

TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2023

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A **MULTI LOCATION** MEETING OF THE **CABINET** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM, ON MONDAY, 30TH OCTOBER, 2023** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Janine Owen
Telephone (direct line):	01267 224030
E-Mail:	JanineOwen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

**This is a multi-location meeting.
Members can attend in person at the venue detailed above or remotely via the Zoom link which is provided separately.**

**The meeting can be viewed on the authority's website via the following link:-
<https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>**

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

CABINET

MEMBERSHIP – 10 MEMBERS

COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO
Councillor Darren Price	Leader
Councillor Linda Evans	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes
Councillor Glynog Davies	Education and Welsh Language
Councillor Ann Davies	Rural Affairs, Community Cohesion and Planning Policy
Councillor Hazel Evans	Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism
Councillor Philip Hughes	Organisation and Workforce
Councillor Alun Lenny	Resources
Councillor Edward Thomas	Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services
Councillor Jane Tremlett	Health and Social Services
Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen	Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**
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4. **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS**
5. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**
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13. **10 TOWNS PROGRAMME CAPITAL FUND - KIDWELLY TOWN** 323 - 328
14. **ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972.**
15. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

THE REPORTS RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT FOR PUBLICATION AS THEY CONTAIN EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 14 OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) (WALES) ORDER 2007. IF, FOLLOWING THE APPLICATION OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST, THE CABINET RESOLVES PURSUANT TO THE ACT TO CONSIDER THESE ITEMS IN PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING SUCH CONSIDERATION.
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CABINET

MONDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price [Chair] (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies	G. Davies	L.D. Evans	A. Lenny
E.G. Thomas	J. Tremlett	A. Vaughan Owen	

Also in attendance as an observer (Remotely):

Councillor D.M. Cundy

Also in attendance in respect of Agenda Item 6 (In Person):

Councillor J.D. James

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services
A. Williams, Director of Place & Infrastructure
R. Griffiths, Head of Place & Sustainability
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
N. Evans, Practice Support Manager
C. Higginson, Media Manager
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer
K.J. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present (Remotely):

J. Morgan, Head of Housing
M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen and remotely : 10.00 am - 10.33 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H.A.L. Evans and P.M. Hughes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 18th September, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. TASK & FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT - REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF FLYTIPPING IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

Cabinet considered the final report of the Task & Finish Group established by the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review of the management of Flytipping in Carmarthenshire.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Councillor J.D. James, Chair of the Task & Finish Group, who presented the report and outlined the recommendations contained within which were formulated by the Group following consideration of a range of evidence over a series of meetings held between December 2022 and June 2023.

The Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 21st July 2023, considered and endorsed the final report recommending that Cabinet consider the report and the recommendations therein.

Councillor James and the members of the Task & Finish Group were thanked for their work in undertaking the review.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report and seven recommendations of the Task & Finish Group be endorsed.

7. APPLYING INTENTIONALITY TO PRIORITY NEED (HOMELESSNESS ORDER)

The Cabinet considered a report detailing changes to homeless legislation. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force on 27th April 2015 and in July 2015 the Authority approved a report to enable intentionality to be applied across the original 10 categories of Priority Need.

Local Authorities apply the intentionality test to consider whether a person presenting as homeless has done or failed to do something which could be considered to have caused the loss of their settled accommodation and could therefore be deemed to have caused their homelessness 'intentionally'. Where a

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

person has become homeless intentionally, the Authority does not have a statutory duty to secure permanent accommodation for that person.

In October 2022 the Homelessness (Priority Need and Intentionality) (Wales) Regulation 2022 came into force which added a new category of Priority Need known as Street Homelessness. Since this introduction, the Authority has been unable to apply the intentionality test to any household that presents as Street Homeless thus allowing them to be owed the full housing duties under the legislation. A decision was therefore required, based on the information included within the report, as to whether the Authority should continue applying the intentionally homeless test across the current categories and also to the additional category of Street Homeless.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that intentionality be retained for all 10 priority need categories listed under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and that intentionality also be applied to the additional 11th category of Street Homeless.

8. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23.

The Chair advised Cabinet that this report had been withdrawn.

9. OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL LETTER 2022/23 - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

The Cabinet considered the Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2022/23 along with the fact sheet and accompanying data.

It was noted that each year the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales provided every Welsh Local Authority with a letter in the form of a fact sheet and accompanying data to assist them in reviewing performance.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2022/23 be received.

10. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - ADOPTED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2006-2021)

The Cabinet considered the Annual Monitoring Report 2022/23 relating to the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (2006–2021) which had been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Local Development Plan (LDP) Regulations 2005.

In accordance with the Council's statutory duty the Annual Monitoring Report would be submitted to the Welsh Government and published on the Council's website by 31st October 2021. This would be accompanied by an informal consultation which would afford interested parties the opportunity to comment on the key issues raised. Whilst not a statutory requirement, such a consultation provided an important opportunity for views to be submitted and, where appropriate, for those views to contribute to the content of subsequent Annual

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Monitoring Reports. The content of the current Annual Monitoring Report, along with that of the previous three documents, would be used to inform the preparation of the Revised LDP 2018–2033 and its associated evidence base.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Annual Monitoring Report for the adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) be endorsed and officers be authorised to make typographical or factual amendments as necessary to improve its clarity and accuracy.

11. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 UPDATE

The Cabinet received a report which provided an update on the latest budgetary position for the 2022/23 capital programme, as at the 30th June 2022 and detailed new projects for noting and Cabinet approval. The report indicated a forecasted net spend of £85,865k compared with a working net budget of £145,604k, giving a -£59,739k variance.

The net budget included the original H.R.A. and General Fund capital programmes approved by Council on 1st March and slippage from 2022/23. Some of the budgets have also been amended to account for differences in actual grant allocations compared with the anticipated allocations at the time the programme was approved and new grant awards received during the year to date.

Appendix B to the report detailed the main variances within each department.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 11.1 the capital programme update report 2022/23 be received;**
- 11.2 the new projects as detailed within the report be noted and agreed.**

12. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet considered the revenue budget monitoring report which provided the latest budgetary position as at 30th June 2022 in respect of 2022/2023.

Overall, the monitoring report forecast an overspend for the year at departmental level of £7,399k, with a forecast overspend on the Authority's net revenue budget of £4,504k

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 12.1 the Budget Monitoring report be received and the budgetary position and appropriate corrective action taken be noted;**
- 12.2 in respect of significant overspends on specific budget areas Chief Officers and Heads of Service critically review options available to them to address the ongoing impact.**

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

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CABINET

30 OCTOBER 2023

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-23

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To consider the content of the draft Council Annual Report for 2022-23.

Reasons:

- Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 we are required to publish an Annual Report on our Well-being Objectives.
- Under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 we have a duty to report on performance based on a self-assessment approach.
- This report aims to meet both these requirements in one document.

Council Decision Required: YES – 08/11/ 23

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Phillip Hughes, Cabinet Member for Organisation and Workforce

Directorate:

Chief Executive

Name of Head of Service:

Jason Jones

Report Author

Gwyneth Ayers &

Robert James

Designations:

Head of Regeneration,
Digital & Policy

Corporate Policy,
Performance &
Partnership Manager

Strategic Performance
Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CABINET
30 OCTOBER 2023**

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23

This is the draft of the Council Annual Report for the period 2022-23. The Annual Report is due to be presented to Full Council at its meeting in October 2023.

The structure of the Annual Report is based on the new Council Well-being Objectives (4) as agreed in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2022-27. As business plans for the 2022-23 period were based on the former 13 well-being objectives progress reports have been aligned on a best fit model. In that respect, this should be considered as a transition report as we move to fully implementing our new Well-being Objectives for the 2023-24 period.

18/19 19/20 20/21 21/22 22/23 23/24 24/25 25/26 26/27

**Old Corporate Strategy 2018-23
with 13 Well-being Objectives**

(An end of year PIMS action and target report is
automatically available if required)

**New Corporate Strategy 2022-27
with 4 Well-being Objectives**



This is an Annual Report and self-
assessment on the new Corporate
Strategy

The Annual Report looks in turn at each of our four Well-being Objectives and Core Business Enablers and assesses the progress that has been made during the year. The report provides information on the following basis for each Well-being Objective and Core Business Enabler:

- Overarching judgement
- Why is this important
- Key overarching indicators and measures
- Outcomes we set ourselves
- How well are we doing and how do we know
- Case studies
- Areas for improvement
- Governance.

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 we are required to publish an Annual Report on our Well-being Objectives.

Under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 we have a duty to report on performance-based on a self-assessment approach.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that a Council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements. The performance requirements are the extent to which:

- a) we are exercising our functions effectively.*
- b) we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively.*
- c) our governance is effective for securing the above.*

We also have a duty to consult on our Performance Assessment.
This report aims to meet both these requirements in one document.

The Governance and Audit Committee now has a duty under the Local Government & Elections Act to consider the Council Annual Report. The Committee has received a briefing on its duty to review the draft report and has dedicated its July 2023 meeting to receiving this report.

The council must make a draft of its self-assessment report available to its governance and audit committee. The committee must review the draft report and may make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or action the council intends to take.

If the council does not make a change recommended by the governance and audit committee, it must set out in the final self-assessment report the recommendation and the reasons why the council did not make the change.

When the report is finalized a copy of the report should be made available to the Governance and Audit Committee.

Extracts from – Performance and Governance of Principal Councils – Statutory guidance on Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jason Jones, Head of Regeneration, Digital & Policy

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

To comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (WbFG) Act 2015, we must (in carrying out sustainable development):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set and publish well-being objectives • Take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives • Publish a statement about well-being objectives 	Our new Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an annual report of progress 	
This will be accomplished by the enclosed Annual Report	

Only when a public body can demonstrate it has taken into account the sustainable development principle in the setting, taking steps and meeting of its well-being objectives will it be compliant with the Act. Public bodies may take other matters into account when making their decisions, but in order to comply with the Act they must take into account the 5 ways of working.

1. Long term
2. Integrated
3. Involving
4. Collaborative
5. Preventative

Under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021

The **Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021** provides for the establishment of a new and reformed legislative framework for local government elections, democracy, governance and performance. It replaces the Local Government Measure 2009.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that a Council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements. The performance requirements are the extent to which:

- we are exercising our functions effectively.
- we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively.
- our governance is effective for securing the above

See Appendix 4.

Legal

This is the second year that we are reporting under the duties of Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

[Part 6 of the Act outlines new duties in respect of Performance and Governance of Principal Councils](#) and includes specific duties for the Council:

- Duty to keep performance under review;
- Duty to consult on performance;
- Duty to report on performance – based on self-assessment approach;
- Duty to arrange a panel performance assessment;
- Duty to respond to a panel performance assessment report.

Finance

For the period 2022-23 the Council had a revenue budget of £656m (total expenditure/income). This is drawn from a range of sources:

- Revenue Support Grant (Welsh Government) - £243m (37%)
- Specific Grants - £108m (16%)
- Council Tax - £104m (16%)
- Fees, Charges & other Income - £90m (14%)
- Non-domestic Rates - £68m (10%)
- Housing Rents - £43m (7%).

In addition, for the same period there was a Capital Budget of £189m

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones, Head of Regeneration, Digital & Policy

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination				YES
Scrutiny	On meeting Agenda	or by 'e' mail	Feedback	Action
Corporate Performance and Resources	YES 18.10.23		No amendments to report. Minutes convey discussion	None
Place, Sustainability and Climate Change	No	11 September	No	
Communities, Homes and Regeneration		Inviting feedback by 3 October	None	
Health and Social Services		No	N/A	
Education, Young People and Welsh Language		Inviting feedback by 15 September	None	
Governance and Audit Committee	Seminar 11 July	<p>The Committee was sent the report prior to the Seminar and devoted an entire morning to through the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of points were raised, and changes were agreed to improve the document. It was also agreed to consider the length of the document and detail provided for future reports as well as focus on the target audience and whether a higher level but still informative and easy to read style would be better. 		
Governance and Audit Committee	14 July Formal Meeting	<p>The Chair advised that members had already received a briefing on the document earlier in the week and had been afforded the opportunity to offer feedback on the draft report</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the draft Council Annual Report for the period 2022/23 be received.</p>		

2. Local Member(s)

3. Community / Town Council

4. Relevant Partners

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

We consulted on our performance as a Council with residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions (See Appendix 4). It is important that our self-assessment of performance is as realistic as possible and that we do not 'mark our own papers' but triangulate our assessment between performance data, regulatory findings and our customers views.

The results of the surveys have been analysed and reports have been prepared and proposals for improvement made that will be addressed in business plans.

Survey	Response Rate		Findings Inform...	
	2022	2023	Change	
Residents Survey	2,195	3,943	80% increase	Service planning & assessment
Staff Survey	1,733	1,459	16% decrease	People Management & Workforce Strategy
Business Survey	36	110	206% increase	Economic recovery & growth plans
Trade Union Survey	5	3	40% decrease	Staff relations

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Cllr. Philip Hughes

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.		SPSF2: Individual Public Body Role
Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.		Part 6 of the Act outlines new duties in respect of Performance and Governance of Principal Councils

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ANNUAL REPORT for 2022/2023 on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-2027

Developing Carmarthenshire Together:
One Council, One Vision, One Voice

October 2023



sirgar.llyw.cymru
carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Corporate Strategy 2022-27 - Summary



1 Start Well

Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life

Thematic Priority

- Healthy Lives – prevention / early intervention

Service Priorities

- Early Years
- Education



2 Live & Age Well

Enabling our residents to live and age well

Thematic Priority

- Tackling Poverty

Service Priorities

- Housing
- Social Care



Developing Carmarthenshire Together



3 Prosperous Communities

Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous

Thematic Priorities

- Economic Recovery and Growth
- Decarbonisation and Nature Emergency
- Welsh language and Culture
- Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion

Service Priorities

- Leisure and Tourism
- Waste
- Highways and Transport



4 Our Council

To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council

Thematic Priority

- Organisational Transformation

Underpinned by our Core Business Enablers: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Marketing and Media (including customer services), Legal, Planning, Finance, Procurement, Internal Audit, People Management (Human Resources, Learning & Development, Occupational Health), Democratic Services, Policy & Performance, Electoral Services & Civil Registration, Estates & Asset Management, Risk Management, Business Support.

Welcome from the Leader of the Council to our Annual Report for 2022-2023

Once again, it is time to publish our Annual Report and take some time to reflect on the events of the last year. In my introduction last year, I wrote about how we had moved from the pandemic into a cost-of-living crisis and as I write this, we are still in the midst of that crisis. We can see some signs of recovery, but certainly these are tough times for many. Responding to that crisis has shaped most of the last year but we have also worked hard to achieve some important things and to better ourselves where we might have needed to.

We knew at the beginning of the year that we would need to act decisively to respond to the Cost-of-Living Crisis and we ensured that there were advisors in our HWBs to provide budgeting and benefit advice. £180,000 was made available from the Poverty Fund for residents and community groups to deliver Warm Welcome Spaces, we opened our libraries in Carmarthen, Llanelli, and Ammanford as warm places as well as supporting third sector partners to deliver support in the community. We continue to support our residents, and to ensure that we are absolutely focused on this issue we have established a cross party advisory panel on tackling poverty to report to Cabinet regularly.

The last year has seen some of our flagship projects come to fruition. The first phase of Pentre Awel got underway, the £200 million-plus healthcare, leisure and research project will help to push the boundaries of understanding what it means to live well. Pentre Awel will be home to big science and small start-ups, all working in partnership with universities and colleges and the health board to make life better. A clinical delivery and research centre will enable Hywel Dda University Health Board to expand its research and medical engineering provision and an education and training centre will focus on health and care training, with courses ranging from entry level through to postgraduate, placing students in a clinical setting and focusing on areas where there is a skill shortage.

We've continued with our Modernising Education Programme and opened two new schools in Kidwelly and Gorslas. We have also increased our Universal Free School meals provision to Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2 and are on track to deliver to all primary pupils by April 2024, which should help families experiencing the effects of the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

In March we opened the Pendine Tourism Attractor Project, and I had the pleasure of being present at the official opening. Pendine has a unique history in terms of the land speed record as well as being one of the most picturesque stretches of beach in the country. The project includes the 'Caban' - accommodation that has been constructed using sustainable building technologies.

Our commitment to expand our social care workforce received a boost last summer when we launched the Care Academi which offers opportunities to those looking for a career in social work or social care. This provides training, support, and guidance, and enables candidates to earn while they learn and choose a career path that suits them best.

Importantly, we have developed a range of actions in terms of tackling the climate and nature emergency, and we look forward to progressing this work further in collaboration with our local partners and the Welsh Government. As I said in my introduction last year, we continue to grow despite the challenges, and we have managed to do that again this year. I look forward to working with members and officers of this Council as we attempt to make further progress in a range of areas and improve the lives of the people that we serve.



We welcome constructive comments on our strategies and services. Feedback from customers and service users is essential in identifying opportunities for improvement and we hope that if you have any comments or suggestions that you believe would help that you will share them with us. Please contact us at **Corporate Performance Management**, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen SA31 1JP or email at performance@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

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Our Well-being Objectives

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| 4 | To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council) | Page 136 |

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- 1 How our Well-being Objectives were identified
- 2a Statutory Requirements
- 2b How our Well-being Objectives contribute to National Well-being Goals
- 3 Regulatory Reports 2022/23
- 4 Performance Assessment
- 5 Annual Governance Statement – Actions
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- 6 Calculating Average Index Score (AIS)
- 7 What and how we can do better/Identified areas for Improvement
- 8 Population Indicators and Performance Measures Ranking Table

INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

In May 2022 a new administration was elected, and the Cabinet outlined its *Cabinet Vision Statement 2022-2027*. We therefore set about reviewing our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives. As part of developing a Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan with our Public Services Board (PSB) partners we undertook a comprehensive well-being assessment to identify key issues. As part of the preparation of the well-being assessment and plan we undertook a series of engagement and consultation exercises to seek feedback and we also consulted with residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions on Council performance during 2022.

We considered this feedback as we refreshed our Corporate Strategy and set our new Well-being Objectives and it was agreed to revise our previous 13 Well-being Objectives into a more compact set of population level objectives which resulted in the new Corporate Strategy adopting 4 Well-being Objectives.

See Appendix 1 to see more on how our new Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives were formulated.

Throughout 2022/23 we monitored the delivery of the former 13 Well-being Objectives on our Performance Information Monitoring System (PIMS). On the approval of our new Corporate Strategy and 4 Well-being Objectives we reassigned the actions and targets set for the 13 Well-being Objectives to the 4 new Well-being Objectives. We can report against progress on both sets of well-being objectives during the year. However, the emphasis of this Annual Report will be on the new Well-being Objectives.

This Annual Report is based on the new Well-being -Objectives for 2022/23

18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Old Corporate Strategy 2018-23 with 13 Well-being Objectives								
					New Corporate Strategy 2022-27 with 4 Well-being Objectives			
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This is an Annual Report and self-assessment ON THE NEW Corporate Strategy

This Annual Report is produced by the Council because we believe we should provide comprehensive and balanced information to the public about our services, so that they can see how we are performing and the challenges we are facing. It is also a statutory duty under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (*See Appendix 2a*).

This annual report and self-assessment addresses two legal duties:

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015		Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021	
Requirement	How we meet our statutory obligations		Requirement
Demonstrate the extent to which well-being objectives are contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals	This will be outlined in the Annual Report for each Well-being Objective and outlined in <i>Appendix 2b</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All Service Divisions complete an Annual self-assessment b) An Engagement and Assurance model to ensure balance c) Identified areas for improvement are addressed by an Action Plan d) We consult with residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions on the extent to which we meet the 'performance requirements' e) Common themes are identified and an overall self-assessment is drawn together <i>Appendix 4</i> 	<p>The Act requires each council in Wales to keep under review, through self-assessment, the extent to which it is meeting the 3 '<u>performance requirements</u>', that is the extent to which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is exercising its functions effectively 2. It is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively 3. Its governance is effective for securing the above 4. We must consult on the 'Performance requirements' <p>Conclusions as to the extent to which the performance requirements were met during that financial year</p>
Take all reasonable steps to meet their well-being objectives	We set out steps for each Well-being Objective (WBO) with targets and actions. Progress on these commitments is provided in each WBO		
Demonstrate well-being objectives are consistent with the sustainable development principle	We include a Case Study within each Well-being Objective		
	Each Well-being Objective concludes with an Action Plan		
			Any actions to be taken, or that have already been taken, to increase the extent to which performance requirements will be met
The Annual Report is a combination of the requirements of both sets of legislation.			

Our Approach to self-assessment is via our Well-being Objectives

Using well-being objectives to frame the self-assessment enables the Council to integrate the reporting requirements of both the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into a single report.

This approach provides the context within which we exercise our functions, use resources and ensure governance is effective:

- It ensures the self-assessment is strategic, focusing on the organisation, rather than individual services and on the extent to which the Council is achieving its well-being objectives and intended outcomes.
- It allows us to reflect at a strategic level on how all our functions (including corporate activities) are contributing to the achievement of our well-being objectives, how we are operating and what action we need to take to improve further and continue to provide effective services now and for the long-term.
- Using well-being objectives as the overarching framework encourages a more holistic view of Council performance, recognising that many services 'join-up' and contribute to one or more well-being objective.
- We continue to manage individual service performance via Divisional Delivery Plans.

Managing Performance in Carmarthenshire County Council

Our Performance Management Framework is based on a Plan/Do/Review cycle, and we have strengthened it to enhance self-assessment. This will be further developed to reflect the expectations of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and statutory guidance.

Our Performance Management Framework - 'Wedding Cake'



Improvements made during 2022/23

- How our Well-being Objectives are contributing to the National Goals. See *Appendix 2b*.
- We reset our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives following the Local Government elections in May 2022. See *how we set our Well-being Objectives in Appendix 1*.
- We introduced a new format of Service Delivery Plans aligned to the new Corporate Strategy Well-being Objectives.
- *Recognise/Grow/Together*
We ensure that individual officers can identify how they contribute to the above and have a voice.

Governance

Carmarthenshire County Council (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. It must also ensure that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively and to secure continuous improvement in this regard.

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the Governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including having appropriate arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council sees Corporate Governance as “doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.” The Governance Framework comprises the systems, processes, cultures, and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled and also the way it accounts to, engages with and leads the Community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

We have continued our revamped approach to the Annual Governance Statement. In addition to looking at what arrangements were in place for 2022/23 we considered how well these arrangements are doing, how do we know and how can we improve?

See *Appendix 5*

Working with Partners

Swansea Bay City Deal

The Swansea Bay City Deal is an unprecedented investment of up to £1.3 billion across a portfolio of nine headline projects and programmes throughout the counties of Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire.

Aligned to three themes of economic acceleration, energy and smart manufacturing, and life science and well-being, all nine business cases have been approved by the Welsh Government and the UK Government, which means that the entire portfolio is now in full delivery. Making the SBCD the First of the Welsh City and Growth Deals to achieve this milestone.

The ambitious regional Portfolio will:

- Create over **9,000** jobs in areas including energy, manufacturing, digital, health and wellness, R&D, education, retail, leisure, and tourism.
- Help **14,000** people upskill, through **2,200** training opportunities and over **3,000** new apprenticeships.
- Contribute **£1.8-2.4 billion** additional regional Gross Value Added (GVA).
- Transform South-West Wales into a place of opportunity for everyone, where people can live and work, have quality education, jobs and healthcare and where businesses can thrive.

With the Portfolio being in full delivery, the SBCD is in a strong position to deliver these targets and has already begun to see some key achievements to date, including:

- £262m of total investment to date 10% of total investment target has been secured from the Private Sector
- £100m+ investment in 2022-23
- 9,200 training weeks provided across Portfolio construction activity to date with at least 1,200 weeks delivered in 2022-23
- At least 550+ Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employment opportunities
- 100 FTE apprenticeship opportunities created or continued as a result of construction activity.
- 47,380m² of completed floor space across the Portfolio
- 200 HAPS homes delivered in 2022-23 realising £42m of investment.
- 200+ contracts awarded to Welsh based companies.

PARTNERIAETH

PARTNERIAETH was established following the abolition of ERW, as a regional service to support schools. This was done in partnership with Swansea and Pembrokeshire Councils. A new Joint Committee was established, and a Legal Agreement was developed to manage the work of the new entity. Core staff have been restructured to create a team of officers to support and complement school improvement activities in the three counties. A Chief Officer and Senior Management Team have been appointed to lead on partnership working and to work to meet the specific needs of the partners and the Welsh Government. Work continues to strengthen governance, monitoring and holding PARTNERIAETH to account for its contribution to school improvement in the region.

South-West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)

The South-West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has been established as a regional corporate body by Welsh Ministers. Membership consists of the Leaders of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils, along with a member of the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority and a member of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

The CJC published its Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 during the year. In recognising this CJC's functions and responsibilities within South West Wales in terms of economic well-being, energy, transport and strategic planning, the Corporate Plan seeks to convey the progress made to date as well as set out future ambitions. To this end, the Corporate Plan includes a Vision for South West Wales 2035, as well as 3 well-being objectives and an equality objective. The production of the Corporate Plan also allows this CJC to chart the progress being made in respect of the public sector duties. In this regard, it is noted that this CJC is still in its relative infancy having first met in January 2022.

Carmarthenshire Public Services Board (PSB)

The PSB brings together several different organisations providing services to the public who are working together for the benefit of Carmarthenshire. They have a longstanding successful track record of partnership working and continue to build on that.

The PSB promotes a positive culture of working together, concentrating collective energy, effort and resources on providing efficient and effective services to local communities. They will continue to do this by working collaboratively to add value to each other's services and will look at innovative approaches and new and different ways of working to achieve this.

Following the publication of the Carmarthenshire Well-being Assessment, the PSB built on the evidence base to prepare its Well-being Plan for 2023-28. The plan outlined the PSBs ambition for the County and how they wish to see real improvements in the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of our residents and communities. This Plan, as required through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, was developed following significant engagement with our communities and other key stakeholders.

This engagement has identified the PSBs five key well-being objectives that they will focus their attention on delivering through collective action over the next few years:

- Ensuring a sustainable economy and fair employment
- Improving well-being and reducing health inequalities
- Responding to the climate and nature emergencies
- Tackling poverty and its impacts
- Helping to create bilingual, safe and diverse communities.

A new delivery structure will be established to make progress against the Well-being Objectives and identified steps. As part of this, the PSB will build stronger partnerships with communities and promote co-production so that residents can come together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important to them.

Consultation undertaken by the Council

The Council has a well-established method of engaging with citizens and other key stakeholders across all key Council functions. There are several network groups which represent a range of interests from the youth council to the ageing well network. We also strive to ensure that we engage and seek the views of those with specific protected characteristics as recognised by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. The following list of consultations were held in the last year.

Budget Consultation 2023: We consulted on a number of policy proposals which included: delegated school budgets, restructuring library services, introducing parking charges, rationalisation of litter bins amongst other policy proposals across all Council departments for the annual budget. The consultation received 2,161 responses from local residents and key stakeholders.

Linkl Project Final Term Evaluation: Following the success of the Linkl project, the Council were successful in securing further external funding to continue the service. The Council sought views from residents and key stakeholders to assess the success and effectiveness of the scheme in meeting the project objectives. In total, 103 responses were received.

Post-16 Education Review: Significant changes in education, changes in oversight of Post 16 education and the experience of the pandemic have meant it is important we review whether Post 16 Education in Carmarthenshire is meeting the needs of our learners, families, communities, and business/ industry. The engagement exercise resulted in 2,361 responding to the online questionnaire with additional focus groups also informing the final report.

Introduce Council Tax Premiums for Second homes and empty properties: Currently, the Council does not apply a council tax premium scheme and second homes and long-term empty properties are currently charged at the standard council tax rate. When considering whether or not to amend the premium levels, the discretion given to local authorities to charge a premium is intended to be a tool to help local authorities to: Bring long-term empty homes back into use to provide safe, secure and affordable homes; and increase the supply of affordable housing and enhance the sustainability of local communities. A consultation was conducted to gather residents' views on the proposals to introduce a premium. A total of 944 respondents completed the survey.

Carmarthenshire County Council Annual performance surveys: The Council launched a suite of surveys aimed to engage with a range of stakeholders. Following the local elections in May 2022 the Council set out to understand the views of Carmarthenshire's residents, businesses and Trade Unions on several areas to inform future planning and priority setting. 2,195 residents took the opportunity to respond to this survey, 36 businesses and 5 Trade Unions.

The highlighted consultations provide clear evidence that there has been an increase in participation of online consultations. When evaluating comparable consultations, the Budget consultation in 2020 which consulted on specific proposals received 2,004 responses whilst in 2022 the consultation received 2,161. The increase in participation is attributed to the closer relationship developed with the Media and Marketing team ensuring that consultations are promoted on social media and corporate website and are sent to all key stakeholders.

The Council is currently examining how to better promote and display the results of each consultation in a bid to ensure that there is better clarity and transparency.

Equality and Diversity

Strategic Equality Plans (SEPs) are important documents that set out how public bodies will consider the needs of groups with protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This is intended to ensure that all individuals receive just and equitable treatment in respect of service delivery and strategy/policy formulation.

During the year, we have started the preparation work for the revision of our SEP, which must be published by April 2024. Carmarthenshire County Council will be working with partners across Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys to undertake this work and to ensure that we work closely with our communities across the region.

The involvement work will focus on key areas like education, housing, health, crime, leisure and access to the coast and countryside. We will also ask people to rate their own experiences of these services and their perceptions of the experience that other people in our society may have.

All public bodies have to produce a Strategic Equality Plan setting out how they will ensure services they provide are accessible to all residents and service users irrespective of their protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published a report called 'Is Wales Fairer' (2018) which sets out the state of the nation when looking at the more vulnerable groups in society. The survey uses the key areas listed in the report as a focus.

Each public sector body has a duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Alongside the survey, each region will engage with particular community groups that represent and advocate for some of the less heard groups like LGBTQ or re-settled refugees.

Welsh Language (also, please see *Well-being Objective 3c*)

The Census data for 2021 indicates that Carmarthenshire is home to **72,838 Welsh speakers**. This translates to 39.9% of the County's total population. This figure has **decreased by 5,210** since the last Census in 2011, which translates to a percentage point decrease of 4.0. This is the largest percentage point decrease of all local authority areas in Wales. In 2001 and 2011, Carmarthenshire had the highest number of Welsh speakers of all local authority areas in Wales, with 84,196 and 78,048 Welsh speakers respectively. These new figures mean that the County now has the second highest number of Welsh speakers of all local authority areas in Wales. Carmarthenshire remains the fourth highest in terms of the percentage of the population that are able to speak Welsh.

We are continuing to implement the **Welsh Language Standards** across the Council with regular dialogue with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. During the year we have undertaken targeted messaging with Council services on identifying and recording linguistic choice of service users, further to feedback from an investigation held by the Commissioner's Office. Messages about the Standards are conveyed to staff through presentations by the Policy and Involvement Team and through the communication streams maintained by Marketing and Media.

The **Welsh Language County Strategic Forum**, which continues to be led by the Council and includes representation from the County's language promotion organisations, as well as public bodies, has also continued with its role of developing a programme of promoting the Welsh language in the County and instigated much joint planning for the implementation of the Carmarthenshire Promotion Action Plan, in line with the Promotion Strategy. During 2022-23, the focus of the Forum's work has been the analysis of impact of the first Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, which will be the basis of the second **Promotion Strategy for 2023-2028** to be published in May 2023.

How we measure the success of our Well-being Objectives

Measuring Progress

The Well-being Future Generations Act promotes a shift in focus from service productivity to all public bodies working together to progress outcomes that improves the quality of life of citizens and communities, both now and in the future.

This requires us to look at a range of data and evidence to build as comprehensive a picture as possible of our progress both in terms of trends over time and in relation to how we compare with other local authorities in Wales.

For us to do this effectively we have developed a data suite of indicators and measures which brings together a wide range of different sources, allowing us to reflect on the evidence available to us in the round. The range of data covers the following:

- ⦿ **Population Indicators:** In the main these include publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire's position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Sources include (but are not limited to); [National Survey for Wales](#), [Annual Population Survey](#), Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, Department for Work and Pensions.
- ⦿ **Performance Measures:** Inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and primary intelligence in the form of consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Primary Intelligence – Consultation Findings

Following the Local Elections in May 2022 we set out to understand how residents, Council staff, businesses and Trade Unions felt about the Council's performance. Whilst this meets the statutory obligations placed on us through the Local Government and Elections Act it was also an opportunity to gain views (predominantly from residents and businesses) on a number of wider key policy issues such as: the climate and nature emergencies, poverty, education, community safety, the Welsh language and mental health and well-being.

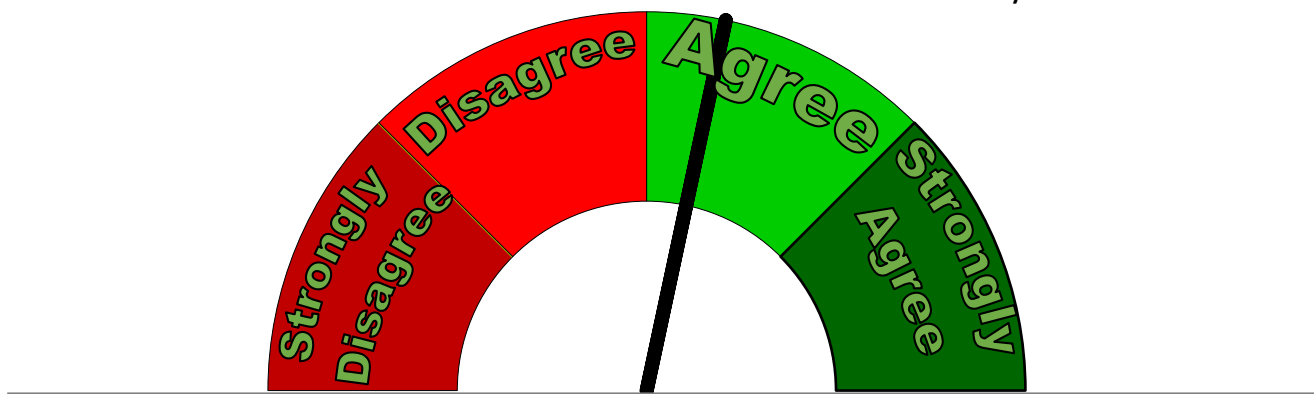
This primary intelligence has been invaluable and when considered as part of a wider suite of measures they will be an important indicator of our performance, with results for 2022 acting as a baseline on which we will monitor performance in the coming years. This is indicative of our commitment to meeting our well-being objectives with residents, service users, our business community and staff at the forefront of everything that we do.

Throughout this report the consultation findings are depicted by an average index score (AIS). This score is a weighted average and will allow for the easy comparison between results year on year. A key is provided below for reference with more information on how AIS's are calculated available in *Appendix 6*.

AIS Key:

- A score below 0 indicates overall disagreement;
- A score between 0 and 1 indicates overall agreement, and
- A score between 1 and 2 indicates overall strong agreement.

The Council provides good quality Services overall? Residents Survey*



Regulatory Verdict

During the year our regulators issued a number of reports, and these are listed in **Appendix 3**



<https://www.audit.wales/>



<https://www.estyn.gov.wales>



<https://careinspectorate.wales/>

Other Regulatory Assessments:



Welsh Government – OSG Gateway Review:
Strategic Assessment of Swansea Bay City Deal

[Published Statistics \(ombudsman.wales\)](https://www.ombudsman.wales/)



This Annual Report looks at a wide range of evidence to make a self-assessment of how we are performing.

New Corporate Strategy 2022-2027

WBO 1	Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life (Start Well)
WBO1a	Thematic Priority: Healthy Lives – prevention /early intervention
WBO1b	Service Priority: Early years
WBO1c	Service Priority: Education
WBO 2	Enabling our residents to live and age well (Live & Age Well)
WBO2a	Thematic Priority: Tackling Poverty
WBO2b	Service Priority: Housing
WBO2c	Service Priority: Social Care
WBO 3	Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous (Prosperous Communities)
WBO3a	Thematic Priority: Economic Recovery and Growth
WBO3b	Thematic Priority: Decarbonisation & Nature Emergency
WBO3c	Thematic Priority: Welsh Language & Culture
WBO3d	Thematic Priority: Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion
WBO3e	Service Priority: Leisure & Tourism
WBO3f	Service Priority: Waste
WBO3g	Service Priority: Highways & Transport
WBO 4	To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council)
WBO4a	Organisational Transformation - Overarching
WBO4b	Organisational Transformation - Efficiencies and Value for Money
WBO4c	Organisational Transformation - Income & Commercialisation
WBO4d	Organisational Transformation - Workplace
WBO4e	Organisational Transformation - Workforce
WBO4f	Organisational Transformation - Service Design & Improvement
WBO4g	Organisational Transformation - Customers & Digital Transformation
WBO4h	Organisational Transformation - Decarbonisation and Biodiversity
WBO4i	Organisational Transformation - Schools
5	Core Business Enablers
5a	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
5b	Marketing & Media including customer services
5c	Legal
5d	Planning
5e	Finance
5f	Procurement
5g	Internal Audit
5h	People Management
5i	Democratic Services
5j	Policy & Performance
5k	Electoral Services & Civil Registration
5l	Estates & Asset Management
5m	Risk Management
5n	Business Support

Cabinet Members and the Well-being Objectives

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



WBO3a Thematic Priority:
Economic Recovery and Growth

5b Marketing & Media including customer services.

Cllr. Darren Price - LEADER

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES



WBO2a Thematic Priority:
Tackling Poverty

WBO2b Service Priority: Housing

5c Legal
5i Democratic Services

Cllr. Linda Evans - DEPUTY LEADER

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & WELSH LANGUAGE



WBO1b Service Priority: Early years

WBO1c Service Priority: Education

WBO3c Thematic Priority: Welsh Language

Cllr. Glynog Davies

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



WBO 1a Thematic Priority:
Healthy Lives – prevention /early intervention

WBO2c Service Priority: Social Care

Cllr. Jane Tremlett

CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, LEISURE, CULTURE & TOURISM



WBO3a Thematic Priority:
Economic Recovery and Growth

WBO3c Thematic Priority: Culture

WBO3e Service Priority: Leisure & Tourism

Cllr. Gareth John

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES



5e Finance
5f Procurement
5g Internal Audit
5m Risk Management
5l Estates & Asset Management
Corporate Governance

Cllr. Alun Lenny

CABINET MEMBER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, COMMUNITY COHESION AND PLANNING POLICY



WBO3a Thematic Priority:
Economic Recovery and Growth

WBO3d Thematic Priority:
Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion

5d Planning

Cllr. Ann Davies

CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION & SUSTAINABILITY



WBO3b Thematic Priority:
Decarbonisation & Nature Emergency

WBO3g Service Priority: Highways & Transport (Flooding and Coastline management)

Cllr. Aled Vaughan Owen

CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATION AND WORKFORCE



WBO4 To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council)

5a Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

5j Policy & Performance
5h People Management
5k Electoral Services & Civil Registration

Cllr. Philip Hughes

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES



WBO3f Service Priority: Waste
WBO3g Service Priority: Highways & Transport

Cllr. Edward Thomas



Useful links

[Corporate Strategy 2022-2027 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/corporate-strategy-2022-2027)

Well-being Objective 1 – Start Well

Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life.



Overarching Judgement

We aim to support all Carmarthenshire learners. We will ensure that they are happy, safe, thriving, and are fulfilling their personal, social and learning potential. We will strive to become the best we can be and be highly regarded locally, whilst also earning national and international recognition.

Children's services continue to introduce working practices (Signs of Safety and a relationship-based approach) which engage and work in partnership with families to help improve outcomes for children. To ensure this, senior managers audit assessments and highlight any areas for improvement and good practice.

For families with children under 4 living in deprived areas the Flying Start programme is expanding in a phased approach across the county. The Flying Start App has been integral in reaching families, providing key messages and support services.

We are continuing to develop our fostering and adoption services to meet the needs of children who become looked after and need permanence at an early stage.

Approximately 15,000 children and young people across the county aged between 0-25 years benefitted from the Summer of Fun and Winter of Well-being initiative.

The new Childcare Offer national digital service has been rolled-out and continually promoted. We are working towards addressing the gaps identified in our fifth Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2022-27) and the accompanying Action Plan and continue to promote and develop Welsh medium childcare within the County.

Why this is important?

Giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing health inequalities across the life course. The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood.

What happens during these early years, starting in the womb, has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status.

To have an impact on health inequalities we need to address the social gradient in children's access to positive early experiences. Later interventions, although important, are considerably less effective if they have not had good early foundations.

Fair Society, Healthy Lives, the Marmot Review, 2010



The key overarching indicators and measures we set ourselves for this overall objective


Measuring Progress

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for Well-being Objective 1.

Population Indicators in the main are publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire's position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Through our well-being objectives the Council has an important role to play in making progress against these indicators, however, it should be noted that these are not solely indicative of the Council's performance and will be influenced by many external factors.

