropriate equipment. In addition, many accredited courses and licences, which are a requirement of specific vocations (e.g. Construction Skills Certification Scheme), were not able to be granted without assessment conducted face-to-face, which was not an option during the strictest lockdown periods.
- We need to revisit relationships formed previously with partners to retain contact and encourage new referrals.
- **Procurement** - The current pandemic has impacted some suppliers, service providers and contractor's ability to proactively deliver community benefits/ social value outcomes. However, the team are supporting these suppliers to remove barriers and reduce emerging risks that would prevent agreed outcomes being met.
- **Housing Stock Investment** - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic Housing Repair Operations (HRO) and Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) works have been suspended for much of the year, with the exception of emergency repairs and works to voids. As a consequence, neither HRO or WHQS have recruited any apprentices or been able to accommodate work placements during 2020/21. Apprenticeships and placements are being made available during 2021/22.

## **Our focus for the future:**

- Responding to continuing economic recovery maintaining close links with employers to gain labour market intelligence and enable us to be responsive to emerging opportunities.
- Developing relevant training pathways for demand sectors such as hospitality, as economy begins to reopen in many sectors.
- Plan and develop new initiatives to engage Economically Inactive participants.
- Collaborate with other Council European Social Fund employment programmes to develop exit plans as we transition into the final year of EU funding.
- Work with other authorities within Cardiff City Region to develop pilot initiatives as precursor to potential future funding, including the Shared Prosperity Fund (in line with Cardiff Capital Regional Skills Partnership Employment and Skills Plan).

## Well-being Objective 3:

# Address the supply, condition, and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance, or support to help improve people's health and well-being

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### Summary of progress:

We are now 3-years into our 5-year Well-being Objective, which we judge to be progressing well. Even though we were only able to focus on providing essential services in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Welsh Government guidance and a requirement to provide support to vulnerable people, we made sure we continued to work hard, making a difference in the lives of Caerphilly's residents and tenants. Below are some examples of the difference we made during this period.

### What difference have we made:

- We supported almost 2,000 Council tenants to lessen the effects of welfare reform and over 400 Council tenants to secure additional welfare benefits and water savings by reducing tariffs. This support delivered almost £2.5 million in savings for tenants.
- The Supporting People programme helped over 3,000 individuals manage their accommodation and money, to prevent them from becoming homeless. 4,000 people were helped by sign posting them to mental health organisations. Over 1,200 people were helped to claim more benefits, bringing in just over £4 million into the borough for these clients in total. Supporting People helped over 19,000 clients in 2020/21 through various projects.
- The 'Confident with Cash' project helped over 500 people, who have disabilities or are part of 'team around the family' projects with financial, debt management and welfare benefit advice. This project is jointly commissioned by the Councils Supporting

People, Families First and the Homelessness Team, (provided via Citizens Advice).

- 550 residents were helped by the Supporting People programme to reduce their combined debt by over £406,000, through referring them for specialist money and debt advice.
- We provided access for rough sleepers through an enhanced GP service and a dedicated Welfare Benefits Officer for homeless individuals.
- Worked in partnership with our colleagues in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, to deliver psychology and psychiatric support, including rapid access to assistance for those with substance misuse concerns.
- One of our housing association partners successfully completed the redevelopment of the former Caerphilly Magistrates Court site, resulting in 34, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and 4 houses, all built to the Passivhaus standard, supported by £4.57m of Welsh Government grant funding to build these homes. The redevelopment of the former Cwm Ifor primary school site will create a further 17 units in 2021.
- Delivered over 18,000 support sessions to sustain tenancies, resulting in no increase in evictions. Many of these support sessions needed to be face-to-face due to the complexity and nature of support required.
- 133 individual minor adaptations were carried out in residents' homes, totalling over £32,000. As we were only able to complete priority tasks during April to August of 2020, due to the pandemic shutdown, routine adaptations had to be completed from September onwards.





- £108,000 was spent on 22 major adaptations, including £64,000 of Disabled Facilities Grants and £44,000 within Council homes. Those adaptations don't include works completed via the Welsh Housing Quality Standard works in Council homes.

**The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) was introduced in 2002, to ensure all homes are of a good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents.**

- Throughout 2020 many staff were redeployed to the Council's 'Buddy Scheme', where they were helping vulnerable residents access medicines and food during the pandemic.

## What went well in 2020/21:

- The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our community and the multiple national lockdowns that followed, which meant we urgently had to re-shape how we delivered our service. Despite the pandemic many of the actions we took helped us achieve successful outcomes and perform well during the year, and in many instances beyond our expectations.
- We are still on target to meet the Welsh Government's revised target date of December 2021, ensuring tenants' homes will meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

- Community engagement for the WHQS environmental programme was completed in March 2020 and we consulted with 82 communities throughout the borough. The focus of the programme is now to deliver on those projects including the increase of play provision for children and young people through the addition of skate parks at Ty Sign and Penllwyn and a playpark at Forsythia Close, Ty Sign.
- We have completed a long-term asset management strategy to make sure all our homes will continue to be maintained to the national standard once all Council homes are completed to the WHQS.
- The Council is working closely with Arc4 to produce a Local Housing Strategy, which will be introduced in the latter part of 2021.



- One of our housing association partners successfully completed the redevelopment of the former Caerphilly Magistrates Court site, resulting in 34, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and 4 houses, all built to the Passivhaus standard, supported by £4.57m of Welsh Government grant funding to build these homes. The redevelopment of the former Cwm lfor primary school site will create a further 17 units in 2021.

**A Passive House is built to a standard, which reduces the buildings ecological footprint.**

- We used Welsh Government funding during the pandemic, to provide temporary accommodation to meet the needs of the homeless.

- The Caerphilly Keys project is actively developing a pool of accessible, affordable private rented accommodation, co-ordinating tenancies through engagement with landlords. This enables us to meet our obligations by offering accommodation to homeless or potentially homeless people. All tenancy support is provided by the Pobl housing association and is funded by the Welsh Government's Housing Support Grant. To date 83 households have been housed through the Caerphilly Keys project and we are currently working in partnership with DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) to deliver flexible support to all Caerphilly Keys tenants.

**The Caerphilly Keys project is a partnership that helps private landlords find long term tenants for their properties. The project has a dedicated team who help match appropriate tenants with relevant properties.**

- The re-classification of a sheltered housing scheme to older person's accommodation has been completed. Several older persons units have been re-classified for general needs accommodation, and a former extra-care scheme has been decommissioned and re-classified as sheltered accommodation. We continually review to identify additional properties that may be suitable for re-classification.

**Re-classifying a building is to change the intended use of that building.**

- Good progress is being made with the Supporting People team to develop a 'Housing First' project for people with complex needs.

**A housing first project is a 'model' for housing people as a priority before dealing with the complex need's they may have after they have been housed.**



## **What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:**

- The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted a need for us to change the way we work. It became clear that we were not sufficiently equipped to deliver all our services remotely at that time, however, where staff were equipped to do so, it resulted in significant benefits to our staff and customers.
- The Council reshaped its services during the first two quarters of 2020/21, prioritising services to vulnerable residents and communities. Employees of some housing services were temporarily redeployed, to support other essential services, such as the Council's 'Buddy Scheme', which supported vulnerable residents by finding volunteers to shop or get prescriptions for those isolating. As a result, performance for these aspects of the Housing service, and those restricted or suspended in line with Welsh Government guidance, fell below that reported in previous years.



- Maintaining essential services whilst operating under limitations has been difficult, but the commitment and support provided by our employees has been excellent and clearly appreciated by our customers. We expect performance to recover during 2021/22, as restrictions are lifted.

- We were only able to make limited progress on increasing the percentage of social housing stock that has an accessibility code this year.

**Accessibility codes are a guide to describe how accessible a property is likely to be. Categories range from A for properties that are fully accessible for wheelchair users, to D which are the least accessible for those with limited mobility.**

- We provided a smaller number of adaptations, grants, and loans this year than we usually would.
- We were not able to carry out all planned energy efficiency improvements to residents' homes, due to being unable to access sufficient external funding.
- Owing to much-reduced levels of engagement, reduced capacity in the team, and Covid-19 restrictions we failed to reach the target for the number of empty properties being returned to beneficial use.
- Due to delays in new affordable home schemes going through the planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage approval systems, we were not able to draw down the full allocation of the Social Housing Grant to build those new homes as anticipated.
- The Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme needed to be extended by 12 months (December 2021) due to the pandemic, so we have needed to delay the implementation of the Post Asset Management Strategy.
- We have had to delay work on a new Local Housing Market Assessment on the advice of Welsh Government.



## Our focus for the future:

Two years of this objective remains and some of the actions are yet to be completed, and other actions are happening annually. As we come out of the pandemic, we will need to understand the full impact it has had on the borough and how we will provide our services in the future.

### Specifically, we will focus on:

- Developing 17 units of Passivhaus homes at the former Cwm Ifor Primary school site (Untitled Welsh Housing Association).
- Completing the procurement of a new IT system which will enable us to improve the type and level of data we collect, which in turn will help improve the level of service provision.
- Meeting the revised Welsh Government Target for the Welsh Housing Quality Standard of December 2021, which we are on target to achieve.
- A new empty homes team will be put in place, to return more empty homes to beneficial use and continue to participate in phase 2 of the Welsh Government's Valley Taskforce initiative, providing grants up to £25,000. Just over a hundred grant enquiries have been made and it is hoped they will be completed in 21/22.
- Continue to work with private landlords ensuring they can maximise funding opportunities for energy saving measures. We are currently working with Rent Smart Wales to target the most fuel inefficient homes in the private rented sector.
- As the pandemic led to an increase in demand on our homelessness services which is amplified by a lack of suitable emergency accommodation, we will continue to source suitable accommodation to address this demand, including Houses in Multiple Occupation, leased properties from registered social landlords to maximise the move to permanent accommodation, and bed and breakfast accommodation.

- Moving forward we need to ensure the Housing Solutions team can respond proactively, meeting the needs of those whom we have a duty to assist. We are devising a Homeless Project Plan to identify clear priority areas to enhance the service. This will allow us to refocus on early intervention and prevention, meeting the requirements of those presenting with complex needs.
- We will continue to work with individuals using the Housing First model and help find suitable accommodation, with support from two dedicated support workers, one of which specifically working with young people.
- We will continue to work with residents in the borough who have difficulties managing their money, by the provision of free, flexible, short term services (floating support), to help resolve immediate crises and improve skills.
- Complete a new Local Housing Market Assessment and introduce a new Local Housing Strategy.
- Reducing fuel poverty by making homes more energy efficient, providing people with advice on how best to heat their home and exploring alternative funding sources, alongside potential ECO funding sources for Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) D, E, F and G rated council properties. This will generate further energy efficiency programmes moving forward with our planned Post Asset Management Strategy programmes in 2021/22.

**Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) are a rating scheme to summarise the energy efficiency of buildings. Buildings are rated from A to G.**





# Well-being Objective 4:

## Promote a modern, integrated, and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment

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### Summary of progress:

This objective has 6 long-term outcomes. At present this objective continues to be progressing well in relation to most of the key outcomes, despite constraints caused by the pandemic.

Development of the strategic outline business cases for the Council's committed Metro Plus Schemes have made significant progress with good engagement from Transport for Wales (TfW). Although the gestation time for transport schemes can be lengthy, this work will translate to some physical improvements being delivered towards the end of the 5-year plan period.

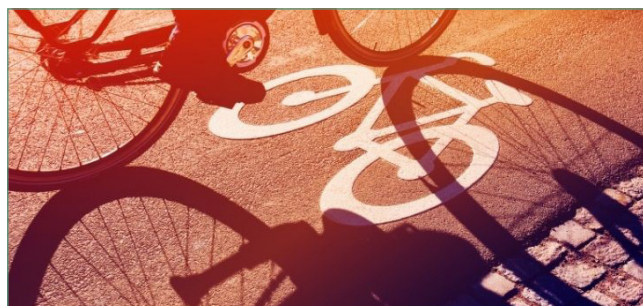
The Covid pandemic has significantly impacted on all public organisations and services, stretching resources, and in particular, adversely impacting on public transport services.

As a result, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales have been focused on maintaining these services and keeping the Core Valley Lines transformation programme on track. Therefore, no progress has been able to be made on considering new future rail routes, or, the legislative changes required to facilitate changes to the regional and local bus network.

It remains to be seen what medium to long term impact the Covid pandemic is likely to have. This may present some additional challenges for public sector organisations to address.

### What difference have we made:

- We continued to implement programmed works as referenced in the Integrated Network Maps for Active Travel Routes (15-year plan), that was formally approved by Welsh Government in February 2018.
- We have progressed the statutory review of the Active Travel Integrated Network Map with public consultation and engagement (due to be completed by December 2021).
- We delivered a £980k package of sustainable transport measures with the Welsh Government Covid response funding, focusing on Active Travel and Social Distancing Schemes.



- The Council continues to work with the delivery of the South Wales Metro, whereby, a £30m jointly funded investment package for Metro Plus Schemes was agreed with Welsh Government at the start of 2019/20. The Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance and Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) work has progressed well for the new proposed Caerphilly Interchange Project. This refers to the standardised stages of scheme and project delivery (strategic definition through the design stages to construction, handover, and use).