Performance Measures are inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Population Indicators		
Indicator	Trend	Explaining the Data
Children Living in Poverty		<p>Child Poverty Rates are Rising</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent shows that between 2014/15 and 2020/21 child poverty rates have generally been on an upward trend in the county. This is consistent with trends seen nationally.</i></p> <p>Data for 2020/21 indicates that 34.6% of children in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty, this translates to nearly 11,250 children. This is a 5.3 percentage point increase on 2014/15 figures and exceeds the Wales average by 0.6%.</p> <p>This is the 12th highest level of all local authorities in Wales which is an improvement on the 10th highest level the previous year.</p> <p>Poverty affects every aspect of someone’s life. It is especially detrimental to children, affecting their long-term health and development, educational attainment and their access to opportunities. A child growing up in poverty is at an increased risk of not having the best start in life given their access to food, shelter, health care and education may be compromised.</p> <p>The Council has seen increasing demand for many of its services and support systems following the pandemic, exacerbated now by the effects of the cost-of-living crisis which is causing some families to struggle. As always, the priority for the Council is to ensure that children are protected and supported with a focus on early intervention and prevention.</p>
Children aged 4-5 years overweight or obese (Child Measurement Programme NHS)		<p>Childhood Obesity Levels are Rising</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2014/15 to 2021/22. It indicates that following a decline between 2016/17 and 2017/18 childhood obesity levels have seen an increase in the county.</i></p> <p>As of 2021/22 in Carmarthenshire 31.4% of 4-5 year olds were overweight or obese. This is an increase of 1 percentage point since 2018/19.</p> <p>Obesity in early life will have detrimental effects on long-term health and in turn the life chances of that person.</p> <p>Whilst the Council alone cannot affect the level of change required to reduce childhood obesity, several of the Council’s services have an important role to play, such as the provision of nutritious school meals and access to leisure and sporting activities.</p>

Performance Measure		
<p>Children on the Child Protection Register (per 10,000 population)</p>		<p>Slight Increases in the Number of Children on the Child Protection Register but Levels Remain Significantly Lower than Welsh Averages</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period between 2020/21 and 2021/22 and shows a slight increase in the numbers of children on the child protection register.</i></p> <p>Despite this increase from 21 to 27 children per 10,000 of the population, the county continues to exhibit one of the lowest levels of children on the child protection register of all local authorities in Wales. The level is also significantly below averages for Wales which sits at 47.</p> <p>Actual figures for 22/23 indicate a further slight increase, with 125 children recorded as being on the register. This is a 22.5% increase on the same time period for the previous year.</p> <p>Recent times have been very challenging for families and staff due to the COVID pandemic. The department is facing the inevitable difficulties of supporting children and families at the end of the pandemic era. Hardships as a result of the rising cost of living are raising stress levels for families.</p> <p>The increasing complexity of cases requires the involvement of the Family Intervention Service, Integrated Family Support and Edge of Care teams to support.</p>

Outcomes we set ourselves

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
<p>1. <u>Improved availability</u> of early years education and childcare settings across the county, particularly in rural areas; with a particular focus on providing and strengthening Welsh-medium childcare.</p>	<p>We are continuing to support and encourage the childcare and early years sector to develop Welsh language opportunities and providers have been made aware of all avenues where staff can access Welsh language courses and resources. The expansion of Flying Start programme will also encourage new providers who specialise in Welsh-medium provision.</p> <p>Progress has been slow due to pandemic aftermath and increasing living costs impacting on the viability of the sector. The sector remains under constant pressure to maintain their services for working parents and early years child development experiences for children.</p> <p>There were 90 childminders with 791 childcare places at 31/3/23 (a reduction compared with the same time last year which was 102 childminders with 781 childcare places.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
2. Pupils with Additional Learning Needs are fully supported.	Carmarthenshire has expanded workforce capacity to meet the demands of delivering the new ways of working, especially to support the provision of additional learning provision in mainstream schools. However, the duty to favour mainstream provision will necessitate further growth in central services to strengthen and build capacity in all areas and limit the requirement for growth in specialist setting provision and reconsiderations of school decisions	Yes
3. Increased school attendance rates and access to education for vulnerable pupils.	In the current academic year attendance levels in both sectors are above the level of 2021/22 by 1.6 percentage points in primary and 3.9 percentage points in secondary schools. This highlights that attendance is generally improving, including an uplift of improvement for eFSM learners. There is variation between schools in both sectors with some making considerably more progress than others	Yes
4. Deliver a rounded curriculum raising educational standards.	<p>Support provided to schools for developing the curriculum has improved considerably since January 2023, with the Education and Children's Services department now playing a lead role in the design and delivery of the curriculum professional learning offer.</p> <p>Engagement of schools <u>has increased substantially from 5 schools per session to 55 +</u>. As a result, there is greater collaboration on understanding the curriculum for Wales, improved sharing of effective practice and a stronger link to authentic learning experiences.</p> <p>Working alongside local developments and businesses we continue to enrich our learning offer to schools, for example, extracting carbon, alongside Swansea University or focussing on the development of the Pentre Awel site</p>	Yes
5. Nutritious free school meals for all primary school pupils.	Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) are being rolled out across the county in line with Welsh Government targets. All pupils up to year 2 currently receive UPFSM meals, with year 3 & 4 going live September 2023 and years 5 & 6 in April 2024	Yes
6. Increased bilingual and Welsh medium education.	<p>The Authority successfully identifies the demand for Welsh medium education and meets this demand and provision in all phases reflects the Authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Carmarthenshire's WESP is innovative and ambitious and is effectively focused on ensuring Welsh medium education is available to all learners, within reasonable distance from their homes.</p> <p>The plan focusses rigorously on proactively ensuring that all schools can move along the</p>	Yes

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	language continuum, specifically focusing on the advantages of access to learning during the Foundation Phase through immersion methodology. As a result, the supply and demand for Welsh medium education across the authority continues to increase	
7. Improved opportunities for all residents in literacy, numeracy and digital skills to upskill for employment.	We have trained and supported more than 330 people by improving their digital skills (one of the key areas of targeted intervention), in order they are well equipped with better employment prospects.	Yes
8. Schools for sustainable community learning that are fit for 21 st Century	Carmarthenshire County Council has clear priorities for investment via its Modernizing Education Programme (MEP). The Programme is a strategic investment and rationalisation plan to transform school provision. It is kept under review to ensure that its school reorganisation and investment proposals retain flexibility at their core to reflect changing circumstances in a continually developing society and be responsive to changes in the education policy framework.	Yes
9. Keeping children at home with their families whenever possible.	Children’s services provide a range of services and support whose overall aim is to enable children and young people to reside within their own families and within their own communities wherever it is safe to do so, working with others to prevent the number of children who suffer adverse childhood experiences (ACE’s) and prevent the need for statutory involvement. <u>Despite an increase in the number of looked after children Carmarthenshire still has one of the lowest compared to the rest of Wales per 10,000 of the population.</u> Families have struggled in the aftermath of the pandemic and cost of living crisis which has added stress, issues arising increasing risks of abuse and neglect and mental health. Requests for accommodation are made through our accommodation panel to try and ensure alternative support options are considered through teams such as edge of Care, Integrated Family Support team (IFST) and Family Intervention Teams and other preventative services. We are reviewing EOC and IFST to ensure families receive the right help at the right time within their local communities. We are also developing parenting programmes.	
10. Reducing the inequalities faced by children from disadvantaged backgrounds which may affect their later life chances.		
11. Families facing difficulties are supported to provide stable, safe and secure home environments for their children.		
12. Families from disadvantaged backgrounds are able to access health and well-being provision within their local areas.	The Local Authority has a broad range of services that support families to access health and well-being provision. Including:	Yes

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Family Information Service (FIS) is central resource for providing information on services for families and professionals. The Right Help, Right Time Framework helps to navigate the service available across different levels of need. FIS Facebook page has 1,195 followers and 34,390 website hits. • Early Years services include the Flying Start programme and Early Years Cwm Gwendraeth Pathfinder Pilot. These provide multiagency and integrated working in targeted deprived communities, improving health and well-being outcomes for families. <p>A total of 2,356 children received support during 22/23 through the Flying Start programme.</p> <p>The Phase 1 expansion led to a further 127 children benefitting from the service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services 0-25 years The Families First programme is accessible across the County, and provides parenting support, support for young people and disability support. A total of 9,230 individuals received a meaningful intervention in 22/23. Demand and complexity have increased, and the programme is responding positively, 94% of 789 cases closed reported a forward movement . 	

As a Council we focus on the following thematic and service priorities.

WBO1a Thematic Priority: Healthy Lives – prevention /early intervention

WBO1b Service Priority: Early years

WBO1c Service Priority: Education

Thematic Priority 1a - Healthy Lives-prevention/early intervention

In their last Assurance Check, Care Inspectorate Wales found **Children's Social Services had-**

- **Approachable and supportive leaders**
- **A Culture of co-production and personal outcomes being developed with people**
- **Clarity in operational methodology**
- **Strong multi-agency cooperation**
- **Positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working**
- **Low children looked after population**

Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period.

We are continually working to reduce the number of children becoming looked after utilising specialist and preventative teams such as Edge of Care (EOC), Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and Family Intervention Team (FIT). We continue to face challenges to maintain children safely at home as families have struggled following the aftermath of the pandemic and cost of living crisis with increased hardship with issues arising where risks are high in relation to abuse and neglect, mental and emotional health issues. We work in partnership with families and other agencies to provide the right support at the right time to prevent the need for children to become looked after and to rehabilitate them safely at home wherever possible.




Why this is important?

- ⦿ Giving every child the best start in life, improving their early life experiences, and ensuring they live healthy lifestyles will reduce their risk of facing inequalities later in life and support them to reach their full potential. We recognise that early childhood is a time of great opportunity but also great risk as every interaction helps to shape the way children develop. We will therefore strive to protect children and young people from harm and work to ensure their emotional and physical well-beings are protected and nurtured.

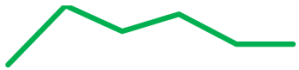
How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Measuring Progress

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for the Healthy Lives – Prevention/Early Intervention thematic priority.

Performance Measures		
Measure	Trend	Explaining the Data
Number of children looked after by local authorities at 31 March		<p>A Slight Increase in the Number of Looked After Children but Levels Remain one of the Lowest in Wales</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 and shows a changing pattern categorised by slight increases from 2020/21.</i></p> <p>Since the 1980's Wales has consistently had more children looked after (per 10,000 of the population) than the rest of the UK. This is a source of concern given the impact on the outcomes of looked after children with regards to educational attainment, health, unemployment, homelessness and criminal justice.¹ However, in the last twenty years Carmarthenshire has consistently outperformed the rest of Wales with performance that is comparable with the best performing authorities in England.</p> <p>There is a lot of variation at a local authority level with data covering 22/23 for Carmarthenshire indicating 190 children were looked after as at March. The rate per (10,000 of the population) for the county remains the lowest in Wales.</p> <p>Increasing pressure placed on families by the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis has seen the demand for services rise following a low of 148 in 2020/21. Challenges in the recruitment of social work has led to a number of vacancies in the service making the intensive work that families need harder to deliver.</p>
Number of children looked after in foster placements at 31 March		<p>A Slight Increase in the Number of Looked After Children in Foster Placements but Levels Remain one of the Lowest in Wales</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 and shows a changing pattern categorised by a slight increase from 125 to 145 between 2020/21 and 2021/22.</i></p> <p>The vast majority of the 145 placements were located within the county.</p> <p>The Council continues to develop our fostering and adoption services to meet the needs of children who become looked after and need permanence at an early stage.</p>
Number of Referrals of Children and Young people attending counselling by Area, Year and Gender		<p>An Increasing Number of Referrals for Counselling which Follows National Trends</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2013/14 to 2021/22 and shows a steady increase to 2018/19 and a sharp increase between 2020/21 and 2021/22. This is in line with national trends.</i></p>

¹ [Children looked after | WCPP](#)

		<p>The most recent data indicates that 1,497 children and young people were referred for counselling in Carmarthenshire during academic year 2021/22. This is an increase of 444 children and young people on the previous year.</p> <p>Whilst it is concerning that more children and young people are requiring counselling it is positive to note that more children are receiving the support that they need.</p> <p>For further information, at a Wales level it is reported that 322 children receiving counselling in 21/22 did not identify as either male or female.</p> <p>Furthermore, the number of admissions to hospital for children following self-harm in Carmarthenshire has increased over the last reporting year (Q3 21/22 TO Q3 22/23). This is in line with trends for Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, however the increase in Carmarthenshire is more significant. This data has and continues to be monitored closely since the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of regional concern and anxiety expressed in various forums about the impact of lockdowns on teenage mental health within the context of self-harming behaviour.</p>
Population Indicator		
<p>Live single births with a birth weight of under 2,500g</p>		<p>The Number of Babies Born with a Low Birth Weight is Decreasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016 to 2021 and shows some fluctuation characterised by a general downward trend from 2019 onwards.</i></p> <p>Babies born with a low birth weight are at an increased risk of developing health problems. It is positive therefore, that generally, the percentage of babies born with a low birth weight has been decreasing in Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>The most recent data for 2021 indicates that Carmarthenshire had the fifth lowest level of low birth weights in Wales.</p>

Progress in 2022/23

Safeguarding Children & young people

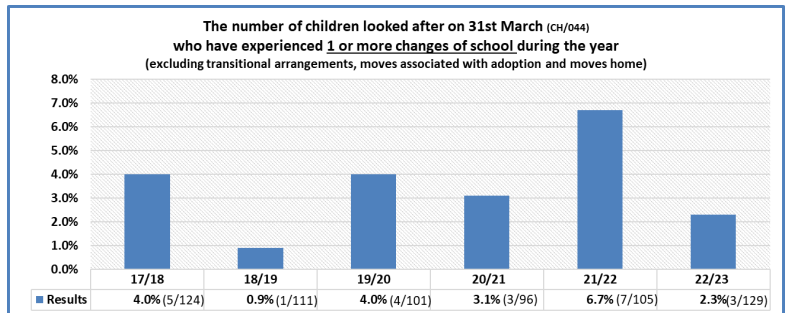
- ⦿ In the aftermath of the pandemic families have struggled especially due to the effects of the cost of living crisis. During the year we have seen an increasing demand for our services and support and has seen the number of contacts to the department continuing to rise along with the need for children to become looked after.
- ⦿ **83% of new assessments for children were completed within the statutory timescales (CH/006a/012).** Assessments are dependent on the availability of relevant multi-agency professionals and family members which can result in some being completed outside of timescales. Some may require a longer period of time ensuring quality and meaningfulness to achieve better outcomes for the child. Monitoring allows managers

to highlight what improvements can be made and further training has been arranged to strengthen the ability of social workers to complete assessments to a high standard.

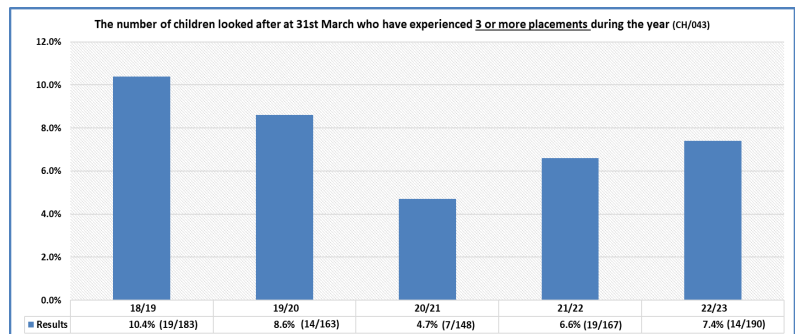
- ⦿ The relationship based systemic approach to delivering social work incorporating signs of safety continues to embed and is being introduced to more teams across children’s services. Training for newly recruited social workers as well as refresher training for more experienced workers has been carried out and will be on-going to strengthen the approach to help improve outcomes for children.
- ⦿ Auditing of assessments and plans has continued to ensure they are developed in partnership with children and families having regard to their wishes and feelings, to set outcomes which are achievable by them, taking into account the five principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act so that families have a voice and control over intervention, focus on well-being, plans are co-produced taking a multi-agency approach, providing early intervention and preventative support to ensure families are supported earlier. Auditing highlights areas for improvement and any training needs.

⦿ **Education stability of Looked After Children remains excellent. (CH/044)**

Figures have historically been very low in this metric. Only 3 children have required a change of school. This result is due to the hard work undertaken with social workers, schools, foster carers and other professionals to maintain children within their original school and community. This provides them with consistency in terms of their education to best meet their needs. Due to the rurality of Carmarthenshire this means that children may be travelling some distances to their schools when appropriate which has an impact on higher transport costs as foster placements may be located across Carmarthenshire.



- ⦿ Of the 190 children looked after up to 31 March 2023, 14 children experienced 3 or more placement moves (CH/043). This is lower than last year of 6.6% with 19 of the 167 looked after children experiencing 3 or more placements. The children who experienced moves had Adverse Childhood Experiences, are less settled and have challenging and complex needs. We continued to focus on maintaining placement stability with good placement support being offered across the service to achieve this.



- ⦿ A development day across the region confirmed multi-agency child protection arrangements are working effectively. Threshold meetings continue to be held quarterly to ensure this is maintained.
- ⦿ 39 out of 110 schools have achieved Phase 5 of the Healthy Schools scheme. The scheme now runs in 110 schools; 95 Primaries; 1 Nursery School; 12 Secondary Schools; and 2 Special Schools. The result is equal to the previous year’s result, as progress in the scheme slowed during the pandemic, with schools having prioritised learning while there was also a delay in Healthy Schools Officers being able to undertake on-site inspections during restrictions. This situation has now improved, and we have seen an increase in the number of schools achieving the higher Phases, with an additional 4 schools achieving Phase 6 and 2 schools achieving the National Quality Award, with further schools working towards the NVQ. (8.3.1.6)

Actif Sport and Leisure

- ! Only **41.5% of children aged 11 can swim 25m** (3.4.2.1). School swimming has struggled to return to pre-pandemic levels with significantly less schools attending (and many not attending for the full 15 session

programme). This means we are not meeting the recommended ability to swim 25m performance target by the age of 11 for almost 60% of children across the County. Financial and time pressures may be affecting attendance, with feedback from schools being gathered to inform future planning. Ongoing dialogue with SwimWales, Welsh Government Sport Policy Unit to try and influence national policy and funding.

- Over **215,000 children** participated in **sport and physical opportunities** facilitated by Actif Communities during 2022/23 (3.4.2.8). With services resuming post-COVID, participations have returned more to normal.
- Assistant Development Officers funded to the end of March 2023 through Sport Wales Rescue Package Funding increased participation in school significantly in Cycling, Athletics and Triathlon. Nearly 61,000 participations in the Couch to 2km programme took place in schools across the county getting children active over an 8-week period.
- The ongoing development of water sports opportunities for children at Llandysul Paddlers has seen over 17,860 participations in 22/23. The sessions range from general activity on the lake or river to Duke of Edinburgh and school residential groups.
- 22/23 saw the launch of a new programme funded through the Child Development Fund called Amser Actif where children have the opportunity to develop basic fundamental skills in community settings such as village or community halls. The sessions run in Cwm Aman, Kidwelly and Gwendraeth have proved very popular with families and initial feedback on improving confidence, competence and motivation to be active, is positive.



Supported Housing

- To support the Cabinet's ambition (CV18) to re-balance the market and take the profit out of children's care we have opened an in-house children's home (Ty Magu) during the year.
- Children's services continue to work in partnership with housing and youth services to develop new improved supported accommodation services with increased support for vulnerable young people aged 16-25 within their home communities.
- The new In-house Supported Lodgings scheme is now up and running and already providing support to 10 young people aged 16-18 to ensure they receive the best start in life and improve their early life experiences including those who have more complex needs.

Fostering & Adoption Support Services

- Mid & West Wales Adoption Service (MWAS) is working in partnership with Reflect to provide improved support to birth parents at earlier stages in the adoption process. A significant level of support is also provided to children and adopters to ensure the right support is provided at the right time by a range of professionals.
- MWAS is working with National Adoption service to embed the Wales Early Permanence framework which will ensure children experience less loss and separation if there is a need to be placed with adopters which in turn will help improve their emotional well-being and outcomes as they develop through their childhood.
- We are working to increase foster placement choice by recruiting more foster carers with the skills and experience to manage children who have more complex needs. This is a key objective for 2023/24 (CV 21).
- Unfortunately, we have seen a reduction in foster carer households across Carmarthenshire this year due to carers retiring or leaving due to personal circumstances, alongside the cost-of-living crisis. This is a national as well as local issue that the department and Foster Wales are trying to improve on by supporting local authorities to recruit and retain more foster carers. WG funding has also been made available for 2023/24 to recruit a marketing officer specifically to the fostering service.

Corporate Parenting & Child Welfare

- ⦿ The Team Around the Family (TAF) co-ordinators ensure there is extensive local community knowledge and engagement and the team continue to focus on early intervention and support for families in their local communities.
- ⦿ Trauma Informed Practice and Attachment Awareness restorative practice is now embedded in the 4-phase inclusive behavioural model in schools.
- ⦿ New membership has been established for the Corporate Parenting Panel and new guidance issued by Welsh Government and a workshop planned to develop a new corporate parenting strategy to be compliant with the expectations of this with an increased focus on accountability from all departments across the council.

Is anyone better off?

Our Young People, Our Futures, Our Communities

Carmarthenshire's new in-house supported Lodgings Service is responsible as a county resource to provide temporary accommodation to support our most vulnerable young people aged 16-18 within Carmarthenshire to gain the independent living skills, they need to ensure the best positive outcomes to empower young people on their journey into independence.

A vertical poster for 'Supported Lodgings' recruitment. It features a puzzle piece graphic on the right side. The text is as follows:

Become a Supported Lodgings provider

Carmarthenshire's young people between 16-18 years **need your help.**

Could you be the **missing piece** to empowering and supporting young people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, looked after or seeking asylum on their journey to independent living.

If this is you, please get in touch.
SupportedLodgings@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Full training and support provided plus a paid allowance.

Our Ethos
Our Young People, Our Futures, Our Communities

carmarthenshire.gov/wales

Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- Corporate Parenting Panel
- CYSUR Audit & Evaluation Multi-agency group
- Accommodation Panel
- Multi-Agency Forum for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (MALAC)

1b - Service Priority-Early Years

Flying Start is expanding in a phased approach across the county.

Phase 1 of the expansion is already complete, and Phase 2 is due to commence in April 2023 to reach a target of 249 children aged 2-3 years by 31st March 2025. Once fully rolled out all families with children aged 2-3 years will be eligible for 12.5 hours of funded, high-quality childcare for 39 weeks of the year.

The 'Summer of Fun' and 'Winter of Well-being' funding enabled approximately 15,000 children and young people aged 0-25 to benefit from free activities across the county.

Why this is important?

- ⦿ Protecting children who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse, neglect, or other kinds of harm is our priority. Our focus is on early intervention / prevention to ensure all children can reach their full potential and be healthy, happy, and safe. Helping to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences is our key aim.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ! We had **72.5% attendance at Flying Start** settings for 2022/23 (9.1.8.1), this did not meet our target of 80% and is slightly below last year (72.6%) and pre-COVID figures (79.2%). On a positive note, the % of **unauthorised absence** (9.1.8.8) are at their lowest at **1.36%**. We continue to work with families to overcome some of the anxieties. Getting families to report absence is an achievement and therefore it's encouraging to see families that are engaging well with the childcare settings and reporting absences.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ **Flying Start** – The Flying Start App is integral especially during the FS expansion, in reaching families, providing key messages, such as health, language and play, safety messages, information, and links to the support services. Due to the digital officer's post being filled the App has been developed and further utilised to reach families e.g. families can book onto courses and have updates on their child when in childcare.
- ⦿ **Summer of Fun / Winter of Well-being** – Welsh Government funding (£270,000 and £434,689 respectively) enabled a significant package of support to be provided designed to help children, young people, and their families recover from the pandemic to ensure no child was left behind. Grants were allocated to play providers across the county and funding directly linked to the gaps identified within the Play Sufficiency Assessment.
- ⦿ **Families First** – early intervention support services for disadvantaged children, young people and their families have developed in line with the Family Support Strategy. During 2022-23 outcomes have been very positive:

- **9,230** individuals supported from the Families First (FF) programme, of which 6011 (65%) were new individuals.
 - **4,621** families supported from the FF programme, of which 2881 (62%) were new families.
 - **798** single agency Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF's) were closed with a forward movement of 749 (94%) on the distance travelled tool.
 - **25** cases were stepped up to Social Services, and 145 cases were stepped down from Social Services to the FF programme.
- **Family Information Service (FIS)** have ensured families and professionals have received updated information on services, resources, and developments. FIS Facebook page has 1,195 followers and 34,390 website hits.
 - **30 hours Childcare Offer National Digital Service** - promotion and support has continued to ensure eligible parents and childcare providers are familiar with the process. 522 parent applications were received and processed between 1st January to 31st March 2023 and 149 childcare providers have completed their on-line registration. £1,694,077.50 has been paid to local childcare providers in Carmarthenshire to eligible children during the year (1st April 2022 – 28th February 2023).
 - Our most recent **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27**, which was submitted to Welsh Government in June 2022, did not indicate any quantitative or qualitative sufficiency pressures for Foundation Learning funded 3-year-old places within approved Childcare settings across Carmarthenshire. Several approved Childcare Providers reported having vacant places in Autumn 2021 which would suggest we had surplus places in certain locations throughout Carmarthenshire.

Scrutiny Task and Finish Review	<p><u>Education and Young People and Welsh Language Scrutiny = Task and Finish</u> <u>A review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities.</u></p> <p>In 2018/19 the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee completed a Task & Finish Review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities.</p> <p>One of the conclusions identified in the report was that the Authority's 'Rising 4s' policy is markedly different to other neighbouring local authorities and that the 'Council undertakes a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4-year-olds (the rising 4s policy). A project group has completed a review of the 'Rising 4s' Policy (pupils admitted to primary schools' full time the term of their 3rd birthday) with a view to rationalising provision of full-time education for 4-year-olds in Carmarthenshire as part of the Admissions Policy and to bring it in line with other neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>The authority is due to consult on the proposals in the Autumn Term 2023 with a view to implement at the start of the academic year 2025/26</p>
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- The 2022 **Play Sufficiency Assessment** identified a need to work in partnership with Education Officers and schools to ensure children have access to rich play environments both during and outside of teaching hours. This work is developed and delivered in partnership with Education Support Advisors and Healthy Schools officers.
 - A Quality Assessment framework for play provision is in development and will be utilised as a framework to quality assure the play opportunities provided within settings and communities.
- **The Regional Maternity and Early Years** Strategy has been finalised. Both the regional steering group and the local operational groups continue to meet regularly implementing priorities. The Early Years Integration Team has been successful in being part of the Save the Children Better Start research project and accepted as part of the Save the Children Ehangu project for 2023/24.

Is anyone better off?

Expansion of the Flying Start early years scheme



Flying Start is expanding in a phased approach across the county. Welsh Government have announced a continued commitment to the Flying Start Programme, which historically has supported 36,000 children aged 0-4 years and their families living in some of the most deprived communities across Wales. In line with the co-operation agreement with Plaid Cymru this commitment has been extended to deliver a phased expansion of early years provision to include all two-year-olds with a particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh-medium provision.

This expansion of early years provision will be delivered across Wales through the Flying Start Programme. Flying Start Carmarthenshire will continue to use a geographical approach highlighting those communities most in need.

Carmarthenshire expanded their programme initially with an additional 127 families in September 2022 which is now complete. Flying Start Carmarthenshire will commence the second phase of an expansion for childcare only in April 2023 to reach a target of 249 children aged 2-3 years by 31st March 2025.

Once the Flying Start scheme has been fully rolled out, all families in Wales with children aged 2 to 3 years will be eligible for 12.5 hours of funded, high-quality childcare for 39 weeks of the year.

To meet this target, existing Flying Start childcare providers will be supported to expand their reach, with work ongoing to encourage new providers, including those who specialise in Welsh-medium provision, to offer the programme.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Childcare and Early Years Steering Group
Play Sufficiency Steering Group
Regional Maternity and Early Years Steering Group

1C - Service Priority-Education

Overall, pupils are happy, safe, thriving and are fulfilling their personal, social, and learning potential.

Pupil surveys show Health and Wellbeing is generally good across all our schools.
Overall, outcomes for GCSE in 2022 are higher than 2019 when exams were last sat.
We have enhanced support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs and vulnerable learners.

Why is this important?

- ⦿ We will support all Carmarthenshire learners. The future direction of Education Services will focus on supporting learners to become:
 - Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives.
 - Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to provide a full part in life & work.
 - Healthy and confident individuals, ready to learn fulfilling lives as valued members of society.
 - Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

1.9% year 11 pupils &
3.8% year 13 pupils
are **Not in Education,
Employment or Training (NEET)**

(Previous year - Yr 11: **1.1%** &
Yr 13: **2.7%**)



The % of Year 11 and Year 13 pupils that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) have increased (worsened) during 2022. With **Year 11** pupils increasing from **1.1% (21/1,885) to 1.9% (36/1,914) (PAM/009)** and **Year 13** increasing from **2.7% (18/678) to 3.8% (26/691) (5.1.0.2)**. Despite this, the Year 11 result when compared other authorities, has moved from 18th in the previous year to 10th in 2022, the Welsh average has also increased from 1.6% to 2.1%. We have remained in 15th place for Year 13, but the Welsh average has increased from 2.3% to 2.8%. The Youth Support Service has delivered the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework though out the last year. There has been work undertaken to ensure that knowledge of the framework is understood within Education and Children`s Services Department. Last Autumn, secondary Schools and other key stakeholders were surveyed on their views of the delivery of Vulnerability Assessment Profile Meetings (which are part of the framework). All European Social Fund projects linked with the Youth Support Service have now been successfully completed in 2023 and have ended. Work continues to identify replacement funding for ESF projects, and we are liaising closely with WG on this matter.

- ⦿ A consultation conducted with our residents in 2022 indicated that there was overall agreement from the 2,195 respondents that local schools provide children and young people with a good education with an Average Index Score (AIS) of 0.52. *See Appendix 6 (page 204) on Average Index Score*

- An inspection will take place in July 2023.
- The Council has prepared a self-evaluation against the inspection framework.
- 'Inspectors should evaluate whether corporate and other strategic plans are consistent with each other – such as this Well-being Objective priority.

Progress in 2022/23

Education Outcomes

Standards of learning and progress overall

GCSE 2022

- ⊙ Most pupils achieve good progress in their maths, numeracy, literacy, language and communication and digital skills overtime.
- ⊙ Overall outcomes for GCSE in 2022 are higher than 2019 when exams were last sat, but lower than 2021, when we had CDGs (Centre Determined Grades).
- ⊙ Overall standards at the end of Key Stage 4, in the three years prior to the pandemic, were high. Outcomes for pupils in Carmarthenshire's secondary schools were strong and generally above or well above Welsh averages.

Pupil Results

% 5 or more A*-G		
Category	2021 (Centre Determined Grades)	2022
Non -Free School Meals	97.5%	96.9%
Entitled to Free School Meals	88.6%	84%
Difference	8.9%	12.9%
% 5 or more A*-C		
Non -Free School Meals	85.5%	81.5%
Entitled to Free School Meals	59.4%	51.5%
Difference	26.1%	30%

A gap exists between the achievements of those entitled to free school meals and those that are not.

A Level 2022

- ⊙ Overall outcomes at A Level in 2022 are higher than 2019 when exams were last sat, but lower than 2021, reflecting national trends.
- ⊙ In the 3 years prior to the pandemic the % of pupils attaining the Level 3 threshold remained above national averages for 2 out of the 3 years, dropping very slightly below national averages in 2018/2019.
- ⊙ The percentage attaining A* at GCSE has increased significantly from 7.3% in 2019 to 11.4% in 2022. The percentage attaining A*-A at GCSE has increased significantly from 21.3% in 2019 to 27.3% in 2022. The increase was reflected nationally.
- ⊙ At A Level, the percentage attaining A* has increased significantly from 8.4% in 2019 to 17.2% in 2022. At A Level, the percentage attaining A*-A has increased significantly from 24.9% in 2019 to 40.1% in 2022. The increase was reflected nationally.

Additional Learning Needs

- ⦿ There are currently 7,126 learners with Additional Learning Needs (25% of the cohort), and most are making progress in mainstream and specialist settings. We support the largest percentage of ALN pupils in Wales, 11.6% above the last recorded Welsh Average (Pupil Level Annual School Census 2023).
- ⦿ Most pupils with additional learning needs are making good progress in line with their baseline assessments and expectations.
- ⦿ Most pupils within 'specific groups' are achieving suitable progress in line with their range of complex, individual needs.
- ⦿ Schools receive high quality support for ALN (Additional Learning Needs) transformation.
 - Carmarthenshire has expanded workforce capacity to meet the demands of delivering the new ways of working specially to support the provision of additional learning provision in mainstream schools. However, the duty to favour mainstream provision will necessitate further growth in central services to strengthen and build capacity in all areas and limit the requirement for growth in specialist setting provision and reconsiderations of school decisions.
 - A recent review of additional learning provision has resulted in the creation of a four-phase model recognising the importance of strengthening schools universal learning provision and ALP underpinning inclusion and equity for all identified need.
 - Impact of ALN school quality assurance visits is evidenced through good outcomes in ESTYN inspections indicating that schools are well prepared and effectively embedding the new ALN system.

Children Looked After

- ⦿ Factoring in cohort size and the pandemic, there has been a **marked improvement in Children Looked After** attainment.

Year	A*-G%	A*-C%
2014/15	28	5.5
2017/18	72	44
2018/19	86	26
2019/20	100	90
2020/21	83	56
2021/22	50	17

79% of our Carmarthenshire care leavers are engaged in education, training or employment. This is an improvement on previous years (20/21 – 75%; 21/22 – 74%)

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

- ⦿ Health and Wellbeing is generally good across all schools. Pupil wellbeing has improved since their return following COVID with most learners feeling safe and happy at school.
- ⦿ Attitudes towards learning is generally good in nearly all schools, with most pupils demonstrating good engagement and respect towards their peers and adults.
- ⦿ Behaviour is generally good in all schools and pupils are developing as respectful, ambitious, and capable citizens.

Carmarthenshire ESTYN inspections note that the wellbeing landscape is consistently good post Covid which demonstrates the impact of the greater focus on Wellbeing since March 2020

- ⦿ The Local Authority makes effective use of pupil surveys to gauge the views of learners. A thorough analysis of 1700 learners in 2022 provided clear intelligence which was used effectively as part of our forward

planning. For example, only 62% of pupils informed us that there was acceptable behaviour at breaktime. This was clear data used to support our 'Your behaviour impacts everything and everyone campaign' and led to an addition £500k investment in our secondary schools.

- 71.8% of pupils like school most of the time or better whilst 87% of pupils feel safe in school and often feel very safe (42.2%). This is confirmed by parents, 87.5% of whom agree or strongly agree that their child is safe in school.
- Safeguarding is strong in nearly all schools. In the very few schools where Estyn have identified a Health and safety issue pertaining to car parks, the LA is working with Governing Bodies to resolve these.

Attendance


- In the current academic year attendance levels in both sectors are above the level of 2021- 22 by 1.6 percentage points in primary and 3.9 percentage points in secondary schools. This highlights that attendance is generally improving, including an uplift of improvement for eFSM learners. There is variation between schools in both sectors with some making considerably more progress than others.

Exclusion

- The fixed term exclusion rate in Carmarthenshire is rising in line with Welsh data (once the effects of COVID-19 and lockdown periods are taken into account). Whilst rising, this compares favourably with Welsh Data, our figures are still below national average data.

Education Services

How regulators have judged our schools:

	<p>Few or our schools require follow up after inspection.</p> <p>Summary of Estyn Outcomes 2017-23 Based on published reports</p> <p>Since March 2022 there is a new inspection framework and Estyn no longer provide summative judgments for individual inspection areas. Inspectors can still place a school into Estyn Review if they judge that the school would benefit from a short period of time to improve a few aspects of their work. The two statutory categories of follow up remain unchanged. This is where schools need significant improvement or require special measures.</p>
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We want to reduce the proportion of schools requiring follow-up activity following an Estyn inspection.

Academic Year	Number of schools inspected	No Follow up	Estyn Review	Significant Improvement	Special Measures
2017-18	17	13	3	1	
2018-19	14	5	6		3
2019-20	13	7	6		
2020-21 (Covid)	No inspections				
2021- 22 Inspections Re -start New Framework	13	11		1	1
2022-23	8	7	1		

Since Estyn have started to inspect schools post Covid in March 2022, many of our schools have had no follow up or very few in a category. In nearly all cases there is close alignment between Estyn outcomes and the departments understanding of school’s strengths and areas of improvement.

An additional five schools were inspected in March -April 2023 -but their reports are not yet published. Coedcae / Mynydd y Gareg / Penygaer / Pontyberem / Llangadog.

Support for school improvement

- ⊙ The school improvement team has effective systems to monitor the challenge, support and interventions in all schools, utilising information from across the Department. The school improvement team focuses well on ensuring differentiated support, impacting positively on schools causing concern.
- ⊙ Most headteachers agree that the local authority knows its schools well due to the consistently rigorous and collaborative approach to school improvement across the education department, alongside our schools, pupil referral units and specialist settings.
- ⊙ Most headteachers agree that the local authority challenges and supports them on their performance, providing effective interventions to improve outcomes for all learners.
- ⊙ The directorate's senior leadership team meets Chairs of governing bodies each term collectively, addressing key strategic issues. Feedback from the governing body training and development programme and briefing sessions is positive, as areas of focus directly align to national priorities and to the analysis of need following monitoring visits.

Support for vulnerable learners

- ⊙ There is a strong network of support to help schools improve and manage behaviour.
- ⊙ Following a behaviour review undertaken across all schools a model was agreed to address providing equitable and consistent behaviour support services. The new service delivery model has doubled the number of staff on the Behavioural Support Community Team. Qualitative data collected provides a very positive response regarding the support of the team and the impact they are having in the training provided.
- ⊙ To enhance the specialist BESD support available in schools, the Local Authority listened to the concerns of Headteachers in Secondary Schools and agreed to provide funding to each school to employ an additional member of staff to support vulnerable learners demonstrating BESD. (£500k)
- ⊙ There is a strong service to support schools in managing and improving attendance.
 - LA and school-based attendance data is shared routinely with the Departmental Management Team to identify monthly trends in sectors and to identify schools where there may be cause for concern. This data is further shared with schools' Education Support Advisors as part of their support and challenge to schools.
- ⊙ The Youth Support Service works effectively with a range of partners to ensure that children and young peoples' needs are met and that they are safeguarded well.
 - The service has received several national and UK-wide accolades and ensures a Youth Worker for every Secondary school as well as universal and targeted provision. The LGBTQIA+ work is highlighted as 'sector leading' within the Youth Work Quality Mark report.
- ⊙ The Carmarthenshire Youth Council provides robust, meaningful opportunities to seek and respond to the views of our young people.

Admissions

- ⊙ The authority manages admissions to its schools well, and in line with statutory requirements, enabling most learners to obtain places at their first-preference school. The percentage of successful first choice applications to date for the normal round 22/23 for Primary is 80.64% and is 88.44% pupils for Secondary Schools.

Modernising Education Programme (MEP)

- ⊙ We have completed projects at Ysgol Rhys Prichard, Ysgol Pum Heol, Ysgol Llangadog and Ysgol Gorslas. Ysgol y Castell Phase 1 (new school building) was completed in November 2022 with Phase 2

(Demolition/MUGA/Sports pitch) due for completion in Summer 2023. Work continues on site to provide Ysgol Pembrey with a new school building with Phase 1 occupation expected in November 2023.

- ⦿ A review of school catchment areas across the Authority will align with the ongoing review of the Modernising Education Programme (MEP) to reflect potential changes to the overall school footprint across the Authority.
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire County Council is currently updating data on the suitability, sufficiency and condition of its schools including PRU's and specialist settings. Having been identified as a corporate risk, a rolling programme of suitability assessments, and a rolling programme of condition surveys has been implemented for all non-housing building stock including schools and PRUs
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire County Council has clear priorities for investment via its Modernising Education Programme (MEP). The Programme is a strategic investment and rationalisation plan to transform school provision. It is kept under review to ensure that its school reorganisation and investment proposals retain flexibility at their core to reflect changing circumstances in a continually developing society and be responsive to changes in the education policy framework.

<u>School Organisation Consultation Process</u>	
Scrutiny Task and Finish	In 2021 the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to review the current consultation process for school organisation changes, including changes in linguistic provision and closure of schools. Several recommendations were made and accepted by Cabinet and are being implemented into the process where appropriate

- ⦿ In 2019, we undertook a survey of school sites in relation to pedestrian and vehicular health and safety. As a result of this, highest risk sites were highlighted for investment. This survey is currently being repeated.

Welsh Medium Education

- ⦿ The Authority successfully identifies the demand for Welsh medium education and meets this demand and provision in all phases reflects the Authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Carmarthenshire's WESP is innovative and ambitious and is effectively focused on ensuring Welsh medium education is available to all learners, within reasonable distance from their homes.
- ⦿ The plan focusses rigorously on proactively ensuring that all schools can move along the language continuum, specifically focusing on the advantages of access to learning during the Foundation Phase through immersion methodology. As a result, the supply and demand for Welsh medium education across the authority continues to increase.
- ⦿ It is noteworthy that, since 2016, eight primary schools have positively changed their linguistic categorisation, providing increased opportunities to learn through the medium of Welsh.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

- ⦿ Improvement planning is firmly based on the analysis of a broad range of data.
- ⦿ A notable feature of departmental structure is the Strategic Focus Groups, which provide important opportunities to strategically improve key issues for the education system based on local and national priorities.
 - A biennial Headteacher questionnaire provides important feedback and constructive suggestions for adapting and developing future service delivery. Pupils and parents are also consulted, and all information is cross-referenced and triangulated against corporate priorities, against information gleaned from focus groups such as several Headteacher fora, unions, and officer staff groups.

Safeguarding arrangements


Corporate Safeguarding

- The newly revised [Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#) provides a framework for every service within the Council setting out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and protecting children and adults at risk as well as the methods by which the Council will be assured that it is fulfilling its duties. This is supported by a robust Business Plan addressing identified priorities. The Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group, which consists of key representatives from a range of Departments and Chaired by the Statutory Director of Social Services, has a clear Terms of Reference and has overview of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and monitors the implementation of the Safeguarding Action Plan. Reports are presented to CMT. Key safeguarding indicators and risks have been identified and are reported on regularly as part of the corporate Performance Information Management System (PIMS).

Safeguarding in schools

- Safeguarding training for schools and for Designated Safeguarding Persons is kept updated on a termly basis, in response to emerging themes, trends, guidance and changes in legislation, and is also reviewed annually.
 - Feedback from course participants indicates that these updates ensures that the training continues to be highly relevant to the needs of schools and to the safeguarding of learners.
 - The training for schools and DSPS is provided on a regular, rolling programme. School staff and staff from the Music Service, TADG, Child Protection Officers, Residential Child Care Workers, MEAS and Area 43 counsellors have received training ensuring that they are up to date with consistent training, in line with the timescales in Keeping Learners Safe guidance.
- In nearly all schools, learners are confident with online safety and share strategies for staying safe online. However, a very few settings needed to establish a program of regular online safety lessons. Interacting and collaboration occurs in a minority of schools and mainly with older learners.

Use of resources

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Schools Expenditure (Final Report Issued: 4th April 2023)</p> <p><u>Objective of the review:</u> The review sought to provide assurance that schools' expenditure is appropriate and has been committed in line with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules for Schools and other relevant policies. The review covered the controls and procedures in operation.</p>	<p><i>Assurance Rating</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1248 1413 1513 1547"> <tr> <td><i>High</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Acceptable</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Low</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>High</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>High</i>					
<i>Acceptable</i>					
<i>Low</i>					

- The Council's allocation of resources reflects the priority afforded to education services. The local authority spends above the indicator-based assessment for education services and has in recent years increased and protected schools' budgets against a backdrop of financial pressures across the Council.
- The Council has protected/prioritised school funding despite need to find larger budget reductions across other services. This has meant that school budgets are higher than would have been the case if they had been treated on an equivalent basis.
- Additional funding is provided every year to departmentally resourced education services for demand/legislative or unavoidable service pressures identified.
- The authority has a comprehensive range of good value Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in place with nearly all schools buying into all the SLA's.

- ⦿ In 2022/23 Carmarthenshire delegated 87.9% of the education budget (excluding school transport) to schools which was above the Welsh average of 86.8%.
- ⦿ The authority is aware of current financial risks and those on the horizon and we recognise that it will be necessary to respond to increasing challenges, including potential increases in costs relating to staff pay and pensions, energy and transport.

Healthy Eating And Living And Making Healthy Choices

- ⦿ Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and have a solid understanding of the importance and benefits of eating and drinking healthily along with undertaking physical exercise
- ⦿ Engagement in sporting activities both within and outside school hours is increasing and, where numbers are low, schools are responding creatively with innovation. For example, having learners to design their own PE kit, giving the bronze ambassadors more responsibility, arranging specific Health and Wellbeing days in the outdoors.
- ⦿ The percentage of participation in physical activities and sport across Carmarthenshire (41%) is higher than the national average (39%)

School meals

- ⦿ Monitoring visits are ongoing. All Catering assistants have completed the Food safety and Allergen training with only a handful of breakfast staff to complete. These are employees with limited IT skills or no access to computers who our Catering managers have had to support directly. Training and induction will be rolled out to all new starters and mobile catering officers.

Sport and Leisure

- ⦿ In response to local and national insight the **Actif** Communities team have rolled out a ‘*Physical Literacy*’ programme to improve the quality of school sport and physical activity. This is being achieved through a whole-school approach via a package of school staff training, mentoring and support. Since the programme’s inception in September 2022, 24 Schools have received training for their entire staffing workforce as well as follow-up mentoring session to embed the learning and provide further support. Initial impact assessment demonstrates increased confidence and competence levels of school staff with improved understanding the importance of physical literacy and increased knowledge of resources to further enhance the quality of delivery.
- ⦿ The *Young Ambassador Programme* in Schools continues to go from strength to strength with over 400 Ambassadors leading and inspiring the next generation to be more active. Around 25,000 participations were recorded in 22/23 lead by Ambassadors on their school yards or halls.
- ⦿ The *Actif Communities’ Intervention and Engagement* programmes have seen targeted support provided across Carmarthenshire’s secondary schools for young people who are disengaged or struggling to take part in regular school sport and PE. Following the 10-week programmes pupils are re-introduced to school sport and PE with heightened levels of confidence, competence and motivation. 365 Children across the county benefited from this initiative with plans to develop the programme further to develop the way in which we measure and demonstrate the impact this has on young people.
- ⦿ *Actif Anywhere Schools* was launched in January 2023 with a free trial period for schools to take part in the initiative. Actif Anywhere Schools provides live-streamed activity straight into classrooms across the county as well as a bank of on demand sessions. As well as the physical benefits of being active, the sessions help improve mood, concentration and memory of the children.



- ⦿ We will work in partnership to look at the issue of around a third of our children and young people being classified as overweight or obese in the County, with the figure being one of the highest in Wales. This is a wider public health issue, and the Council will have a significant contribution through school dinners and leisure. A scrutiny task and finish working group has been established to review this issue during 2023-24, with work already underway. This area will continue to be a key focus for our prevention and early intervention work and affect better life-long habits for our residents.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Cabinet Advisory Panels

- **Corporate Parenting And Safeguarding Panel**- The Corporate Parenting Panel provides a level of scrutiny, monitoring, oversight and challenge as to how well the Council is doing in meeting the needs of looked after children and care leavers.
- **School Improvement Panel** - The School Improvement Panel was established to enable the County Council to effectively discharge constitutional and statutory responsibilities for monitoring school performance, constantly striving to improve educational outcomes for our pupils
- **Education Admissions Forum**- The Council is required under The Education Act 2002 to establish an Admission Forum which has the power to advise the Local Authority on matters connected with the determination of admission arrangements.
- **Welsh In Education Forum** - The WESP sets out a requirement for each local authority to establish a Welsh Education Forum In legislation the Forum is described as follows-Welsh medium education forum” (“fforwm addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg”) means a body established by a local authority for the purpose of improving the provision of Welsh medium education the members of which consist of local authority officers and such other persons as the local authority considers appropriate.

Education, Young People and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language

8 Education Strategic Focus Groups

Well-being Objective 2 – Live & Age Well

Enabling our residents to live and age well



Overarching judgement

Just over a third of Carmarthenshire households are thought to be living in poverty, a situation which will likely be made worse by the cost of living crisis. In response to this the Council has developed a stronger and more integrated approach to support residents.

Following the pandemic, we have seen increased demand for all social care services, made more challenging by the increasing complexity of cases, however, we have continued to innovate, develop and protect the most vulnerable. We are also clear regarding priorities and service improvements going forward.

We have delivered over 1,000 additional affordable homes since 2019/20 in recognition that the additional supply of homes in our rural and urban communities is key to enabling community resilience and cohesion.

Why this is important

We want to enable our residents to live and age well and participate fully in society. To achieve this, we need to:




- Tackle poverty and reduce its detrimental impact.
- help people to maintain their independence at home for as long as possible.
- Ensure good quality affordable homes.



The key overarching indicators and measures we set ourselves for this overall objective

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for Well-being Objective 2.

Population Indicators in the main are publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire's position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Through our well-being objectives the Council has an important role to play in making progress against these indicators, however, it should be noted that these are not solely indicative of the Council's performance and will be influenced by many external factors.

Performance Measures are inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Population Indicators			
Indicator	Trend		Explaining the Data
	Male	Female	
Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at Birth			<p>Healthy Life Expectancy is Decreasing for Males and Increasing for Females</p> <p><i>The trendlines adjacent cover the periods 2017/19 to 2018/20.</i></p> <p>HLE measures the number of years someone is expected to live in good health. Generally, people are living longer than ever before due to advancements in health care and a general improvement in living standards.</p> <p>However, there are variations between sex and where a person lives. HLE for males in Carmarthenshire is lower than that for females and saw a decrease between 2017-19 and 2018-20 from 60.4 to 59.7. This is the 18th lowest level of all local authorities in Wales and is less than the Wales average of 61.5.</p> <p>Female HLE increased slightly over the same time period from 61.1 to 61.8. This is the 13th lowest level of all local authorities and is also less than the Wales average of 62.4.</p> <p>This is an important consideration in Carmarthenshire as the county is home to an above average level of people aged over 65, which, when coupled with a HLE which is below average, could result in increased pressure on health and social care services.</p>
% of People Living in Material Deprivation			<p>Levels of Material Deprivation are Rising</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.</i></p> <p>Material deprivation is a measure which is designed to capture the consequences of long-term poverty on households.</p> <p>The most recent data (2022/23) indicates that 16.7% of households in Carmarthenshire are living in material deprivation. This is the 7th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and an increase on figures for 2020/21 (12%).</p> <p>This increasing trend is in line with generally increasing trends for poverty rates. The ongoing cost of living crisis is also likely having a detrimental impact on household deprivation levels.</p> <p>The Council is undertaking significant cross-departmental work to support residents affected by the cost of living crisis and improving the lives of those living in poverty. Intelligence gathered has resulted in the development of a Tackling Poverty Plan which encourages an integrated approach.</p>

<p>Adult Mental Well-being Score</p>		<p>The Score for Adult Mental Wellbeing is on a Downward Trend which is Consistent with National Trends</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016/17 to 2022/23.²(Scores³ are out of 70, with a higher score indicating a better result).</i></p> <p>The score for Carmarthenshire as of 2022/23 was 48.3, a decrease on previous figures for 2021/22 (48.8). This is perhaps indicative of the effects of the pandemic, in which we saw the most significant change to normal life in decades. Decreases were seen at a Wales level also.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire’s position relative to the other local authorities in Wales is the 10th lowest, compared with 11th lowest for the previous year.</p> <p>Findings of a recent residents’ consultation indicate that there was overall agreement from respondents that consideration should be given to supporting people’s mental health in the county.</p> <p>The Council recognises this and is committed to working with partners to provide readily accessible and appropriate levels of support to individuals with mental health issues, focusing on an expansion of access and support to children and vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>Adults who have 2 or more healthy lifestyle behaviours</p>		<p>The Number of Adults with 2 (or more) Healthy Lifestyle Behaviours is Increasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.</i></p> <p>Healthy lifestyle behaviours are directly related to HLE as noted above and are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not smoking, • Being a healthy weight, • Eating five fruits/vegetables a day, • Not excessively drinking alcohol, and • Undertaking physical exercise in line with guidelines. <p>Carmarthenshire has seen a very slight improvement on figures for the previous year moving from 92.4% to 92.5%. This has translated to the county exhibiting the 9th highest figure of all local authorities in Wales, an improvement from 13th the previous year.</p> <p>This is slightly higher than the Wales average which sits at 92.3%. Continued improvement for this measure would likely translate to an improvement in HLE.</p>

² This question was not asked for 2019/20 therefore there is no comparable data for this year

³ This score is derived from the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale and is intended to measure mental well-being as opposed to mental illness or disorder.

Outcomes we set ourselves

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
<p>Help and support to alleviate the effects of the 'cost of living' crises and poverty in the County</p>	<p>Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do.</p> <p>At a household level the most recently available paycheck data suggests that 34.5% of all households in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty⁴, this translates to around 28,730 households. This is a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year which mirrors trends seen nationally</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Seamless integrated services between Health and Social Care</p>	<p>We continue to have an integrated service between the Health Board and Carmarthenshire County Council for older people and people with physical disabilities. Over the last year, we have relooked at our integrated management structure to ensure that our services can benefit all Carmarthenshire residents equally regardless of where they live.</p> <p>We have continued to develop our Home First approach to help those in hospital get home quicker and support those in crisis in the community to prevent them going to hospital in the first place. We now have a multi-disciplinary team based at our offices at Eastgate made up of a range of health, social care and third sector professionals to support those leaving hospital and those in crisis in the community. This team includes an Advanced Paramedic Practitioner who can support with diverting ambulances from the Emergency Department and Llesiant Delta Well-being (our council owned arms-length company) who are able to provide short term support for those in crisis through their rapid response service. Llesiant Delta Wellbeing are now supporting thousands of elderly people with proactive digital support in their own homes.</p> <p>To support this approach, we have further developed our 14-bed unit Ty Pili-Pala, attached to Llys Y Bryn care home, where patients leaving hospital can benefit from a period of assessment and rehabilitation. This development has proved highly successful with 70% of people leaving the service with no need for ongoing formal care. We have also launched our integrated reablement home care service, to provide short-term care to those leaving hospital and 90% of people accessing this service have no long-term care requirements on leaving the service.</p> <p>Our overall approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care, which is particularly important at the moment with all of the challenges relating to securing care and support at home due to the ongoing recruitment and retention issues in the</p>	<p>Yes</p>

⁴ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	care sector. This approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care.	
Accessible, inclusive, sustainable services, which promote and facilitate learning, culture, heritage, information, well-being and leisure.	We are progressing an ambitious programme of change in our learning day services provision; buildings are now being utilised for those with the most complex needs and we are working with colleagues in leisure and environment to offer community activities which promote independence and social inclusion.	Yes
Improved preventative services to meet the demands of an ageing population.	A multi-agency Prevention Board has been established comprising of representatives from the Council, Health Board, Public Health and the Third Sector. This Board will start to map existing preventative services in the County, with a view to identifying key gaps and an action plan for development. A new Senior Delivery Manager for Prevention is also in the process of being recruited who will provide leadership across agencies to drive this action plan forward. We have established well-being pathways within the Community Mental Health Teams.	Yes
A reduction and working towards an end to homelessness.	<p>A Rapid Re-Housing Plan has been developed which outlines the vision on how we intend to transform the homeless service.</p> <p>Workstreams as part of the Rapid Re-housing plan have been established to look at key areas which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Allocations Policy • Reviewing and Developing housing related support • Temporary accommodation • Developing settled accommodation <p>We have improved the Prevention of Homelessness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Housing Hwb Team • Reviewing and Developing the Emergency Allocations Policy • Utilising the Discretionary Housing Prevention Fund <p>The Pre-tenancy team has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided more support to new tenants by maximising their benefits/income to help them maintain tenancies. • Expanded the support available to tenants in the private rented sector. • Re-introduced training packages for young people to help them maintain tenancies. • Pilot training program with the DWP as part of the claimant commitment. 	Yes
Availability of good quality and energy efficient affordable homes in the County	The Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan confirms our commitment and approach to increasing the supply of good quality and energy efficient affordable homes throughout the county. In 2022/23 we delivered an additional 323 affordable homes (exceeding our target by over 100 homes), using a range of solutions including:	Yes

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building new Council homes • bringing empty homes back into use • increasing our housing stock by buying private sector homes on the open market • working with our Housing Association partners and supporting them to build more homes in the County • managing private homes through our inhouse Simple Lettings Agency • delivering affordable homes for low-cost home ownership through the planning system <p>Since the beginning of our affordable housing programme, we have now delivered an additional 1,760 homes, creating homes and communities for local people</p>	
<p>Recognise and seek to limit the disproportionate barriers faced by marginalised groups in accessing services and support which allow them to live and age well.</p>	<p>The Age-friendly Communities approach was developed by the World Health Organisation in 2007, in consultation with older people around the world. It is built on the evidence of what supports healthy and active ageing in a place and supports older residents to shape the place that they live.</p> <p>By following this approach, local groups, leaders, councils, businesses and older residents will all work together to identify and make changes in both the physical and social environments. This includes improving transport, outdoor spaces, volunteering and employment, leisure and community services.</p> <p>All Local Authorities in Wales have received funding from Welsh Government in order to become members of the Age-friendly communities' programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2022/23, we have undertaken a detailed mapping exercise against the domains of the programme and this evidence will form basis for our future action planning. <p>In recognising that some people groups may face difficulties accessing services and support , we have put a number of things in place to mitigate this . Some examples are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carmarthenshire is part of a regional independent advocacy scheme which supports people to access services, and as part of their ongoing support . • Information is provided in easy read format and in language of choice. • Interpretation can be facilitated where necessary <p>For individuals with hearing impairments requiring TEC services and alarm monitoring, we can use SMS as means of communication and email/home visits to gather necessary information to enable us to set the service. There is also a lot of TEC available to support individuals with visual and hearing impairments</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
Improved opportunities for all residents in literacy, numeracy and digital skills to upskill for employment.	We have established a skills hub for people with disabilities which will provide opportunities for accredited learning and digital skills to upskill them for volunteering and ultimately employment.	Yes
People are supported to take advantage of local opportunities whether it be through starting a business, gaining qualifications or gaining meaningful employment	The Employability Programmes in Carmarthenshire support individuals who are unemployed or who have been made redundant. The support includes one to one mentoring; training; confidence building; helping with CV' writing and finding suitable employment and volunteering opportunities. The programmes (C4W plus and Workways +) have both helped secure employment for individuals from Carmarthenshire as well as offering training to meet the needs of employers.	Yes

As a Council we focus on the following thematic and service priorities

WBO2a Thematic Priority: Tackling poverty

WBO2b Service Priority: Housing

WBO2c Service Priority: Social Care

Enabling our residents to live and age well

Thematic Priority 2a - Tackling Poverty

34.5% (28,730) of households are living in poverty⁵, a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year.

Whilst this is the case Carmarthenshire still exhibits the 8th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and poverty levels remain higher than the Welsh average by 1.1%.

Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are, can and need to do.

Why this is important?

- ⦿ Poverty and deprivation have serious detrimental effects, impacting all aspects of well-being. It limits the opportunities and prospects for children and young people and damages the quality of life for families and communities.
- ⦿ Poverty can be a barrier to full participation in society and is too often an intergenerational experience which poses a significant threat to experiencing positive well-being both now and in the future.
- ⦿ With the added pressures of the cost-of-living crisis there is a need for a fully integrated and collaborative approach to responding and supporting in the areas that we can influence.
- ⦿ In addition, 34.6% of children in Carmarthenshire are thought to be living in poverty, this translates to around 11,247 children. This exceeds national levels and is the 12th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint sixth highest rate of change over the last five years.
- ⦿ To corroborate this a large proportion of respondents to a recent consultation agreed that poverty is a problem in their respective area. In addition, the vast majority of the respondents highlighted the cost of living crisis and themes aligned to this as being one of the main challenges being faced by them and their families at the time of survey.


How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures monitored for the Tackling Poverty thematic priority.

⁵ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income -

Population Indicators		
Measure	Trend	Explaining the Data
Households Living in Poverty		<p>Slightly Less Households are in Poverty than the Previous Year but Levels Still Exceed National Averages</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2014-2022. It depicts a changeable picture characterised by a general downward trend with increases seen in 2018, 2020 and 2021.</i></p> <p>The most recently available data (2022) suggests that 34.5% of all households in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty⁶, this translates to around 28,730 households. This is a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year which mirrors trends seen nationally. It is thought that this is largely to do with the time period covered by the data which coincides with the pandemic.</p> <p>Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do.</p> <p>Departments are working hard to support those in most need through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving supported savings in the form of income maximization and grants; • Supporting households to claim what they're entitled to; • Better signposting to relevant support agencies and information.
Median Weekly Pay (Full Time Workers)		<p>Weekly Pay for People Living in Carmarthenshire is Increasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2012-2022 and depicts a generally increasing trend.</i></p> <p>The most recent data for 2021 indicates that Wales' average gross weekly earnings is £603.50 which is significantly lower than the GB average of £642.20⁷.</p> <p>In Carmarthenshire, the average weekly wage is £623.40, higher than the average for Wales but still noticeably lower than the GB average.</p>

⁶ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income - £20,021

		<p>Earnings have a direct effect on a person’s life, impacting every decision that is made. This becomes particularly difficult if a person’s earnings do not allow them to meet their basic needs and made worse if wage growth does not coincide with the rate of inflation, the effects of which many are facing right now.</p> <p>As noted previously, the Council is committed to supporting people to maximise their incomes and access the support that they are entitled to.</p>
<p>Housing Affordability Ratio</p>		<p>Housing Affordability is Amongst the Best in Wales</p> <p><i>The adjacent trendline covers the period 2014-2022 and depicts a fluctuating trend. Increases in the county have not been as significant as other areas in Wales.</i></p> <p>Dividing the house price for a given area by its earnings, produces a ratio which serves as an indicator of relative affordability. A higher ratio indicates that on average, it is less affordable for a resident to purchase a house in their local authority. Conversely, a lower ratio indicates higher affordability in a local authority.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire’s current ratio is 5.61 which is significantly lower than the highest ratio in Wales of 9.47. This is the 6th lowest level of all local authorities as of 2022. Whilst increases have been seen over recent years these increases are not as significant as have been seen in other areas. It should be noted that housing affordability will vary between smaller areas within the county.</p> <p>Access to affordable housing is important as it leads to improvements in both physical and mental health and well-being. Put simply, the more affordable housing is then the more money households have to spend on the other things that they need which in turn increases their quality of life.</p> <p>Residents indicated via a recent consultation that it is important that local people are supported to buy homes locally.</p>

Performance Measure		
Poverty is a problem in my area - Residents Consultation	2022	<p>Poverty rates are generally on the rise, both at a national level and at a Carmarthenshire level, a trend which is likely to be exacerbated by the rising cost of living.</p> <p>Responses to this statement were mixed, however a higher proportion overall agree that poverty is a problem in their area. Further analysis indicates that agreement was more acute amongst some groups, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents with disabilities, • Respondents with caring responsibilities, • Members of the LGBTQ+ community, • Respondents whose household incomes are below £30,000 per year • Respondents who are either serving members of the armed forces or are veterans.
	0.23	

Progress in 2022/23

Child Poverty

- Children are consistently the age group most likely to be in relative income poverty; this is true across all four UK nations. Data for 2019/20 indicated that 31.3% of children in Carmarthenshire were living in poverty, compared with 30.6% at a Wales level.
- The latest data for 2021 estimates that 34% of children in Wales are living in poverty, a percentage point increase of 4.8 over the last five years. This is compared to an UK level of 27%. The figures for Carmarthenshire show a 4.7 percentage point increase over the same time period, with 34.6% of children living in poverty.⁸ This translates to around 11,247 children. This is the 12th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint sixth highest rate of change over the last five years.⁹
- The largest proportion of children living in poverty live in workless households. However, more concerning is the increasing rate at which children living in working households are living in poverty. At a Wales level the risk of a child being in poverty in a household whereby all adults are in work is 17%. This is an increase of 5 percentage points from 12% over the last ten years.¹⁰

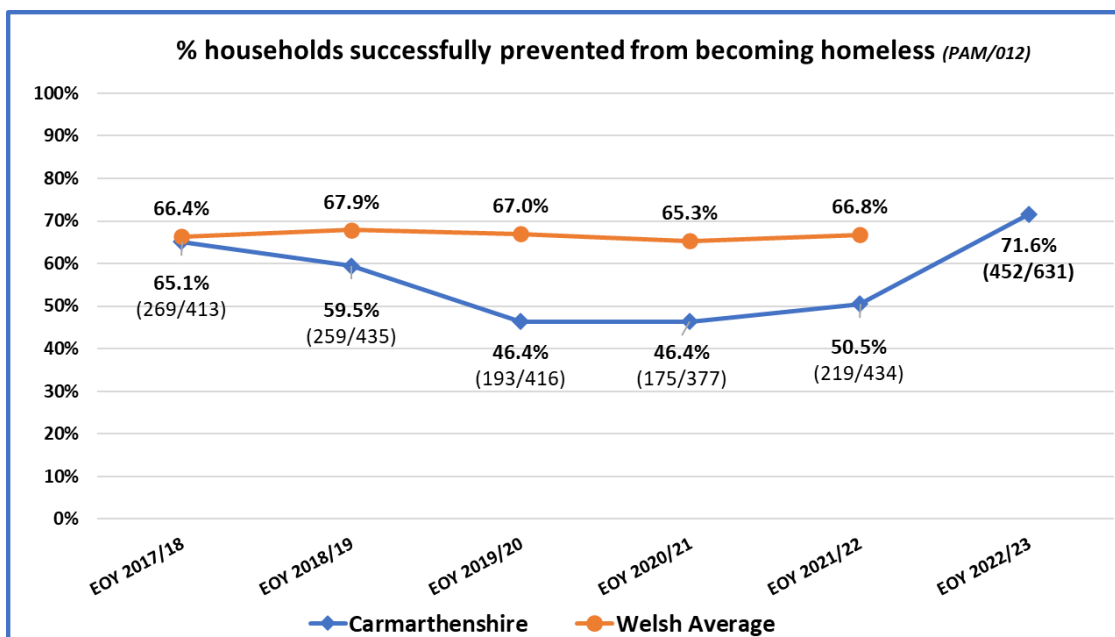
Toybox Appeal 2022

Over 9,900 toys and gifts to 1,650 children

This is an increase of 28% in the number of nominations. We are once again extremely grateful to the people of Carmarthenshire for their astounding generosity. The support has come from county councillors, town and community councils, churches and chapels, schools, shops, businesses, and extremely generous individuals from all corners of the county. This has enabled us to provide support for children and young people during the Christmas period and is a real example of the whole community working together to support families in need.

Homelessness Prevention

- % of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless in Carmarthenshire has improved from 50.5% (2021/22) to 71.63% (2022/23), this is the highest recorded prevention figure since reporting commenced in 2017/18.



⁸ [Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2021-FINAL.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

⁹ The HBAI figures for 2020/21 are less reliable than earlier years due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. This should be kept in mind when interpreting the statistics

¹⁰ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Poverty/childreninrelativeincomepoverty-by-economicstatusofhousehold>

We have achieved this by:

- developing the Housing Hwb Team – we now have more emphasis at the first point of contact where we are able to assess households' circumstances in more detail to tailor the support and advice they require. By creating our in-house support team and re-aligning existing resources we have moved from a reactive service to a more preventative service.
- the introduction of the Emergency Allocations Policy. This has enabled us to directly match homes to applicants most in need, such as those who are homeless, are at risk of homelessness or are in urgent housing need. We are able to allocate homes more quickly and ensure the property they are matched to meets their needs and is in an area they have a community connection to.
- utilising Welsh Government grant funding known as the Discretionary Homelessness Prevention Fund. This funding has helped to prevent and relieve homelessness by utilising the money made available to top up rent where there is a shortfall, pay rent in advance to secure a new home where an individual wishes to move to, help to reduce rent arrears to enable existing tenants remain in their homes. By using this funding and offering other support services available from within the team we have been able to prevent more households from becoming homeless and help them to sustain their tenancies.
- Converting 8 3-bedroom houses into 2-bedroom en-suit properties suitable for 2 people to share accommodation. This has helped to alleviate the pressure on single person accommodation within the county.

Living in material deprivation

- ⊙ Five of Carmarthenshire's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are identified as being in the top 10% most deprived in Wales and rank highly in a number of the domains most closely related to poverty, namely, income, employment, health, education and housing. These areas are: Tyisha 2, Glan-y-môr 4, Bigyn 4, Tyisha 3, Llwynhendy 3.
- ⊙ Since 2011 the number of areas in Carmarthenshire included in the 30% most deprived in Wales has increased by 25% which further corroborates the increasing poverty rates evident in the county.
- ⊙ A more detailed analysis of the 2019 WIMD data for Carmarthenshire can be accessed [here](#).

Review of our approach to Tackling Poverty

- ⊙ Our new Data Insight Team developed a poverty profile for Carmarthenshire so that we could understand the issues involved.
- ⊙ Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do. We have prepared a Tackling Poverty Plan which *will be revised when Welsh Government publish their Child Poverty Strategy within the next 12-months*.
- ⊙ During the year Audit Wales published a report on poverty and made 2 recommendations for Welsh Government and 6 for local authorities. This was an all-Wales report and we had already been doing many of the best practice ideas recommended by the all Wales study.

This report looks at the challenge of poverty in Wales and how government is responding.

It acknowledges that effectively tackling poverty is not easy and is exceedingly difficult for both Welsh Government and councils in Wales. This is the first of three reviews on the challenge of alleviating and tackling poverty

Comment

The report identified best practice and we had already achieved a number of its recommendations.

	Recommendations for Local Authorities Abbreviated	Status	Comment
A	That councils use their Well-being Plans to provide a comprehensive focus on tackling poverty to co-ordinate their efforts, meet local needs and support the revised national plan targets and actions	✓	The Council will set tackling poverty as a thematic priority within one of its well-being objectives within the new Corporate Strategy and the PSB has also included tackling poverty in its draft Well-being Plan. Actions and measures to make progress against these objectives will be determined with clarity between organisational and partnership response to avoid duplication.
B	That each council designate a cabinet member as the council's poverty champion and designate a senior officer to lead and be accountable for the anti-poverty agenda	✓	CLlr Linda Davies Evans, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty already appointed following May 2022 elections. The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy identified as lead senior officer.
C	That councils improve their understanding of their residents' 'lived experience' through meaningful involvement in decision-making using 'experience mapping' and/or 'Poverty Truth Commissions' to review and improve accessibility to and use of council services.		Agreement to develop a Carmarthenshire engagement programme to seek views of residents. (By December 2023)
D	To ensure people are able to get the information and advice they need, we recommend that councils optimise their digital services by creating a single landing page on their website	✓	This is available through the Council's Website on the 'Claim What's Yours' page
E	To streamline and improve application and information services for people in poverty		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work already underway centred around the Council's Hwb model. • Collation and use of data is being considered as part of wider Council data suite. • Specific issues relating to data sharing will be considered. (by September 2023)
F	That councils review their integrated impact assessments or equivalent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of up to date Carmarthenshire data profiles is underway. • Review of Integrated Impact Assessment to ensure capture of these elements will be undertaken. (by September 2023)

Preventing Poverty

We have re-introduced our in-person pre-accommodation training courses which can be accessed by anyone cross tenure within Carmarthenshire. This has helped to identify support needs at an earlier point, signpost to appropriate support including income maximisation and informing people of what help is available to them.

We have Private Rented Sector Support Workers located in the 3 Job Centre Plus offices to provide help and advice to anyone with a housing cost attached to their Universal Credit (UC) claim.

Poverty and Work

Whilst it is well evidenced that being in paid employment reduces the risk of poverty compared to being in a workless household, trend data indicates that levels of what is termed as 'in-work' poverty are rising. For context, the risk of being in poverty for working age adults living in a household where all adults work has increased by 2 percentage points between 2010 and 2020.¹¹

Further evidence shows that the risk of poverty is higher for disabled workers, BAME workers, single parents and families with children. Falling benefit incomes and rising living costs continue to pull low-income working families into poverty.¹²

Job quality (remuneration), job quantity (labour market participation of household members) and household expenditure (cost of dependents) are some of the contributory factors to in-work poverty. We recognise therefore, the importance of meaningful employment and in line with this ensuring that people are supported into work or to improve their employability prospects is a priority for us. Through our Communities 4 Work Plus programmes we have achieved the following:

- ⦿ **532 adults** received **employability support** during 2022/23 with all (100%) of them feeling more positive with improved confidence about seeking work. *(EconD/020)*
- ⦿ **414 adults** received **digital inclusion support** during 2022/23 with all (100%) of them feeling more confident in using a computer and gaining IT skills. *(EconD/021)*
- ⦿ **502 accredited qualifications** were achieved by residents attending Employment related courses during 2022/23. *(EconD/022)*
- ⦿ **204** individuals were supported through Council employability schemes to earn the real living wages during 2022/23, this is an increase on the previous year of 153. *(EconD/023)*

Improving the lives of those living in poverty

Hwb Advisor Support

- ⦿ Specialist help, support and advice to help with the cost of living and other matters is available at each of our customer service Hwbs in Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen, on the phone through our contact centre or online through the Claim What's Yours website page.
- ⦿ Hwb advisers, working alongside budgeting officers, are available every day to provide tailored packages of support to residents with access to a range of council and other partner support services available to residents.

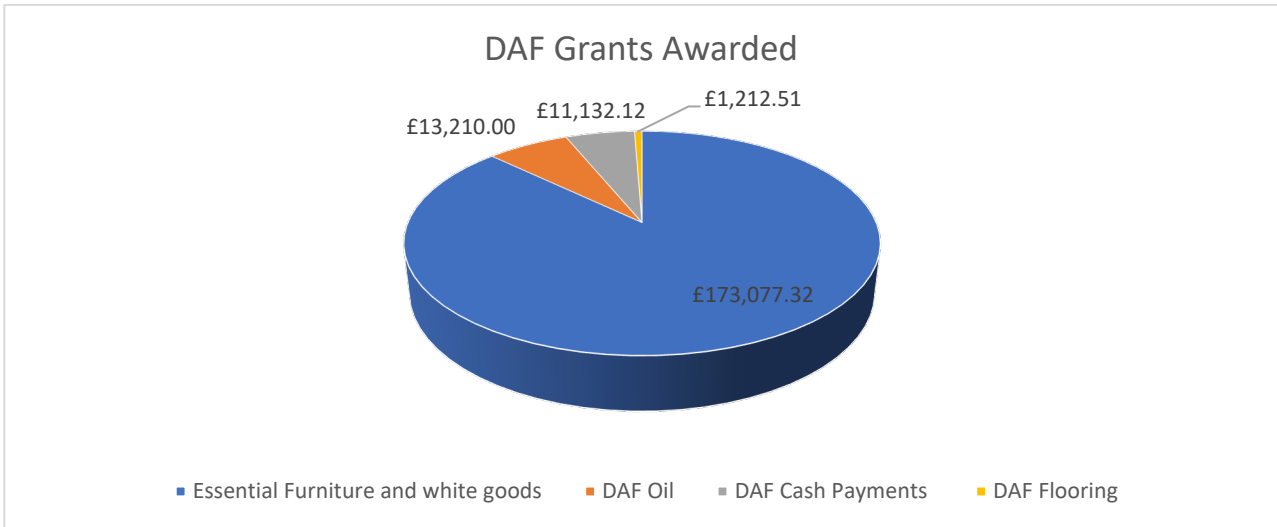
Pre-Accommodation Support

- ⦿ For the financial year April 2022/2023, we have supported a total of 847 new tenants' cross tenure (helping achieve £787,900 of supported savings in the form of income maximisation and grants). This is higher than the previous year due to an expansion of the service and, we are now recording Council Tax Reduction / Discounts - £345,641 for 2022/23.

¹¹ [Working age adults in relative income poverty by economic status of household \(gov.wales\)](#)

¹² [UK Poverty 2019/20: Work | JRF](#)

- Pre-Accommodation staff helped with income maximisation and completing several different benefit applications that financially impacted the tenants. We are trusted partners to apply to the Welsh Government Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF) providing grants for white goods, off grid fuel and Emergency Assistance Payments, as well as verified assessors for Welsh Water, where we can apply for reduced water rates to qualifying households.



- We issue Foodbank vouchers and make referrals as required for more complex cases.
- Pre-Accommodation support has been expanded into the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and we have also supported 138 tenancies in the PRS (included in figure above), through Housing Support Grant funding.
- Our PRS Support Officers are now located in the 3 main Job Centre Offices, taking referrals for anyone making a claim for Universal Credit and have housing costs in the PRS.
- We have re-started our training programme for people who join our housing register. We have provided training to: Youth Training - 19 young people; General training (in person) - 81 Households; General advice provided via phone email - 51 households.
- We have also extended the training to include a module for University of Wales Trinity Saint David as part of a Youth Workers course.
- We have started a pilot of partnership working with the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to provide training to young jobseekers as part of their claimant commitment.
- Satisfaction with our service for 2022/23 was 4.85 out of 5 based on responses returned.

Warm Places

- As a result of the pressing cost of living crisis and rising energy costs the Council established dedicated warm places in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford libraries. Newspapers, magazines, computers / iPads and a television are available in a comfortable seating area. By the end of March 2023 just over 8,000 attendances, within these warm places.
- In addition to the Council run facilities a Welsh Government Poverty Grant of £274,000 was administered by the Council to support the establishment of 45 community led warm spaces and 6 food related projects. The community-based service up to the end of March 2023, recorded approximately 10,000 attendances across these provisions.

Supporting families to claim all the financial support they are entitled to.

- ⦿ We continue to support families to claim all the support they are entitled to and actively pursue information to enable Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims to be processed as quickly as possible. We ensure we promote Discretionary Housing Payments and also actively encourage take up. There is close multi-Council service working and links with housing associations. An extra £100k has been allocated to the DHP fund via the cost -of -living discretionary scheme. In addition, we will undertake the relevant signposting and referrals to ensure that families receive the relevant advice and support.
- ! The average time taken to process new Housing /Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims (6.6.1.2) during 2022/23 is 18.46 days. Although this is higher than in 2021/22 when it was just over 16 days, this is still well within the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) requirements of 30 days to process new claims.
- ⦿ The average time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Reduction Scheme notifications of changes of circumstances continues to be very good at 3.62 days. (6.6.1.3)

Is anyone better off?

Hwb Advisor impact

Mrs H called into Hwb as she had received a summons for her council tax, as the Hwb Advisor was talking to her they could see that Mrs H was facing other financial difficulties, so the Hwb Advisor offered support to work through circumstances.

Mrs H was a single parent of 3 and a homeowner. Her only income was Employment Support Allowance (ESA), industrial injuries, Personal Independent Allowance (PIP - lower rate) and child benefit.

She was struggling with day-to-day bills and school dinners. She had applied for Free School meals but had been turned down.

Action Taken by Hwb Advisor

1. Issued with a council tax reduction (CTR) form and to apply for back dating
2. Checked council tax and could see there was no Single Occupancy Discount (SPD) in place, husband had left 2 years previous, issued SPD form
3. Advised to apply for Universal Credit (UC)
4. Advised to appeal Personal Independence Allowance (PIP) and apply for enhanced rate
5. Advised to apply for a blue badge due to health condition
6. Contacted Free School Meals services who advised to apply again if UC awarded and for Uniform Grant

Outcome

1. Council tax reduction awarded and backdated 3 months
2. Single Person Discount (SPD) awarded and backdated – refunded £1200
3. Awarded Universal Credit (UC)
4. Awarded the enhanced PIP
5. Awarded a blue badge
6. Free School Meals and Pupil Development Grant awarded

Mrs H was pleased with the help and support that she had received from the Hwb Advisor and noted that she was now approximately £800 a month better off and not struggling.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- **Cross-party Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel** – The Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel provides important support to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for tackling poverty. The Panel which is made up of a cross-party group of elected members oversees and monitors the Council’s Tackling Poverty Action Plan, overarching policy and wider tackling poverty agenda.
- During November 2022 the Council established a Head of Service level **Tackling Poverty Officers Working Group** in order to ensure a multi-service response to the cost of living crises. This approach has proved to be extremely beneficial and the collaboration and integration between Council services and with external stakeholders has been extremely beneficial in developing our response to cost of living pressures for residents.

2b - Service Priority- Housing

We have delivered over 1,000 additional affordable homes over the last four years

Good quality affordable homes are the bedrock of healthy and sustainable communities. Delivery through our plans and our new Housing and Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan continues to exceed targets.

Why this is important?

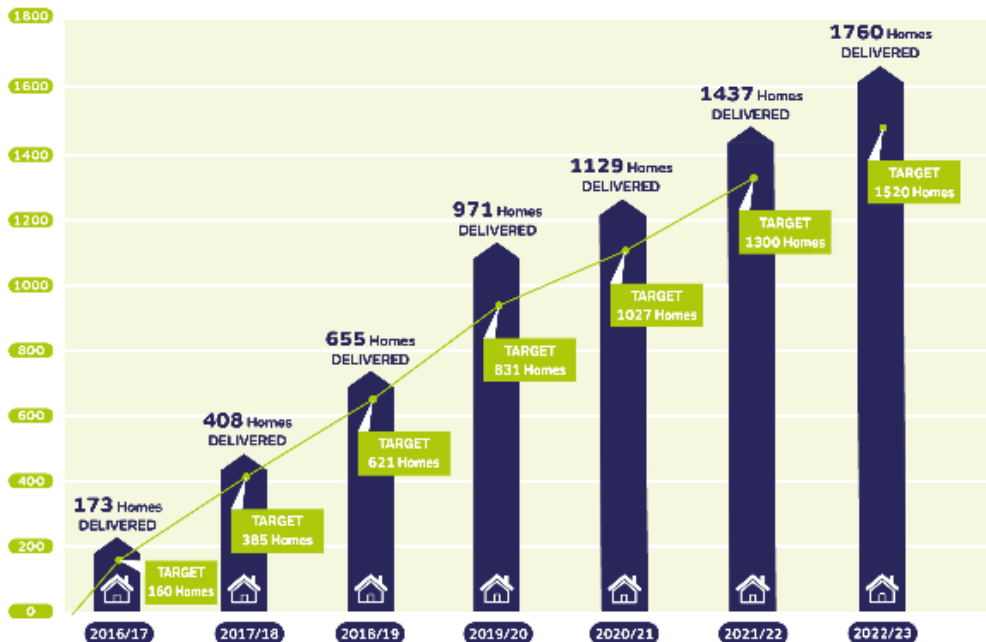
- Good quality affordable homes as well as continued significant investment in existing homes promotes health and well-being, meeting the individual needs of the residents, building resilient and cohesive communities and places where people want to live. Investment in existing and the additional supply of homes in our rural and urban communities across the County will be key to enabling community resilience and cohesion.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

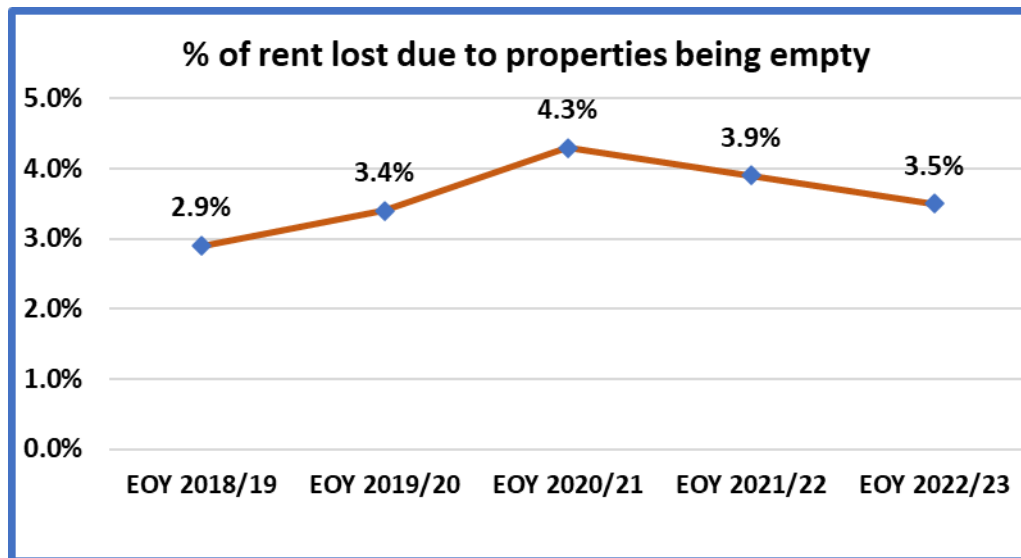
Success Measures / Explaining the Results


During 2022/23 we provided pre-accommodation support to 847 people cross tenure within Carmarthenshire. Within our own stock, we were able to support over 99% of new tenancies which started between 1st of April 2022 and 31st of March 2023.

- 323 additional affordable homes** were delivered in Carmarthenshire during 2022/23 (7.3.2.24)



- 3.5% of council house rent was lost due to properties being empty (Voids) during 2022/23 (PAM/039) this is an improvement on the last couple of years but not quite back to pre-COVID levels yet. We will continue to implement further improvement actions over the months to come, as laid out in our Void Action Plan and approved by Improvement Board. This has seen recent rates fall below 2018/19 levels.



 Internal Audit	<p>Housing Voids (Final report Issued:23rd August)) <i>Assurance Rating: Acceptable</i></p> <p>Objective of the review: The objective of the review was to ensure that the systems and procedures in place for Voids and Allocations are robust and comply with the Authority’s approved policies and procedures and current legislation.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>High</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Acceptable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> </tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

- It took an average of just over **6 calendar days to complete housing repairs** during 2022/23 (PAM/037), this is an improvement on the previous year of 15.1 days which was caused by a backlog of repairs on the aftermath of COVID and restrictions that came with it.