- The development of the outline business cases for the new Llanbradach Park and Ride and Ystrad Mynach Park and Ride extension schemes, as part of Metro Plus Schemes, has been completed. Feasibility design will commence throughout 2021/22.
- Bus stop improvements in the Mid Valley Area have been substantially delivered in 2020/21. Design and construction of the last phase of bus stops for 2021/22 is also progressing well.
- In Caerphilly, Virgin are building high speed broadband connections with a 350Mb broadband speed with capability of up to 500Mb, for 12.5k homes, with 5964 of these completed and released in 2020. At present Virgin are releasing between 300 – 500 homes every month. Sales figures so far are between 25-30%, which Virgin deems to be very good. The Caerphilly build will look to finish near the end of 2021. This is an important part of the transportation and communication network, as it will improve access to digital information, both online and at all points of transportation stops and pick-up points, for example electronic bus and train stop information boards, as well as access to website and on-line intelligence about transport links, network operations, timetables, routes and interruptions of service.
- Installation of new electric vehicle fast charging units have been installed at 11 public car parks locations across the county borough.

## What went well in 2020/21:

- Despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Transport for Wales (TfW) are progressing the detailed design for the Core Valley Lines (CVL) Transformation Programme without any apparent delay to the overall delivery timeline, of December 2023. The Rhymney Line and CVL are part of the South Wales Metro Project (2019 to 2024). A Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) Stage 1 study was commissioned via TfW and completed for the Central Rhymney line Park & Ride study. This confirmed support for the Llanbradach

and Ystrad Mynach, Park and Ride proposals. A Stage 2 study has been commissioned and will be completed in 2021/22.

- The £30m jointly funded investment package for Metro Plus Schemes across the region continues to be progressed in 2020/21. The key project for the authority within this programme is the Caerphilly Interchange. A \*\*RIBA Stage 1 study, commissioned via TfW, was completed. Working with the Design Commission for Wales, work has begun on commissioning the Royal Institute of British Architects Stages 2 & 3 study and design in 2021/22 along with the WelTAG Stage 2. Wider public consultation will be undertaken during 2021/22 as part of the Caerphilly 2035 project.



- A dialogue is being maintained with Welsh Government and TfW officials to discuss the ongoing CVL committed investment and the Council's Metro Plus aspirations. This dialogue includes both the longer-term aspirations for the Ystrad Mynach to Nelson rail line and the Caerphilly to Newport corridor Metro improvements. Through the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority officers are working with Welsh Government to identify future Metro strategic priorities.
- The second phase of the Mid Valley area bus corridor improvements progressed in 2020/21 with the delivery of 60 bus stop improvements with the limited funding award from Welsh Government. Further funding has been secured in 2021/22 to complete the bus corridor improvement programme for the county borough, that will improve accessibility for passengers.

- Transport for Wales (TfW) are still developing proposals for a 4 trains per hour service on the Ebbw Valley Railway, that would require significant improvements to Crumlin and Newbridge stations, with a view to deliver by 2024. Details of the revised business case are expected to be shared by TfW with key stakeholders in 2021. This work has somewhat been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the significant impact it has had on public transport services.
- The Ystrad Mynach to Penpedairheol and Cefn Hengoed Active Travel Route has been substantially improved. The outstanding works will be completed in the first quarter of 2021/22.
- £980k was secured from Welsh Government's in year Sustainable Travel Covid Response Grant.
- This funded social distancing schemes in Blackwood and Bargoed (widened footways with parklets), Risca and Fleur-de-Lis (bus stop improvement) and active travel schemes in Maesycwmmmer (pedestrian crossing), Nelson (one way, footway and cycleway) and Ystrad Mynach (Lewis Street cycleway).
- Installation of 17 new electric vehicle 22kw fast charge points for residential and public use in 11 of the Council's public car parks. This was part of the Gwent Wide Scheme that installed 62 new dual electric vehicle 22kw fast charging units at 34 sites.
- Virgin Media have continued to accelerate their lightning build throughout Caerphilly borough, where customers will be able to take benefit from the new Gig 1 service – delivering average broadband speeds of 516mbps download (50x faster than the standard UK broadband). Virgin are nearing the end of the fibre network construction in Caerphilly, with 10,500 homes reached to date, the final 1,500 homes to be reached by July 2021. Sales penetration in the area has been great with 39%\* of customers choosing to take service with this provider.

\* (% based on 12-month average).

## What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:

- Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted on the country in many tragic ways, one of the positives has been the increase in active travel and the greater interest in improving local infrastructure. This has been evidenced by the significant public engagement with the consultation on the review of the adopted Active Travel Integrated Network Map (almost 3000 website hits and responses). The use of online data mapping has proved to be very effective and easy to use. This form of public engagement will be used more extensively for future consultations.
- The near completion of the bus corridor enhancement programme means that all residents across the county borough will benefit from accessible bus stop infrastructure and passenger transport information.



- Resourcing projects has been a challenge due to lack of experienced and qualified engineers within the sector. An investment in "grow our own" apprentice programme has commenced but future funding of further initiatives is required.
- Welsh Government is providing increasing sums for Active Travel grant funded schemes, so we need to build up our capacity into increase our development and delivery of the Active Travel infrastructure programme.

- There have been some delays to project development because of the impact of Covid stretching resources and having to deliver on the £980k Covid response fund that was unplanned works.
- Delivery of all flood response schemes due to prioritised workload focussing on Covid response.
- Development of a forward work programme of “shovel ready” schemes due to lack of resources and diversion of resources to Covid response work.
- Resurfacing of some significantly deteriorated roads as these were, located in high density residential areas. With increased working from home and social distancing measures, resources were diverted to less populated areas for 2020/21 with the remainder of the programme re-prioritised to 2021/22.

## **Our focus for the future:**

**Continue to make progress with the above activities. In particular:**

- Complete the review of the Active Travel Integrated Network Map and development of the new Active Travel Network Map and prioritised programme.
- Increasing our capacity for faster delivery of the Active Travel infrastructure programme.
- Increase key resources to be able to sustain delivery of key projects.
- Progress the detailed architectural design for Caerphilly Interchange and target the new UK Levelling Up Fund for its delivery by March 2025.
- Design of the Llanbradach and Ystrad Mynach Park & Ride schemes.
- Review the updated business case for the Ebbw Valley Railway, ensuring the Council's priorities for Crumlin and Newbridge are considered.
- Continue to develop the Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure for public, taxi and public transport use.



# Well-being Objective 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

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### Summary of progress:

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic from February 2020 presented a range of unprecedented challenges for the residents of Caerphilly County Borough and for several of the programmes that contribute to this Objective. It has meant that progress has not been as expected, but it also makes this Well-being Objective even more relevant going forward. There remains much to do.

have an Active Gwent membership which allowed them to attend leisure services in their own county.