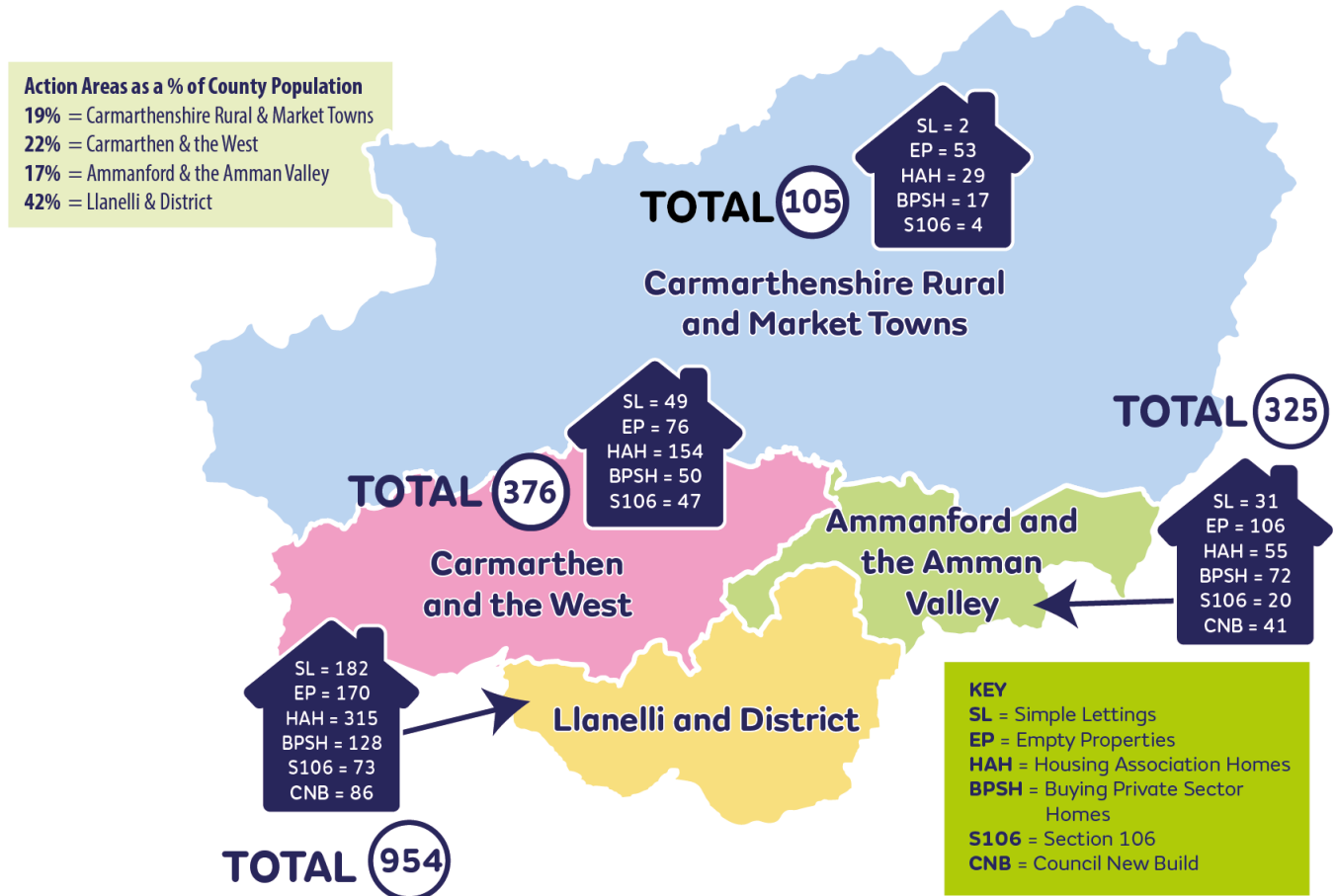
- There are many properties in the County that have been vacant for 6 months or more, as an Authority we provide advice and guidance as well as Welsh Government funded Empty Property Grants, to help to bring these empty properties back into use. Therefore, of the 1,980 empty properties that were empty in April 2022, we have helped **143 properties to be brought back into use** (PAM013), this equates to **7.2%** which is an improvement on 6% in 2021/22. The delivery of the Western Valleys Task Force, Valleys Task Force, Houses into Homes schemes, and a strong enforcement regime has allowed us to meet our target at the end of the year. There are however barriers that we have had to overcome like the economic crisis, supply and contractor availability and understanding the data/landscape of empty properties across the county that has slowed progress. The general decrease in the number of empty homes over the past 5 years and meeting this year’s target gives us a solid foundation to work from to deliver on the objectives within the empty homes policy over the next 3 years.

Progress in 2022/23


Affordable Homes

- Through our plans and our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan we have delivered a total of 1,760 additional affordable homes since 2016, exceeding our targets every year. As noted previously, 1,105 of those have been delivered in the last four years. Our current homes have been delivered throughout the County using a range of solutions as shown in the map.

Countywide Affordable Housing Delivery




- A brand new supported accommodation project has been launched in Coleshill Terrace which provides 24-hour support for residents. This project is a collaborative approach between Housing and Social Care and forms part of the Council's five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.
- The Council's first five new build developments have been completed and let creating 127 new homes in Llanelli, Burry Port, Pembrey, Ammanford and Llandybie.

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Affordable Homes (Final Report Issued: 6th July 2022) Assurance Rating: Acceptable</p> <p>Objective of the review: To ensure that systems and procedures for the management and administration of 'affordable housing' complied with those detailed in the approved Policies and Procedures. The audit also reviewed the adequacy of controls in place to verify the information declared in applications and confirmed that income is appropriately accounted for.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1257 212 1460 369"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
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Low					

Housing Property

- ⦿ We have undertaken 643 detailed surveys in our council homes in order to establish a programme of investment for our tenants.

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) <i>Objective of the review:</i> The objective of the review was to ensure that effective systems and procedures are in place for the management, administration, and reporting of Disabled Facilities Grants.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1276 795 1460 918"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

Is anyone better off?

First tenants move into new supported housing project in Llanelli

Carmarthenshire County Council has opened a brand-new supported accommodation project with 24-hour support for its residents in Coleshill Terrace, Llanelli. The Council has transformed the former Registrar Office and Cash Desk into quality supported accommodation for eight individuals, helping them to live independently in the community.

The works to transform the building have been jointly funded by Welsh Government’s Integrated Care Fund and Carmarthenshire County Council. The new facility contains four self-contained flats and a separate shared accommodation unit for four tenants.

The Coleshill Terrace project forms part of our commitment to increasing the supply of affordable, quality supported accommodation that is owned by the Council, as part of our affordable housing delivery plan.

This is a collaborative approach between Housing and social care that will help individuals live independently in their own homes. We will also provide appropriate support to manage their own tenancy to achieve greater freedom and control in their lives.

This project forms part of the Council’s five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan which will see the creation of over 2,000 homes within five years and an investment of over £300million.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

A range of cross Divisional Groups have been established to ensure the effective governance of Divisional plans in addition to the formal political structures. These include:

- Housing and Regeneration Steering Group- Affordable Homes Programme
- Participation in RDT and Transformation Board
- Quarterly performance management sessions with Cabinet members across the Housing and Public Protection Division
- Improvement Board for Housing Voids and repairs
- Weekly SMT/DMTs

2c - Service Priority- Social Care

Following the pandemic, we have seen increased demand for all social care services, made more challenging by the increasing complexity of cases, however, we have continued to innovate, develop and protect the most vulnerable. We are also clear regarding priorities and service improvements going forward.

Why is this important?

- Social care services across a range of client group areas are likely to see an increase in demand over coming years and with the sector facing significant pressures in terms of workforce capacity there is a need to focus attention and respond innovatively.
- The further development of collaboration and integration with health will be essential in order to deliver the key principles and standards relating to prevention, system flow, proactive care and planned care, and long-term care. The long-term aim is to wherever possible help people to maintain their independence at home for as long as possible, prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and support timely discharge home from hospital to ensure that those that need good hospital care can access it.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? 📄 Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

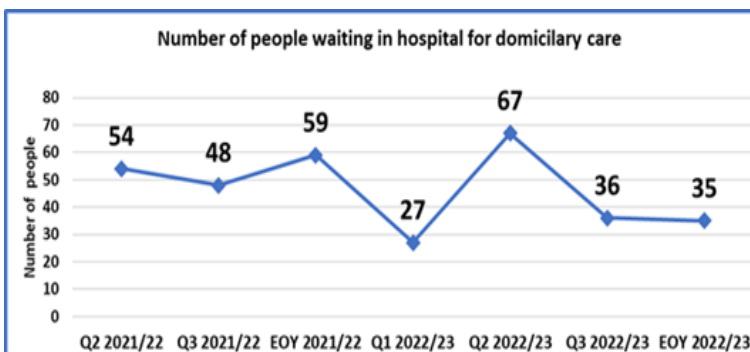


66%

Agree there's a good social care service available in their area
(Previously 47.5%)

Source: National Survey for Wales

According to the 2020/21 [National Survey for Wales](#) 66% of participants believed that there is **good Social Care Service available in the area**. This is an improvement on the last survey result of 47.5% and above the Welsh average of 63.9%.



The number of people waiting in hospital for domiciliary care varies during the year and is an 'as at' figure captured at the end of each month.

We continue our efforts to increase care capacity available via both internal and external recruitment and retention initiatives. We are increasing capacity through our enhanced integrated reablement service, which will help increase capacity available. There is a positive impact in reducing those waiting in hospital from our Home First approach, and providing short-term services where capacity allows. **(ASC/001)**



It takes us an average of **277** calendar days to deliver a

Disabled Facilities Grant

(Previously 259 days)

A backlog of delivering Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations occurred due to COVID-19 restrictions with delays and the ability to complete ongoing site work, since then the average number of days to complete these adaptations remains as we try to clear that backlog. This together with experiencing issues around contractor capacity, work is generally taking longer to complete. We are working on a new contractor framework and discussing ways to increase capacity in the interim



51.8% (198/382) of people referred to the National Exercise Referral scheme that completed the 16-week programme

(Pre-COVID this was at 57.4%-374/652)
(PAM/041)

The ability to run the full programme of NERS sessions (over the full 16-week programme) has been affected by capacity issues within the wider Health and Fitness team, and specifically the specialist NERS team. Exercise referrals cannot be taken and managed without qualified NERS instructors and upskilling a pool of staff to improve this position. Whilst both the number of overall referrals and then the number that complete the 16-week programme (a national indicator that reflects likely long-term adherence to healthier habits) are not back to pre-covid figures, both are improving, as we build back capacity and resilience in the team.

Progress in 2022/23

- Despite all of the workforce challenges across social care, we have effectively managed the risk to Carmarthenshire residents. Similarly, to the rest of Wales and the UK, due to the ongoing shortage of qualified and non-qualified social care staff, we have many more people than we would like, waiting for social work assessment and care. Whilst we are doing everything we can to address these workforce challenges, it has been important that we keep those that are waiting safe. We have done this through effective and regular triage and prioritisation of those waiting for assessment to ensure that those in greatest need are assessed first. We have then ensured that once someone is assessed and waiting for care, we keep in regular contact through our Care and Support Coordinators to monitor any escalation of need which needs to be addressed.
- We have established our Home First approach which supports earlier discharge from hospital and is starting to respond to people in crisis in the community. We are consequently providing patients with a period of assessment either at home or in a bed-based setting, prior to determining the long-term care arrangements required. This approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care, which is particularly important at the moment with all of the challenges relating to securing care and support at home.
- In 2022 the new integrated Home First Team, which is a collaboration between the Local Authority and Hywel Dda University Health Board, were finalists in the **UK Public Sector Transformation Awards**.

- The Council's Reablement service is a critical pillar of Intermediate Care and is heavily involved with the Home First approach, which is proving to be an innovative and successful way of improving person centred outcomes for citizens. The success of the integrated approach with Hywel Dda University Health Board has been recognised in a number of local and national awards received in 2022/23.



- ❖ HDUHB team of the month – February 2022
- ❖ Public Sector Transformation Awards March 2022 – silver award in the Transformation in Health & Social Care Category
- ❖ NHS Wales October 2022 – Delivering Person Centred Care
- ❖ NHS Wales awards October 2022 – Outstanding Contribution to the Transformation of Health and Care
- The Council's in house Homecare Service deploys 275 carers to deliver over 3,500 hours of essential care and support to over 330 citizens across the county. A Care Inspectorate Wales inspection report of 2022 found that:
 - ❖ People and their relatives speak highly about the care and support they receive.
 - ❖ The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.
 - ❖ Care Staff are knowledgeable, caring and take pride in the care and support they provide.
 - ❖ Care staff are well trained, have a good knowledge of the people they care for and are enthusiastic about working in the service.
 - ❖ The service has a strong leadership team with a clear vision for the service.
- The success of the Carmarthenshire in-house long-term Homecare Service was celebrated when they became winners of the Great British Care Awards Wales, Homecare Team Award in January 2023.
- Tŷ Pili Pala is a bed-based reablement unit which was established in joint partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board, supporting people to be discharged from hospital with the aim of enabling people to return home safely and maintain their independence. During 2022/23, 125 people were admitted and 119 have returned home either with reablement, low-level support provided by the Red Cross, home care or no service at all.
- Delta Well-being and Hywel Dda University Health Board have won a 'Partnership in Tec' award for a telehealth project which supports patients to manage their health and make sure they are fit for surgery. The project supports patients to monitor cardiac, lung function and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease remotely from their own homes using a range of health equipment paired to a mobile phone.
- Delta Well-being's Rapid Response Team is helping to prevent unnecessary ambulance callouts and hospital admissions by attending non-medical emergencies and supporting people in their own homes. In 2022/23, they supported 152 people in this way as well as helped bridge care arrangements which were due to start within the next week to support patients to come home from hospital sooner.

- ⦿ A Skills hub for adults with disabilities has opened in Cross Hands. The Hub offers structured opportunities to learn new skills and will offer accredited training to enable people to progress volunteering and potential employment opportunities going forward.
- ⦿ We have continued to develop new and innovative ways to grow our workforce and address some of the recruitment challenges that we continue to face:
 - A Care Academi which offers exciting opportunities to those looking for a career in social work or social care was established. 7 people are currently on the programme and recruitment for the next cohort is underway. Individuals will have experience in the different social care settings through placement rotations. We are also growing our own social workers through an increase in the number of traineeships within the Council.
 - We continue to work with the external domiciliary sector to look at ways to develop their workforce. This has included the retendering of our domiciliary care framework to ensure that we have effective coverage across the county. Following a successful pilot in Pembrokeshire, we are starting to develop micro-enterprises to deliver care in discreet communities.
- ⦿ We are starting to develop our overall approach to prevention and supporting people earlier before they need a statutory intervention. In line with this, we have recently retendered our preventative services aligned the 5 localities supported under our domiciliary care framework. Third sector organisations are starting to work in each locality to understand what they need in relation to preventative services to develop a bespoke offer which addresses the need of individual communities.
- ⦿ We have collaborated with colleagues in housing and commissioning to progress several accommodation projects and utilised external funding such as the Integrated Care (Capital) Fund to progress bespoke housing projects: We have developed six accommodation schemes for individuals with a learning disability.
- ⦿ In relation to substance misuse our specialist team have been raising awareness of the impact of substance misuse across the county. The team have provided training for staff working with adults and children including front line care staff. This year the team have also provided intensive support for people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage. Prevention is a key objective for the team.

Is anyone better off?

‘Living her best life’

R is a young woman aged 20 who has successfully moved into supported living from residential care . Following her long transition to living a more independent life, R has been supported by a dedicated team and a loving family. R is now said to be ‘living her best life’. People close to R made sure that her wishes and feelings were at the forefront of any decision-making process.

At her previous accommodation R preferred to spend time in her room and living area, knowing this the team ensured her new room was decorated and refurbished to her requirements. Following her move R has amazed everyone by choosing to spend significant periods of time with the other people in the communal areas within the house.

Watching her cut the ribbon at her own front door on the day of her move with a beaming smile brought a tear to the eyes of all who have supported her.

In R’s words her enthusiasm for being in her new home is expressed by an exuberant ‘All right Butt’ when she meets people on a day-to-day basis. All who know and understand how R communicates see this as her saying very clearly ‘I’m happy and I feel safe’.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- Monthly Integrated Services Quality Assurance Senior Management Team meetings.
- Performance Management Framework and scheduled dedicated Performance focused meetings as well as regular review of performance via Communities DMT and Integrated Services Quality Assurance SMT.
- We produce a Directors Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions which is audited by the Care Inspectorate Wales.
- Assurance meetings with CIW 3 times a year.

Well-being Objective 3 – Prosperous Communities

Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous.



Overarching judgement

We want to enable our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous.

- *There are positive signs emerging from the local economy, but some challenges remain.*
- *Whilst we have significant Environmental challenges to address, significant early progress has been made and innovative work to develop carbon trajectories will assist us in targeting activity to meet the more challenging carbon reduction targets.*
- *We have made significant improvement to waste recycling as a result of service changes.*

Why this is important

Providing secure and well-paid jobs for local people is crucial and increasing employability is fundamental to tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. This has a dramatic impact on our health and ability to function in everyday society.

Carmarthenshire has a high economic inactivity rate. This is a significant barrier to growth for Carmarthenshire, as the economically inactive represent a significant source of labour supply which is a crucial element of a well-functioning labour market. This is also concerning given that being inactive for a long period of time can negatively impact a person's well-being, health and life-satisfaction.

A barrier to employment for many is a lack of qualifications or skills. This applies to those that have no qualifications at all and those that wish to re-skill or up-skill to better themselves and seek higher level or alternative employment. This is a pertinent issue for Carmarthenshire, as the County exhibits a higher-than-average number of people with no qualifications and a lower proportion than average of people with higher level qualifications.

Areas of the County are susceptible to the negative effects of the climate emergency, especially flooding. Just over 15,000 properties in the County are currently at some level of flood risk. Climate change will increase the number of properties, infrastructure and key services at risk of flooding. Places which do not currently flood will become at risk of flooding and those already known to be at risk will see the level of that risk become greater.

The County remains a key strategic stronghold for the future of the Welsh language and the social and economic benefits of bilingualism are widely recognised. Evidence gathered via the residents' survey indicates that overall respondents agreed that it is important that the Welsh language is promoted and protected.

Transportation & highways play a key role in supporting and sustaining our communities, it provides the vital infrastructure which connects people to one another, binds communities and enables businesses to grow and expand.



Useful links:


[Corporate Strategy 2022/27](#)




The key success measures we set ourselves for this overall objective

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for Well-being Objective 3.

Population Indicators in the main are publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire's position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Through our well-being objectives the Council has an important role to play in making progress against these indicators, however, it should be noted that these are not solely indicative of the Council's performance and will be influenced by many external factors.

Performance Measures are inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Population Indicators		
Indicator	Trend	Explaining the Data
Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI)		<p>Disposable Household Income is Rising but Levels Remain Below National Averages</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016 to 2020 and shows a generally increasing trend.</i></p> <p>GDHI is an estimate of the amount of money that a household has available to spend on goods, services and saving.</p> <p>In 2020, gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head in the UK fell 0.2% when compared with 2019; England fell by 0.2% and Northern Ireland by 0.5%, while Wales and Scotland reported increases of 0.9% and 0.3%, respectively.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire saw growth of 1.1% over the same time period to £17,349 in 2020, which exceeds the growth rate for Wales and the other home nations. Whilst this is positive, this level remains below the Wales average of £17,592 and is significantly below the UK average of £21,440.</p> <p>Inflation is running at its highest level for many years with essential items like food and utilities seeing the most significant rises. This means that people are paying more for these items when in most cases their disposable income is not increasing at the same rate. This causes pressure for households and can ultimately result in a decline to living standards, impacting health, safety and prosperity.</p> <p>Whilst this is directly related to support mechanisms detailed in WBO 2, the Council also recognises the important role the local economy has to play in this respect, in providing local people with opportunities to access meaningful information or support to maximise their employability prospects.</p>

<p>Number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads</p>		<p>The Number of People Killed or Seriously Injured on the Roads has Increased Following the Height of the Pandemic</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2019 to 2022 and shows a fluctuating pattern characterised by the Covid pandemic.</i></p> <p>The most recent data for 2021 at a Wales level indicates that 5.3% of all deaths of those aged 5-19 and 3.9% of those aged 20-34 were due to land transport accidents.¹³</p> <p>As of 2022, Carmarthenshire saw the second highest number of people (83) killed or seriously injured on the road of all local authorities in Wales.</p> <p>The Council is committed to making the County’s roads safer through strengthened partnership working to raise awareness, educate and train all types of road users in order to improve skills and behaviour.</p>
<p>Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) pollution in the air</p>		<p>The Level of Nitrogen Dioxide in the Air is Decreasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016 to 2020 and shows a generally decreasing trend.</i></p> <p>This measure provides an indication of air quality by providing an average concentration of pollutants in the air. Nitrogen dioxide is one of several major pollutants and is released into the air by the burning of fuel. These pollutants not only have serious detrimental impacts on human health but also exacerbate the climate and nature emergencies that we are facing.</p> <p>Positively, the level of Nitrogen Dioxide in the air in Carmarthenshire has been on a mainly downward trend, decreasing from 5.9 (µg/m3) in 2019 to 4.2 (µg/m3) in 2020.</p> <p>Whilst this compares positively with the Wales average of 6.5 (µg/m3) the county now has the 8th lowest level of all local authorities in Wales compared to 6th the previous year.</p>
<p>Crime rates</p>		<p>Despite Increasing Rates, Carmarthenshire Remains One of the Safest Places in the Country</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2018/19 to 2022/23 and shows an increasing trend, characterised by sharp increases between 2021 and 2022.</i></p> <p>Crime volumes have been generally increasing in Carmarthenshire over the last five years. The most recent data for financial year 2022/23 indicates that there were 16,381 incidents of recorded crime in the county which is an increase of 497 on the previous year.</p> <p>Whilst this is the case, the County remains one of the safest in the country as comparably rates are quite low. Community safety is a priority for the Council and through the proactive work of the Safer Communities Partnership it is possible to target the main crime and disorder problems in the County ensuring that people feel safe to live, work and visit the County.</p>

¹³ [Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2021 \(refreshed populations\) - Office for National Statistics](#)

Outcomes we set ourselves

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
Businesses supported and employment provided.	1,237 businesses supported and 1,350 direct jobs created via Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund, Property development Fund, Pendine attractor, Llandeilo Market Hall, Ammanford Regeneration development fund, CRF - Towns and Growth, Carmarthen Town Regeneration Activity, Ammanford Town Regeneration Activity, Parry Thomas centre, C4W+/C4w+ YPG, RLSP, Workways/STU, CRF - Iaith Gwaith, BREF, Transforming Towns, Progressive Procurement, Business growth & Start Up, targeted business Engagement, CRF Business Llanelli	Yes
People are supported to take advantage of local opportunities whether it be through starting a business, gaining qualifications or gaining meaningful employment.	14 individuals supported to establish a new business under the Business Start Up fund and 619 individuals have been helped into employment via C4W+ C4W YPG, Workways / STU and linked activity with Job Centre Plus. Through the employability programmes within Carmarthenshire 463 individuals have been supported into meaningful employment, with Workway+ working with people with multiple barriers.	Yes
Businesses are supported to take advantage of local supply chains and procurement opportunities.	303 businesses have received support under the Progressive Procurement Initiative. In addition, funding has been secured under the Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a business engagement project to promote the Think Carmarthenshire First approach to encourage spend within County development of Carmarthenshire inter-trading – linking businesses to each other to support local supply chains. Progressive procurement initiative within Carmarthenshire to increase local spend. As part of Procurements engagement with suppliers for our tendering activity in 2022-23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 suppliers were met with on a 1-2-1 basis; • 4 Early Market Engagement Events were held with 151 attendees; • 6 Live Tender Workshops/Webinars were held with 125 attendees; • 9 Tender Briefing Sessions attendees 434; • 2 Getting Tender Ready Events, 67 attendees; • 3 Consortia/Joint Bidding Events, attendees 101. 	Yes
People feel empowered to lead active and healthy lives through access to fit for purpose services and provision	We have re-established public confidence in engaging in exercise, with attendances returning to pre-pandemic levels (over 100,000 pcm) by the end of the year. This included demonstrating exemplary health & safety standards by winning RoSPA's international 'Leisure Trophy' award. Over £300k of additional external funding leveraged to increase and broaden the activity programmes available, from free swim lessons for children living in deprivation and 61,000	Yes

	<p>participations in our 'couch to 2km' schools programme, to Actif legacy for youths, to walking sports and pre-diabetes activity for adults, to 'curling and a cuppa' for older adults to Beat the Street for the whole community of Llanelli that engaged almost 7,000 of the town's population who actively travelled over 43,000 miles over 6 weeks and created a step-change in people's activity levels.</p> <p>Particular improvements made to the welcome areas at Carmarthen and Amman Valley Leisure Centres, further digitalising access to enable customer service staff to have additional capacity to improve customer interaction.</p> <p>Digitalisation Across Actif Sport & Leisure also progressed in terms of functionality and popularity of Actif App, doubling the number of App downloads compared to 2021-22 (downloaded by 46,000 people) with an average of 230,000 module uses / 28,000 transactions per month (70% of all transactions). Average reach across all digital platforms (web/social media/app) of 406,000 per month.</p> <p>Enhancing sustainability/active travel by installing and activating car and e-bike parking and charging points at various leisure centres and taking activity to communities via our Actif van and establishing activity programmes in 3 community halls in Cwmaman, Kidwelly and Whitland.</p> <p>Amman Valley Leisure Centre/Ysgol Dyffryn Aman astroturf resurfaced, with brand new 3G pitch and synthetic track installation to commence imminently.</p>	
On track to meet the national recycling targets	This year we have exceeded the statutory target with a performance of 65.25% which is currently being verified by NRW before official recycling rates are released for 2022/2023 nationally. Following the changes, the recycling performance in Q4 has significantly improved from last year from 2022 Q4 - 60.03% to 2023 Q4 - 67.69%.	Yes
Continue to work towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030	The Council demonstrates a strong organisational commitment to carbon reduction and was the first local authority in Wales to publish net zero action plan and has reported annually against the plan. In the absence of guidance on a cost model the plan and annual updates have not indicated the total cost of the plan to meet the Council's net zero objective. In 2023 the council has developed methodology for estimating the cost of meeting the Council's net zero target by 2030. The model requires further refinement to provide consistency of approach across local authorities in Wales. The authority is pressing the Welsh Government for guidance while working with partners in the SBCR to develop the model.	Yes
Look to improve the availability and affordability of early years education and childcare settings across the county, to address one of the	30 hours Childcare Offer National Digital Service - promotion and support has continued to ensure eligible parents and childcare providers are familiar with the process. 522 parent applications were received and processed between 1 st January to 31 st March 2023 and 149 childcare providers have	Yes

<p>common barriers faced by individuals looking to return to or find employment.</p>	<p>completed their on-line registration. Just under £1.7M has been paid to local childcare providers in Carmarthenshire to eligible children during the year (1st April 2022 – 28th February 2023).</p> <p>Our most recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27, which was submitted to Welsh Government in June 2022, did not indicate any quantitative or qualitative sufficiency pressures for Foundation Learning funded 3-year-old places within approved Childcare settings across Carmarthenshire. Several approved Childcare Providers reported having vacant places in Autumn 2021 which would suggest we had surplus places in certain locations throughout Carmarthenshire.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Look to improve access to services through enhanced transportation networks and infrastructure.</p>	<p>The aspiration for modal shift has influenced our investment in infrastructure particularly around our major population centres where we have built new infrastructure to support more sustainable travel journeys</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Improve current and explore new developments to limit the effects of flooding and other environmental threats which affect our residents and service users.</p>	<p>We have delivered 12 schemes within our capital works programme, 4 of these schemes are estimated to deliver flood reduction benefit to 112 residential and 13 business properties.</p> <p>We utilise telemetry at some of our assets, affording us live data on river levels at high-risk area. It is hoped that this will better inform our operational response, allowing us to target areas at greatest risk.</p> <p>We are in the process of developing our Flood Risk Management Plan 2024-2030 which will set out our FCERM# priorities over the next 7 years.</p> <p><small>#National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management</small></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Sustain low crime rates whilst continuing effective partnership working to address increasing rates evident in some areas of the county.</p>	<p>Low crime rates have been sustained through effective partnership working. There has been a slight increase in the number of crimes reported in 2022/23 – 16,381 – which is 3% (497) higher than the previous year. However, the county remains one of the safest areas in the UK and Dyfed-Powys the safest Police Force area in England and Wales with the lowest crime rates.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Increase in the number of Welsh speakers.</p>	<p>The latest Census data for 2021 indicates that Carmarthenshire is home to 72,838 Welsh speakers. This translates to 39.9% of the county's total population. This figure has decreased by 5,210 since the last Census in 2011, which translates to a percentage point decrease of 4.0. This is the largest percentage point decrease of all local authorities in Wales.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Increased confidence and use of Welsh as a thriving language.</p>	<p>The number of people able to speak, read and write Welsh in the county has decreased by 1.9 percentage points or 1,828 people. This is a considerably lower decrease than the figures for those only able to speak Welsh.</p>	<p>No</p>

As a Council we focus on the following thematic and service priorities

- WBO3a** Thematic Priority: Economic Recovery and Growth
- WBO3b** Thematic Priority: Decarbonisation and Nature Emergency
- WBO3c** Thematic Priority: Welsh Language and Culture
- WBO3d** Thematic Priority: Community Safety, Resilience, and Cohesion
- WBO3e** Service Priority: Leisure and Tourism
- WBO3f** Service Priority: Waste
- WBO3g** Service Priority: Highways and Transport

Thematic Priority 3a - Economic Recovery and Growth

There are positive signs emerging from the local economy, but some challenges remain.

Building upon the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), we have secured and are delivering the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in Carmarthenshire. The £38.68m fund will help to deliver against some of Carmarthenshire's key strategic objectives. The Shared Prosperity Fund will provide new opportunities for local communities, support the development and growth of local businesses as well as supporting the recovery of our town centres and is a mix of revenue and capital funding that can be used to support a wide range of interventions to build pride in place and improve life chances. We've also launched the second phase of the £11 million ARFOR Programme, which aims to deliver an economic boost and strengthen the Welsh language across counties Gwynedd, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Anglesey.

In addition, significant regeneration capital schemes have been delivered, most notably, the redevelopment of Llandeilo Market Hall and the Pendine Tourism Attractor Project. Both projects illustrate the Authorities ambition to invest in infrastructure which will stimulate and support the local economy.

Whilst positive, the County continues to face challenges:

- ! Positively, unemployment rates are falling, and employment rates are increasing. However, the County still exhibits a higher-than-average level of people (aged 16-64) who are economically inactive. This can restrict labour supply and stunt economic growth.
- ! Carmarthenshire continues to lag behind national averages with regards to the proportion qualified to level 4 or above. Developing skills and qualifications improves employability and career prospects and creates a well-skilled and able labour market.
- ! Continue to exhibit a significant and persistent productivity gap with the rest of the UK.
- ! Reliance on micro and small businesses, coupled with relatively high employment in the public sector which can make the economy more susceptible to threats.
- ! The cost-of-living crisis fuelled by the significant increase in inflation and energy prices is having an impact on businesses. As such business support grants through the Shared Prosperity Fund have been introduced to assist businesses and stimulate growth.

Why this is important?

- ⊙ The strength of our local economy is central to our communities' wider well-being and going forward we will focus our regeneration efforts on developing our businesses, people and places. In our future plans we will enable Carmarthenshire to become more productive whilst being more equal, greener and healthier and supporting business and community resilience and growth.
- ⊙ Providing secure and well-paid jobs is central to everything we are seeking to achieve.
- ⊙ Increasing employability is fundamental to tackling poverty and the cost of living reducing inequalities and has a dramatic impact on our health and ability to function in everyday society.
- ⊙ We need to build a knowledge rich, creative economy by maximising employment and training places for local people through creating jobs and providing high quality apprenticeships, training and work experience opportunities, to have an ongoing skilled and competent workforce to face the future.






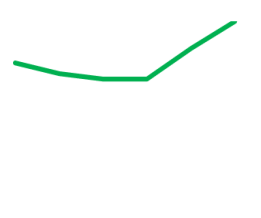

Measuring Success

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for the Economic Recovery and Growth thematic priority.

Population Indicators			
Measure	Trend		Explaining the Data
Employment & Unemployment	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate	<p>Employment Rates are Rising and Unemployment Rates are Falling</p> <p><i>The trendlines adjacent cover the period 2017 to 2022.</i></p> <p>The employment rate in Carmarthenshire has seen fluctuation in recent years. There was some improvement between 2021 and 2022 from a rate of 68.7% to 72.3%, however this remains below averages for the UK and Wales.</p> <p>The unemployment¹⁴ rate has also seen fluctuation but is positively on a general downward trend, sitting at 2.2% as of 2022. This is lower than pre-pandemic levels which was 4.0%. This is consistent with trends seen at UK and Wales levels.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire exhibits a higher-than-average economic inactivity rate (22.6% compared with 20.75 at a Wales level), which means that the county is home to more people aged 16-64 who are not involved in the labour market, meaning they are neither working nor actively seeking employment. This restricts labour supply and can stunt economic growth.</p> <p>The Council recognises that to sustain sustainable growth the economy must be underpinned by a capable and available workforce. In line with this, regeneration assistance saw the creation of 1,350 direct jobs and 116 indirect jobs in 22/23.</p>

¹⁴ A person is unemployed if they are actively seeking or are available for work

<p>Highest Level of Qualification</p>	<p>No Qualifications</p> 	<p>Qualified to L4+</p> 	<p>Less People Have no Qualifications but the Numbers of People Living in Carmarthenshire with Higher Level Qualifications Remains Comparably Low</p> <p><i>The trendlines adjacent cover the period 2017 to 2022.</i></p> <p>The proportion of those aged 18-64 with no qualifications has been on a downward trend in recent years. The most recent data indicates a level of 7.0%, which compares positively with the average for Wales which sits at 8.3%.</p> <p>Conversely, Carmarthenshire continues to lag behind national averages with regards to the proportion qualified to level 4 or above. Improvements were seen between 2017 and 2019 where levels reached 41.4%, only to decrease to 37.6% by 2021. Levels have since began to rise again to a level of 40.0% in 2022.</p> <p>Developing skills and qualifications improves employability prospects, boosts career prospects and creates a well-skilled and able labour market. It also ensures that we have a workforce that is fit for the future.</p> <p>During 2022/23 residents attending Employment related courses within the Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes achieved 502 accredited qualifications.</p>
<p>% of people claiming unemployment related benefits for over 12 months</p>		<p>Less People are Long-Term Unemployed</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2017 to April 2023 and shows a steady trend characterised by a decline in recent years.</i></p> <p>The rate of people aged between 16-64 claiming unemployment related benefits for over 12 months has been on a downward trend from 2021. Levels remained consistent at 0.5% between 2017 and 2021. The most recent data for April 2023 indicates that the level is now 0.1% which is line with the Welsh average.</p> <p>This is positive and indicates that more people considered long-term unemployed have been reintegrated back into the labour market.</p> <p>The Council's employability support programmes have been working with both short and long-term unemployed individuals to support them into sustainable employment opportunities.</p>	

Business births & deaths	Births	Deaths	<p>Business Birth Rates are on the Rise but so are Business Deaths</p> <p><i>The trendlines adjacent cover the period 2016 to 2021.</i></p> <p>Following some stagnation between 2017 and 2019, business birth rates in the county are showing signs of improvement. This is positive as an improving start-up rate can be indicative of increased confidence and capacity within the economy. The most recent data for 2021 shows that 820 were opened/started, which is an increase of 100 on previous year. The largest uplift was seen in the Construction sector.</p> <p>There has been more fluctuation with regards to business deaths. The level was largely consistent between 2018 and 2020, however an increase between 2020 and 2021 is evident (+170). The main contributory factor to this was the loss of businesses within the Transport & Storage sector. This is likely related to the effects that lockdown restrictions had on the sector in terms of transportation i.e. rail, land transport, water transport and air transport industries.</p>
			

Performance Measures

Businesses are supported within the local area – Business Consultation	2022		<p>Businesses: A score of -0.88 represents overall disagreement. The Council has an important role in supporting businesses therefore whilst concerning it should be noted that this may be indicative of the wider challenges facing businesses at the time of survey and the increasingly difficult climate that businesses find themselves operating in given the cost of living crisis and post-COVID recovery.</p> <p>During 2022/23 1,237 business enquiries were supported through regeneration assistance.</p>
	-0.88		

Local people/ businesses are well supported to take advantage of local opportunities- Residents/Business Consultations	2022		<p>Businesses: The results show that in the main businesses who responded to the consultation (of which there were 36), do not feel supported to take advantage of local opportunities, with this statement scoring -0.76.</p> <p>Residents: A significant proportion of respondents indicated ‘neither’ when asked whether they feel local people are well supported to take advantage of local opportunities. Further views were mixed with slightly more people disagreeing than agreeing.</p>
	Business Consultation	Residents Consultation	
	-0.76	-0.05	

Progress in 2022/23

Through **Community Benefits** we have delivered/created the following during 2022/23:

43 jobs created

**1,628 weeks of training
recruitment delivered**

2,360 STEM pupil engagements
(Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths)

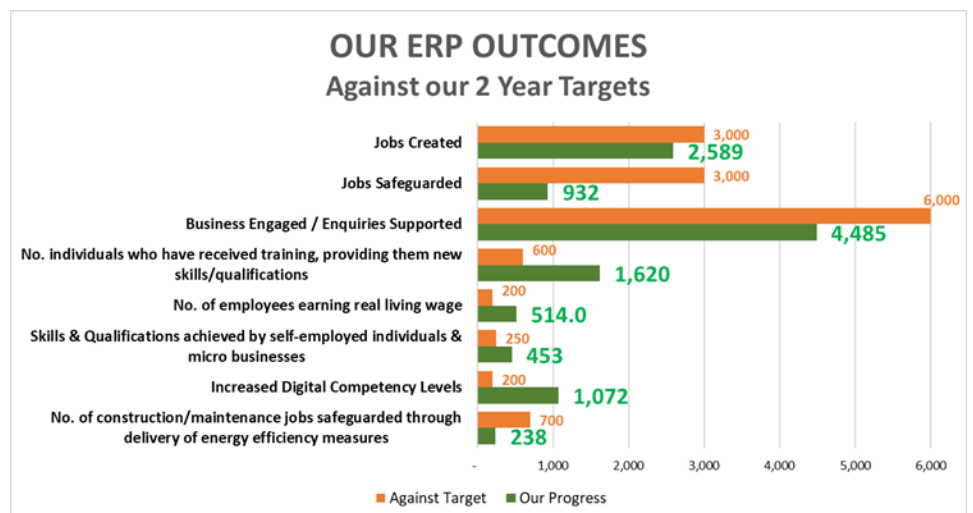
- ! We secured just under **£12m Private Sector Investment / external funding** during 2022/23, which is an excellent amount, but is only 60% of the investment and funding we were aiming for during the year. Significant funding of £38m has been secured in principle from UK government via the Shared Prosperity Fund, this will be drawn down over the next two years and reported in 2023/24 and 2024/25. In addition, Private Sector Investment anticipated on 3rd party grant schemes will also now be realised in 2023/24 as a result of delays to third party delivered projects due to procurement and supply chain issues.
- ! Delivering many of our large economic development projects depends on an efficient and effective planning service, there has been a vast improvement in performance of the service during 2022/23, with **72.4% of "major" applications determined within time periods** (just short of our 80% target) compared to 54.1% in 2021/22. The Planning Service are continuing to work through a number of planning applications which are out of time, but are identifying the backlog cases and prioritising the oldest cases in parallel to meeting the target time for new cases.
- ⦿ We continue to deliver our aims and objectives in line with the [South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan](#) which is the Council's over-arching economic regeneration policy. It builds on our distinctive strengths and opportunities to develop a more prosperous and resilient South-West Wales economy (Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire & Swansea) together with our local Recovery Plan we aim to achieve the vision and objectives contained in the policy.

Our Economic Recovery Plan (ERP)

Following our assessment in 2020 of the impact that COVID-19 had on Carmarthenshire businesses, and what was important to them in the short, medium and long-term, a business, economy and community recovery group was established to co-ordinate the development and delivery of the themed actions. Together with an overarching advisory group (that also comprised of key private sector industry leaders), an economic recovery and delivery plan was formally adopted in June 2021 after an independent review.

Key to the plan is ultra-reliable digital connectivity, actions that support the County's foundational economy and supporting local people to grow skills and talent in targeted areas so that there is a strong and resilient local workforce.

Our economy is made up by a large number of self-employed and micro sized enterprises together with significant employment within the [foundational economy](#) (business activities that we use every day and see all around us e.g. retail, care and food industries). So, our path to recovery has focused on: **Localism** - support within our local economies and increased local spend; and **Competitiveness** - increasing productivity and competitiveness.



With the support/intervention plan, Carmarthenshire's economy has started to recover as quickly as possible to become one which is more productive than before. We are not able to deliver everything, so working across all departments, with public sector partners, external organisations, including the private sector, ensures coordination of activity wherever possible to support our Plan for recovery and growth.

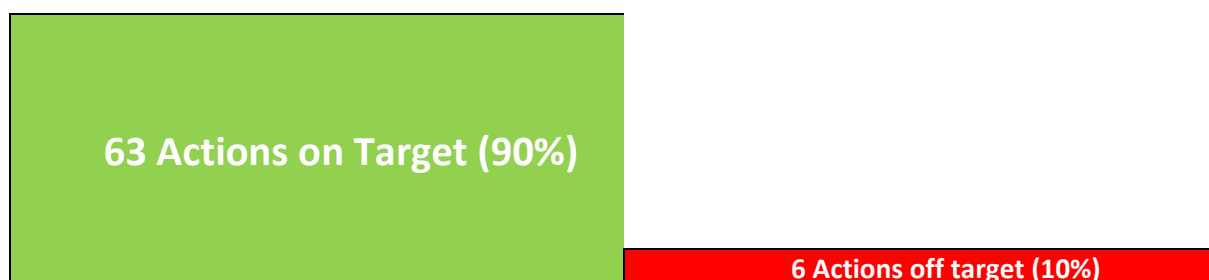
Explaining our ERP results

Of the eight Key Performance Indicators being monitored under the Economic Recovery Plan, four have now exceeded their target, these being “Skills and qualifications achieved by self-employed individuals and micro businesses”, “Training Delivered to Upskill Individuals”, “Number of employees earning real living wage” and “Increased digital competency levels”. These have been captured principally through the Regeneration Department’s employability schemes such as Workways, C4W+ the City Deal Skills & Talent Project, the LEADER Project as well as through Business Support Grants and work with Business Wales.


“Jobs Created” has seen a boost towards its target of 3,000, now reaching over 86% of this, mainly due to a consolidation of figures from the recently closed round of business support funds, Communities for Work Plus, targeted business engagement and partnership work with the Job Centre Plus and Business in Focus. Further collation of figures from projects such as Pentre Awel, which was profiled relatively highly towards this target, but which has only just started “on the ground”, will add to this over the coming quarters. “Business Enquiries Supported” has reached almost 75% of its target and with the newly launched Shared Prosperity Fund, should also be on profile to reach its target in the coming quarters.

Red flags are showing on “Jobs safeguarded” and “Number of construction/maintenance jobs safeguarded through delivery of energy efficiency measures” which both fall below 35% of their target. It is envisaged however that these figures will be boosted in the coming quarters from proposed and ongoing Housing and Education schemes, projects taking place within the Place and Infrastructure Department, through Shared Prosperity Fund Projects and Pentre Awel.

Progress on our Economic Recovery Plan – Action Plan



The Recovery Plan sets out our priorities for supporting Businesses, People and Place:

<p>Business</p>	<p>Over 90% of our nearly 8,000 businesses in Carmarthenshire are micro-businesses (i.e. with fewer than 10 employees), so we need to support these businesses to maintain, upscale and grow our economy. We also have more than 10,000 self-employed people who need support to survive and thrive in business. Therefore, safeguarding our existing businesses, supporting new start-ups and growing businesses in our foundational and growth sectors to become more productive and competitive is key</p> <p><u>Digital Economic Growth</u> The £55 million Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) Digital Infrastructure programme will benefit residents and businesses in all parts of the Region, which includes Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The programme is estimated to be worth £318m to the regional economy over the next 15 years.</p>
<p>People</p>	<p><u>Regional Learning & Skills Partnership (RLSP)</u> - Carmarthenshire is the Lead Body for the RLSP. The RLSP is leading on the delivery of the SBCD Regional Skills and Talent Programme over the next 5 years. The key aim of the programme is to deliver the skills needs of the 8 City Deal projects and to support the skills needs of the region.</p>
<p>Place</p>	<p><u>Urban, coastal and rural Carmarthenshire</u> - Throughout all the town centres, businesses are supported to make best use of digital communications to grow their market reach, turnover and footfall; with decarbonisation encouraged through low carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, renewable energy and sustainable developments; and Welsh language and culture supported and promoted to celebrate Carmarthenshire’s identity.</p> <p><u>Pentre Awel</u> part-funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal - brings together business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities all at one prime location along the Llanelli coastline. It is the first development of its scope and size in Wales providing world-class medical research and health care delivery and supporting and encouraging people to lead active and healthy lives.</p> <p>As well as improving health and well-being, the project will create almost 2,000 jobs (750 to 950 in Zone 1), training/apprenticeship opportunities and is expected to boost the local economy by £467million over the next 15 years</p> <p><u>Rural Economy / Foundational Economy and Community Resilience</u></p> <p>The economic and policy context has changed considerably since 2013 at both Welsh and UK level, particularly in light of the UK’s decision to leave the European Union, the impact of the pandemic and changes regionally</p> 



BUSINESS:

- ⦿ We continued to support businesses to safeguard 143 jobs via Targeted Business engagement, Business Growth & Start Up fund, Community Bureau and Pendine Attractor Project.
- ⦿ We have secured over £4.5 million of Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) to deliver Business Anchor projects that will see over the next two years £4.5m of third-party grant funding being made available to Carmarthenshire Business via the Property Development Fund, Business Renewable Energy Fund and Business Growth and Start Up Fund
- ⦿ Funding has also been secured from SPF to deliver over the next two years to deliver the Sir Gâr Business Engagement Project that will see support provided to businesses to encourage inter trading, support local supply chains, support delivery of progressive procurement initiative and encouraging entrepreneurship.

- ⊙ Demand for our Business core funded Third Party Grants continues to exceed available funding. In 2022/23 both the Commercial Property Development Fund and Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund were fully committed in principle and over £400k of awards made under the Business Growth & start Up Fund
- ⊙ Conversely, EU funded services we currently provide will end this year (e.g. Workways+; Community for Work, Short Term Unemployed, Cynnydd, LEADER, etc.), but we have been awarded through SPF funding for employability / skills initiatives running up to March 2025.
- ⊙ Work was completed in March 2023 on the £4m redevelopment of Llandeilo Market Hall which will see an additional 20+ lettable commercial spaces becoming available for Carmarthenshire’s Rural businesses in 2023/24
- ! **Increasing Capital Costs / Supply Chain Issues:** Marked increases in the cost of delivering capital regeneration schemes have occurred over the past year. These increases are industry wide and are believed to have been triggered through several factors including Brexit, COVID-19 and more recently the conflict in Ukraine and resultant increases in inflation. These increases are putting pressure on what is achievable with budgets that were set at project outset. As such, the Council and third-party projects are having to be amended where possible to meet these increasing pressures. In addition, supply chain shortages are delaying programme delivery which in turn is adding further costs to already challenged schemes.
- ⊙ Throughout the pandemic we delivered *over £66 million COVID-19 Business Recovery Funds* on behalf of the Welsh Government, which provided a lifeline to businesses in what was a challenging time, enabling the businesses to safeguard jobs.

<i>Business Recovery Grants</i>	£586k	<i>Discretionary Grants</i>	£265k	<i>Non-Domestic Rates Business Grants</i>	£65.1m
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- ⊙ Through our Modernising Education and Housing and Highways programmes we awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs.
- ⊙ Over 97% of the 342,000 invoices received by the Authority were paid within 30 days, retaining our best ever performance of last year despite a 15% increase in the number of invoices. Prompt payment is essential for businesses especially at a continued time of uncertainty.


Digital Economic Growth

- ⊙ **The Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure Programme:** The Digital Programme Business Case, Board, and Governance of it was established; Access to City Deal funding for the Digital Programme together with additional public sector funding was secured across the region; A central team for the Digital Programme was also established.
- ⊙ **Our Digital Regeneration Programme:** There has been significant commercial investment in Gigabit fibre at Cross Hands, Llangennech, Burry Port, Llanelli, Carmarthen, and Llandovery; together with Superfast Cymru 2 investment has been secured to connect 3,300 of Carmarthenshire’s worst served rural premises.
- ⊙ We have trained and supported more than 330 people by improving their digital skills (one of the key areas of targeted intervention), in order they are well equipped with better employment prospects.
- ⊙ We have been working with all relevant partners and stakeholders to address issues of poor broadband connectivity and mobile coverage across the County, particularly in rural areas.
 - Of Carmarthenshire’s approximately 96,000 premises:
 - 91.2% now have access to Superfast broadband or better (above 30 megabits per second).
 - 52% now have access to Gigabit broadband (Speeds above 1000 megabits per second).
 - Carmarthenshire has also seen an increase in mobile coverage in 2021-22:
 - Coverage from all four Mobile Network Operators (MNOs): up to 65% (3% increase from 2020-21).
 - Coverage from at least one MNO: up to 95% (2% increase from 2020-21).

We are working closely with the UK Government and all 4 MNOs to ensure delivery of the Shared Rural Network (SRN) programme which could contribute approximately £11 million of investment in Carmarthenshire and improve mobile coverage from all four operators across rural Carmarthenshire by the end of 2027.

We continue to work with private sector, UK Government and Welsh Government to support existing ongoing fibre deployment and to secure additional future fibre investment.

- ⦿ We have continued to lead the £55 million investment in Digital Infrastructure across Carmarthenshire and the wider Swansea Bay City Region.
 - Operator engagement, lobbying and facilitation is ongoing on behalf of the region to ensure fibre and mobile deployment is accelerated and is as efficient as possible. Stakeholders within UK and Welsh Government are fully engaged, working closely with the programme team to ensure national, regional, and local connectivity projects are aligned. Telecoms providers have shown active interest in the programmes schemes and regional stakeholders remain fully committed to and engaged with the programme.
 - As a result of this work in 2021-22 the Digital Infrastructure programme secured the following significant investment to improve connectivity across the region:
 - £7.6 million public sector investment
 - £14.55 million private sector investment
 - Of this investment, Carmarthenshire has directly benefitted from:
 - £2.5 million public sector investment
 - £8.7 million private sector investment

	<p style="text-align: center;">Clear positive progress against all programme deliverables</p> <p>We engaged with external consultants (FarrPoint) to conduct a benefits realisation exercise to quantify the impact of the programme to date, and the report shows clear positive progress against all programme deliverables.</p> <p>We are re-engaging with FarrPoint to conduct another exercise to quantify further deployment of both fixed and mobile connectivity across Carmarthenshire and the region for 2022-23</p>
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- ! However competing demands and growing pressures within the public sector mean that capacity to deliver at an organisational level is increasingly challenging.
 - Staffing resources for the central programme team have been in place for over a year. A Programme Coordinator has recently been recruited to strengthen that central team.
 - All 4 Next Generation Infrastructure Managers have now been recruited across the region's local authorities. These roles act as a single point of contact to the mobile and fibre industry, the UK Government and Welsh Government. They are responsible for delivering a programme of work to encourage and streamline fibre and mobile deployment across the region and exploring the use of public sector land and assets to accelerate mobile and fibre deployment.
 - 4 x Rural connectivity support and engagement officers are now also in post at each of the local authorities across the region (as recommended by both the UK Government’s Barrier Busting Handbook for Local Authorities and Welsh Government’s Barrier Busting Report). They are funded by the City Deal Digital Programme to support rural communities in obtaining adequate broadband. **These roles have proven to catalyse public sector investment across Carmarthenshire, having supported residents to access £243,000 worth of Access Broadband Cymru (ABC) vouchers (2021-22) to fund/part-fund equipment and installation costs of new broadband connections for homes and businesses.**

- ⊙ We are funding a full fibre infrastructure build (FFIB) to approximately 100 regional public sector sites that do not currently have access to or plans to commercially build connectivity in the next three years.
- ⊙ A £6 million procurement of superfast broadband to rural and the hardest to reach premises across the region is currently being considered with plans being aligned to Welsh Government open market review data. This will ensure we avoid subsidising premises which the private sector intends to connect in the next 3 years. We are also awaiting details of intervention areas for UK Government’s £5 billion Project Gigabit which will fund connectivity to significant parts of rural Carmarthenshire and the Welsh Government’s future £70 million “Extending High Speed Broadband Reach in Wales” project which works to complement Project Gigabit. We are engaged with both Governments to ensure that our £6million funding for rural interventions is aligned to their proposals, working in coordination and collaboration to ensure public sector investment in Carmarthenshire has maximum impact.
- ⊙ A regional portfolio of opportunities has been developed to identify potential new interventions and investments in Digital technologies across key sectors. This will be presented to local and regional leadership in the latter part of 2023.


PEOPLE:

- ⊙ The Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS officially launched the Employment and Skills Plan 2022-25, acknowledging the collaboration and co-production that that had taken place to bring together the ambitious plan for the region. The main goal of the plan is to identify employment and skills priorities over short, medium and long-term periods to develop the social and economic potential of the South West Wales regional economy and will now help inform Welsh Government decisions on funding for further education and work-based learning.
- ⊙ The Regional Learning and Skills Partnership’s Skills and Talent programme moved another step forward in helping thousands of local students prepare for upcoming job opportunities across the region. The RLSP has approved 12 pilot applications which will help future proof the regions workforce. Spread geographically across the Swansea Bay City Region the 12 newly approved pilot projects will hope to maximise prospects for many local people and create job security for future generations to come by ensuring they have the training requirements they need to match their aspirations.



- ⊙ The RLSP along with the private sector chairs worked together to launch new look specific sector Careers Guide booklet for learners. The booklet will support learners in getting their dream career or boosting their career plans. [A guide to careers Digital English - Flip PDF | FlipBuilder](#)
- ⊙ Our dedicated employability team have worked with both short term and long-term unemployed individuals in Carmarthenshire to support them into sustainable employment opportunities.
- ⊙ During the last year we have collaboratively, with the RLSP, successfully delivered *six job fairs* in each of the primary towns, to support sectors experiencing acute recruitment challenges.

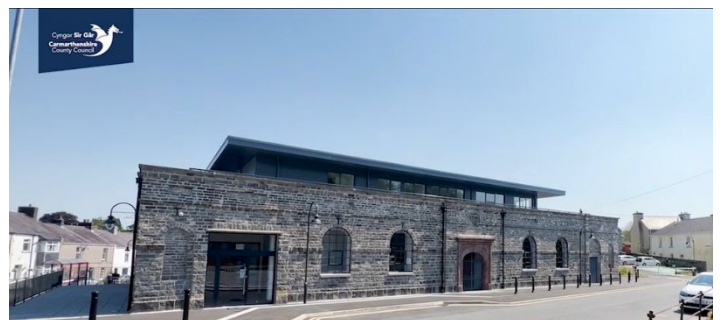
- ⦿ During 2022/23 we helped 759 people into volunteering (the year before it was 927). Post pandemic, the team has identified consistently across programmes that public attitudes to volunteering has changed and people are now more reluctant to volunteer their time. We are addressing this via a specific Volunteering project under the Shared Prosperity Fund and we are working closely with CAVS to increase numbers going forward.
- ⦿ The Skills and Talent programme moved another step forward with 12 pilot applications approved which will help thousands of local students prepare for upcoming job opportunities across the region. With 12 of the pilot projects now in delivery the Skills and Talent programme is working towards:
 - delivering at least 2,200 additional skills
 - supporting around 14,000 individuals with higher level (between 2-8) skills within 10 years.
 - create at least 3,000 new apprenticeship opportunities, to include level 3 to Degree apprenticeships

	<p><u>Audit Wales – A Missed Opportunity – Social Enterprise (December 2022)</u> This is a National Report</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have prepared a strategic action plan on how we as a County engage with Social Enterprises – we have consulted with Cwmpas and taken on board their recommendations. • Once Shared Prosperity Fund applications have been decided upon, we will have additional capacity to address the recommendations of the Audit Wales report 	

PLACE:

Urban, coastal and rural Carmarthenshire

- ⦿ Our Recovery Plans for our three primary towns (Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford) were bespoke to the town and set out the impact that COVID-19 had on the town centres in terms of loss of spending, increased vacancy rates and decline in footfall. In developing the Plans, we worked closely with key members of the town’s stakeholders. The Plans highlighted key issues and opportunities and provided a delivery framework of interventions specific to the individual town centres. These Plans continue to be the basis for which activity is shaped within the primary town centres. We have developed funding initiatives utilising UK Government and Welsh Government funding to take forward actions held within the Plans while also providing support for third party applicants.
- ⦿ Transforming Towns funding provided to the South West Wales Region is being utilised to directly deliver strategic redevelopment such as the former YMCA building and Market Street North. We have utilised Transforming Towns placemaking funding to deliver green infrastructure initiatives including the green wall at Llanelli Library and green and blue infrastructure at Carregamman Car Park. This support is also available to third party applicants to bring vacant commercial space back business use within the primary town centres.
- ⦿ Alongside the three main town centres, we delivered a programme of investment to support the growth of our 10 rural market towns. Bespoke plans were developed to benefit the town and surrounding areas of Cross Hands, Cwmaman, Kidwelly, Laugharne, Llandeilo, Llandovery, Llanybydder, Newcastle Emlyn, St Clears and Whitland.



- WIFI provision has been made available within most of our town centres. 16 businesses are being supported to pilot IOT technology to see how their businesses can benefit from data such as air quality monitoring, fridge sensors and footfall counters.
- We have secured over £3.5 million of Shared Prosperity Funding to deliver the Place Anchor projects which will include £2.6 million of directly delivered projects within the primary and secondary towns. £900,000 of funding will be made available to third parties through the Vacant Property Fund and Events Fund specifically aimed at the primary town centres.
- The Pendine attractor project has been completed which aims to maximise Pendine’s heritage and its natural assets in order to drive forward the resort’s future economic regeneration. The project received funding of £3m through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the Welsh Government’s Tourism Attractor Destination Scheme; £1.5m from Visit Wales Targeted Match Funding from Welsh Government; £128,000 from the RDP Funded Tourism Amenity Investment Fund to fund the sand sport area, and £984,000 from the Welsh Government Capital Stimulus Fund. The balance is match funded by Carmarthenshire County Council. Pendine attractor comprises of three individual projects:

- Y Caban accommodation is a brand new 14 room, 43 bed accommodation that has been constructed using sustainable building technologies. Overlooking the beach, Y Caban facility also includes a restaurant and caters for the walking holiday and outdoor sports adventure market as well as those seeking a coastal experience. The accommodation has an overall rating of 9.6/10 from customers which is among the best in Wales.



- An Adventure playground with an events area, exhibition esplanade offering platforms to host events; a beach sand sports area; improved car parking facilities and the Dune Gardens providing seating and interpretation trails.
- Museum of Land Speed, opening end of May 2023, is an exhibition space displaying motor cars and associated land speed memorabilia. Interactive zones will be located throughout the museum allowing visitors to engage, listen and learn about stories of Pendine and land speed records.



- UK Levelling Up Funding is enabling us to deliver Carmarthen Hwb. We are progressing at pace with plans to deliver the £18.5m (additional £3.5m match funding from our Capital programme) project at the former Debenhams shop. It is being repurposed into a Hwb centre that will bring together a range of health, well-being, learning and cultural services. Our Customer Service Centre was also relocated to the Hwb.

Pentre Awel

Pentre Awel has taken a significant leap forward during the 2022/23 reporting period, reaching key procurement, design and construction milestones. Considerable resource and activity have been directed towards Zone 1 with works progressing at pace, whilst scoping and early concept design work is underway on Pentre Awel's other developable Zones.

- **Zone 1** benefits from £96m of public sector investment to develop and co-locate new leisure, health, business, education and research facilities. An extensive pre-construction programme was undertaken during 2022/23 which encompassed key planning approvals; ground investigation work, ecology surveys, vegetation clearance and reptile translocation over the summer months; enabling works from October 2022 and market / supply chain engagement on over 40 work packages, from groundworks, steel frame to carpentry and flooring.
- Following unanimous approval at Cabinet and Full Council in January 2023, the Council and Bouygues (BYUK) entered into a construction contract in February 2023. A ground-breaking event was held on 6th March 2023 to formally mark the start of works onsite, attended by the Secretary of State for Wales and local and regional partners/stakeholders.
- Important socio-economic outputs are being realised during the pre-construction and construction stages through BYUK's community benefits programme, supporting local schools, organisations, businesses and labour pool:
 - Targeted Recruitment and Training - 4,680 person weeks of recruitment and training will be delivered with the aim of maximising local opportunities for apprenticeships, trainees/work experience and target groups including NEETS, economically inactive and long-term unemployed. Monthly 'Employment Hubs' have been established which allow local employability agencies to be able to refer potential candidates to the project.
 - Local supply chain - a range of local subcontractors and suppliers have been appointed or engaged on the project to date including Shufflebottom, Gavin Griffiths, Dyfed Steels, Dyfed Recycling, Owens and Oil4Wales. Further 'Meet the Contractor/Subcontractor' events will be arranged building on the successful Meet the Buyer event at Parc y Scarlets in 2022
 - Education - there has been extensive engagement with over 1,000 local primary and secondary school pupils via special assemblies, build challenges, construction careers sessions and student ambassador scheme. Over 30+ hours of STEM engagement have been achieved to date.
 - Community – c. 12 local residents will have the opportunity to participate in project's Community Ambassador Programme. In addition, a Meet the Contractor event held at Morfa Social Club to engage the local community with around 50 residents in attendance.
- An 89-week construction programme is now underway. Sectional completion of the education facilities is targeted for September 2024 with full completion due October 2024.



- ⦿ Other key achievements and milestones for the Pentre Awel project in 2022/23 include:
 - Working with Hywel Dda University Health Board to secure c. £1.5m of charitable funding for the hydrotherapy pool at Pentre Awel.
 - Development of a Welsh Language Impact Assessment and Action Plan which considers the use and promotion of Welsh language and culture across all elements of Pentre Awel – leisure, business, education, assisted living, communications and procurement. The draft was shared with the Welsh Language Strategic Forum in February 2023.
 - A range of Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) institutions have been engaged in a workforce planning exercise to map out projected job roles at Pentre Awel against current education and training provision across the region. This will help identify any skills gaps and facilitate the planning and delivery of the education function.
 - Scoping and appraisal on **Zone 2** is underway looking at a nursing home and extra care facility.
 - Design development of **Zone 3** – initial concept designs for up to 144 units of assisted living accommodation have been produced comprising a mix of one and two bedded apartments and three bed bungalows.
- ! As with all similar projects a key challenge or risk will be to ensure that all tenanted areas of the facility are fully let in advance of or as soon as practicable after opening.

Rural Economy / Foundational Economy and Community Resilience

- ⦿ The Cabinet unanimously resolved that the County Farm Estate be retained and managed under the current policy whilst rationalising and considering development opportunities as they arise.
 - A new Rural Estate Plan will be drafted over the next 12 months to highlight the extent and performance of the current portfolio, together with the key issues and future strategy of the Estate to enable the Council to maximise the opportunities available to support its well-being objectives.
 - We will also continue to engage with the Climate Change & Nature Emergency Advisory Panel and the Rural Affairs Advisory Panel to consider their views in finalising the Rural Estate Plan.
- ⦿ We have delivered regeneration initiatives that focus on the development of the rural market towns in the County via projects and initiatives such as the 10 Towns capital fund, Rural Employment Space Joint Venture, Laugharne Car Park & Llandeilo Market Hall.
 - Construction has reached practical completion stage on the Llandeilo Market Hall project.
 - Ten Towns Growth plans have been completed for all the ten towns.
 - Growth plan teams continue to work on the submission of their detailed project applications for the £1m capital Recovery grants pot having submitted Expressions of Interest previously with the exception of Llandovery who have submitted their detailed application for consideration.
 - Joint venture agreement has been signed with Welsh Government to assist with the delivery of the rural employment space initiative and Welsh government have engaged design consultants to work up detailed designs for the first project at Beechwood 2.
- ⦿ Through our housing investment programmes we have invested over £20million into our communities developing over 100 new homes and investing in our existing stock. These programmes provide sustained periods of trade and benefit to local contractors and builders. They create more jobs and training opportunities in our communities directly supporting the actions in our Economic Recovery Plan.



Is anyone better off?

100% Sir Gâr

100% Sir Gâr was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic as a virtual shop window on the council's Discover Carmarthenshire website, as a way of supporting local businesses to recover from a long period of lockdown and restrictions on retail.

Following on from the success of the 100% Sir Gâr platform, Economic Development Staff have facilitated seasonal Pop-Up shop events across the County's primary towns as well as opportunities to a space at the Urdd Eisteddfod which was hosted in Carmarthenshire.

The Pop-up shop events provided an opportunity for Carmarthenshire based businesses to showcase their produce and create a new marketplace for locally based businesses to gain new customers and increase income opportunities. It was also an opportunity to raise the visibility of the Welsh language on the high street by use of bilingual marketing.

To date over 200 businesses have registered on the digital platform with more than 40 business having attended a 100% Sir Gâr pop up event.



One of the businesses who have benefitted from the development of the 100% Sir Gar initiative is Cwyr Cain.

Cwyr Cain homemade candles and fragrance boutique came about following a complete career change for business partners Carys Mai Lewis a Rhian Angharad Davies-Belcher.

Following a training day on to how to make candles and homemade fragrance products, the idea came to venture into business as a partnership.

Through the support and assistance of 100% Sir Gâr, this new business has benefitted from opportunities to promote and sell their Welsh/bilingual products at nearby locations and learn how to improve and develop their business' shop window. Being part of the Sir Gâr platform has also ensured a wider audience reach which both have noted to be of benefit to their business.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Regeneration Delivery Team (RDT) continues to coordinate development and delivery of actions aligned to our economic recovery and delivery plan (ERP) and an overarching advisory group, comprising key private sector industry leaders, continues to provide advisory support.

Three primary town centre task force / forum groups continue to oversee and take responsibility for the delivery of their respective Recovery Masterplans.

Ten growth plan teams continue to oversee and take responsibility for the delivery of their respective town growth plans.

3b - Thematic Priority - Decarbonisation and Nature Emergency

We have significant environmental challenges to address

We have a strong organisational commitment to carbon reduction and were the first local authority in Wales to declare a climate emergency, publish an action plan and report annually against progress made within the plan. Since 2016/17 to 2021/22 we have reduced our carbon emissions by nearly a third (-31.7%) (-8,418 tCO₂e). This is strong progress in the pathway to meeting our commitment to Welsh Government's ambition for net zero Welsh public sector by 2030 | Legal commitment to achieve a net zero Wales by 2050. We are also committed to playing our part in achieving the wider public sector obligation to become net zero by 2050 and our progress in achieving significant reductions to date in our own emissions plays an important part in achieving that wider obligation.

We are proactively working with national government, public, private and third sectors to mitigate against the impacts of climate change through for instance the WLGA Climate Change Strategy Panel and in leading the commercial and industrial workstream of the regional and local energy action plans. While significant early progress has been made, innovative work to develop carbon trajectories has been developed this year which will assist us in targeting activity to meet the more challenging circa 60% residual carbon savings. In 2022, we became one of a few authorities to declare a nature emergency and convene a cross party climate change and nature advisory panel (CCNEAP) recognising the close relationship between the two areas of work. Work to deliver actions and report on the delivery of the Environment Act plan is progressing well, of the 38 actions, 26 are progressing well, and 12 have been completed and we are moving to review the content of the plan with the advice of the CCNEP, to reflect the declaration of the nature emergency.

We are making a difference to many communities with our flood risk analysis and business case developments works, we have a better understanding of risks in many communities. All new developments must have sustainable drainage which is managing flooding for both new developments and the surrounding community.

Why this is important?

- ⦿ The Natural Environment is a core component of sustainable development. The Council has already declared its commitment to addressing the climate and nature emergencies and will continue on its route towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030 and addressing the issues that are driving a decline in our biodiversity and support nature recovery.
- ⦿ **Route Towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030**
- ⦿ A biodiverse natural environment, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supports social, economic and ecological resilience. Carmarthenshire's natural environment is the natural resource on which much of our economy is based – *tourism, farming, forestry, and renewable energy*. It is a major factor that attracts people, both young and older to live, work and visit the county, bringing inward investment with them.
- ⦿ The *conservation and enhancement of biodiversity* is vital in our response to climate change and key ecosystem services such as food, flood management, pollination, clean air and water.




Success Measures / Explaining the Results

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for the Decarbonisation and Nature Emergency thematic priority.

Population Indicators in the main are publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire’s position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Through our well-being objectives the Council has an important role to play in making progress against these indicators, however, it should be noted that these are not solely indicative of the Council’s performance and will be influenced by many external factors.

Performance Measures are inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Population Indicators		
Indicator	Trend	Explaining the Data
Capacity of Renewable Energy Equipment Installed (MW)		<p>Capacity is Increasing as a Result of the Increasing Number of Projects in the County</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016 to 2020 and shows an increasing trend.</i></p> <p>Carmarthenshire is one of the most proactive counties in Wales in terms of investment in low carbon energy projects. This is positive and substantiates the forward-thinking approach that the county adopts with regards to addressing the threats posed by the climate and nature emergencies.</p> <p>The most recent data for 2020 indicates that there were a total of 6,439 projects in Carmarthenshire generating 321MW of energy. This is the third highest level in Wales and is an increase on figures for 2019.</p>
No. of Properties (Homes & Businesses) at risk of flooding	N/A	<p>Over 15,000 Business and Homes are at Risk from either River, Tidal or Surface Water Flooding</p> <p><i>There is no trendline available as previous data collected in 2014 is not directly comparable with the most recent data for 2019.</i></p> <p>Flooding is always a concern in Carmarthenshire, and according to Natural Resources Wales (2019), over 5,500 of our properties are at risk of river flooding, over 2,600 at risk of tidal flooding and just under 7,000 at risk of surface water flooding.</p> <p>The increasing threat of the climate and nature emergencies places greater emphasis on the need for suitable and proportionate flood defences to protect those at greatest risk.</p> <p>Through the Council’s Flood & Water Management Act and Shoreline Management Plan a number of interventions have been completed, including the installation of new defences and upgrades made to existing defences.</p>

Performance Measure		
The Climate Emergency is Being Addressed Locally	2022	The largest proportion of respondents to a residents' consultation indicated 'neither' when asked whether the climate emergency is being addressed locally. Further analysis indicates that with the exception of those that answered 'neither', more people disagreed than agreed. This possibly suggests that people are unaware of any measures put in place to address what is one of the most pressing issues of our time.
	-0.1	



We generated
1,317,121 kWh of renewable energy during 2022/23

(increased from 1,106,902kWh in the previous year)

The Council's Total Energy Consumption (kWh) decreased



by **5.65%**

from 67,694,145kWh in 2021/22 to **63,869,172kWh** in 2022/23

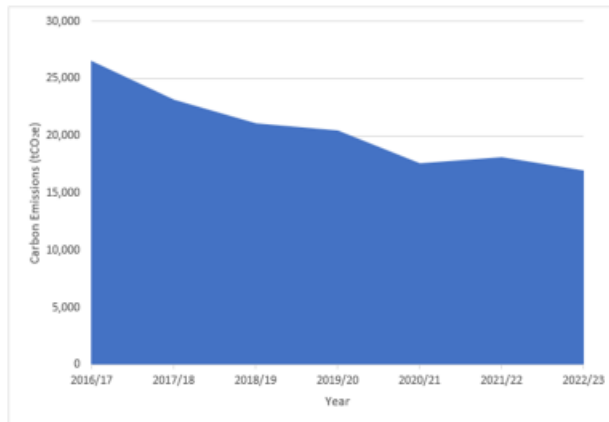
A breakdown of the Council's Energy Consumption							
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23 vs 2021/22		
					Progress	% change	Comment
Non-Domestic Buildings							
Consumption (kWh)	66,407,242	59,808,497	64,095,021	60,274,987	-3,819,637	-5.96%	Improved
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	14,443	12,581	13,026	11,846	-1,180	-9.06%	Improved
Street Lighting							
Consumption (kWh)	3,925,149	3,875,843	3,599,124	3,594,185	-4,939	-0.14%	Improved
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,088	981	832	809	-23	-2.76%	Improved
Fleet Mileage							
Mileage (Miles)	5,154,668	4,427,070	4,262,681	4,496,754	234,073	5.49%	Worsened
Diesel Used (litres)	1,419,336	1,267,437	1,320,551	1,327,545	6,994	0.53%	Worsened
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	3,814	3,407	3,573	3,584	11	0.31%	Worsened
Business Mileage							
Mileage (Miles)	3,971,513	2,251,986	2,511,091	2,775,432	264,341	10.53%	Worsened
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,132	621	693	745	52	7.50%	Worsened
TOTAL							
Consumption (kWh)	70,332,391	63,684,340	67,694,145	63,869,172	-3,824,576	-5.65%	Improved
Mileage (miles)	9,126,181	6,679,056	6,773,772	7,272,186	498,414	7.36%	Worsened
Carbon Footprint (tCO2e)	20,477	17,590	18,124	16,984	-1,140.14	-6.29%	Improved

Significant reductions were reported for 2020/21 which were largely attributable to COVID-19. Whilst year-on-year emissions increased in 2021/22, and further increased in 2022/23, these have not returned to pre COVID-19 levels.

Non-Domestic Buildings represent ~70% of our reported emissions.

Our track record of carbon emission reduction

Performance - Carbon Footprint



2016/17 – 2022/23
-36% tCO₂e

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Progress	Change
tCO ₂ e	26,542	23,143	21,087	20,477	17,590	18,124	16,984	2022/23 vs 2021/22	
								-1,140	-6.29%

Since 2016/17 to 2022/23 we have reduced our carbon emissions by over a third (-36%) (-9,558 tCO₂e).

Progress in 2022/23

Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Local Authority by 2030

- Climate and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel have hosted 4 meetings.
- We have established an Officer Decarbonisation Steering Group to enable Decarbonisation to be embedded across all services to be proposed in new Decarbonisation / Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Plan.
- We recognise the need for the focus to be authority wide in order to be make substantial progress towards achieving our goals for a Net Zero Authority.
- Transformation Steering Group: NZC is now to be brought under the umbrella of the new Transformation Programme and there will be a workstream dedicated to this key corporate priority. Quarterly progress updates are reported to Transformation Board.

Archwilio Cymru Audit Wales	Assurance and Risk Assessment Progress Update – Carbon Reduction (September 2022)
Overall finding <i>The Council demonstrates a strong organisational commitment to carbon reduction and has a published action plan, but this plan is not costed and does not identify the funding required to deliver all the activity within the plan.</i>	
Audit Wales Recommendation <i>In order to meet its net zero ambition, the Council needs to fully cost its action plan and ensure that it is aligned with its Medium-Term Financial Plan</i>	The Council's Action Plan Response <i>The Council proposes to fully cost its action plan and ensure that it is aligned with its Medium-Term Financial Plan by April 2023.</i>

Progress update

- This is the single Recommendation that the Council received from Audit Wales following publication of their report 'Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030' (July 2022).
- In the absence of an all Wales costing methodology the Council has draft costing ESTIMATES for its net zero plan working on a basis similar to another Local Authority in the SBCR [Swansea Bay City Region].
- That estimation is however recognised to be subject to a wide degree of tolerance and we are working to produce robust £ costings by adopting the following approach:
 1. Developing carbon reduction trajectories to produce various scenarios regarding our likely residual carbon emissions in 2030.
 2. To estimate the corresponding £ spend to deliver carbon reductions, seeking technical support from Local Partnerships (via Welsh Government Energy Service) to develop a consistent methodology for the four SW Wales local authorities, and potentially all Welsh public bodies.

The Council demonstrates a strong organisational commitment to carbon reduction and was the first local authority in Wales to publish net zero action plan and has reported annually against the plan. In the absence of guidance on a cost model the plan and annual updates have not indicated the total cost of the plan to meet the Council's net zero objective. In 2023 the council has developed methodology for estimating the cost of meeting the Council's net zero target by 2030. The model requires further refinement to provide consistency of approach across local authorities in Wales. The authority is pressing the Welsh Government for guidance while working with partners in the SBCR to develop the model.

The progress and approach as outlined above is to be commended but the scale of the spend required to achieve Net Zero Carbon is significant and an area of concern.

- ⦿ ['Walk the Global Walk'](#) is a three-year international project which focuses on mobilising young people in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are working in partnership with Dolen Cymru Lesotho, supporting 15 schools with a focus on climate action. Pupil ambassadors raise awareness of climate change, lead actions in their communities and then come together to share and celebrate their work with decision makers in the annual Global Walk.
- ⦿ We are leading in the public sector with our commitment to ensure Carmarthenshire plays its part in meeting climate change commitments. In order to meet our target of Net Zero Carbon by 2030, substantial reductions in energy consumption and renewables generation are needed across our estate. Following multiple detailed site visits, in-depth data analysis and discussions with occupants of the buildings in scope, we have implemented extensive Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) across our facilities.

“[Phase 1](#) has been completed and projected to save £315,726 and 675 tonnes of carbon equivalent (tCO₂e) each year – these savings being guaranteed by Ameresco under an Energy Performance Contract.

Working with Ameresco has allowed us to accelerate the roll-out of our energy efficiency programme in a more comprehensive manner and at a greater pace than could be achieved using limited in-house resources. We look forward to developing further phases to help us become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.”
- ⦿ 'Smart' and Sub-metering technology:

Accurate and timely data is critical for planning, monitoring and reporting progress towards becoming a net zero carbon local authority. As our non-domestic buildings account for 70% of our reported carbon emissions, we are extending the coverage of 'smart' and sub-metering technology for electricity and gas (plus water) to ensure timely capture of consumption data. We are installing smart and sub metering technology for electricity, gas and water to ensure timely capture of consumption data.

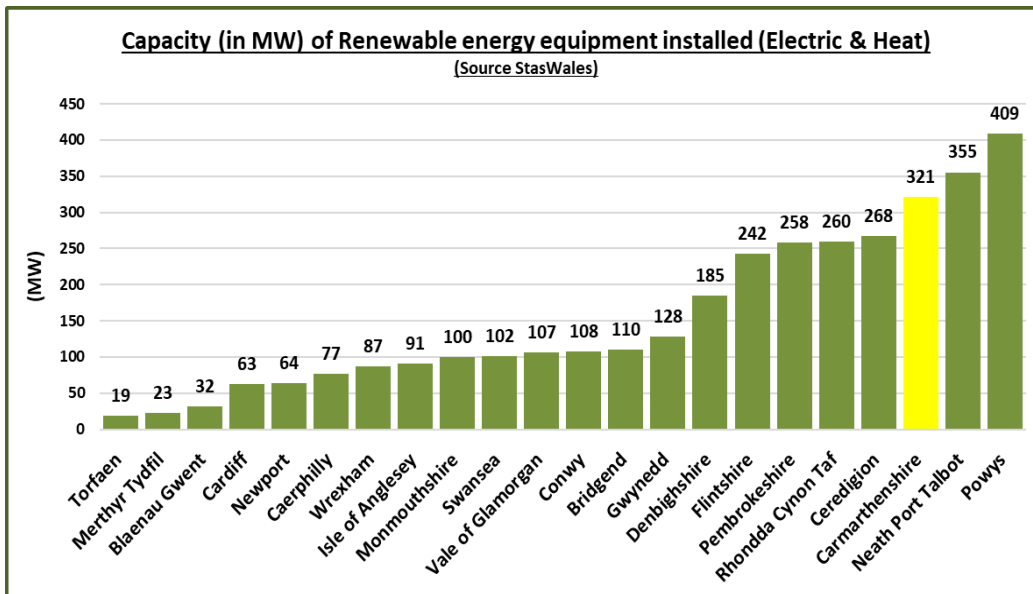
- Gas Metering: We have installed meters at all sites to be retained.
Day+1 Half Hourly (HH) data flowing from 209 meters including all the 197 supplies at sites to be retained.
 - Electricity Metering: We have installed meters at 55% of sites to be retained.
Day+1 HH data flowing from meters associated with 313 of 574 known supplies.
Works are progressing via a collaboration between our distribution network operator, National Grid (formerly Western Power Distribution) and our electricity supplier EDF Energy. Whilst progress had been delayed due to EDF staffing issues, a surge in electricity meter upgrades is now underway.
 - ! Water Metering: We have installed 1% of meters.
Day+1 Quarter Hourly (QH) data flowing from 4 of 336 known supplies.
Preliminary work is underway with Dŵr Cymru / Welsh Water to confirm current meter location.
Staff capacity constraints are delaying our roll-out of water data loggers until the completion of the electricity meter upgrade programme.
- ⦿ Half Hourly and Quarter Hourly data flowing from these advanced meters are imported daily into our SystemsLink energy management software system to provide enhanced data accuracy that will enable us to better identify consumption and carbon saving opportunities in of our non-domestic buildings and street lighting infrastructure.
 - ⦿ Waste Services have implemented the first three electric 26t Refuse collection vehicles and are now part of our front-line refuse collection fleet. We are not on target to receive 33 ULEV vehicles by 2024, as it transpires through market engagement in readiness of the procurement process for the new vehicles required to roll out the second phase of the waste strategy known as the kerbside sort, it has come apparent there is a delay in the procurement lead times.
 - ⦿ We recognise the need for the focus to be authority wide in order to be make substantial progress towards achieving our goals for a Net Zero Authority.

Capacity (in MW) of renewable energy equipment installed - National Well-being Indicator 12.



The recently Welsh Government published data shows that Carmarthenshire has the 3rd highest Capacity (in MW) of Renewable energy equipment installed (Electric & Heat) at 321 MW and 2nd highest number of projects at 6,439 (1st Powys - 7,384)

	Number of Projects	Electrical Capacity (MWe)	Heat Capacity (MWth)
Anaerobic Digestion	2	1	0
Biomass	508	0	45
Energy from Waste	0	0	0
Biomass Electricity and Combined Heat and Power	0	0	0
Heat Pump	1007	0	11
Hydropower	14	6	0
Landfill Gas	1	2	0
Nuclear	0	0	0
Offshore Wind	0	0	0
Onshore Wind	113	145	0
Sewage Gas	0	0	0
Solar PV	4491	110	0
Solar Thermal	303	0	1
Total	6439	264	57



Promoting affordable warmth and decarbonising our housing stock

- Our aim is to make all our homes energy efficient and achieve a minimum Band C energy performance rating as quickly as possible. Over 30% of our homes have already achieved this standard. Future investment in our existing homes will be based on using a Fabric First approach that improves the thermal performance of our homes and introducing non fossil fuel heating systems. This approach will promote affordable warmth for our tenants.
- Our new build Council homes embrace decarbonisation. Our homes are energy efficient, well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies and support the Council’s Net Zero Carbon principles. They help reduce our carbon emissions by on average 70% and create affordable warmth for tenants growing the green economy and creating sustainable communities.

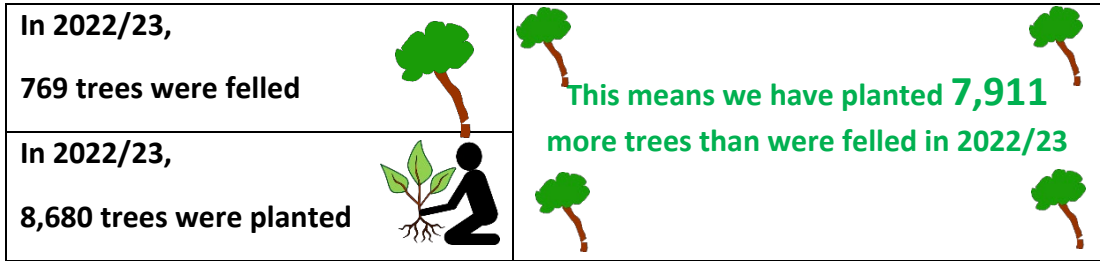
- Five potential priority sites have been identified for potential renewable energy development. We are working in collaboration with National Grid as part of the Carmarthenshire Local Area Energy Plan process with the aim of securing funding from Ofgem to enhance the local Grid.

Nature Emergency

- A nature emergency has been declared by Welsh Government and we have a Climate Change and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel to address this issue.

We are delivering several projects to ensure nature recovery:

- Adopted 21 sites on our estate to pilot a new way of Managing Land for Pollinators
- We have created a new wildlife garden areas at Trinity Saint David,
- Enhancement of a number of wildlife habitats in this area, ponds, grassland and woodland planting at Kidwelly Quay area
- We have been tree planting and creating a new access on our land at Tregib Sports field to enhance access to the woodland Trust Reserve
- We have a Service Level Agreement with National Botanic Garden of Wales. This enables us to work with a multi-disciplinary team at the National Botanic Garden of Wales and to benefit from their facilities for training and events. We have delivered our first event with Public Sector Bodies to encourage new LP4 N applications by hosting as training session.



- Tree Nursery Plans at our Day Centres - Plans have been put together by the Council’s Conservation team, with the help of the Botanic Gardens, for a Tree Nursery and wildlife friendly grounds to be developed in Johnstown Day Centre. With financial support from ‘Places for Nature’ funding scheme, the garden will include an accessible outdoor growing area and sensory garden, a woodland garden, a bog garden, meadow areas and an orchard. Although the project is taking place at the Johnstown centre, it will involve all day services through the collecting and planting of native seeds. There are also plans for a similar project to take place at Manor Road Day Centre. Not only will the garden improve the biodiversity of the area, but it will also provide a safe and accessible space for all to enjoy.