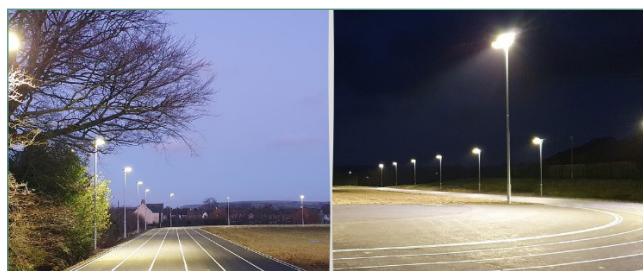
- Additionally, the benefits of green space for our mental and physical health have become more apparent during the enforced period of change to our daily lives brought about by the pandemic. The public turned to green spaces to walk, exercise and to meet under lockdown.

### What difference have we made:

- Despite the challenging circumstances, a great deal has been achieved over the year.
- We have made significant investments in physical infrastructure that will enable a healthier lifestyle for our residents, including the opening of the athletics track in Oakdale, a jogger's path, leisure centre improvements, and new artificial sports pitches. Despite the challenges of the pandemic it has still been possible to sustain a range of opportunities for residents of the county borough to live healthy lifestyles.
- Services have responded to the pandemic by adapting to the challenging circumstances, for example the delivery of virtual opportunities to participate in activities. The open leisure membership allowed those who had a membership in counties across Gwent to attend local leisure facilities whilst the lockdown was in place. This new initiative, called Active Gwent, allowed those who live in Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire or Newport who were members of leisure providers outside of their local area to

### What went well in 2020/21:

- We developed an Athletics Track in Oakdale that will support education, community use and future club development. We have also enhanced two multi use 3G pitches at Lewis School, Pengam and Ysgol Cwm Rhymni, Fleur de Lys.



- This summer will see the completion of the jogger's path at The Showfield in Blackwood.
- By accessing funding from Sport Wales, we have developed an enhanced outdoor facility at St Cenydd Campus from an aged and poorly maintained Astro Turf Pitch to a new multi-use 3G facility. We are also working collaboratively with Play Wales and Welsh Government to access funding that supports and increases the opportunity for

sport and physical activity and enhanced play activity in our leisure centres, parks, and tourism venues.

- We are maximising the realignment of the Welsh Government Free Swim Initiative capital funding allocation to improve the provision and opportunity of aquatics across our portfolio of leisure centres. An example of this is the provision of aquatic based spin bikes at Heolddu Leisure Centre, the first in South East Wales, building upon the significant growth in group cycling across the UK.
- During the year there has been a significant investment into the enhancement of the fitness suite provision at Newbridge Leisure Centre, scheduled to open later this year.
- We developed a dedicated 'free to access' YouTube channel that is providing a range of Group Exercise classes that would traditionally be available in leisure centres.
- We have collaborated with other local authorities in Gwent to provide an 'open membership' for residents to visit their nearest leisure facility (when appropriate) to reduce travel requirements and comply with Welsh Government guidance.
- We are working closely with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board on the green prescription initiative in the Upper Rhymney Valley to reduce obesity levels and increase active participation.
- We provided a targeted provision of bespoke activity for customers registered on the National Exercise Referral programme. This included virtual and hard copy resources.
- We ran school holiday programmes that were delivered virtually in collaboration with a range of local clubs and organisation.



- The number of visitors to country parks has seemingly increased significantly during the year. Unfortunately, the system counter that we use for recording the number of visitors to our parks was not functioning at end of 2020/21. However, from our observation, there appears to have been a potential increase of 25% to 40% on numbers in Country Parks at times during the lockdown and opening up periods.
- The increased use of country parks and green infrastructure will have helped mitigate both physical and mental well-being health issues that may have arisen due to the pandemic.
- The usage of the Public Rights of Way network, which totals some 800km of pathways and tracks accessible to our residents, has increased during the pandemic.
- During the autumn/winter period, several enhancements were undertaken at key entrances (or gateways) into the county borough to improve the visual aspect and provide residents with a 'feel good' factor.
- A number of skate parks and outdoor gyms have also been installed as part of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme.



- At the start of our maintenance season in the spring of 2020, the UK went into a national lockdown and subsequently our traditional maintenance programme was paused. This allowed many areas to flourish with wildflowers and provide increased habitat for wildlife. The interest shown in wildlife by the public has increased during the past year with over 300 seed packs being requested from residents and usage of the Countryside website increasing.

- The Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the Welsh Government and the European Union, has continued to work with and support rural businesses, including those in the food production and recreation fields.
- Within the borough the majority of allotments continue to be oversubscribed, they provide both local produce and health benefits.
- The period dignity working group continued to operate during the pandemic, and we sent out over 1200 packs of sanitary products to Free School Meal registered girls aged 10-18. Additionally, products were also delivered out to our communities and all schools, to distribute where necessary. Eco friendly products have been purchased from the 2019/20 grant and distributed to all schools. We have developed a structured process that ensures products are delivered directly to schools and made freely available to girls throughout the year (primary and secondary). Educational resources that support our young people's knowledge on eco-friendly products have also been made available.



## What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:

- Despite the difficulties presented to us by the pandemic, we have quickly adapted our services to deliver a digital platform that covered and engaged with a broad range of users. This included the National Exercise Referral Scheme. Over 60 different Group Exercise Classes and a programme of activity were delivered in collaboration with a broad range of partners to our young people during the pandemic. The role of people of all ages engaging in sport, active recreation and subsequently leading healthy lifestyles has increased in prominence during the pandemic and as such the targets associated with this objective have become even more prevalent.

- We didn't sign up any new clubs to the 'Let's Go Girls' campaign due to the pandemic so our Sports Development Team will be picking this back up and restarting the initiative as soon as possible.
- Caerphilly Sport and Leisure swimming pools were closed to the general public and primary schools due to the restrictions imposed by Welsh Government as a result of the pandemic. As a result of these closures, no swimming lessons for any school children took place.
- A number of programmes are being developed, supported by targeted Welsh Government funding, that aim to increase participation utilising the broader outdoor environment that exists across the county borough. A Welsh Government funded 'recovery' programme will see a number of new initiatives aimed at increasing the opportunity to all residents to engage in sport and active recreation.
- We haven't completed an audit for the Daily Mile due to school closures, but at the last audit our records showed 43 schools participating.
- The Healthy Schools Scheme was suspended due to many key Public Health Wales staff being redeployed to other areas. This has meant we haven't been able to support any schools in achieving the National Quality Award since March 2020. A full review on whether accreditations can continue will take place in 2021. Although 20 schools have already achieved the Healthy Schools National Quality Award, this equates to 23% of our schools, and is still well above the national target of 10%. Schools can continue working towards local phase assessments in the meantime.





- 21 parents benefited from an evidence-based parenting programme in 2020/21. 491 parents also benefited from parenting interventions. These were on a 1:1 basis, delivering evidence-based programmes and programmes outside of the evidence-base. Due to Covid restrictions this is much less than last year when 60 parents participated in evidence-based programmes and a further 662 benefited from other parenting interventions.
- We wanted to engage with a minimum of 5 new settings to promote the Healthy and Sustainable Preschool Scheme (Hey Scheme), but we only managed to sign up one new setting this year due to Covid. This was not a priority for childcare settings across the board as their focus was on Protective Measures and keeping children safe. In comparison to other LA's, being able to sign up one new setting was a good achievement. We are on track to sign up 5 new settings next year and to move settings between phases of the scheme.
- All led walking groups had to be stopped following the first lockdown, so as a result there are no numbers to report. Independent self-led walking has undoubtedly gone up, but we are unable to evidence this increase, so we are looking at alternative ways to capture the data to show growth in independent local walking. We were unable to run the Caerphilly Challenge during 2020/21, however going forward our walking groups should be able to re-start and we are hoping that we will be able to deliver the Caerphilly Challenge Series in a way which will be compliant with government guidance. Early bookings for the 2021/22 event are already oversubscribed.
- During the pandemic incidence of enviro crime such as fly tipping has risen substantially resulting in the Enforcement Team devoting more time to investigating fly tipping and less time patrolling for dog fouling and littering. Dog fouling and littering affects the authority's ability to provide a safe and clean environment to enable a healthy lifestyle.
- The pandemic has highlighted the huge inequalities and the dangers posed by widespread food poverty and diet-related ill-health. At the same time, the impact on jobs and businesses across the food sector will have a long lasting social and economic impact on our high streets and communities.
- When schools closed on the 20th March 2020 due to coronavirus, the Council's Catering service faced a huge logistical challenge as to how they could meet the needs of over 6,000 Free School Meal pupils within the borough. This challenge was met with the support of staff from Sport and Leisure and other services across the Council and has operated ever since with Free School Meals delivered to families during all school holiday periods and those eligible pupils who have needed to isolate due to coronavirus. We worked in partnership with local suppliers to provide us with a range of foods such as milk and bread and this helped provide small business with work to keep them going throughout the pandemic. During this time Free School Meal take-up has also been increased from 68% to 96% of those eligible.

## **Our focus for the future:**

- The impact of the lockdown measures associated with Covid 19 have no doubt impacted the services ability to deliver against stated objectives associated with this objective. Now, more than ever, as we emerge from the pandemic, we need to deliver against the vision and ambitions set out in the Sport & Active Recreation Strategy (2019 – 29) to ensure a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle. A primary example would be the percentage of children aged 11 years who are able to swim 25m due the closure of leisure centres, so we will be supporting an appropriate 'catch-up' programme and this will become a priority as restrictions continue to ease and a return to engagement with schools, likely from September 2021.
- We will use targeted promotions and engagement through a range of media,



with all customers, to support the recent investments to provide the most appropriate environment to encourage customers to return to our leisure centres. This will include open days, catch up programmes, targeted promotions and, importantly, operating practices that support ensuring high levels of customer confidence and advocacy.

- We will continue to encourage residents to maximise the use of our green spaces to support both physical and mental wellbeing. This will include promoting and developing our county parks, supporting our local clubs and organisations and encouraging use of the new joggers path, along with continued collaboration with various partners to deliver dedicated programmes and activities in outdoor settings.
- A full review on whether Healthy Schools accreditations can continue will take place in early 2021/21.
- The Period Dignity working group want to ensure grant money is utilised to provide girls with eco-friendly products. All young people receive education on the need for eco-friendly products, as well on how to use them correctly. We will also be developing a more suitable logistical plan to ensure that products are distributed to schools and girls more frequently.
- Going forward we propose to add an outcome in relation to increasing the awareness, availability of local and affordable healthy food by working across sectors to develop and deliver a joint vision for a better food system to support the health and prosperity of residents, communities and environment. For this project our proposed new actions are:
  - Mapping current food policies and strategies, assets, and initiatives across Caerphilly.
  - Establishing and developing of a dynamic, high impact food partnership.
  - Coordinating a multi-strand consultation on key food issues, opportunities, and priorities.

- Developing a food vision and more detailed food plan for Caerphilly.

Community Regeneration are working with the Regional Development Plan team in relation to the food poverty agenda and are appointing to a post that's currently out to advert

This year we will be taking a report forward, following consultation with local members on more sympathetic grass cutting regimes with an aim of increasing biodiversity and ecology across the borough.



# Well-being Objective 6:

## Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

### Summary of progress:

In 2020/21, the 3rd year of our 5-year plan we have made good progress towards achieving our Well-being Objective, despite the Covid-19 pandemic and only being able to focus on essential services throughout considerable parts of the year, therefore we judge this Well-being Objective is progressing well.

The number of people receiving services is consistent across the year. Due to the pandemic the levels dropped since we had to exclude day services (people with complex needs) as they have not been attending for over 12 months but are now having a community support service. For the same reasons a lot of service users cancelled services as they were shielding, and the family were providing support at the time, this decrease has seemed to level out now.



### What difference have we made:

- Although, some data shows that parts of the service under-performed this year, when compared with previous years, we expect to see an upturn in performance as Covid-19 restrictions are eased and society returns to normal. We capture the impact our services make on people's health and wellbeing by recording service user experiences.
- Given the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is reassuring to see that 25% of all referrals made to Children's Services proceeded to

an assessment. This compares favourably to pre-Covid levels and demonstrates that those cases in greatest need continued to be responded to despite the lockdown restrictions within the period.

- However, there is no doubt that the timescales for completion of assessments was adversely affected at the start of the year by Covid-19 with the majority being out of timescale due to families being unavailable because of shielding or being symptomatic. Performance has improved significantly by the end of the year.

### What went well in 2020/21:

- Social Services have an effective Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service in place that fully meets the requirements of the Social Services have an effective Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service in place that fully meets the requirements of the Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. All staff have received 'what matters' training in line with a national programme supported by Social Care Wales and Welsh Government. A dedicated Officer has been appointed to support the further development of the Dewis Cymru website as the 'go to' site. Dewis Cymru is a website that has lots of information and advice about well-being. Along with information about the people that can help you in the local area.



- Home First, Emergency Care at Home and Discharge to Assess Schemes are all now fully operational. Welsh Government have confirmed grant funding is in place until 31st March 2021 and both programmes have structured work plans and commissioned services in place. Supporting People continue to monitor and provide services to individuals who require support whilst in hospital. The Intensive Support Team (IST) provides the edge of care support for Children's Services and utilising grant funding, has been expanded to include a Child Psychologist, Education Worker, Health Visitor, a Family Meeting Service and additional Family Support Workers.
- A significantly enhanced range of support is now available to all carers including individual support, groups and leisure and social activities. These are all publicised through a regular newsletter.
- Net increases of 10 Shared Lives Carers and 15 Foster Carers have been achieved in the past 12 months. Current advertising is being revised to include reference to the MyST (My Support Team) Therapeutic Fostering service.