- Tree Planting - To help improve the County’s environment and increase biodiversity, the Council’s Rural Conservation Team and Property Department arranged the planting of over 8,000 native broadleaved trees to create 4.5 hectares of new woodland on Council owned land at Tregib (Llandeilo), Pendre (Kidwelly) and Maesdewi (Llandybie). Community planting days, including a day for pupils from Llandybie Primary School, were held at two of the locations.

As trees grow and photosynthesise, they will extract carbon emissions from the atmosphere. These new woodlands will provide new habitats for wildlife and thus contribute to addressing the nature emergency and become places where people can enjoy nature.

As a result of needing to re-position the active travel route which runs between Lower St Clears and St Clears, CCC purchased a 10-acre field. Active Travel have installed a new path, away from the river and the remaining land is now being managed for nature conservation. A scrape (shallow water body) has been created, 150 tree planting with ENRAW and Woodland Trust support, and we are re-introducing grazing of the flood plain meadow. In time we intend to propose to NRW that this area be designated as new Local Nature reserve.

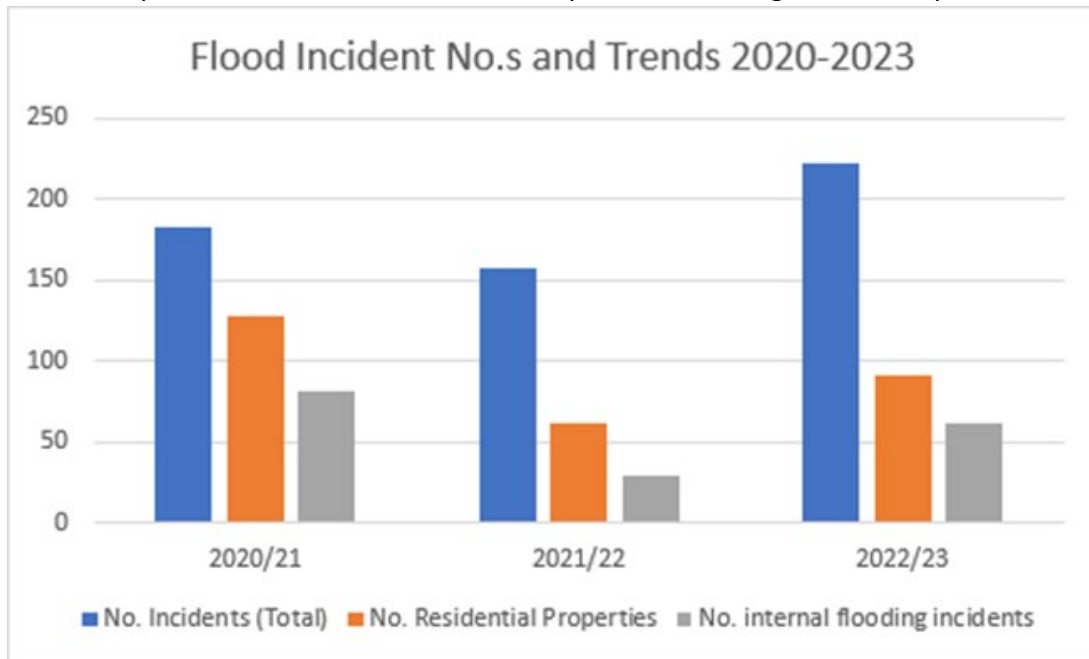


Tregib Sports Field and Grazing land - with Local Places for Nature, and some ENRAW grant aid we have planted individual and small groups of trees on the sports field, and we have used Glas Tir Woodland creation grant to plant 2.5ha woodland on land that was previously grazed. The more species rich grassland will be managed as a meadow. The new woodland planting links with the Woodland Trust’s Coed Tregib reserve, extending this woodland area, and with the grant aid we are providing an off-road path and a new foot bridge to improve access from Ffairfach to this reserve. Some of this path is suitable for mobility scooters, providing much needed access to the countryside for those with restricted mobility.

- ⦿ **Pollinators** - Over many years, across Britain, there has been a huge decline in insects which pollinate wildflowers and crops, also known as pollinators. The Council is currently looking at ways of managing grassland that will make it both richer in wildflowers and more attractive to pollinators. Simply by cutting less frequently, flowers that are already growing in the grass can flower and also support insects. There is no need to sow wildflower seed. Last summer, the Council experimented with this new approach, and it was well received by residents who enjoyed seeing the flower rich grasslands that appeared.

Flood risk management

- ⦿ While there have been no significant flooding events this year, we are getting better at collating data. As such numbers are up. In 2022/23 we received 223 reports of flooding incidents up from 158 in 2021/22.



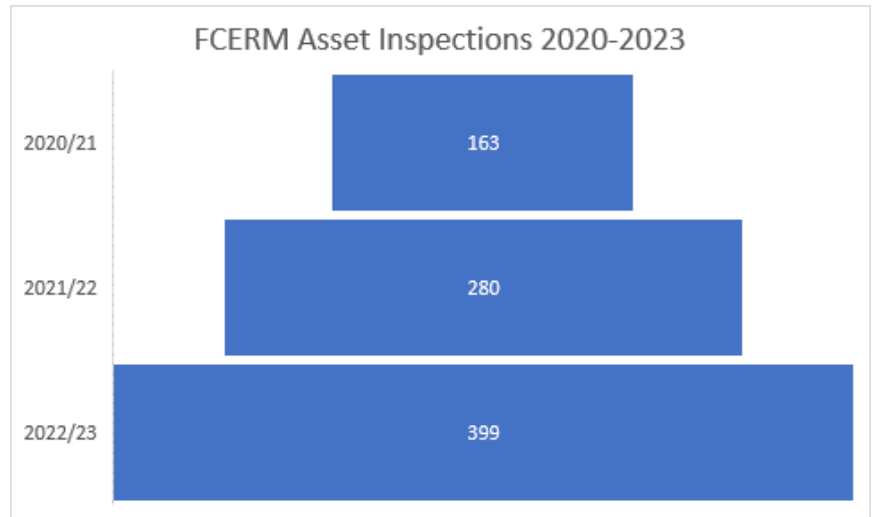
In 2022/23, we separated flooding incidents from enquiries and recorded 48 last year.

In October 2022 we completed and published our investigation report into the October 2021 floods in Kidwelly which is available online [here](#). This report included a 28-point action plan, over 70% of which have been delivered.

According to the 2022/23 [National Survey for Wales](#) results, 49% of Carmarthenshire respondents were concerned about flooding in their local area, and 16% with flooding in their own property.

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Asset Management

- We have completed 399 formal asset inspections, compared to the 280 the year before. We are focusing on ensuring that current assets are to standard and maintained accordingly.
- In 2023, we have continued our CCTV programme with seeks to map out sub terrain drainage in areas of flood risk; drainage which we hold no or inaccurate data on. In 2022/23 we surveyed over 8km of drainage which has been recorded on our National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management asset database.



Flood Capital Works

- In 2022/23 we secured Welsh Government funding for 12 [schemes](#) with a value of over £1million. We delivered 3 schemes namely.
 - ✓ Upgraded 1 key flood defence asset at Drefach, the trash screen.
 - ✓ Upgraded two key surface water outlets at Llansteffan Beach and Ferryside.
 - ✓ We also delivered a Natural Flood Risk Management Scheme at Margaret Street, Ammanford with £137k of Welsh Government funding.
- The above 4 schemes are estimated to deliver flood reduction benefit to 112 residential and 13 business properties.
- We have worked in collaboration with Ceredigion County Council and Natural Resources Wales to deliver a business case to Welsh Government for flood risk management funding for Llanybydder and Llandysul.
- We have completed the detailed design for a new culvert at Quarry Ffinant in Newcastle Emlyn.
- We have secured a further £1.35 million in grant funding to National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management business case development and capital construction works for 2023/24.

Proposals to reduce flooding in high impact areas

The communities of Llandysul and Pont-Tyweli, and Llanybydder have been subject to a number of devastating flood events, including Storm Callum in 2018 when numerous residential and commercial properties were impacted, and roads closed. Following this significant event, Carmarthenshire County Council, Ceredigion County Council and Natural Resources Wales have been working together to better understand the processes of flooding at these locations and assess different flood risk management options.

In August 2022 stakeholder engagement events were held at locations in both communities to collect local information on flooding history and processes and gather feedback on potential flood risk management options identified by the work to date.

Officers from Carmarthenshire's Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Team, working in partnership with Ceredigion County Council and NRW hosted the consultation events. Both events were well attended with a total of approximately 60 people contributing to the discussions, providing local knowledge on flooding history and processes, and commenting on potential solutions. This information has been used to validate and improve the flood models developed as part of the work, which has in turn been used to assess standards of protection provided by the proposed flood risk management options.

Stakeholder engagement and input has thus formed an integral part of these schemes' development and provided direction and motivation for the next stages.

This work is currently finalising 2 Outline Business Cases to be presented to Welsh Government to inform and direct the next stage of the work. Funding has been secured to progress both schemes (subject to approval of the OBCs) to the next stage, which is Detailed Design and Full Business Case.



Flood Risk Consultation with Llangennech Community

On the 19 April we held a public consultation event in Llangennech Community Centre. The Flood Defence and Coastal Protection Team have been working to develop a greater understanding of flood risk in Llangennech and to develop potential mitigation options. This event afforded us the opportunity to discuss local flooding issues with the community, and also table our initial options for the management of specific risks. The event was well attended with lots of useful discussion and debate. Attendees were asked to complete questionnaires relating to historical flooding events and provide feedback and ideas on potential flood risk management solutions. The collected data and information will be used to inform the next phase of the work.



Permitting and Consenting

	2021/22	2022/23
Full Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) applications	113	116
Pre applications 'Drainage Approval Body (SAB)'	0	59

- ⦿ We provided comments and advice on 621 planning consultations.
- ⦿ Delivered a programme of compliance checks where 222 developments have been checked to see if they are SAB compliant, there was a 99% compliance rate.
- ⦿ We have determined 100% of all Flood defence Consents within the statutory timeframe.

Coastal

- ⦿ We undertook pre and post storm checks of our coastal assets throughout the winter.
- ⦿ We formally inspected 100% of our coastal assets over the year.
- ⦿ We have repaired 8 Aids of navigation from Llansteffan to Llanelli.
- ⦿ We are working collaboratively with the Ministry of Defence to manage a private coastal defence in Pembrey.
- ⦿ We have worked collaboratively across Council services to manage the eroding coastal path.
- ⦿ We have worked collaboratively with Leisure and Engineering Design on the coastal erosion issues at Pembrey Country Park and Burry Port East.
- ⦿ We are procuring coastal surveys to monitor how our coastline is responding to climate change.

Reservoirs

- ⦿ We worked with framework contractors Griffiths to deliver significant upgrades to Trebeddrod Reservoir in Llanelli including repairs to the embankment and installation on a syphon.
- ⦿ Our own workforce has also key in helping deliver minor repairs at both Trebeddrod and Cwmoernant Reservoirs.
- ⦿ We have established Service Level Agreements with Grounds Maintenance to ensure all of our reservoirs are managed to the requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1949.
- ⦿ We have also established a programme of invasive species management at all sites.
- ⦿ We have overseen the annual inspections of our reservoirs by the Supervising Engineers and implemented their actions accordingly.

Carmarthen Learning Centre

Work has recently been completed at Carmarthen Learning Centre to make it more energy efficient and reduce its carbon emissions by 76%. Retrofit measures that include cavity wall insulation, double glazing, and roof improvements have been implemented to improve the heat retention of the building. The Learning Centre is no longer reliant on a gas supply as Solar Panels an Air Source Heat Pump provide energy and heat to the building. Energy efficient LED lighting have also been installed.

Not only has the upgrade works reduced the building's environment impact, but it has also improved the comfort and experience for those who work and learn in the building.

Leading the way on Phosphates



In early 2021 NRW published evidence of excessive phosphate levels in riverine special areas of conservation (SAC's). There were far reaching implications for competent authorities, developers and communities. The Council responded with new collaborative ways of working to this new challenge. Environmental legislation underpinning habitats conservation in SAC rivers requires a 'whole river' approach necessitating action plans transcending authority boundaries. In close collaboration with Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion councils, we created a new post of NMB Programme Manager to establish

Nutrient Management Boards (NMB's) and coordinate the cross boundary local authority activities in collaboration with Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

The Council has worked collaboratively and closely with NRW to improve clarity on guidelines, and worked closely with DCWW, NRW, sub-regional local authorities and external subject matter specialists to produce nutrient resources and are actively assisting in the preparation the first nutrient calculator for the whole of Wales. The Council fostered close sub-regional links to expand the Council's resources producing a West Wales nutrient calculator and supporting documents, West Wales catchment specific Mitigation Measures, and a regional Nutrient Trading Feasibility Study in collaboration with Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Neath Port-Talbot. We and the NMB Programme Manager collaborates closely with a range of stakeholders and provides LA input to WG on nutrient related Task and Finish and Action Groups.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Authority's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial as well as non-financial performance.

Business Plans/ Delivery plans are developed and reported at Scrutiny Committee. Actions monitored through the PIMS by the department and by the Committee.

The Council's constitution provides delegated authority to the Head of Place and Sustainability for certain planning functions [part-32-revised-council-9th-feb-2022.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#). Officers are delegated to undertake key activities appropriate to their role by the Head of Place and Sustainability.

The Council is required to meet the Welsh Government's reporting requirements for carbon emissions net zero in accordance with [Public sector net zero reporting guide | GOV.WALES](#)

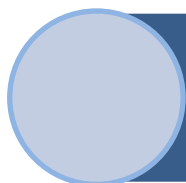
The Council prepares an annual report on progress in meeting its net zero action plan on an annual basis which is considered by the Climate Change and Nature Advisory panel, Cabinet, scrutiny committee and council.

The Council prepares an annual report on progress in meeting its section 6 Environment Act biodiversity obligation each year to the Welsh Government which is considered by Cabinet, the Climate Change and Nature Advisory panel, scrutiny committee, council.

The Department has its own live performance monitoring HWB, ARCUS which provides real time reporting on planning functions for local management purposes.

Performance management reviews are undertaken by line managers using KPIs.

Transformation Board reviews are conducted on areas of the function and reported to the Head of Service, recommendations resulting from reports are reported and progress monitored through the PIMS system.



3c - Thematic Priority - Welsh Language and Culture

The 2021 Census results published in December 2022 saw a further decline in the number of Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire, down to 39.9% of the population, which is equivalent to 72,838 Welsh speakers. However, the Welsh Language County Strategî Forum is developing excellent co-operation approaches and has worked together to co-produce the new Welsh Language promotion Strategy. The Council is also developing its ethos and culture in terms of use of the Welsh language within the organisation and this will be further developed over the next few years.

Why is this important?


- Carmarthenshire is a stronghold for the Welsh language and is considered to be of high strategic importance in its future. Bilingualism is beneficial to both the economy and individuals through cognitive and social benefits. We will work towards increasing the number of Welsh speakers and supporting the regular use of the language across all aspects of our daily lives.
- Engaging in cultural activity has demonstrable positive impact on starting well, living well and ageing well. We want our future generations to be immersed in a strong, intriguing, wholly unique Carmarthenshire Culture, which reflects our past and shapes our future.





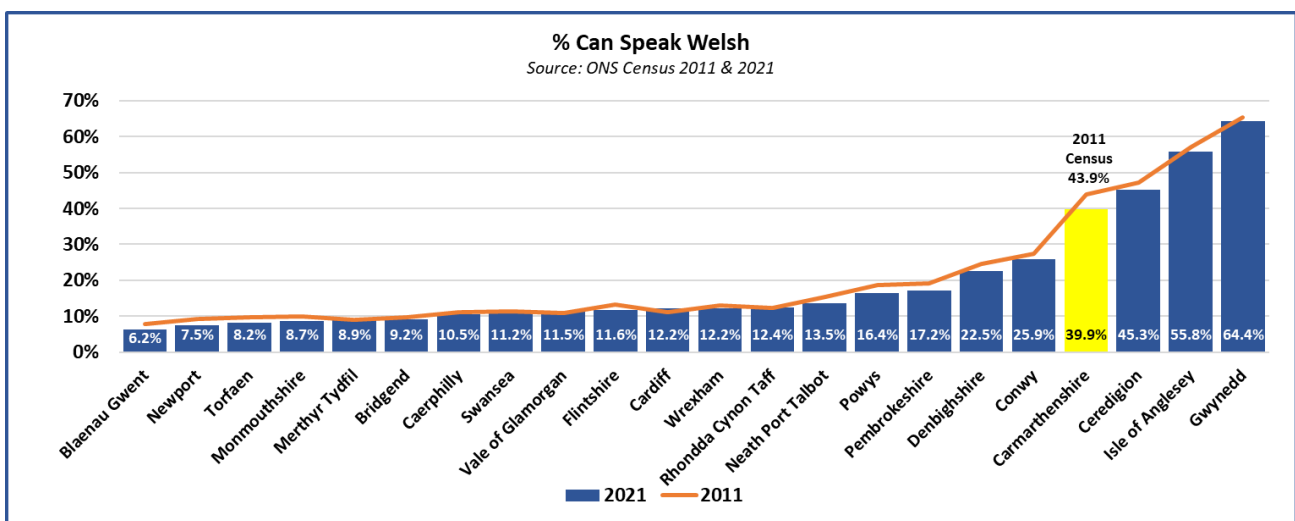
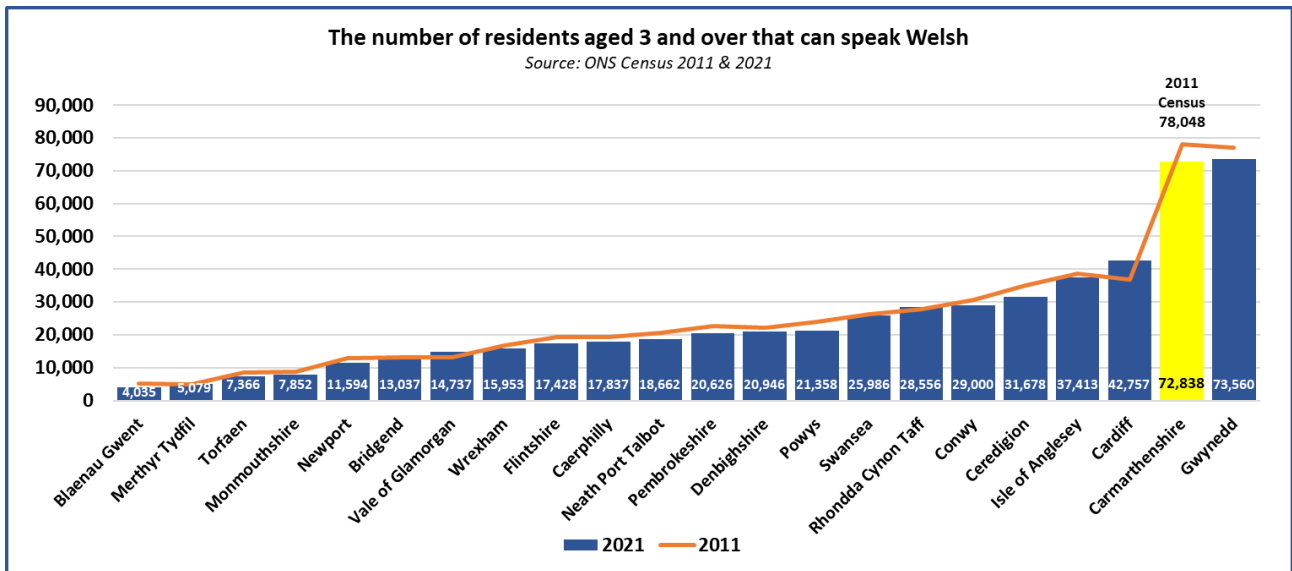
How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Measuring Progress

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures monitored for the Welsh Language and Culture thematic priority.

Population Indicators		
Indicator	Trend	Explaining the Data
No. of People that Can Speak Welsh		<p>The Numbers of Welsh Speakers in the County have Declined</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period between the 2011 and 2021 Census and shows a decreasing trend.</i></p> <p>Carmarthenshire is home to 72,838 Welsh speakers. This translates to 39.9% of the County’s total population, this is a decrease of 5,210 since the last Census in 2011, equal to a percentage point decrease of 4.0%. This is the largest percentage point decrease of all local authorities in Wales.</p> <p>In 2001 and 2011, Carmarthenshire had the highest number of Welsh speakers of all local authorities in Wales, with 84,196 and 78,048 Welsh speakers respectively. These new figures mean that the county now has the second highest number of Welsh speakers of all local authorities in Wales.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire remains the fourth highest in terms of the percentage of the population that are able to speak Welsh.</p>

<p>Number of those aged 3-15 that can speak Welsh</p>		<p>Less Significant Declines Amongst the Younger Age Group when Compared with other Age Groups</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period between the 2011 and 2021 Census and shows a decreasing trend.</i></p> <p>All local authorities saw a decrease in the percentage of children aged 3 to 15 reported as being able to speak Welsh between 2011 and 2021.</p> <p>At a national level it is thought that the decrease in both the number and percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh is mainly driven by a fall among children and young people who reported as being able to speak Welsh.</p> <p>In Carmarthenshire the numbers of those aged 3-15 able to speak Welsh has decreased by 510 people, this translates to a percentage point decrease of 2.6.</p> <p>Decreases were also visible within the 16-64 and 65+ age categories although at more significant levels than the younger age group. To expand, the decline in those aged over 65 able to speak to Welsh translates to a percentage point decrease of 8.7.</p>
<p>% of people (16+) attending or participating in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times per year</p>		<p>Decreasing Attendance/Participation in Arts, Culture or Heritage Activities Likely as a Result of Covid Restrictions</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2017/18 to 2019/20.</i></p> <p>Attending and/or participating in arts, culture or heritage events is linked to improved general health and well-being. Such events also underpin the creation of a sense of place and national identity.</p> <p>Whilst it is disappointing to see that attendance and participation levels have dropped in the county, it is important to note that data collection coincided with the pandemic and therefore attendance and participation may have been detrimentally affected by lockdown restrictions.</p>
<p>Performance Measure</p>		
<p>It's important that the Welsh language is promoted and protected</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>0.69</p>	<p>In our 2022 residents survey the majority of respondents agreed that it is important to promote and protect the Welsh language with an average index score of 0.69.</p>



- There were almost **516,000 virtual or actual visits to our libraries (LCL/001)** during 2022/23, this equates to 2,710 per 1,000 population, this shows an improvement on last year (1,614 or 307,000 visits). Despite the improvement, this is 64% lower than pre-COVID (2019/20) with 1.4m visits. With a decrease of 85% in actual visits, but a 45% increase in virtual visits. Physical visitor figures are gradually increasing as COVID-19 restrictions ease, with various adult and children’s activities taking place during the year with various exhibitions, summer reading challenge, the launch of the Warm Winter Welcome Club, weekly local history talks, vocalists and author visits, Makerspace experience, children craft sessions, science and poetry workshops, keep fit classes, drama workshops, magic shows & music/ rhyme sessions, to name but a few. Customers also continue to utilise our free digital resources, with customers benefitting from our range of digital eBooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines & training apps.

Progress in 2022/23

Welsh Language

- On 7 December 2022, we took part in the national Welsh Language Rights Day, facilitated by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The focus of the day was the promotion of rights amongst young people; therefore, we promoted our career and workplace opportunities to young people in secondary schools and colleges across the county. We also worked closely with Cynllun Profi, to promote Welsh medium support and guidance for young people on their journey from school to the workplace.



- ⦿ During 2022/23 we have submitted evidence to the Welsh Language Commissioner’s Office on Recruitment and how we consider the Welsh Language as part of our policies and procedures. This formed part of a national thematic review and we are awaiting further feedback during 2023/24.
- ⦿ The Welsh Language Strategic Forum has continued to meet regularly with a clear focus on evaluating our first Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and preparing a revised strategy for 2023/28. As part of the evaluation of the first strategy, members of the Strategic Forum took part in workshops to look at areas of success and improvement and to identify priority areas for 2023/28.
- ⦿ We continued with the 'laith ein Gwaith' project, which supports the Education and Children’s Services Department to move along the journey towards administering through the medium of Welsh. One element of the project is to work with Bangor University, through the ARFer programme, which supports staff to increase their use of the Language daily. Six groups from the department took part in a pilot project through ARFer and we will revisit these groups in September 2023. During the year, we have also been updating the language skills audit information we have available for the department, to establish a data baseline.
- ⦿ As part of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, we worked closely with Menter Cwm Gwendraeth Elli during the year to help with the vulnerable situation of the Welsh language in Llanelli. In partnership with the Menter, an action group was set up to discuss possibilities in Llanelli and the Council drew up a SNAP questionnaire for the Menter to administer, to find out more about opportunities and obstacles to using the Welsh language in Llanelli. A detailed report has been prepared by Catrin Llwyd to analyse the questionnaires and carry out further consultation work to draw up recommendations which would be the basis for priorities for the action group.
- ⦿ One of the projects under the UK Government's Community Regeneration Fund, is the 'laith Gwaith / Working Language' fund led by the County Council. 'laith Gwaith' provided grants of up to £3,000 to support businesses and community organisations to raise the profile of the Welsh language. These grants were in line with the Welsh Government's 'Helo Blod' provision, with the two officers in Carmarthenshire being encouraged to promote the grants as part of a wider package of support to provide bilingually. With 'Helo Blod' project ending, the laith Gwaith program is going to acquire a similar service, to ensure one to one sessions of further support for all those who are successful with an laith Gwaith grant.

Welsh Culture

- Carmarthenshire Museum Service has benefited from capital investment in recent years. This year sees the completion of the most ambitious project of all, the new Museum of Land Speed in Pendine. Situated within a destination that offers high quality and accessible visitor facilities, the museum will transform from what was once a seasonal exhibition facility into one of only a handful modern purpose-built museums in Wales that meets the high standards of design, security, environmental sustainability, and visitor access. Also completed is the full external restoration scheme of Carmarthenshire Museum. The £1.2m investment was shared between Carmarthenshire Museum and the Tywi Gateway Trust. Parc Howard Museum has benefited from capital investment to make the iconic landmark building watertight and upgrade all electrical systems. The grade 2 listed building converted to museum use in 1912 has had a sensitive interior refurbishment to the main public areas and the museum stores.
- A new £2.2M archive repository and information hub opened to the public in July 2022. It is home to an extensive collection of historic documents that date from the 13th Century to the present day. The council received funding of £120,000 from the Welsh Government's Transformation Capital Grant Scheme towards the new facility.
- Our libraries hosted a wide range of events over the year. We held several exhibitions including Battle of Britain Exhibition, Bible Exhibition & Scarlets Rugby Exhibition.
- Author visits were held in several libraries along with poetry workshops & craft sessions.
- Makerspace sessions continue to be popular with customers attending 3D Printing workshops, Gaming sessions and Animation Workshops.
- Throughout the winter months we held the 'Warm Winter Welcome Club' offering our customers a safe space to socialise, have a cuppa, keep warm and enjoy some of the free sessions we ran including, digital assistance sessions, book club, knitting group, music sessions & board games. Working partnerships with organisations continued - Actif Leisure resumed Actif Storytime sessions, Mudiad Meithrin held the Cymraeg i Blant sessions within our libraries.
- Carmarthenshire have purchased additional collections of eBooks/ eAudio books to meet the increased demand and new membership.
- A self-service library has been successful at the Foyer, Cawdor Hall, Newcastle Emlyn, following a successful bid to the Welsh Governments' Cultural Recovery Grant. Carmarthenshire Libraries have been working with [Lyngsoe LibCabinet](#), [D-Tech Lockers](#) and [Hublet](#) for the project. The Lyngsoe LibCabinets operate much like a vending machine, creating a mini self-service library. Our self-service reservation pick up lockers, accessed with your library card, allows customers to reserve items online from the extensive Carmarthenshire library catalogue. When an item is ready for collection simply pick it up from the locker in the library at a time that is convenient. Items can also be returned via the locker when they are due.



Author John Nicholl
(Carmarthen Murders and Tywi Estuary Killings)



- ⦿ Free online training courses are also available to our customers through our digital resources 'Universal Class', 'Artist Works' and 'Transparent Language'. Library members can learn music instruction for the most popular string and band instruments, discover how to cook healthy meals, take art classes, learn basic IT skills, gardening skills, parenting classes, learn a new language or even take a mock theory driving test. Family history resources like 'Ancestry' and 'Find My Past' are also very popular. National, international newspapers and magazines, also available to download for free, visits to our 'Pressreader' newspaper app continued to rise during 2022/23.
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire libraries have a dedicated reserve book stock located at Burry Port library which gives us access to thousands of Welsh book materials. Over £20k was spent on Welsh Language materials in 2022/23.
- ⦿ During the year, Welsh language Storytime sessions 'Cymraeg i Blant' were held in our regional libraries, helping to ignite imagination and develop literacy skills. Carmarthenshire Libraries work in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin Cymru who provide these Welsh Language story time sessions for babies and young children at the three regional Libraries.
- ⦿ History drama presentations were held within our libraries to celebrate St. David's Day. 'Mewn Cymeriad' ran the sessions for primary school children who were invited to attend the events, the sessions helped inform and inspire the children to learn more about the history of Wales.
- ⦿ In August 2022, Theatrau Sir Gâr returned to **Pembrey Country Park** for another summer season of **outdoor theatre**. A jam-packed programme of entertainment was presented on a temporary outdoor stage over thirteen days, including live music, comedy, dance, and fun-filled family shows, attracting nearly 1,900 attendances.
- ⦿ In July 2022, The Ffwrnes partnered with Hijinx Theatre to bring **The Unity Festival** to Llanelli. The Unity festival is one of Europe's largest inclusive and disability arts festivals and the only one of its kind in Wales. Over the course of two days a programme of inclusive theatre, film, dance, and street theatre from around the world, was showcased at the Ffwrnes Llanelli (and online).



Is anyone better off?

The Theatres Service worked with **National Dance Company Wales** to create **PARTi**, an event to bring the whole community together to celebrate dance, which was held at Y Glowyr in Ammanford in November 2022. Local people from the community worked alongside professional dancers to co-create the event, which included a dance performance, cake, and a twmpath. Tickets were offered on a 'Pay What You Decide' basis to ensure that everyone could enjoy a great night out at the theatre.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- ⊙ Welsh Language Members Advisory Panel - To advise the Executive Board Member with responsibility for the Welsh Language on the development and promotion of the language in the County.
- ⊙ Welsh In Education Forum - The WESP sets out a requirement for each Local Authority (LA) to establish a Welsh Education Forum In legislation the Forum is described as follows-
Welsh medium education forum” (“fforwm addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg”) means a body established by a LA for the purpose of improving the provision of Welsh medium education the members of which consist of LA officers and such other persons as the LA considers appropriate
- ⊙ Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language
- ⊙ Education, Young people and the Welsh Language Scrutiny.
- ⊙ Welsh Language Standards implementation in liaison with Welsh Language Commissioner’s Office.
- ⊙ Welsh language County Strategic Forum – this is a partnership between public sector bodies and organisations who work for the benefit of the Language.
- ⊙ Publish an annual report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards.

Culture Services are subject to business planning supported by structure meetings/appraisals and performance management sessions as well as Weekly / Fortnightly 1 to 1 meetings with service managers, Weekly Departmental meetings, Quarterly HoS / CMT meetings and Bi-monthly Scrutiny committees. We also have external assessment via customer/stakeholder engagement and feedback. Whilst not a statutory requirement Culture measures standards by the achievement of accreditation (a national standard) in the museums and archives services and achievement of the Welsh Public library Standards. The latter is annual whilst accreditation is granted and then reviewed on a three yearly basis.

3d - Thematic Priority - Community Safety, Resilience, and Cohesion

Despite a slight increase in crime rates, Carmarthenshire remains one of the safest places in the UK. Partnership working with Dyfed Powys Police and other agencies remains strong and continues to develop as new issues arise.

Why is this important?

- Safety and a feeling of belonging are important to personal well-being.
- More people now appreciate the value of kindness and being part of a community. Supporting cohesive communities and ensuring those from different backgrounds share positive relationships, feel safe in their neighbourhood, and have a sense of mutual respect and shared values is central to having active and thriving communities.
- Community Resilience is also essential to enable communities to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. When communities work together to support each other it builds a sense of pride and belonging which is key for social well-being.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? 📄 Sources of evidence

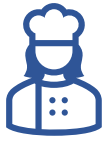
Measuring Progress

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures monitored for the Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion thematic priority.

Performance Measure		
Indicator	Trend	Explaining the Data
I like living in Carmarthenshire – Residents Consultation	2022	Overall, there was strong agreement from respondents through a recent consultation that they like living in Carmarthenshire. Whilst many factors will have contributed to these sentiments, it should be noted that some of the main factors which make a good place are closely aligned to the work of the Council. Most notably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good schools, ▪ Good leisure facilities, ▪ Pleasant surroundings, ▪ Good accessibility, ▪ Low crime rates.
	1.32	
I feel that I can live the life I want to live without the fear of judgment or prejudice - Residents Consultation	2022	Respondents largely agreed that they are able to live the life they want to live without the fear of judgment or prejudice. However, agreement to this statement was lower amongst members of the LGBTQ+ community and respondents who have disabilities. This is a luxury which is not afforded to everyone across the world, therefore, it is testament to the nature of Carmarthenshire as a place and its people that overall residents feel that they can be themselves. This is an integral part of feeling a sense of belonging and is one of the main contributors to overall happiness. Happier people live happier lives which in turn allows them to make positive contributions to their communities.
	0.71	

I feel safe in my community - Residents Consultation	2022	A positive score to this statement indicates that the majority of residents who responded to the consultation feel safe in their communities. The most recent National Survey for Wales results for Carmarthenshire suggests that we are slightly above the Welsh average for this measure and rank 11th lowest in Wales overall.
	0.78	

- ! Targeted intervention delivery on Food Business was revised during the course of the year on the basis of known identified risks from newly registered businesses. This meant that of the **879 Food Business establishments liable for a programmed inspection** as per the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Recovery Plan during 2022/23 (*PPN/002*), **553 were actually inspected**, this equates to 61% compared to 100% of the 407 establishments inspected the previous year. This deviation in approach was acknowledged by the Food Standards Agency and is also a component of their recovery plan, post COVID. Premises programmed for, but did not receive an intervention during 22/23, will default into the 23/24 risk based inspection programme. All premises due for inspection have been deemed broadly compliant by virtue of their current Food Hygiene Rating and having been subject to an Official Control Visit in previous years.
- ⊙ 99% (2,128/2,148) of food establishments in Carmarthenshire meet food hygiene standards (*PAM/023*).
 - ⊙ 100% (211/211) of Trading Standards high risk businesses in Carmarthenshire that were liable to a programmed inspection, were inspected during 2022/23.
 - ⊙ Unfortunately, we were unable to complete two **Animal Health high risk programmed inspections** by 31st March 2023, giving a result of **99% (162/164)** both inspections were completed in April 2023.



Progress in 2022/23

Community Safety

- ⊙ We have ensured the Council fulfils its duties relating to the current Contest Strategy (counter terrorism). There have been ongoing discussions at the Carmarthenshire Contest Board and the Regional Contest Board to progress the production of key documents to ensure the Council and partner organisations are fulfilling their duties as outlined in the Contest Strategy. Consideration has been given to how the Counter Terrorism Local Profile could inform the development of a situational risk assessment for the region to identify key challenges and the local context around those. This assessment would then be utilised to develop corporate risk assessments, including one for the Council to assess how the Council is delivering against the requirements of the Prevent Duty.
- ⊙ Partnership working in the Tyisha ward led by the Council's 'Transforming Tyisha' team has continued to deliver successes over the past year. These have included the setting up of Neighbourhood Watch groups, days of action with police led operations to target specific concerns and thousands of households supplied with security marking kits and crime prevention equipment, community engagement via 'Meet the Street' and using the outreach van, targeted waste and anti-social behaviour patrols, the development of a CCTV implementation action plan and closure orders of premises causing anti-social behaviour problems. Reductions have been seen in 2021 in the number of a range of types of crime compared to the previous year. Following a review by the Crime and Disorder workstream in January 2023 of their work to date, current policing issues are areas of priority, a new action plan for 2023/24 has been developed. This focuses on increasing visibility and presence, engagement and partnership, enforcement and specific operations.
- ⊙ The Council showed its support again for the 'White Ribbon Campaign' to end male violence against women and girls on the annual White Ribbon Day on Friday, November 25 and the 16 Days of Action which follow. Activities supported were on an even larger scale than previous years, with the White Ribbon flags flown at County Hall and town halls in Llanelli and Ammanford and County Hall lit up in purple, screensavers on council laptops encouraged staff to make the promise "to never commit, excuse or remain silent about

male violence against women” and directed staff to support available on the intranet. This includes the Council’s ‘Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence’ policy which was revised in July 2022. Posters were put up in our buildings with digital messages in our bus stations and video messages on the screens in libraries and leisure centres and awareness raised amongst our local sports clubs. An e-chat for staff was led by a local domestic abuse service provider, Calan DVS and special events held including a Walking Football session at Amman Valley Leisure Centre, at a Carmarthen Town AFC home game with the support of Carmarthen Domestic Abuse Service and former Welsh international rugby union star, Sam Warburton, supported the campaign at his event at the Lyric on White Ribbon Day.

- ⦿ The Council has been working closely with our partner agencies to respond to the new ‘Serious Violence Duty’ which requires a strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in, and reduce instances of, serious violence in the area. Such violence includes domestic and sexual violence, knife and gun crime, loss of life and violence against young people. A Strategic Needs Assessment, to be produced and led by Dyfed Powys Police, will include data from the Council and all partner agencies to inform the regional Strategy.
- ⦿ Officers have been working with Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys local authorities, police, UWTSD and Coleg Sir Gâr to develop a film for students to address and challenge extremist views to prevent young people being drawn into terrorism. Funding for the project was received from the Home Office Preventing Radicalisation Grant and local young people were involved in the development and making of the film. The film will be launched in Universities and Colleges across the region in the summer of 2023 with a further roll out in schools being planned.
- ⦿ The Road Safety Unit delivered kerb craft initiatives to 969 pupils to promote road safety training and campaigns to encourage safe active travel.
- ⦿ 808 pupils received National Standards for cycling training.
- ⦿ The innovative Seraphim Telephone Fraud Prevention programme notifies authority officers and triggers local authority intervention when trueCall users experience a high volume of calls from suspected fraudsters. In 2022/23, 400 high level alerts were generated (an increase of 306 from the previous year). These alerts have led to welfare calls and officer intervention, such as blocking incoming calls from identified, high-risk telephone numbers, to prevent vulnerable residents engaging with telephone fraud approaches.


For the period 2022/23 the programme has

- blocked 24,860 calls
- blocked 5,370 calls from scam callers (calls blocked from nationally reported scam numbers)
- saved service users approximately £146,693 by preventing engagement with telephone fraud
- saved Social Care, NHS and the police and estimated £86,875 in intervention/support costs

Community Cohesion



- The Mid and South West Wales Community Cohesion team are one of 8 regions funded by Welsh Government to achieve a consistent approach to cohesion across the country. The team works across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys. The Community Cohesion team raise awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it, ensuring people understand what constitutes a hate crime and working with organisations like Victim Support to develop campaigns, training and projects. During 2022-23, the cohesion team led projects throughout the year including:
 - facilitating an Online hate session looking at the impacts of online hate/harms on both individuals and communities, highlighting cases in Wales
 - two information sessions for organisations to find out more about Hate Crime Awareness Week and how they can get involved.
 - Coordinated a LGBTQ+ Training with Victim Support and CETMA, aimed at professionals. Over 200 people attended.
 - organised a Wales wide webinar as part of Victim Supports, Countering Hateful Extremism Wales meeting. Raising Awareness and Understanding of Extremism and Toxic Masculinity - a webinar for Professionals working with young people. Over 150 people attended.
 - presented at the national forum 'The View from the Ground': Asylum, Cohesion and Extremism Challenges, organised by SIGCE on experiences of managing tensions in communities housing refugees and asylum seekers.
- The Community Cohesion team promote a number of awareness calendar events that support inclusivity and equality including Holocaust Memorial Day; Transgender Day of Visibility; Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, Refugee Week, Hate Crime Awareness Week and Interfaith Week. Social Media posts are shared and for some key dates, flags are flown, and public buildings turned relevant colours as a mark of respect. The team led on a number of training and capacity building projects:
 - Delivery of a Cohesion in our Communities session, aimed at community groups, showcasing good practice from 3 small grants funded projects.
 - Completion of the short film, "What is Community Cohesion" film.
 - Supported a Friends and Neighbours (FAN) group involving Ukrainians living in Llanelli and joined the Wales FAN steering group.
 - The team had three articles to the Public Health Network Cymru E-bulletin on Cohesive Communities. All of which were included.
 - In collaboration with Travelling Ahead, facilitated 2 GRT Awareness Raising sessions looking at the culture and traditions and policy relating to these groups. Nearly 70 people attended from Local Authorities, Police, Health and third sector.
 - The cohesion teamwork with local authorities and partners around the Ukraine schemes and have linked in with regard to Tension Monitoring and supporting resettlement of Ukrainians across the region. Also, working to monitor and support on the role out of Asylum Dispersal across the region.
- The team ran a Small Grants fund across the region to encourage community groups and organisations to apply for funding. A number of successful projects ran across Carmarthenshire including:
 - **Cymuned Cymraeg by Heart of Wales LGBTQ+** - this project facilitated fortnightly conversation groups with the aim to bring Welsh learners and fluent Welsh speakers together and practice their Welsh together. The project involved the LGBTQ+ community promoting the use of their individual pronouns in Welsh.
 - **Winter Pride and Hate Crime Awareness Virtual Coffee Morning run by CETMA** - This project ran a series of online and in person events aimed at members of the LGBTQ+ community to raise awareness of hate crime, ways to report it and where to seek help and support. A Winter Pride event was held in December for the first time in the County.

Community Resilience

	Audit Wales National Report: Together We Can – Community resilience and self-reliance (January 2023)
<p>This National report notes that local authorities find it difficult to empower people and communities to be more self-reliant and less dependent on services, but with less resource now available they need communities and people to do more for themselves. The report made two recommendations.</p>	
<p>In response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s new Corporate Strategy (adopted 1 March 2023) includes a Well-being Objective to enable our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous. One of the Thematic Priorities within this objective focuses on Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion. As part of our response to this priority we will use the evaluation tool (promoted in the report) to self-evaluate our current approach and develop an action plan in response. We will do this across all Council services and engage with PSB partners as community resilience also features in the new Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan. By December 2023. • Once the action plan is in place governance arrangements will be established to ensure implementation and monitoring of progress within the Council and across PSB activity. By March 2024. 	

Is anyone better off?

Using a Small Grant fund through the Community Cohesion Team, Foothold Cymru and Llanelli Multi Cultural Society hosted a celebration event - Christmas Around the World. The event brought together a host of different nationalities who live and work in Llanelli.

Over 500 people attended the event which increased social cohesion within the town, attendees had the opportunity to sample food from around the globe and information was shared on how to minimise food waste and produce healthy, nutritious food on a budget and shared learning and ideas from one another.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Cabinet Member for Organisation and Workforce, Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny
 The Community Cohesion Team reports to Welsh Government on a quarterly basis and are part of and provide updates to Safer Communities Partnership, CONTEST, Serious Violence and Organised Crime and Strategic Equalities in all four counties.

3e - Service Priority - Leisure and Tourism

Leisure Attendance Almost Back to Pre-Covid Levels

Attendances have recovered across the year as more people are engaged in physical activity opportunities across the county, with figures almost back to pre-Covid levels. Our key challenges over the past 12 months have been around managing post pandemic participation and income recovery, along with the cost of living and energy price crises.

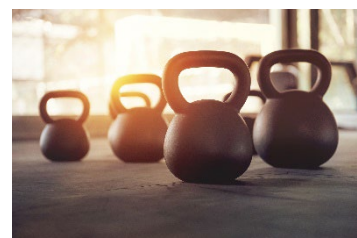
Why is this important?

- ⦿ Sport and leisure, culture and outdoor recreation are the heartbeat of our communities. These services provide a range of health and well-being activities, facilities, and programmes in order to support our residents and communities to lead healthy, safe and prosperous lives.
- ⦿ In a similar way the promotion of our County as an attractive and commercially viable place to visit and invest in is a key economic and well-being factor.
- ⦿ We will continue to develop these services in response to the need of our residents, businesses and visitors.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ⦿ There were over **1.3m visits to our leisure centres during 2022/23 (PAM/017)**, this equates to 7,017 per 1,000 population, this shows a 52% growth on last year (4,598 or 874,000 visits). Attendances have recovered across the year as more people are engaged in physical activity opportunities across the county with figures almost back to pre-COVID levels.
- ⦿ Over 800,000 people visited Pembrey Country Park, Facebook followers have increased to over 29,000, over 10,000 people visited the Christmas festivities including the light trail.



Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ We have secured £219k for a 5-year maintenance and development programme at Ynys Dawela nature reserve.
- ⦿ Our Leisure Services achieved a Gold Award from The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). Which is a highly sought after award for health & safety.
- ⦿ Pembrey Country Park again secured the prestigious Blue Flag Status, making it the most awarded Blue Flag Site in Wales since 1988. The Blue Flag award is only given to beaches, marinas and harbours that have the highest quality of water, environmental education and management, safety and services. It was also awarded the Green Flag award for its inspiring green space and secured the VAQAS accreditation from Visit Wales.
- ⦿ In addition, Llyn Llech Owain Country Park was awarded a Green Flag for the first time.

- Two playgrounds within Pembrey Country Park were refurbished, which now includes easily accessible equipment, a disabled swing a sensory tunnel and is fully accessible for wheelchairs.
- A new Bear Trail for 2023 & Foot Golf offering in Pembrey Country Park.
- Theatres in the Park.
- 700 Individuals donated 2,910 hours of volunteering across Outdoor Recreation Sites.
- Y Caban opened its doors on 31st March 2023.
- Over £160k was spent in Grants in both Llyn Llech Owain and Mynydd Mawr Country Park to restore boardwalks, heathland and accessibility.



Actif Sport and Leisure

- Upgrades to changing facilities at Ammanford Leisure Centre facilities have been completed with improvements to parking and external sports facilities scheduled.
- 'Beat the Street' - An exciting project delivered by Actif Sport & Leisure saw the town of Llanelli transformed into a giant physical activity game. 6,679 participants engaged (13% of the population) across a 6-week period resulting in increased levels of physical activity and enhanced well-being.



During the 6-week programme a total of 43,844 miles were travelled, a staggering 36% of the less active children became more active, 45% of inactive adults became active and 12.04 tonnes of CO2 emissions were saved.

Registration data was collected on 5,408 people at the start of the game, providing audience insight into who was taking part: their age, gender, ethnicity and postcodes. A further 4,071 people completed an optional survey on their physical activity levels, long term conditions, disability and mental well-being. By comparing the registration data to local data, we can conclude that Beat the Street was able to reach those under-represented

communities who are more likely to experience health inequalities. For adults living in areas of higher deprivation (within the 20% most deprived areas according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, WIMD) the proportion reporting being inactive fell by 11% following Beat the Street (to 35% from 46% at registration). Following the game phase, participants were invited to complete another health survey containing additional questions which has allowed us to measure the behaviour change and impact that Beat the Street has had on individuals. Matched data analysis shows that 45% of inactive adults became more active and 36% of less active children became more active.

- The delivery and completion of the Actif Van allowed it to make its debut appearance and subsequent attendances at various events. Purchased through a Welsh Government grant its main aim is to increase opportunities for children and young people to be active, with a particular focus on those who live in rural isolation and/or areas of deprivation.

- ⦿ The Actif '60+' continues to engage the older population of the county in community and facility activity. 2022-23 saw over 2,300 participations in the community as a result of the Welsh Government Funding administer through Sport Wales.
- ⦿ Community 'Health Prevention' Initiatives that target those who suffer from loneliness and isolation and mental health illnesses saw extremely positive participation throughout 2022/23. With 7387 participating in 'Curling and Cuppa' sessions and in Mental Health running groups across the county. Averaging around 155 participating per week of the year.
- ⦿ This year Actif lead on the Carmarthenshire West Wales Walking for Well-being initiative in partnership with Pembrokeshire National Park. Since taking over the project the Actif Adults Officers have doubled the number of weekly walks to 8 countywide and see an average of 180 weekly regular walkers.
- ⦿ Community Walking Sports continues to go from strength to strength and 2022/23 saw over 2,300 participations in Walking Football, Rugby and Netball.



Tourism and Marketing

- ⦿ Proactive marketing of the County as an attractive winter short break destination encompassed public relations, digital advertising and organic posting on social media and web sites with thematic campaigns including the Cwtch Crawl and Larder Trail used to drive UK media interest with several visits arranged for journalists - in one week alone in March, over £130,000 of advertising was gained for the County in publications including Women's Own and The Sunday Times. The "Larder Trail" guide included over 70 local businesses. With food and drink a key experience to the UK tourist audience in the Autumn period, paid for promotional partnerships were delivered with the UK's top selling foodie magazine delivering pan UK awareness.
- ⦿ Supporting all areas of the County to benefit from the visitor sector, promotion actions focused on promotional video adverts showcasing the Market Towns of Carmarthenshire, targeting visitors within a 2.5hr drive time via Facebook advertising. This reached 1.8million. The Discover Carmarthenshire Facebook pages now has 20,971 followers with a reach of 447,070. The Discover Carmarthenshire website had 79,699 users, 103,985 sessions and 264,562 page views during this financial year.
- ⦿ This year 86 different TV, Film and Static advert productions have been processed through the corporate online film request system - allowing applicants to just make the one contact with the Council instead of seeking various departments. Examples include:
 - The major Disney production "Willow" filmed at Pendine and the S4C joint production with Channel 4 "Y Golau / The Light in the Hall" that was filmed in numerous locations including Llandovery.
 - A production for Visit Britain, the organisation set up to promote Great Britain as a tourist attraction around the globe. After providing them with local areas and contacts, Pendine Sands was the chosen Welsh destination in the promotional campaign in the USA, with paid for adverts being on TV and through British Airways.

Events

- ⦿ The Council has worked with all interested partners in the tourism sector & local communities to develop, support & promote a programme of year-round local events/festivals across the County - including creating & promoting a digital support "toolkit" for local community event organisers.
- ⦿ Proactive advice, guidance and templates have been provided to over 35 event organisers through the event safety advisory group (ESAG) and direct communications through a new populated database. One to one guidance has been offered via TEAMS or face to face, and this has proved to be an effective method in explaining key Council services that can support a successful event.

Is anyone better off?

Actif Legacy is a project that is delivered by Leisure's Actif Adult Officers. The project is aimed at 16-24 years olds who are not currently in education or employment and are wanting to gain valuable skills and experience through sport and additional opportunities over a 10 week-period.

On its third intake of participants, the Actif Legacy programme continues to go from strength to strength. In partnership with the Communities for Work+, The Legacy Fund and Scarlets in the Community, 6 participants have gained employment as a result of the confidence and qualifications they'd gained through the programme.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Leisure Services are subject to business planning supported by structure meetings/appraisals and performance management sessions as well as Weekly / Fortnightly 1 to 1 meetings with service managers, Weekly Departmental meetings, Quarterly HoS / CMT meetings and Bi-monthly Scrutiny committees. We also have external assessment via customer/stakeholder engagement and feedback.

3f - Service Priority - Waste

Recycling Change Brings Improved Performance

We undertake waste and recycling kerbside collections to 91,000 households with over 8.5m interactions per annum. During this year we made significant changes to our suite of waste services, implementing a move to weekly food and dry recycling, reducing the frequency of our residual waste collections and rolling out new separate kerbside glass and nappy recycling collections. Any change in waste service delivery is difficult and bring its own challenges, however, the strategic success of the service change has led to a significant improvement in our recycling performance, and we have exceeded the Welsh Government Statutory Recycling target with a performance of 65.25%.

Why is this important?

We recognise the importance to a shift towards a truly circular economy, where waste is eliminated, and resources are kept in use for as long as possible.

As well as being good for the environment, a fully circular economy could create employment.

In our county, more people recycle every day.

If recyclable items end up in landfill their value is lost forever.

Recycling also reduces the need for extracting (mining, quarrying, and logging), refining and processing raw (or 'virgin') materials, all of which create substantial air and water pollution.

This helps to save energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping to tackle climate change.

Whilst recycled materials are valuable commodities in the worldwide market and are financially important, recycling is good for the environment too. It makes best use of our limited natural resources. We need to remember how we act now will have an impact on future generations.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



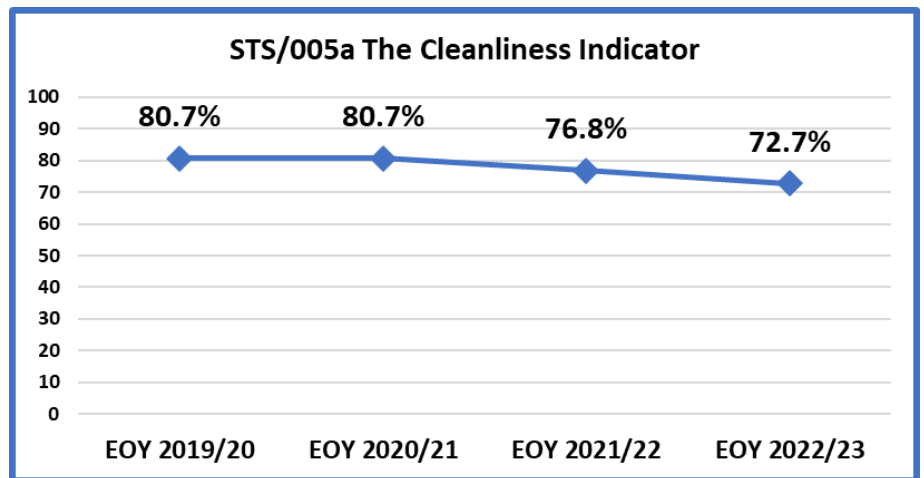
Our 2022/23 recycle rate is **65.25%**
(This is an increase on the previous year's figure of 61.68%).

- Comparative recycling for 2021/22 shows Carmarthenshire with the 4th lowest figures in Wales with a result of 61.68% recycled, the Welsh Average was 65.16%. Hopefully with the improved figure of 65.25% for 2022/23, our comparative position will also improve in 2022/23 when they are published in December 2023.
- The kilograms of local authority municipal waste that Carmarthenshire residents **do not reuse, recycle or composted per year (PAM/043)** is gradually reducing in Carmarthenshire, with currently the equivalent of 144kg per person not being recycled etc. during 2022/23 compared to 154kg per person in 2021/22. We hope that Carmarthenshire residents will continue to recycle more and more of their rubbish, we are doing far better than the 2021/22 Welsh average of 178kg.

- There's been a significant reduction in the amount of our municipal waste sent to landfill (*WMT/004*), which is now down to **4.89% for 2022/23** which is almost back down to levels before the fire at CWM's Nantycaws materials recovery facility (3.11% in 2020/21), which significantly disrupted to our normal waste sorting, treatment and disposal arrangements for a period of time.

Local Environmental Quality

- Street cleanliness (*STS/005a*) in Carmarthenshire improved slightly during the year but still shows a decline compared to previous years. Smoking related litter continues to be the most common litter type on the streets of Carmarthenshire, with a notable increase of confectionary litter and a decrease in the levels of Drink and fast-food litter. Litter from pedestrians



remains the highest source of littering in the county, this was recorded on 82.4% of the streets.

- A new litter source has become prominent within Carmarthenshire, with an increase of single use Vapes being discarded in the county. We continue to raise awareness of issues that blight the county, conduct a targeted campaign working with stakeholders in tackling litter issues which includes working with Fast Food Outlets.
- Increasing volunteering participation in conducting litter picking activities across the county. Data from the audits are shared with the relevant stakeholders including the enforcement team in identifying the current trends of adverse local environmental quality issues.

- On average, it takes the council **2.8 working days to clear reported fly-tipping incidents** in the County (*PAM/035*), with just over 1,600 incidents recorded and cleared during 2022/23, the number of fly-tipping incidents recorded has reduced by 22% from 2,073 in 2021/22.



- According to our resident's survey of 2022, the **majority tend to agree that their local environment is pleasant and well looked after** (Average Index Score of 0.14), there is also a relatively high proportion which disagree, these comments were in relation to street cleansing, waste, litter and verge/hedgerow maintenance as possible contributing factors. The importance of our natural and built landscapes in creating a sense of place and pride for local people cannot be underestimated. Furthermore, access to pleasant open spaces has an important role to play in improving the health and well-being of our residents. This is especially pertinent for marginalised groups, of which Carmarthenshire has an above average level.

Progress in 2022/23

- We have implemented new collection methodology to our waste collection service in order to ensure high quality recycling and improving our performance against statutory recycling targets. We have delivered the first phase of the waste strategy by introducing three weekly glass collection at kerbside, a move to three weekly residual waste collection and a weekly collection of dry mixed recycling and food waste in January 2023. In addition, the service has provided a Nappy collection service for those residents that have young children in nappies which are treated and recycled at a facility in the County.

As part of the move to Zonal collection methodology, residents also received a change to their waste and recycling collection days to ensure that the maximum number of properties received the same collection day for recycling, black and glass collections. By doing this piece of work 45% of households receive all their waste and recycling collections on the same day. To reduce the impact on residents and minimise missed collections to those residents who have different collection days for black/glass and their blue & food we introduced an email and SMS reminder service to those residents.

- This change of the new collection methodology has been rolled to the 91,000 households within the County with 12.5 million interactions per year on waste, this includes refuse, recycling, garden waste and nappy and hygiene collections.
 - Since the changes have come into force on the 23rd January 2023 we have received 503 complaints. This equates to 1.16% of domestic waste collections during service change.
 - As part of the new fleet to roll out the service change, we procured 23 new vehicles to undertake refuse and glass collections. As part of this procurement:
 - we have commissioned three electric RCV’s which are being used in our frontline service in our challenging Carmarthenshire topography. This is the commencement of our commitment and drive to becoming a Net Zero Carbon Authority by 2030 and reaching our target of a 50% ULEV compliant fleet by April 2024.
 - We have commissioned a new depot at Cross Hands and recruited 47 new members of staff to roll out the first phase of the waste strategy.
 - To promote the Circular Economy, we have been developing partnership opportunities and supporting community networks, with a view to building capacity for new or expanded Circular Economy projects. Furthermore, we have implemented the following projects:
 - Canolfan Eto in June 22 at Nantycaws Recycling Facility
 - Commercial waste recycling centre in October 22 at Nantycaws Recycling Facility
 - We have steadily increased our customer base for Nappy Collection throughout implementation of the service this year. We currently have 7,140 customers and have diverted 779 tonnes of hygiene waste from black bags.
 - We have implemented an Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) Collection & Nappy Service collection service which has attracted 7,500 Customers.
 - We have increased our customer base for our seasonal Garden Waste collection by 20%, whilst retaining 96% of our existing customer base. 94% Achieved from 94.5% Target
- ⊙ According to the 2022/23 [National Survey for Wales](#) results, 82% of Carmarthenshire respondents were satisfied with the recycling service in the county, this is an improvement on 82% in the last survey of 2018/19. Also, 74% of respondents agreed that they felt informed of the council’s recycling service, 6th best in Wales, this is an improvement on the previous result of 61% and 21st position in Wales.

<p>Task & Finish Group: Environmental Enforcement</p>	<p>“The Scrutiny Task and Finish Group has been working across various divisions to review the strategic approach to Fly-tipping in Carmarthenshire. This group is due to conclude and make recommendations and strategic plan to Cabinet in June 2023. In addition to this we have commenced a pilot of CCTV enforcement activity with hot spot locations identified and will report back in 2023/24”</p>
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Environment hero helps to keep Carmarthenshire clean

A young volunteer has been praised by Carmarthenshire County Council for his environmental work in the Whitland area.

10-year-old Leon litter picks his local area every day, helping to keep the area clean and tidy.

As a reward for his fantastic work Leon was invited on a behind the scenes tour of Nantycaws recycling centre and Canolfan Eto.

During the visit, Leon saw the different processes that Carmarthenshire's household recycling goes through as well as seeing the transformation of items at Canolfan Eto re-use project.

Businesses can also support their local environment by becoming a custodian of a '2 minute clean' board. These A-frame boards are equipped with everything needed to clean the area including litter pickers and bags.



Behaviour Change for the Future

We have been working closely with the pupils and teachers of Ysgol Dyffryn Ammanford and Ammanford Lions in conducting an anti-litter intervention, we have trailed a bottled recycling facility at 2 schools to improve waste management. Other schools have already removed the option of purchasing drinks in plastic bottles in an effort to reduce waste.

In addition the school and local community group have undertaken a number of community litter picks during the campaign, from these events discussions were formed on how best to highlight the issue of litter in the community, it was agreed to construct a sculpture using the materials collected from the litter picking event, it was agreed by all partners the theme of the sculpture would be a globe to represent planet earth, which is filled up with all the plastic and litter collected.

Workshops were created so the children from Ysgol Dyffryn Amman and Canolfan Amanwy department were fully involved with the design and creation of the litter globe. The Sculpture is currently at Ysgol Y Bedol, Ammanford, and evaluate a more prominent position within the town of Ammanford to show that the sculpture has been made from litter collected in the community. This provides education and awareness to our young generation in the County to encourage behaviour change for the future.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Compliance and governance are a priority. We ensure we create and adhere to good governance frameworks identified in the below structures and support tools below:

- Scrutiny
- Waste Changes Programme Board & Governance Structure
- BMT with Agenda
- Toolbox Talks
- PowerBI dashboard
- Financial meetings
- Risk and H&R & HR & IT as members of monthly BMT
- Media and Marketing monthly meetings
- Corporate level we are members of the Regen Forum, 10 towns project and regional development team (RDT)
- NZC Governance
- Air Quality Monitoring Group
- Fleet monthly meetings
- Annual Report
- Self-Assessments
- Involving wider service board members in the development of services (PSB)
- DMT

We monitor this through our divisional delivery plan and performance measures. Also working with internal audit to improve the governance of our service delivery.

3g - Service Priority - Highways and Transport

Delivering key services & projects through strategic challenges

The aspiration for modal shift within the Wales Transport Strategy has influenced our investment in infrastructure particularly around our major population centres where we have built new infrastructure to support more sustainable travel journeys. The Division has continued to work through the strategic challenges influenced by macro influences that include the economy, resulting in reductions in income, both revenue and capital funding, the development of the Corporate Joint Committee with specific responsibility for transport planning, changes to the default speed limit in September 2023, the Wales Transport Strategy and climate change. The service has been proactive in delivering change however the constant reduction in resource levels, rising public expectation, supply chain pressures and deteriorating asset condition is leading to a difficult operating environment for services.

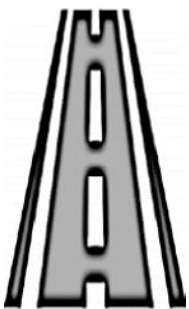
Why is this important?

- ⦿ The Transportation and Highway system role has never been more important than today when society continues to recover from worldwide events and addresses the key challenges of decarbonisation, inequality, developing housing and sustainable communities, education, health, well-being and the local economy.
- ⦿ Our highway and transportation networks underpin the economic prosperity of Carmarthenshire, facilitating access to employment and learning opportunities, social connections, health, leisure, active travel and delivering services that touch every home every day. Connectivity and accessibility are central to facilitating economic and social well-being and we will continue to develop and enhance our local infrastructure in order to support our communities.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

⦿ Roads that are in poor condition 2022/23:



3.1% of our **A Class** - Improved
on 3.6% in 2021/22

2.4% of our **B Class** - Improved
on 2.8% in 21/22

10.1% of our **C Class** - Improved
on 11.7% in 21/22


The improvement evidence targeted investment using a risk-based evidence led prioritisation model.

- ⦿ The majority of respondents to our 2022 residents survey either **strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement 'there are good transportation links around me'**, with an overall average index score of **-0.41**)











Poor transportation links can limit a person’s independence and their ability to go about their normal day to day routines, including being able to travel to work. This can exacerbate feelings of isolation and limit a person’s ability to better themselves and access opportunities to improve their health and well-being.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ Maintaining the highway network is important to ensure residents have access to services, it is also important to ensure more vulnerable residents received care and support, particularly during the winter months. Strategic highway routes are treated with salt, as part of our winter maintenance plan to ensure vital services and supplies can be sustained. Over the course of the 22/23 winter season the service has spread 8,951 Tonnes of salt and operated on 116 occasions. Activity this winter has grown by 46% over the previous year with 4,030 more Tonnes of salt used.

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Highway Maintenance/Road Safety (Final Report issued: 23rd August 2022) Assurance Rating: High Objective of the Audit: The objective of the review was to provide assurance that the allocation listed on the Authority’s Capital Programme for Road Safety Grants is spent appropriately</p>	<p>Assurance Rating:</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

- ⦿ We have completed the decarbonisation on our street lighting sector, our LED investment programme has reduced our energy consumption by 62 percent.
- ⦿ Active Travel - construction of a shared use bridge and active travel route linking north and south Llanelli in accordance with our Active Travel Masterplan for the town. Progress has also been made on the design for other schemes in Carmarthen, St Clears, Ammanford, Cross Hands and Burry Port.
- ⦿ Schools Streets – two school streets initiatives were introduced, one at Glan y Mor school Burry Port the other at Morfa, Llanelli.
- ⦿ Behavioural Change – work has commenced with schools in Llanelli to encourage young people to walk and cycle to school. This is more challenging and will take time to achieve.
- ⦿ Road Safety Education has played a key role in keeping young people safe this along with cycle training supports or work to achieve the well-being objective for young people to have the best start in life. Over the year 969 pupils received training against a target of 950, 620 pupils received cycle training against a target of 600. Eighteen initiatives were undertaken outside schools to improve road safety just short of the target figure of 20.
- ⦿ Weather stations:

				
<p>We Installed 3 additional weather stations for increased domain forecasting accuracy to optimise effectiveness of Winter Highways at Porthyrhyd, Llangadog and Meidrim. Winter treatment route reviews will be undertaken ahead of the 2023/24 season</p>				
				

- ⦿ The Cross Hands link road was opened in October 2022, this major piece of new infrastructure has stimulated economic development and supported the development of the strategic employment site at Cross Hands. The 2.1Km Cross Hands Link Road delivers a cost benefit ratio of over 4.5 with £65.9M of economic benefit for the communities of Carmarthenshire.
- ⦿ We have developed our Regional Framework Civil Engineering construction contracts to provide opportunities for SMEs to bid for work and grow.
- ⦿ Strategic connectivity is important to support economic growth, we therefore have continued to work collaboratively with regional partners on the long-term plans for a Southwest Wales Metro transport system that aligns with the Wales Transport aspirations. During 2022/23 we supported the Grand Union Trains bid for an “Open Access Agreement” to run new strategic rail services from Carmarthen to London to improve connectivity and reduced journey times by rail for cities
- ⦿ We have continued to work in collaboration with the Wales Government to lever in investment to assist with the delivery of programmes of work that help achieve the Well Being objectives. In 2022/23, £8.7 million was levered in to help enable us deliver infrastructure investment aligned to the Wales Transport Strategy
- ⦿ In addition to Wales Government funding, work has continued on the Towy Valley Path, our bid to the UK government for levelling up funding was successful providing £16.7million of UK Government investment. Progress has concentrated on Planning, land and design. A Compulsory Purchase Order has been published to sustain momentum on the project. It is a challenging project that we continue to manage through a Project Board for proactive management of risk.
- ⦿ Supported economic development through timely response to highway authority consultations on planning applications and highway searches. 82.4% of planning consultations were responded within 21days compared to national average of 60%. 94% of searches enquires were responded to within the statutory timescale.
- ⦿ Empowering communities – the Council has worked collaboratively with the Dyfed Powys Police, Go Safe and the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service to improve road safety. We were one of eight areas to introduce 20 mph speed limits, we have worked with partners on speed watch outside schools, the introduction of average speed cameras on high-risk roads and continue support education to stimulate behavioural change.

Is anyone better off?

New all-electric TrawsCymru T1 buses launched



Supporting core public transport routes across the county core service and where possible decarbonising the public transport sector. The T1 Carmarthen to Aberystwyth bus route is now served by eight electric buses with supporting infrastructure constructed for the service operation. The T1 project was a delivered by Carmarthenshire for and in collaboration with the Wales Government and Transport for Wales.

Electric Vehicle infrastructure network continues to grow

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure has been installed at key operational depots this year and new electric refuse collection vehicles procured.

The County Council has introduced electric charging points at 52 locations across the county (45 fast, 6 rapid and 1 ultra rapid).

Across our fast-charging network (41 sites – soon to be 43) during 2022 there were 4230 sessions, and 58,490 kWh were delivered.

The average dwell time per session was just over 2 ½ hours.

Earlier in 2022 we opened the Cross Hand rapid charging hub for public use.

Since opening 5,589 charging sessions delivering 131,075 kWh of energy drawn. This equates to 384,050 EV miles/74.1 tonnes of Co2 savings. We have installed 52 charge points in total.

We have also worked in partnership with Transport for Wales to install 2 x 50kW chargers at: Llanybydder (completed), Llandovery (completed), Ammanford and Newcastle Emlyn.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

There are formal structures in place to manage business performance and strategic projects performance aligned to corporate management structure, Cabinet Council and Scrutiny Committees.

Performance and delivery are managed through Divisional Business and Strategic Project Management Team with reviews at the Departmental Management and Corporate Management teams. We continue to develop our risk-based approach to understand developing areas of concern.

In managing risk consideration is given to nature of work, the level of ambition and level of strategic change aligned to national and local strategy relative to the role of highway and transport system. The corporate risks are reviewed every two months to CMT. Risks are captured in the Departmental Business Plan.

Project Boards with cross authority senior officer representation are set up for major projects to support governance. In 2022/23 specific project boards were in place for the Towy Valley Path, T1 electric bus and 20MPH default speed limit changes.

Revenue and Capital Budgets are reported quarterly to Scrutiny Committee Departmental Business Plans are produced and reviewed every year. They are submitted to various scrutiny committees.

The Corporate Joint Committee with responsibility for Regional Transport Planning and a regional Scrutiny Committee and Regional Transport Directors Group will manage the development of the Regional Transport Plan when guidance on Regional Transport Plan is issued in 2023.

Well-being Objective 4 – Our Council To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council



Overarching judgement

In March 2023, the Council formally launched its new approach to transformation via the adoption of its first Transformation Strategy. The Strategy will provide the strategic framework that will underpin the implementation of a significant programme of change and transformation across the organisation over the course of the next 5 years. The main focus of this programme will be to further accelerate the process of modernisation across the Council, and allow us to continue to deliver high quality, cost-effective services within the context of a challenging external environment.

Eight Workstreams have been established to progress the key priorities outlined within the Transformation Strategy and good progress is already being made in implementing these work programmes

Why this is important

- ⦿ In March 2020, we entered one of the most challenging periods ever faced by local government with the COVID-19 pandemic. Emerging from the crisis, there was a recognition that ‘things would never quite be the same’ and we would not be in the same organisation that we had been.
- ⦿ We therefore wanted to capture the learning from our response to the pandemic; what worked well/did not work so well, and how this could potentially change ‘what we do’ and ‘how we do it’ in the future.
- ⦿ This is now an opportunity to re-set or go back to basics in using some core principles that underpin service delivery.
- ⦿ Findings from a staff consultation in 2022 indicate that the vast majority of respondents feel proud of the way we responded as an organisation to the pandemic. Additionally, the majority feel ready to move forward and work in a post-COVID world. Mostly, staff agree that they were well led during the pandemic, however a lower proportion agreed that they feel valued for the contributions they made during this time.

The key success measures we set ourselves for this overall objective

Statement	Overall Score 2022
I can access Council services through my preferred language	1.4
When I access Council services, I find the staff to be approachable and friendly	0.82
I can easily access up to date information about Council services	0.5
I find contacting the Council simple and easy	0.31
The Council provides good quality services overall	0.27
The Council lets people know how it is performing	-0.1
The Council provides opportunities for me to participate in decision-making	-0.19
The Council makes good use of the financial resources available to them	-0.33
Investment is focused in the correct areas	-0.41

Source: CCC Consultation / See Appendix 6 (page 204) on Average Index Score

Analysis below will be reflective of trend analysis of consultations over time following analysis of 2023 results.

The vast majority of respondents **agree that they can access Council services through their preferred language**, depicted by an AIS score of 1.4. This is the highest score exhibited under this theme. Qualitative comments received were mixed, with some expressing frustration regarding receiving communications or seeing social media posts in Welsh first. In contrast to this, others stated that they are not always able to communicate with the Council through the medium of Welsh. In addition, reference was made to a lack of communications in Polish and communications appropriate for deaf members of the community.

A lower proportion of people agree that they find **contacting the Council simple and easy**, indicated by a score of 0.31. As specified through comments, reported reasons for this are numerous, with notable examples including:

- Difficulty in identifying the right person to speak to,
- Long waiting times on calls,
- Staff coming across as uninterested and unhelpful,
- Staff not returning calls,
- Digital nature of some processes act as a barrier for some,
- Website pages not user friendly and are perceived to be out of date.

Positively, the majority of respondents agree that staff are approachable and friendly when accessing Council services. This is testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff who are seemingly providing residents with good customer service.

A minority expressed that they have not found staff approachable and friendly, comments to this end are mixed between a perceived lack of support and interest from staff in dealing with queries to wider issues in communicating with the Council.

Positively, the majority of respondents feel that they can easily access up to date information about Council services.

Respondents are mainly in agreement that the Council provides good quality services overall, however the relatively low positive score indicates that a reasonable proportion of respondents disagree with this statement. Reasons behind this disagreement are numerous, however the broad themes include:

- Unreliable waste collection,
- Perceived lack of town centre regeneration,
- Poor road conditions i.e. potholes,
- Lack of street cleansing,
- Poor verge/hedgerow maintenance,
- Long waits for housing repairs,
- Increased litter and fly-tipping,
- Lack of public transport,
- Perceived poor quality social care services,
- Lack of street lighting.

Several comments were made in relation to council tax and the perceived wastefulness/misdirection of financial resources. This is corroborated by the negative score indicated for 'the Council makes good use of the financial resources available to us.'

In addition, a high proportion of respondents indicated 'neither' or 'don't know.' This is perhaps indicative of a wider issue whereby the public's understanding of how the Council utilises its financial resources is limited.

Responses were mixed with regards to the degree that residents feel that the Council lets them know how it is performing. The largest proportion disagree whilst a significant number of respondents indicated 'neither' or 'don't know', which perhaps highlights those respondents are not aware of how to access this information or the information needs to be promoted wider. Comments made under this theme would suggest that this is the case. In this regard, it is worth noting earlier comments made in relation to the website and how user-friendly this is considered by some residents.

Views were mixed with regard to 'the Council provides opportunities for residents to participate in decision-making.' Many indicated 'neither' which substantiates the importance of consultations in providing residents with opportunities to share their views. A further large proportion disagree which highlights the importance of sharing with residents how their views have been taken on board following a consultation.

Outcomes we set ourselves

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
To further modernise and develop the Council's ways of working.	One of the key aims of the Transformation Programme is to develop smarter and more efficient ways of working, especially through the use of technology. A programme of work is already underway to automate a number of paper-based processes.	Yes
Support the development of the Council as a modern, diverse, inclusive and responsive organisation and be an 'Employer of Choice'.	A Workforce Strategy has been developed during the year, and this will provide the strategic framework to support in delivering on a number of workforce related priorities and to become an 'Employer of Choice'.	Yes
Listen to our staff through regular staff engagement and empower them to improve their own service areas	A Staff Survey was undertaken during 2022/23 and a summary report on findings and actions has also been communicated to staff. These findings have also been used to inform the work of an Employee Engagement Task & Finish Group who have developed a Corporate Communications Plan which outlines a range of staff communication and engagement initiatives.	Yes
Ensure local and regional partnership working is efficient and effective and adds value to the work of the Council	The Carmarthenshire Public Services Board has worked well during the year to develop its new Well-being Plan for the period 2023-28. Collaboration with regional colleagues in Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire have also worked well with sharing of resources to progress certain elements. The Safer Communities, Serious Violence & Organised Crime and Contest Boards have also worked well at a Carmarthenshire and Dyfed Powys basis with collaboration with a range of partners on a range of community safety focused activity.	Yes

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
Increased public engagement through engagement, participation and consultation.	Increased numbers of respondents to Council consultations is a positive indicator of progress. There is further work to be done to improve our feedback methods post-consultation and to broaden our early engagement and participation methods. This is identified as an action for 2023-24.	Yes
A more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services with a view to increasing the level of income generated.	A dedicated workstream has been established within the Transformation Programme to identify opportunities to generate more income through adopting a more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services. Discussions are being held with services to inform the development of a Commercialisation business case and delivery plan which will be considered by Cabinet in September 2023.	Yes
Embrace and promote agile working, hybrid meetings and new ways of working across the organisation, by being more sustainable and creative to improve Council services.	The Transformation Workplace workstream has been examining how we can rationalise our accommodation portfolio, whilst modernising and improving the workspaces in our retained core buildings. Since the pandemic, most offices have been less than a third full, with staff increasingly needing different types of space to meet, work and collaborate. In the current financial climate building rationalisation is an effective way to save money while protecting front line services. Reducing the Council's estate will also help save spends on utilities and contribute to us achieving our net zero carbon objectives. A successful rationalisation pilot has already taken place with Housing and Education & Children's Services (E&CS) staff in Llanelli. The number of staff based at Parc Dewi Sant in Carmarthen will be reduced over the next 12 months. Staff will be relocated to Spilman Street and County Hall.	Yes
Deliver organisational change that supports key Net Zero Carbon targets	A Net Zero Carbon Plan will be developed by April 2023 which will set out how the Council intends to meet its carbon reduction targets by 2030. The Transformation Programme will have a key role to play in facilitating the organisational change required to deliver the commitments within the NZC Plan.	Yes
Ensuring the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively.	During 2022/23, the Council was one of the first authorities in Wales to produce its 2021/22 statement on accounts and receive an unqualified audit report. Against an extremely challenging economic backdrop of high inflation and unprecedented wage growth not seen for a generation, the council delivered a small underspend against budgets. The council met its target to pay 95% of suppliers within 30 days, but narrowly missed its treasury investment returns goal due to the nature of rising interest rates. Departmental Self Assessments have been introduced which include an evaluation of economy, efficiency and effectiveness	Yes
Embedding the sustainable development principle in all that the Council does	The requirements of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act have underpinned the approach to both the development and implementation of the Transformation Programme. Development work on the Integrated Impact Assessment during the year will be implemented during 2023-24 and will ensure the sustainable development principle is fully embedded.	Yes



WBO4a - Thematic Priority: Organisational Transformation

Following the Local Government elections in 2023, it was agreed that this would be an opportune time to review the Council's approach to transformation and ensure that the programme was fully aligned with the aims and objectives of the new Corporate Strategy.

This would also look to build on the work of the Council's TIC Programme which had been the main vehicle for delivering on organisational support for transformation and change since 2012 and allow the Council to maximise the opportunities presented by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to further transform and modernise our ways of working, especially using technology.

The roll out of this new approach would be underpinned by the development and implementation of a Transformation Strategy. This is the first time that the Council that has produced a Transformation Strategy, and it is intended that this will provide the strategic framework to drive a programme of significant change and transformation across the organisation over the next 5 years.

The Transformation Strategy was reported to Cabinet in February 2023 and launched in March 2023 and now provides the strategic framework to support the delivery of eight thematic priorities:

- ⦿ Efficiencies and Value for Money
- ⦿ Income & Commercialisation
- ⦿ Workplace
- ⦿ Workforce
- ⦿ Service Design & Improvement
- ⦿ Customers & Digital Transformation
- ⦿ Decarbonisation and biodiversity
- ⦿ Schools.

Workstream Delivery Groups have now been established to support the implementation of each of the transformation priorities and these will be led by a Director/Head of Service.

A Communications Plan has been developed. Regular news articles will be used to raise awareness of the projects, share 'good practice' and provide opportunities for staff to provide feedback or contribute ideas and suggestions.

The Transformation Programme has been aligned with the Council's Future Leaders development programme and 12 Future Leaders (Council officers on the programme) are all undertaking transformation related projects as part of their development programme. However, there is an opportunity for any member of staff to participate in, or lead on, a transformation project and this has the potential to develop into a corporate talent management programme.

WBO4b - Efficiencies and Value for Money

To continue to deliver financial savings through efficiencies or cost reductions and smarter ways of working.

Progress to date

- ⦿ Budget sessions are being held with individual Heads of Service between February and the end of July 2023, which aim to support the identification of future efficiency savings for 2024/2025 budget setting process. A summary of outcomes from the sessions are due to be reported to Transformation Board in September 2023.
- ⦿ Work is also being undertaken at an individual service level to review opportunities to make best use of staffing resource with a view to reducing spend on agency workers and overtime.
- ⦿ The Workstream is also reviewing the Council's approach to contract management in recognition that this a more robust approach in this area could support improvements in respect of quality and value for money of the services received from external providers.

WBO4c - Income & Commercialisation

To develop a more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services with a view to increasing the level of income generated.

Progress to date

- ⦿ A business case to support an increased level of commercialisation within Council services is currently being developed, and this is due to be reported to Cabinet in September 2023. This report will look to identify a range of opportunities to generate additional income which will help mitigate the impact of the ongoing budget challenges that the Council is likely to face in the coming years.
- ⦿ A cost recovery approach to the setting of fees and charges is currently being rolled out on a phased basis across Council services. This will look to ensure that, where appropriate, the service is recovering the full cost of providing a service when setting their fees and charges or is able to generate a profit, if the relevant legislation permits.
- ⦿ A scheme to allow advertising on designated roundabouts throughout the County has been approved and is due to be rolled out shortly. Plans are also being developed to identify wider advertising and sponsorship opportunities across the Council which could also generate additional income.
- ⦿ An 'Invest to Save' initiative has resulted in additional staffing resources being deployed within the Council's debt recovery functions to support an increased recovery work. This will look to build on a previous TIC 'Invest to Save' project which generated recovered debt of over £1.8m between 2016-2018, and a more recent pilot initiative which recovered £800k through the adoption of an early intervention approach.

WBO4d - Workplace

To exploit the opportunities presented by a move to hybrid working and to further rationalise the Council's accommodation portfolio and modernise and improve the working environment within the remaining core buildings.

Progress to date

- ⦿ The Workplace workstream has been examining how we can rationalise our accommodation portfolio whilst modernising and improving the workspaces in our retained core buildings.
- ⦿ Since the pandemic, most offices have been less than a third full, with staff increasingly needing different types of space to meet, work and collaborate. In the current financial climate building rationalisation is good a way to save money while protecting front line services. Reducing the Council's estate will also help save spends on utilities and contribute to us achieving our net zero carbon objectives.
- ⦿ The number of staff based at Parc Dewi Sant in Carmarthen will be reduced over the next 12 months. Staff will be relocated to Spilman Street and County Hall, however, staff in Building 7 will remain in place for the foreseeable future. Those groups of staff affected have been made aware of the changes and the Head of Service responsible will be discussing directly on any changes which may affect them.
- ⦿ A successful rationalisation pilot has already taken place with Housing and Education & Children's Services (E&CS) staff in Llanelli. E&CS staff based in Llanelli are now working together on a single floor of Tŷ Elwyn with Housing staff from Eastgate based on another floor alongside Health staff in Tŷ Elwyn, Llanelli.
- ⦿ A service led re-design of the workspace accommodated the teams across two floors with 315 staff comfortably working from 120 desks, with better meeting facilities and flexible working spaces created. This model can now be applied across the Council but will be adjusted to reflect the way that each service works as we recognise that not all teams work in the same way.

WBO4e – Workforce

To oversee the development of a Workforce Strategy and delivery of key workforce priorities to enable the Council to become a more modern and responsive organisation and an 'Employer of Choice'.

Progress to date

- ⦿ A Workforce Strategy has been developed and this will provide the strategic framework to help us address our key workforce priorities over the course of the next 5 years. This will also be supported by the development of a workforce data framework to help us evaluate the impact of this work.
- ⦿ One of key workforce priorities is to strengthen our approach to the recruitment and retention of staff which is one of the key challenges facing a number of Council services. A new recruitment system is due to be implemented by September 2023 and this will provide for a quicker, more user-friendly process for both applicants and managers. A specific project is also looking at how we can adopt a more innovative and creative approach to the way that we attract and then retain our staff.
- ⦿ Our 'Future Workforce' initiative is also looking to promote a sustainable approach when responding to future workforce needs, by seeking to increase the number of apprenticeship, graduate and work experience opportunities.
- ⦿ A feasibility study is reviewing the potential to establish in-house agency as a way of reducing agency costs and providing greater resilience within the staffing resource. It is likely that this study will recommend that this approach is subject to an initial pilot in social care before being potentially rolled out across other services.
- ⦿ We had just under 100 apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes within the Council during 2022/23 this equates to 15.2 per 1,000 employees (*PAM/044*)

WBO4f – Service Design & Improvement

To provide for a more sustainable and creative approach to the review, remodelling and improvement of Council services.