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- Welsh Government requires each of the collaborative regions to deliver statutory advocacy services for children and young people. Caerphilly led the commissioning of the service on behalf of the Gwent region and has been acknowledged to be leading the work in Wales.

## What have we learnt and where do we need to improve:

- Social Services is an essential, frontline, key service and despite initial disruption to services during the first two weeks of the pandemic, service delivery returned to as near 'business as normal' as was possible very soon afterwards. This is a significant achievement given the global context and is testament to the resilience, dedication and determination of our skilled and committed workforce. They truly are the key workers who managed to maintain support to the most vulnerable people in our communities.



- What we have learnt and what we need to focus on improving going forward is the continued use of digital solutions, different media platforms and the creative ways that we have managed to engage with people. The blended approach to mixing face to face contact with virtual contact has worked well in ensuring monitoring arrangements are in place and support can be provided when needed. Similarly, the blended approach to home and office working to ensure staff wellbeing is promoted and safe services are delivered must continue and will undoubtedly improve as we move forward.



## Our focus for the future:

- Continuation of the secondment scheme to support Social Worker recruitment.
- Implement the learning points from the Care Inspectorate Wales Assurance Check.
- The purpose of the assurance check will review how well local authority social services continue to help adults, children and carers at this difficult time and the plans for sustainability of services into the future.
- Modernisation of adult's day services by listening to local people with learning disabilities about how they would like to spend their days and working to make this a reality.
- Working with people with learning disabilities in a person-centred way to identify and seek to meet their wants and aspirations rather than offering a limited menu of predetermined choices. Moving away from block contracts, centralised transport and provision and rigid financial structures to more flexible approaches.
  - Enabling and supporting people with learning disabilities to take risks.
  - Not further segregating people with health care needs, significant disabilities or who have behaviours that challenge services.
  - Listening to the sometimes differing, voices of people with learning disabilities and their family carers and paid supports.
  - Offering stability for those who wish it while recognising that change will be ongoing
- Progress the establishment of two new purpose-built respite houses.
- Plan for the potential ending of Integrated Care Funding.
- The Integrated Care Fund is allocated by the Welsh Government across Wales. The aim of the fund is to drive and enable

integrated working between social services, health, housing and the third sector and independent providers to develop sustainable services. Although this Programme for Government initiative was due to come to an end in March 2021, Ministers have agreed a 12-month extension until March 2022. This will allow time for a new approach to regional resourcing to be developed in readiness for April 2022. The scope and scale of future regional resourcing is currently being developed and will need to be agreed by Ministers.



## Section 3:

# Managing your money 2020/21

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The Council is the largest employer in the area with 8,296 staff providing approximately 800 services to our communities. We maintain 829 buildings, including 89 schools, 8 leisure centres, 18 libraries and approximately 10,805 council houses. These vital public services are funded from the Council's Revenue and Capital budgets, which for 2020/21 totalled £446 million.

We set principles that guide our financial decision making. As part of the challenging environment, we have reviewed our financial principles in line with our Cabinet commitments and the Council's values and vision. Following our review, we believe our Medium-Term.

### Financial Principles remain relevant and are set out below:

- Seek to protect services for the most vulnerable whilst continuing to evaluate all other services.
- 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.
- Adopt a longer-term approach to financial planning that considers the impact on future generations.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

During the period 2008/09 to 2020/21 the Council has delivered savings of £106million to address reductions in funding and inescapable cost pressures.

In 2020/21 the Council received an increase of 5.49% in the funding it receives from the Welsh Government. 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 totalling £3.007million for the 2020/21 financial year.

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

### Revenue Budget

The 2020/21 revenue budget totalled £356.13m. The majority of revenue funding 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 sources of funding that supported the 2020/21 revenue budget

Income	2020/21		
	Budget £m	Actual £m	Actual %
Revenue Support Grant	221.89	221.89	62.20
Business Rates	61.48	61.48	17.23
Council Tax	71.71	72.33	20.27
Council Tax	1.05	1.05	0.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>356.13</b>	<b>356.75</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The table below provides details of revenue budget expenditure for the 2020/21 financial year

Expenditure	2020/21		
	Budget £m	Actual £m	Actual %
Corporate Services	22.02	19.34	5.87
Education & Lifelong Learning	146.28	133.18	40.43
Communities	42.89	41.24	12.52
Social Services	95.11	89.56	27.19
Miscellaneous Finance	49.83	46.05	13.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>356.13</b>	<b>329.37</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The revenue budget underspend for 2020/21 is £26.76m, which includes an underspend of £10.07m for schools. In addition to this, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reported an underspend of £10.02m. The HRA 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 level of underspends for 2020/21 are significantly higher than in previous years and reflect the unprecedented impact of Covid-19 on changes in working practices, along with the scale of one-off financial support provided by the Welsh Government (large elements of which were not received until the latter part of the financial year).

The emergence of Covid-19 posed a significant and unprecedented challenge to our way of life and the way in which the Council provides services. In response to the pandemic and the initial lock-down the Council refocussed, repurposed and reshaped its priorities and how it works within a very short timescale. This ensured that we were well placed and equipped to respond to the immediate needs of our communities. The Council incurred significant additional costs due to the pandemic and also lost income in several areas. However, the Welsh Government provided a substantial support package to help Local Authorities manage the financial impact of Covid-19 during the 2020/21 financial year, with the Council receiving £32.8m.

## Capital Budget

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 2020/21 financial year**

Capital	2020/21		
	Budget £m	Actual £m	Actual %
Education & Lifelong Learning	12.70	5.27	10.15
Communities	27.18	19.61	37.76
Social Services	4.23	0.97	1.87
Private Housing	6.09	0.56	1.08
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	29.68	20.39	39.26
Other	10.11	5.13	9.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>89.99</b>	<b>51.93</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The 2020/21 capital underspend of £38.06m is mainly due to delays in progressing schemes and this funding has been carried forward into the 2021/22 financial year to enable schemes to be completed.

## Future Financial Outlook

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 2020/21 Caerphilly CBC has delivered savings of £106m to address reductions in funding and inescapable cost and service pressures.

For the 2021/22 financial year the Council received a welcome increase of 3.1% in the funding it receives from Welsh Government to support the revenue budget. The Welsh Government has also committed to provide further one-off funding to address the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19 to 31 March 2022. However, moving forward the funding situation for Local Government is likely to be challenging due to the unprecedented fiscal impact of Covid-19 and the strain that this will put on public finances for years to come.

Caerphilly CBC's budget for the 2021/22 financial year was approved by Council on 24 February 2021. Council was also presented with an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) based on a range of assumptions that showed a potential savings requirement of £21.1m for the four-year period 2022/23 to 2025/26.

At its meeting on 12 June 2019, the Council's Cabinet approved the Future Caerphilly Transformation Strategy, which was launched as TeamCaerphilly - Better Together. This Strategy is a key strand in helping the Council to maintain financial resilience and is being integrated into our medium-term financial planning moving forward.



The Strategy sets out details of a major transformation programme to examine how services are prioritised, how they can become more business efficient, to explore opportunities for greater customer focus and digital delivery, and to consider alternative delivery models and seek out commercial opportunities. Furthermore, to enable the Council to continue providing high quality value for money services in an environment that will require new approaches and new skills, a new relationship is being built with staff and with our communities.

The learning that the Council has developed through its response to Covid-19 has helped reshape and expand the transformation programme. At its meeting on 22 July 2020, Cabinet endorsed the inclusion of ten corporate reviews within the Team Caerphilly - Better Together programme, all of which expand on or embed further many of the positive changes implemented in response to Covid-19.

**The ten corporate reviews are as follows:**

- Walk in Services Review.
- Remote Contact Review.
- Front Line Delivery Review.
- Support Services Review.
- Information, Insight, and Intelligence Review
- Flexible Working Review.
- Sustainable Financial Planning Review
- Workforce Development Review.
- Corporate Volunteering & Community Partnership Review.
- Decision-Making Review



## Section 4:

# What our regulators told us

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Audit Wales carries out a range of work and provides us with proposals for improvement and recommendations. We also have other regulators such as ESTYN who look at our schools and education standards and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), who regulate social care. Each year we provide a summary of what our regulators have told us.

Due to the pandemic, Audit Wales reduced its work schedule for 2020 to focus on supporting Local Government through recovery work. Below is a list of the works carried out since we last reported our Performance Audit Work for 2020/21.

### **Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations**

This was an examination of the extent to which the Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when delivering our approach to preventing avoidable hospital admissions and enabling timely discharges.

The Report Summarised “Our examination found that: There are examples that show how the Council has applied the sustainable development principle in practice, however it will need to consider how it can effectively meet anticipated challenges over the longer term”.

The final report issued November 2019 and the action plan for improvement areas is now completed.

### **Delivering Good Governance Review –**

the review sought to answer the question: ‘Is the Council improving its governance arrangements so that they support its transformation agenda?’

The overall summary was that “Overall, we found that aspects of the Council’s arrangements are not yet sufficiently well developed to support the increasing scale of the Council’s wide-ranging transformation programme”.

The Final report was presented to Governance and Audit Committee on 20 July 2021 and an action plan developed for those areas of improvement we agreed with.

### **Financial Sustainability -**

Phase 1 published local reports to councils with a national report in October 2020. Phase 2 was finalised in June 2021.

Due to the pandemic Audit Wales carried out general Covid 19 learning project which was due to capture ongoing lessons learnt and was not a traditional audit in this regard.

All action plans, recommendations and proposals are reported to our Governance and Audit Committee with the last progress update in June 2021 and these reports can be found on our [website](#).

All Audit Wales publications and reports can be found on the [Audit Wales Website](#).

## Section 5:

# Equalities, Welsh Language, and the Future Generations legislation

### Equalities (2019-2020)

We report progress to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission a year behind activity so the highlights and impact below are for the time period 2019/20.

- The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme delivered 1,046 lessons with 498 of them focussing on bullying, diversity, respect or lack of respect and coercion.
- The Disability Work Programme, run by Property Services, spent £65,000 on supporting disability Access improvement works.
- Significant work has been undertaken to engage with a large number of local businesses with a high percentage of European Union (EU) Nationals in their workforce to work with them regarding the European Union Settled Status Scheme. The work continues through working closely with recruitment agencies to reach a higher volume of EU Nationals and support local Brexit resilience.
- The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 was developed and consulted on. The Plan was adopted by full Council in October 2020.
- A number of awareness days were celebrated or marked including Hate Crime Awareness Week, LGBT History Month, Diwrnod Shwmae, International Men's Day which focussed on mental health, Dementia Awareness Week, Pride Cymru, Welsh Language Rights Day (Mae gen i hawl) and Holocaust Memorial Day. Hate Crime Awareness week was marked by supporting regional community based initiatives. Corporately we partnered with Show Racism the Red Card and launched the Wear Red Day and worked with local rugby clubs who promoted Hate Crime Awareness Week in their supporting match literature and via their social media channels.



- Intergenerational work between Caerphilly 50+ Forum and Lewis School Pengam continues with the school working with Trafalgar Care Home in Nelson to produce poetry for a Poetry Together event, hosted by Gyles Brandreth and attended by the Duchess of Cornwall.
- The work of creating Dementia Friends progressed further with 1,395 people across the county borough now Dementia Friends and 10 additional Dementia Champions trained. The focus now is to involve young people and create more Dementia Friendly Schools and work to make Bargoed our first Dementia friendly town.



## Welsh Language

- There were 2 Welsh language complaints recorded this financial year. One related to a joint Covid-19 update from the Chief Executive and the Leader issued during the local Caerphilly lockdown in English only initially, due to the urgent nature of its content, with the Welsh translation following. The council took a strategic decision to use an exemption given in its compliance notice, in relation to the publication of press statements of an urgent nature, especially during a global pandemic. The other complaint was from a resident who had not received a response to their initial service request and felt it was because the requests was submitted in Welsh.
- There was an increase in the number of Welsh speaking staff recorded on our HR system for 2020-2021 across all 3 Directorates.
- For the fourth year running we are seeing an increase in the number of staff learning Welsh with 246 learners having completed courses. A significant number of staff completed the 10-hour online part 1 and part 2 courses during lockdown, with 517 of these courses completed. Many of the staff who completed these courses were school-based staff and or who work in the social care sector.



- 690 vacancies were advertised in total. Only 4 posts were advertised as Welsh Essential. 42 posts were advertised where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed, 684 posts were assessed as Welsh desirable and 7 where no Welsh language skills were required, due in part to existing staff already possessing Welsh language skills. All posts are advertised with a default of Welsh desirable as a minimum.
- A number of service requests over the past two years have related to highways works signage being non-compliant with the Welsh Language Standards. During 2020-2021 the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation team worked very closely with Highways Officers to develop a guide which sets out examples of works signage in a compliant format. This guide has been shared with officers and contractors to ensure everyone is aware of the requirement and to reduce the number of service requests we receive regarding this issue. The guide can be seen in Appendix A of the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report.





- The Planning Department have upgraded the Public Access Platform, which enables people to search, track and comment on Planning Applications.

The software is being developed in partnership with LinguaSkin, and the Translation Team have been preparing translations to be fed into the system in readiness for it to be launched.

- The new Integrated Impact Assessment, which includes a section on the Welsh language was developed using the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on the Policy Making Standards. This section now requires officers to give more consideration on the impact on the Welsh language when developing proposals and policies.



- We have also highlighted the promotional work undertaken during 2020-2021 to promote the Welsh language and raise awareness of calendar dates where we celebrate the language and culture.



## Armed Forces

- Armed Forces Covenant Training - The Armed Forces Covenant is due to come into law for Housing, Education and Health by the end of 2021. Staff will have to apply 'Due Regard' in respect of the Armed Forces Community. The training provides an overview of the unique challenges of service life and how staff can help support the Armed Forces Community. It will help staff understand and apply the principles of the Covenant at a local level. It includes sources of further information and support.

### It includes sections on:

- What the Covenant is
- Who the Armed Forces Community are and what challenges they face
- How the Covenant is applied in real-life scenarios
- And AFC legislation (due to come into law Dec 2021)

The training has been adapted to be delivered online with over 100 Caerphilly staff trained since October 2020.

- A new Caerphilly Veterans Hub was launched in June 2021, the Hub provides veterans and service personnel with the confidence, skills to access the help they need, where and when they need it. It reinforces people's self-reliance, esteem, and self-empowerment. Run by veterans for veterans, it is place for a brew and chat with onsite support services available.



- Caerphilly County Borough Council appointed the Royal British Legion as Honorary Freedom of the Borough in recognition of their 100th Year Anniversary on 15th May 2021 and to honour the charitable work of the organisation supporting ex-service men and women and their families.
- Due to Covid restrictions we celebrated VE/VJ day digitally and promoted stay at home celebrations.



## Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016

Much of our partnership work is highlighted in the Annual Report of the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) for 2019/20. This year's report covered a longer 16-month period, up to September 2020, as all partners have inevitably been involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. Taking a longer timeframe has allowed the report to showcase some of the amazing public and community sector response to supporting communities through this public health crisis.

This work supports our Well-being Objectives, for example the early years work has radically altered how we support children and parents in the early years, breaking down traditional barriers to help individuals irrespective of post code, this helps us to deliver our Well-being objective to improve education for all. The work of the apprenticeships theme securing 300 places of employment supports success of our Well-being objective 'enabling employment'. We have also been working with partners including

Remploy, to ensure that access to opportunities is maximised for participants with a disability or work limiting health condition.

### This year the PSB has championed important projects including:

- Flu communication resource packs
- HPV Immunisation roll out to boys
- Enhancing access to the great outdoors (Tir-y-berth)
- Compassionate Communities integrated teams/open access drop-in sessions at the Rhymney Integrated North Resource Centre giving residents access to the Police, Citizen's Advice, employment services, housing and tenancy support as well as support groups

You can read about this and much more on the Caerphilly Public Services Board website at the link [Caerphilly Public Services Board](#)

## Decarbonisation

We developed a 'Decarbonisation Strategy' in consultation with our stakeholders which was approved by our Council on 25th November 2020. The strategy is aimed at meeting the Council's key ambition of becoming net carbon neutral by the year 2030 and is also in response to the Council declaring a climate emergency.

The strategy has two supporting documents, an Action Plan and the Energy Prospectus, under the 4 main headings of Reduce, Produce, Offset and Buy to get the Council to its carbon neutral target.

Existing emissions are being identified and quantified in line with Welsh Government reporting guidance on establishing baseline data. This information will form a vital part in identifying the key areas for the authority to focus its efforts and resources to reduce carbon emissions.

Across the organisation a significant number of projects are already being developed and delivered. These include a review of the Council's entire fleet of nearly 600 vehicles with detailed plans and a 9-year strategy to transition

those vehicles to ultra-low emission vehicles. To date 9 new electric vehicles have been delivered and are in operation. Design work has been undertaken and tender documentation prepared to install the charging infrastructure to support up to 100 electric vehicles.



The existing programme of upgrading lighting to LED is being expanded to take in all CCBC owned properties.

A 20MegaWatt solar farm is being developed in the south of the county borough. The outline business case has been agreed and an application for planning permission for the project is anticipated to be submitted to Welsh Government in the autumn.

Significant upgrades have been made to the Council's housing stock to reduce carbon emissions and work to ensure that any new build properties are constructed to minimise both construction and operational emissions is well under way.



All land in Council ownership is being assessed to identify opportunities for tree planting to offset any unavoidable emissions. This is such an important area of work that we will continue to develop action and report on progress throughout the years.

## Section 6:

# 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: [BIT@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:BIT@caerphilly.gov.uk)  
or via the Council Performance webpage and follow the instructions on screen.

The screenshot shows the 'Business Improvement Team' contact page on the Caerphilly Council website. It includes a search bar at the top, navigation links, and a form titled 'Your contact details' with fields for Name, Email, Phone No., and Message. A sidebar on the right asks 'Are you looking for' and lists 'Corporate Plan (including Well-being objectives)' and 'Performance Report'.

### Alternatively, please contact:

ROS ROBERTS  
Business Improvement Manager,  
Caerphilly County Borough Council,  
Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed CF82 7PG

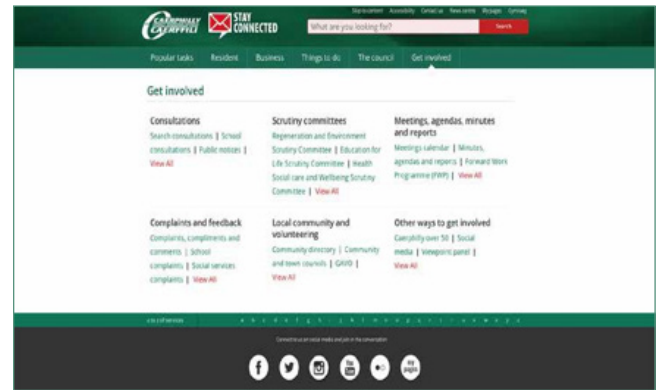
tel: **01443 864238**

e-mail: [roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk)

### You can get involved in many ways.

Please have a look at our website.

[www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)



### For more information, please contact:

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### You can contact us via social media:



Os bydd angen yr adroddiad hwn mewn fformat gwahanol - er enghraifft PDF hygyrch, print bras, fersiwn hawdd ei ddeall, recordiad sain neu braille - cysylltwch â ni ar [cydraddoldeb@caerffili.gov.uk](mailto:cydraddoldeb@caerffili.gov.uk)

If you need this report in a different format - like accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille - please contact us at [equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Further information can also be found on our website:

[www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)

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TRAFODAETH CAERFFILI  
THE CAERPHILLY CONVERSATION