Progress to date

- ⦿ The main priority for the workstream currently is to review the status of those previous TIC Reviews that are still on the work programme – this will aim to check whether there is sufficient evidence of improvement (i.e. use of data) and ability to sustain this improvement before any sign off from the group. The group has considered four TIC Review delivery plan updates to date: Pensions, Planning Enforcement, Property Design and Debtors. Further updates will be considered in the coming months, and each will be required to use data as evidence of the impact of any changes/improvements being made within the service.

WBO4g – Customers & Digital Transformation

To continue to make better use of technology to deliver smarter, efficient service processes and to deliver a better experience for customers.

Progress to date

- ⦿ The workstream is overseeing the implementation of an on-going programme of work which is seeking to rationalise and/or automate a number of paper-based processes, such as the processing of outgoing mail, timesheets, invoices and the printing of documents for signing. The use of electronic signatures and hybrid mail solutions is being rolled out across a number of services and this is already delivering a more cost-effective and productive way of working and also supports staff to work in a more hybrid way.
- ⦿ The use of robotics technology is also being deployed to automate two back-office processes within the HR services. This project which is being funded via the Council's Digital Transformation fund will be used as proof of concept in advance of the further potential use of AI/robotics within other services.
- ⦿ We continued to increase the number of Transactional Council Services available to the public online (*ICT/003*) with the following added during 2022/23:
 1. Contact Us Pages and Process Enhancements
 2. Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) and Nappy Collection Service
 3. Pupil Development Grant
 4. Community Learning Bookings
 5. Claim What's Yours enhancements
 6. Email and SMS Alerting for Recycling and Waste Services
 7. Citizen Access Portal for Revenues Services.

This makes a total of 53 transactional services made available online to the public since 2014/15.

WBO5h - Decarbonisation and Biodiversity

To support the Council in delivering transformational change in support of key decarbonisation objectives and targets.

Progress to date

- ⦿ The main focus of current programme is the development of a strategic/policy framework which will then provide the basis for the development of a Strategy and Delivery plan. Workshops have been held to engage directorates in the development of a new strategy.
- ⦿ Work has also progressed on the development of a carbon costing model for the Council.
- ⦿ A series of carbon literacy sessions were held for elected members during 2022 and the team have worked with colleagues in Media & Marketing as part of an on-going Communications Programme.

WBO5i - Schools

To assist schools in identifying cost reductions and better ways of working and support the development of more sustainable school budgets and help protect front line academic provision.

Progress to date

- ⦿ The Schools Workstream aims to support schools in their financial decision making to create efficiencies and develop more sustainable budgets. This includes providing them with savings opportunities through access to a range of corporate procurement contracts such as printing, telephony, stationery, and waste services.
- ⦿ Undertaken reviews of operational support services leading to improved and more financially efficient service provision to schools such as the Primary School Property 'Handyvan' Service and improvements to the Schools' Cleaning Service.
- ⦿ Developed financial and curriculum benchmarking tools which aim to enable and support the sharing of good practice between schools in their financial management.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

5 Core Business Enablers

In addition to the identified thematic and service priorities, there are a range of core business enablers that are essential to enable us to make progress against our well-being objectives. These core business enablers are as noted below.

#	Core Business Enablers
5a	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
5b	Marketing & Media including customer services
5c	Legal
5d	Planning
5e	Finance
5f	Procurement
5g	Internal Audit
5h	People Management (Human Resources, Learning & Development, Occupational Health)
5i	Democratic Services
5j	Policy & Performance
5k	Electoral Services & Civil Registration
5l	Estates & Asset Management
5m	Risk Management
5n	Business Support

5a Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

As a service we engage with and understand our customers to help them deliver effective services. We have strengthened our approach to disaster recovery and cyber security to ensure we are in a strong position to mitigate and respond to any threats. The service is closely aligned to deliver the aspirations of the new Transformation Strategy and has worked closely with services on key transformational projects to streamline, automate and drive efficiencies across all our key areas.

Why is this important?

- ⦿ Technology is becoming increasingly pervasive across all sectors and becoming integrated in many aspects of our lives. Digital technology has the potential to transform the County and the lives of residents while generating long-term savings for the Council.
- ⦿ There are three key strategies underpinning our ICT delivery. Namely the Digital Transformation Strategy 2021-2024, the Digital Technology 2022-2025 and Digital Schools Strategy 2022-2025. Key areas of work covered by the service are as follows:
 - Core Data and Telephony Network and Infrastructure
 - Facilitate the delivery of the Digital Transformation Steering Group (DTSG) Work Program and Funding along with the newly formed Transformation Workstreams - Digital & Customers.
 - Cyber Security including Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity testing, scenario planning and awareness.
 - Application Development
 - Systems Support for Business-Critical Systems
 - Workforce / Operational Support (Hardware / Software)
 - Schools Operational and Strategic ICT Support
 - I.T. Procurement function
- ⦿ Our purpose is to engage with and understand our customers to help them deliver effective services.

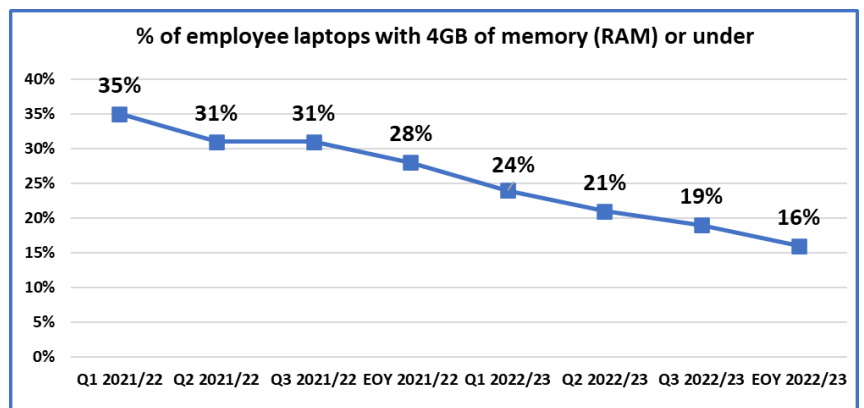
How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

! Of the 9,790 ICT helpdesk queries received during 2022/23, 65.8% were done through using the Self-Service helpdesk, this is slightly lower than previous year with 68.8%, but there has been in a 3% increase in the number of queries received. (ICT/002)

⦿ We are continuously upgrading the laptops our employees use in order that they are as efficient as possible by reducing those with a memory of 4GB or under. This has halved in number since April 2021 and at the end of March 2023 this was down to just under 500 laptops out of a total of 3,219. (ICT/009)

⦿ Out of the 740 Freedom of Information Act request received during 2022/23, 95% were responded to in 20 working days, this continues to be well above the Information Commissioner's Office target of 85%.



Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ We procured an enterprise RPA (Robotics Process Automation) solution. This will allow the Council to streamline and improve back-office functions and processes (especially those mundane / repetitive tasks) by using specialist software and AI (Artificial Intelligence) capabilities. HR are pro-active and will be the first to automate and target a collection of processes as the initial Proof of Concept. Creating a New Post, Issuing Contracts, Reference Checks as some being evaluated. We are contracted and working with a local specialist company based in Llanelli (CodeBase8 / Davies Internet) to help implement technology, develop the first set of processes for us and give knowledge transfer and training to develop a centre of excellence in-house within the Application Development Team within ICT Services. The vision is to expand further across the authority over the next 3 years. A massive transformation opportunity to drive efficiencies.
- ⦿ We continue to deliver support to schools, supporting the HWB services, delivering and installing the preferred student devices of Chromebooks. We have provided ICT consultancy on all new schools builds in the county.

Cyber Security

- ⦿ We have recently undertaken a Cyber security stocktake.
- ⦿ We act as an enabler and vehicle for transforming the way services across the Council are delivered to customers by increasing opportunities for accessing council services via digital technologies. We have launched the new Citizen Access Portal for Revenues Services. A 2-year project in development which launched at the end of March 2023. 24/7 Self-Service Portal for Council Tax for our residents to manage their eBilling for Council Tax, Apply for Paperless, Manager Direct Debits, Apply for Exemptions and will grow to more services. With over 14,000 current Residents already subscribed to view their Council Tax Balances via our Contact Centre and HWB My Account, we now have the ability to offer far more on-line services, automation and integration functionality into the back-office will massively help transform the revenues services and the range of services we can offer digitally via our HWB's, Contact Centre and On-Line via the Council's Website.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

To ensure delivery of the aspirations of the Transformation Strategy we report directly to the Digital Transformation Steering Group that in turn reports into the Transformation Board.

From an Information Governance perspective, we report directly into the Corporate Information Governance Group that in turn reports into the Corporate Governance Group and then Governance and

5b Marketing and Media including Customer Services

The service has seen increasing demand across all of our functions with the need to provide timely and accurate information

...through a range of channels continuing to be an important element of the Council's work.

The introduction of the Hwb Advisor service has been an essential part of the Council's response to the cost of living crisis and will continue to develop in coming year.

Why is this important?

- Good communication and engagement can create a positive experience for those who interact with the Council. It helps people understand our objectives, values, services, challenges, and achievements. People should be empowered to get involved, have their say, ask questions, and feel that their feedback is valued.
- The Marketing, Media and Customer Service is a diverse team that supports every department across the Council to ensure people have a clear understanding of what we do, what we aim to achieve and the services we provide.
- The team has expertise in public relations, campaign marketing, graphic design and print, media, advertising, social media, internal communications, web, digital, consultation, customer care and translation.
- Our role is to ensure that Council messages do not conflict and that we remain on message and on-time, and that we are giving out to our audiences clear and concise information from a single trusted source.
- We can respond in a crisis, share information, and inform on future developments, explain why certain things must be done in a particular way, work with our community and workforce to share the right message, in the right way, at the right time.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- Over 3.4m user sessions on the Council's website during 2022/23 this is a 11.4% increase on the previous year. *(M&M/001)*
- Over 1.45m sessions on the internal Staff Intranet, this is a 46% increase on the previous year. *(M&M/008)*
- During 2022/23 our contact centre received 238,300 calls with an average time taken to answer the call at 6min 32 seconds. This is a slight reduction in the number of calls compared to previous year with 268,000 calls. During 2022/23, we added a message on our telephone line which has resulted in a reduction of the number of customers needing to speak with a member of staff, together with an added 'Options' menu to our telephone lines that directs customers to parts of the organisation that they require based on the options they have selected. We have also introduced a 'Contact Us' form making it easier for customers to communicate with the Council electronically and enhanced web forms making it easier to make applications/reports online which reduces the need for customers to contact by phone. The contact centre will continue to take calls and enquiries through other media whilst improving the customer experience. *(M&M/001)*
- Carmarthenshire has three main town centre Hwbs at Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford. During 2022/23, **12,800 residents requested a face-to-face appointment**, this is a 32% increase on the previous year. *(M&M/004)*



Home <small>Home</small>	About Us <small>About Us</small>
Services <small>Services</small>	Contact Us <small>Contact Us</small>
Council <small>Council</small>	Partners <small>Partners</small>
News <small>News</small>	Jobs <small>Jobs</small>
My Account <small>My Account</small>	Feedback <small>Feedback</small>



Progress in 2022/23

Our Website

- ⦿ We are working to develop a systematic approach to involving service users in the future design and development of our online/channel shifted services.
- ⦿ We are working with the WLGA (Welsh Local Government Association) Digital team on user testing, specifically in regard to the cost of living agenda. The information we have received allows us to look at the website from the customer point of view, and offers recommendations based on the service user experience, allowing us to involve the service user in our content design process and take the service user with us on the development of our website and online services.
- ⦿ The Discover Carmarthenshire site has been modernised and updated to the updated version of Umbraco. The Intranet is currently being updated to follow the layout and features of the corporate website.
- ⦿ The jobs and careers pages are currently being updated with new imagery and content to compliment the introduction of the new Oleoo recruitment platform which will be launched during 2023-24.
- ⦿ During the year, we have been working with services to update their content and to digitise some of their processes, to appeal to more customers as it is our customers preferred way in interacting and learning more about various council services.
 - During the months of January through to March new waste collection arrangements were introduced and the website was key in providing information to the public, so making sure that the information was correct and user friendly was essential.
 - Due to the cost of living crises we added the period dignity information on to our website transferring it from the Carmarthenshire youth council website, creating a directory of locations and adding the locations on the in my area map.
 - Working with the Place and Infrastructure Department web editors the planning enforcement page was updated. Guidance have been added to inform customers of what planning can and cannot be enforced and the backend process streamlined so that all queries are answered within a designated timeframe.
 - Council tax changed platforms from Granicus to Northgate Citizen access to provide the customer with a new self-serve option which allows them to interact with the Council quickly and efficiently. The web pages were amended accordingly. Currently the platform allows the customer to set up a secure account which they can use for electronic billing, set up or amend a direct debit and check their council tax balance. The platform will offer further interaction as the team move forward with the development.

Engagement and consultation

- ⦿ We have ensured a planned and co-ordinated approach to engagement and consultation across the Council by improving coordination of requests to undertake consultations. We have communicated this approach across all departments to ensure consistency.

Hwb

- ⦿ A huge amount of work has been done to develop and promote the Claim What's Yours initiative. The service delivered by the Hwb Advisers have now supported more than 1,800 individuals since August 2022.
 - This support provides, advice, opportunities to claim money and well-being support.
 - Over 50 warm spaces were opened within the County with the 3 main warm welcome spaces at our 3 main libraries supporting approximately 350 individuals per week.
 - The cost of living page on the corporate website is highlighted on each page to ensure all visitors to the site know where to get support and advice.
 - A new Hwb model pilot was launched beginning of December where more services were made available face to face to deal with customer enquiries. These included housing matters, employability and trading standards.
 - On 27 January 2023 we held a successful money advice event at all 3 Hwbs. Funding has been secured to recruit 3 money advice officers to help residents with budgeting advice and support during 2023-24.

Communications Strategy

- ⦿ The new communications strategy will be developed in line with the key headlines and actions identified within the cabinet vision.
- ! The updated corporate customer charter is now in draft format. The next stage is to engage with specific services to ensure this meets their service need in respect to how they require to manage their customers.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Transformation Board Customers & Digital Transformation Workstream.

5c Legal

We have ensured legality and probity in the Council's decision-making
We work within a statutory framework governing such things as the way meetings are run, the way decisions are taken and the legislation behind each decision which needs to be taken.

Why is this important?

- ⦿ On the legal front we aim to handle as much of the legal work needed by the Council in-house as we can, although there will be some occasions when we need to send work to external lawyers. However, these are a small number across the full range of the Council's functions.
- ⦿ Some of the key areas of focus in the next 12 months will be supporting the work of the Regeneration Team in relation to the Shared Prosperity Fund, our Housing colleagues in bringing empty properties back into use, playing a key role in the TIC Debt Recovery Project, advising on the Council's submissions to the National COVID-19 inquiry and implementing changes to court procedures in child protection cases.
- ⦿ The range of legal work undertaken includes not just court and tribunal cases, but also advising Council committees, drafting legal documentation and giving legal advice.



How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ We have collaborated with HM Land Registry (HMLR) so as to enable HMLR to become the registering authority for Local Land Charges for the County of Carmarthenshire in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Infrastructure Act 2015. The task of identifying any anomalies in data held and making any necessary changes has been completed by both Land Charges and Planning teams. This has taken longer than expected due to staff shortages, delays with software providers and delays on the part of HMLR. The data is in the process of being checked by HMLR for any outstanding issues and this exercise will be repeated until no anomalies are identified. Then the project will move to the next phase with a scheduled end date of June/July 2023.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

The Corporate Governance Group has a responsibility for ensuring Corporate Governance functions.

5d Planning

Significant improvements to the Planning Service

Our performance continues to improve to exceed national benchmark targets. 2022/23 has been our highest performing year for the service for several years.

Why is this important?

- ⊙ A good planning service is essential to deliver the Council's ambitions and will play a significant role in delivering regeneration projects that are contributing to increased employment and bringing incredible benefits to our County in terms of digital infrastructure, smart manufacturing, energy and well-being.
- ⊙ Planning Enforcement mitigate any adverse impact on wider public amenity, the environment and/or the historic environment either by negotiation or by formal enforcement action where necessary, following breaches of planning.
- ⊙ Building Regulations help to ensure that new buildings, conversions, renovations, and extensions, whether domestic or commercial are going to be safe, healthy, and high performing.
- ⊙ Forward Planning deliver innovative approaches, policy guidance and advice (including specialist support) guiding strategies, decision making and facilitating the delivery of new homes, economic growth, environmental protection, and climate resilience.



How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ① Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ⊙ **89% of all planning applications were determined in time** during 2022/23, this is a considerable improvement and is at its highest level for many years. When broken down to the four planning elements, (despite the lower numbers involved), major planning applications determined is where the main delays are. The historical nature of the major applications have a disproportionate effect on the overall result.

All planning applications	Minor	Householder	'Other'	Major
89.0% (1,307/1,468)	85.5% (544/636)	94.7% (411/434)	89.7% (331/369)	72.4% (21/29)


The prioritisation of historic cases is continuing in conjunction with ensuring that new cases are addressed within the desired timeframe. Going forward performance results for this measure should therefore become more representative of the significant improvements achieved by the service. **(PAM/018)**


- ⊙ Furthermore, there has been significant improvement on the determination of planning applications during the year. This is demonstrated by the following End of Year 2022/23 results:

	2020/21	2022/23	Improved by
% of applications determined in time [PAM/018]	60.3%	89%	28.7%
% of major applications determined within time periods required [PLA/010]	41%	72.4%	31.4%
% of planning enforcement cases investigated within 84 days [PLA/021]	49%	68.8%	19.8%

Progress in 2022/23

Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Carmarthenshire County Council – Follow-up Review: Planning Services Oct 2022</u></p> <p><i>“The Council is to be commended for the swift, decisive action it took in response to the findings of our 2021 report, and for the way it has driven improvements in its planning service. The constructive way in which the Council received our report and acted on the recommendations is a particularly positive example of a Council demonstrating its commitment to driving improvement in service delivery. The Council has learnt lessons from the review that it has also applied more widely, particularly in relation to performance management”</i></p>
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<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Planning: Minerals & Waste (February 2023) Objective of the review: The review focused on how the Authority delivers the Regional Minerals and Waste Planning Service. The scope of the review was to identify, test and evaluate the procedures in place for the Regional Minerals and Waste Planning Service</p>	<p>Assurance Rating:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td style="background-color: green; color: white;">High</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: yellow;">Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: red;">Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

🕒 [Annual Monitoring Report](#) [2022/23 will be published Oct 23]

What and how we can do better

See our [delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7](#)

Governance Arrangements

<p>The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Council’s arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial as well as non-financial performance.</p> <p>Delivery plans are developed and reported at Scrutiny Committee. Actions monitored through PIMS by the department and by the Committee.</p> <p>The Council’s constitution sets out where planning applications should be determined Planning Committee part-32-revised-council-9th-feb-2022.pdf (gov.wales) on consideration of a recommendation report by officers</p> <p>The Council’s constitution provides delegated authority to the Head of Place and Sustainability for certain planning functions part-32-revised-council-9th-feb-2022.pdf (gov.wales). Officers are delegated to undertake key activities appropriate to their role by the Head of Place and Sustainability.</p> <p>The Local Development Plan Advisory Panel provides advice and guidance to officers in the development of the Council’s local development plan which is considered by PSCC scrutiny committee, cabinet and full council prior to it being submitted to the Welsh Government for consideration.</p> <p>The Council is required to report on the progress in meeting the LDP to the Welsh Government through the submission of an Annual Monitoring Report. The AMR is subject to consideration by PSCC scrutiny committee, Cabinet and Council before it is submitted to government.</p> <p>The Council is set national planning performance targets by the Welsh Government and is required to report performance to the Welsh Government on an annual basis.</p> <p>The Council has its own set of local planning performance targets which are reported and monitored corporately by the PIMS system and reported to Planning committee on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Department has its own live performance monitoring HWB, ARCUS which provides real time reporting on planning functions for local management purposes.</p> <p>Performance management reviews are undertaken by line managers using KPIs. TIC reviews are conducted on areas of the function and reported to the Head of service, recommendations resulting from reports are reported and progress monitored through the PIMS system.</p>

5e Finance

The situation here in Carmarthenshire is financially challenging.

All local authorities across Wales are facing big shortfalls in their budgets due to the global economic climate.

Why is this important?

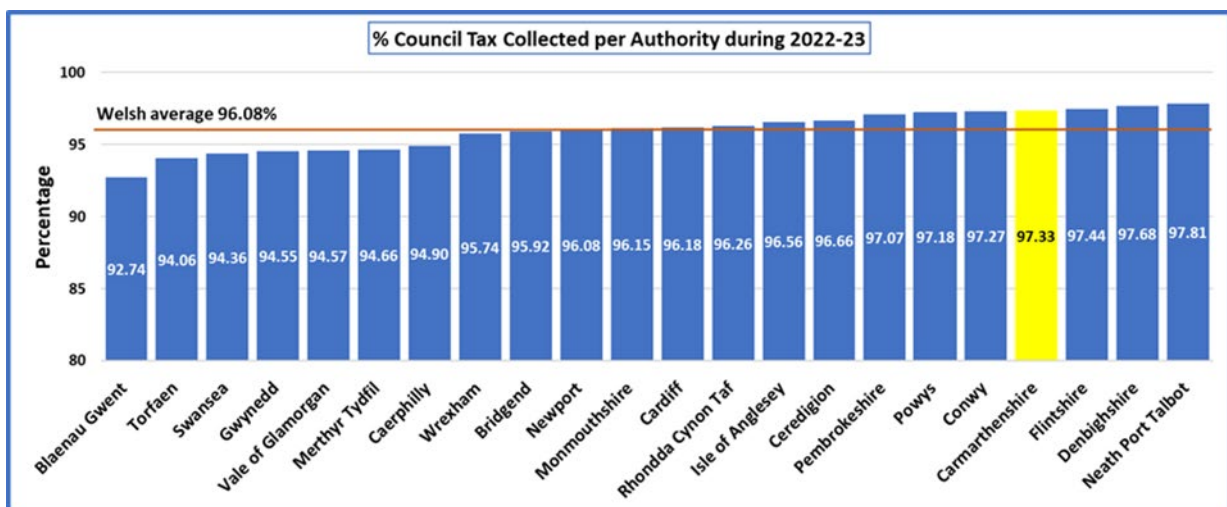
- Carmarthenshire County Council, like all local authorities, is facing unprecedented financial pressures as the rising cost of inflation, food and energy prices along with increased global demands for goods and services, present a significant shortfall in its 2023/24 budget.
- The Cabinet Member for Resources said 'This year's budget choices are every bit as hard as the very worst years of the austerity era. Although the funding from Welsh Government, which accounts for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of our income, increased by 8.5% we still had to budget for savings of £9.4m for this year, which meant very difficult decisions to be made'.
- We must and will respond to this challenge again, ensuring we do all that we can to support the residents, businesses and communities of Carmarthenshire.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

Success Measures / Explaining the Results


- **97.33% of Council Tax was collected** during 2022/23, a slight improvement on 2021/22 of 97.24%. Recovery action continued throughout this financial year but due to the recent pandemic and current cost of living crisis low-income households who are in employment are struggling to pay. We will continue to take a proactive approach to recovery ensuring we provide relevant support and advice to those falling into arrears to ensure the best possible way forward with regard to repayment arrangements. We will provide relevant information and signposting to ensure residents claim the council tax relief and benefits they are entitled to and signpost for relevant debt and benefit advice.

Comparatively we have moved up to 4th highest collection rate compared to 6th for 2021/22.



- ⊙ **97.97% of non-domestic rates was collected** during 2022/23 which is slightly lower than 2021/22 with 97.98%. The recently published comparative data shows us above the Welsh average of 95.51% and in 8th position, down on 7th last year.
- ⊙ With increased access to **online services**, this has created a natural shift for on-line payments with many customers contacting us, submitting forms and documents and paying for our services electronically with a 6.03% increase in the number of online payments from 56,582 in 2021/22 to 59,995 transactions during 2022/23.
- ⊙ **Cost of living** - We have administered the **Winter Fuel Support Scheme** and processed 19,986 cases and have paid out £4 million to support Carmarthenshire residents.
- ⊙ We promote the **Discretionary Housing Payments** and actively encourage take up. An extra £100k has been allocated to the Discretionary Housing Payment fund via the cost of living discretionary scheme.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⊙ **Audit of Financial Statement** - An unqualified Audit report was received from Audit Wales in respect of our 2021-22 Statement of Accounts. These again included a significant number and value of additional COVID-19 related funding from many different grants.  Following late changes to the accounting/audit requirements, Carmarthenshire was able to adapt to these amendments and was one of the earliest Local Authorities in Wales to have its 2021/22 accounts signed off.
- ⊙ Despite inflationary pressures on a truly unprecedented scale, the Council was able to set a **balanced budget** based on total Expenditure / Income of £656m. Council Tax increase was set at 6.8%.
- ⊙ Over 2,000 people responded to the online consultation, and 80 young people from the County's Secondary Schools attended a face-to-face event at County Hall to discuss with Cabinet Members and express their priorities. All comments and views were taken into consideration and changes were made to the Council's budget proposals.

What and how we can do better

See our [delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7](#)

Governance Arrangements

A Corporate Governance group comprising key officers and 2 cabinet members is in place with the Cabinet member for Resources being a member together with the Director of Corporate Services, Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance and Head of Financial Services. The Group are responsible for updating the Code of Governance and developing the Annual Governance Statement. In addition, the group oversees the work of the Information Management Group. Minutes of the Corporate Governance Group are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee.

A Swansea Bay City Deal Joint Committee has been formally established with supporting governance and advisory boards. As part of the assurance arrangements for the SBCD portfolio, an independent gateway review was undertaken. The review was undertaken by an independent external team in accordance with the Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub Guidelines. The SBCD received an Amber-Green Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA) rating.

5f Procurement

We spend an excess of £311 million per annum on goods, works and services with our suppliers and this has a significant impact on the quality of life for the Carmarthenshire Community.

Why is this important?

- It is more important than ever that we have the best arrangements in place to deliver innovative solutions that help us reduce costs and improve the services that we deliver to our residents. We continue to use procurement to positively impact on Carmarthenshire’s economy and communities in delivering social, economic, and environmental benefits.




The process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- Through our delivery of **Community Benefits** over 1,628 weeks of targeted recruitment and training was delivered in 2022/23 through the Council’s 21st Century School Programme as well as Housing and Economic Development projects across the County.
- 43 jobs were created** through Community Benefits in our Construction projects (21st Century School programme, housing and regeneration projects).
- 2,360 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) pupil engagements through Community Benefits in our Construction Projects ((21st Century School programme, housing and regeneration projects).

 Internal Audit	<p>The following Internal Audit review was undertaken as part of the 2022/23 Audit Plan: Procurement (Final Report issued: 2 March 2023) Assurance Rating: Acceptable <i>Objective of the review:</i> The review sought to provide assurance that the Authority is obtaining best value for money on goods, works, and services procured up to a value of £5k, and that all such procurement is carried out in accordance with the Authority’s Contract Procedure Rules.</p>	Assurance Rating <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">High</td></tr> <tr style="background-color: yellow;"><td style="text-align: center;">Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

Progress in 2022/23

- We are continually working with departments to deliver compliant tender exercises through the implementation of a category management approach.
- As part of all tender exercises appropriate lotting mechanisms are applied to ensure that the contracts are attractive to SME’s. A recent regional tender for Civil Engineering Contractors Framework 2023 took a different approach and a key addition to this framework iteration was the inclusion of county-specific lots

for the very small civils work up to £50k in value to encourage SME's to bid for a place on these lots with the intention it might help them grow and be in a position for larger lots in future iterations of the Framework. A new style of supplier engagement event was piloted in partnership with Business Wales for those suppliers that have not tendered before. The 'Getting Tender Ready' session provided support to register on relevant platforms such as Sell2Wales and eTenderWales. Of the successful 67 tenderers:

- 13 are Carmarthenshire Companies (19%)
- 41 are from the South West Wales region (61%)

This was a success and the framework commenced in February 2023.

Is anyone better off?

Maximising Community Benefits arising from the multi million pound Scheme Pentre Awel Scheme at Llanelli



A multi-million-pound project bringing together business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities all at one prime location along the Llanelli coastline

Pentre Awel is the first development of its scope and size in Wales. On completion, it will provide world-class medical research and healthcare delivery and will support and encourage people to lead active and healthy lives.

It will create five distinct buildings linked with a “street” space, comprising an aquatics centre, sports hall, multipurpose sports and fitness rooms and gym, education and training facilities, clinical delivery and research and innovation and business space.

As well as improving health and well-being, the project will create over 1,800 jobs and training & apprenticeship opportunities and is expected to boost the local economy by a £467million over the next 15 years.

Our Corporate Procurement team are working with the main contractor, Bouygues UK to design and build Zone One of the Pentre Awel development.

Our Community Benefits officer is working closely with Bouygues UK to maximize the Community Benefits realised in this project. In total, the project target for Targeted Recruitment & Training is 4860 person weeks in a timescale of 89 weeks. Through the Carmarthenshire Employer Support Group (ESG), a large network of employability projects such as Workways+ and Communities for Work, learning providers including Coleg Sir Gâr and University of Wales Trinity Saint David and public bodies such as DWP, Careers Wales, plus representation from within the Council’s Economic Development department and the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership support will be on hand to meet these ambitious targets. The ESG meet frequently and provides critical support in placing individuals for work experience,

and jobs on site. Work is on-going on the education and community engagement opportunities, with introductions made to the local Youth Centre and social enterprise projects requiring support in the surrounding project location. School and Community Ambassadors have been appointed as local representatives to provide the link between the local community, schools and the project team. Bouygues UK are also in the process of advertising opportunities for sub-contractor packages.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Authority's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial as well as non-financial performance. The Governance and Audit Committee approve the Contract Procedure Rules as updates are required.

5g Internal Audit

The overall opinion is that the Authority as an 'Acceptable' control environment in operation.
(Annual Report for Governance and Audit Committee)

Why is this important?

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires that **a local government body must maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control.** By providing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes, Carmarthenshire County Council's Internal Audit function provides a quality, independent and objective audit service that effectively meets the Council's needs, adds value, improves operations, and helps protect public resources.

Carmarthenshire County Council has a **zero-tolerance** stance to all forms of fraud, corruption, and theft, both from within the Council and from external sources. The Internal Audit function promotes an anti-fraud, anti-bribery and anti-corruption culture within the Council and investigates any allegations of fraud, bribery, corruption, and other irregularities.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ⊙ **87% of draft Internal Audit reports were issued within 10 working days of completing the fieldwork (IA/002)**
- ! **Only 38% of management responses received within 15 working days of the draft Internal Audit report being issued.** Requests are made for management responses to be received within the target of 15 days; however, responses are not always provided within this time. Further liaison with management to try to ensure that management responses are received to reports in a timely manner, and within the 15 working days target. (IA/002)
- ⊙ **All (100%) of final reports were issued within 10 working days of management responses being received. (IA/003)**
- ! **83% of the planned Internal Audits were completed** during 2022/23. Staffing issues during the year has greatly impacted on the ability to complete planned audits. The Governance & Audit Committee approved the deferral of three audit assignments from this year's Audit Plan. Recruitment for new staff has been successful with a full complement of staff from summer 2023. We will continue to make progress against the plan, producing quality audits which add value to the Authority.



Progress in 2022/23

- ⊙ The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require an External Quality Assessment (EQA) of the Internal Audit function to be completed every 5 years. The most recent assessment, undertaken during 2022/23, concluded that Carmarthenshire County Council's Internal Audit service is conforming in 300, out of the 304, requirements. Of the 4 requirements remaining, three were found to be partially compliant, with one identified as non-compliant.
- ⊙ Actions have been put in place to address the conformance issues relating to the 4 areas identified as being partially compliant and non-complaint in the EQA; details are as follows:

- The Head of Financial Services, who is outside of the Internal Audit activity, now has oversight of all Internal Audit assignments which fall under the remit of the Head of Internal Audit (Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance). Whilst an approved escalation protocol was already in existence for such reviews, as the oversight did not involve an officer from outside the Internal Audit activity, the previous arrangements were deemed to be non-compliant. The introduction of this additional control is seen as a positive addition and will strengthen the existing process.
- Client feedback surveys have been introduced, which assist us to know how we are doing. From the results so far, we have received positive affirmations (Excellent or Good) to over 90% of the questions. Results of the surveys are used as a discussion basis to improve our performance.
- The remaining two areas identified as partial compliance relate to strengthening of wording within the Internal Audit Charter; these changes have been implemented, with the revised Charter due to be presented to the Governance & Audit Committee in July 2023.

⦿ There is a coordinated approach for drafting the Annual Governance Statement and challenge of the contents, to ensure it reflects the actual governance position and what improvements are required. An action plan is produced annually, and the governance issues are monitored through the quarterly Governance Group Meetings. Internal Audit undertakes a review of the Corporate Governance arrangements in place, including review of the Annual Governance Statement, on an annual basis; the most recent review concluded that the Authority’s Corporate Governance Arrangements are Acceptable.

Table - Internal Audit Report extract:

Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance	
Post Review Assurance Level	Description for Assurance Level
Acceptable	Moderate controls, some areas of non-compliance to agreed controls Medium/Low risk of not meeting objectives Medium/Low risk of fraud, negligence, loss, damage to reputation
Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.	

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Internal Audit report to the Governance and Audit Committee, which is key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Authority’s arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment and reporting on financial as well as non-financial.

5h People Management (Human Resources, Learning & Development, Occupational Health)

People say they are proud to work for us and would recommend us as an employer. Over 1,700 staff responded to our staff survey in 2022 and responses were overall positive. An engaged workforce is critical to the delivery of our services.

Why is this important?

Staff are our greatest asset and we have approximately 8,000 employees who contribute every day to the achievement of our services. Our ambitions simply cannot be realised without our dedicated and motivated workforce. We work together, be open, honest, fair and inclusive.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ① Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

During 2022/23 the Council was re-awarded the Gold and Platinum Corporate Health Standard from the Welsh Government. The Corporate Health Standard is part of the Welsh Government's Healthy Working Wales programme and is the national mark of quality for health and well-being in the workplace.

Platinum is the beacon for exemplar employers who demonstrate sustainable business practices and take full account of their corporate social responsibilities. The Platinum level recognises responsible employers who demonstrate an organisational commitment to support not only their employees, but also other employers and the local community. The assessor was very impressed with the amount of work that we are doing in each area and the sophisticated and joined up approach with **'significant progress being made since the last Platinum level revalidation in 2019'**.

We were also recognised as Investors in People (IIP) organisation and given Gold Accreditation. This means that **'people and leaders actively drive positive outcomes, taking ownership of the principles and practices [of IIP]'** Our External Advisor, told us she had found:

'... a quantifiably different organisation – as a result of focus on trust, empowerment, caring and support, continuous investment in best practice, improving management and use of data.'

The review also found mutual respect at all levels with an openness to feedback and a desire to improve by investing in people and their well-being. What was clear was that there are talented people at all levels of our organisation. When we are at our best, we are working collaboratively, making improvements using internal and external sources and making decisions.

! The review found that the areas that we need to work on are how we recognise and reward people as well as developing the skills of our leaders. We need to keep thinking about how we communicate to make sure everyone gets the messages they need.





Armed Forces Covenant

The [Armed Forces Covenant](#) is a promise from the nation to those who serve. It says we will do all we can to ensure they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. This includes offering injured servicemen and women and bereaved families extra support where appropriate.

- All parts of the county council were kept up to date on the requirements of the Armed Forces Act so that our processes and policies reduce the risk disadvantage to our Armed Forces Community throughout, especially in the areas of housing and education.

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS)-Silver award

- We worked to ensure our employment policies and practices within the council support the armed forces community and we were awarded the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS)-Silver award.
- We have also put in place the measures to offer a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for members of the Armed Forces Community (certain criteria apply), which will be launched when the new recruitment platform goes live.

We have established strong links and referral pathways between our recruiting team, workways and armed forces employment charities, so that veterans who need that extra support in gaining employment are provided for.

Employee Survey

During 2022/23, we also undertook our first Employee Engagement Survey aimed at assessing how engaged our staff.

Working for Us - Most people that responded said that they were proud to work for Carmarthenshire County Council and would recommend us as an employer. Many also said that they felt their well-being was important to the Council, and that equality in the workplace was supported, allowing them to be themselves and speak openly. Many also told us that they are encouraged to make suggestions and challenge the way things are done; and that their opinions are listened to and used to improve things.

Communication - Most people that responded to the survey agreed that they were up to speed on what was happening in their team or work location.

! Fewer people felt they knew what was happening across the organisation.

Learning and Development - Most people that responded to the survey felt that they have the right skills to do their job and many stated that they were able to perform to the best of your ability. The majority of respondents also stated that they can access learning opportunities in their preferred language. In terms developing new skills, many stated that they are encouraged to learn and grow and that they had been given the opportunity to do so during the last year.

! However, it is clear from some of the responses received, that not everyone has this experience, and we will address this during 2023/24.

Expectations and Recognition - Most of the people that responded to the survey felt that their job makes an important contribution to the Council. They were also clear about what is expected of them, and what they could expect from their manager. However, our Investors In People (IIP) review identified that not everyone had the same experience, and that appraisals were not being undertaken in a consistent manner. Many said that someone had talked to them about their progress during the previous year and that they regularly receive recognition from others for doing a good job.

Turnover

Voluntary turnover is currently running at 9.11%, which is below the UK average, an indicator that we are a good employer, which is borne out by the results of the staff survey – staff being “proud to work for us” and staff willing to “recommend us as an employer”. Where we have higher than average turnover, retention strategies have been put in place to support services e.g. market supplement payments, real living wage supplement, re-evaluation of job roles.

Providing Bilingual Services

We understand that the Welsh language is key to the identity of many of our residents and that people are often able to better express their opinions and needs in their first language. It is therefore our duty to ensure our residents and customers can access our services through their language of choice and to make sure our employees have the required skills. We have a range of learning and development opportunities in place to ensure new and existing staff have the opportunity to develop their Welsh Language skills. This year we will strengthen the process of developing Welsh Language Agreements, which is being considered alongside the implementation of the new Oleo recruitment system. Recruitment pages are also being updated to provide opportunities for all candidates to achieve level 1 prior to starting employment.

We are also looking to increase the proportion of Welsh-medium apprenticeships within the Council.

Well-being of our Current Workforce

Supporting the well-being of our workforce is a key priority for the Division and our engagement survey told us that the majority of people who participated agreed that their well-being was important to us as an employer and that they felt valued for the contributions they make.

Workforce Development Opportunities

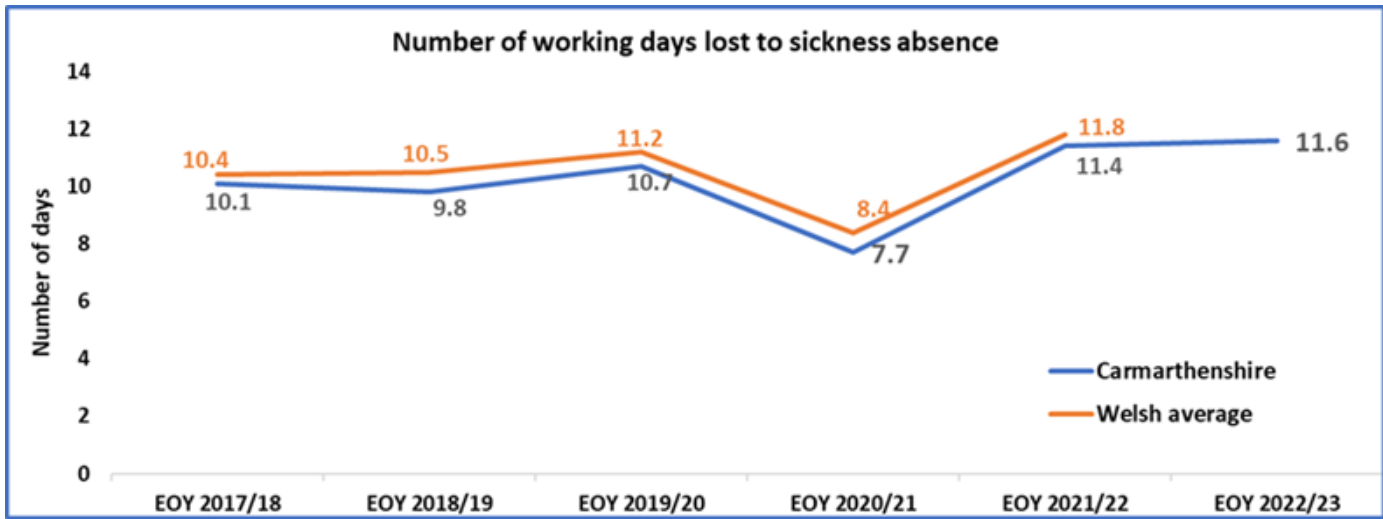
During the last year, we have developed a range of initiatives and solutions in a bid to support the Council’s corporate priorities. These include:

- Supporting our people to develop their Welsh language skills
- Supporting 12 future leaders
- Sponsoring 21 individuals to become Social Workers
- Recruiting 10 graduates – to meet our workforce planning aspirations
- Recruiting 5 apprentices - to meet our workforce planning aspirations.


! We also have a statutory obligation to ensure all our people undertake level 1 training in relation violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. At the end of March 2023, 69% of our staff had completed the relevant training. We need to improve this take up rate, and the successful procurement of a new Learning Management System, as part of Consortium of Welsh Local Authorities, this year will support us to improve and monitor completion rates.

Attendance

! We have a robust attendance management framework in place with a range of employee well-being solutions to support the organisation, however sickness absence per employee continued to increase during 2022/23 to 11.6 days (PAM/001)



It should be noted that it is not only Carmarthenshire sickness figures that have increased after the pandemic, but the Welsh average also increased by 3.4 days (8.4 days – 11.8 days).

	Audit Wales report: Springing Forward Workforce Management- Carmarthenshire County Council (Sept 2022)
<p>Purpose: This report reviews the Council’s arrangements for managing its workforce. It looks at how the Council strategically plans for its workforce, how it monitors the use of its workforce and how it reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its arrangements.</p> <p>Finding: <i>The Council is improving the strategic planning for its workforce and is taking action to address staff capacity issues in key service areas but recognises that performance monitoring of workforce management needs strengthening</i></p>	

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ During 2022 the Council agreed a new Transformation Strategy.
- ⦿ A new Workforce Strategy has been developed and will be approved during 2023-24.
- ⦿ During 2023-24 we will also agree a new Learning & Development policy that ensures fair access to learning for all our staff.

Employment Policies

- ⦿ All our employment policies are regularly updated to reflect changes in legislation. We also respond to manager feedback and align our policies to good practice.
- ⦿ We have undertaken a complete review of our Employment Safeguarding policies and procedures and have developed an action plan to address areas that require improvement. We now have a new updated policy and procedure which are in the process of being signed off (Corporate Safeguarding Board sign off agreed).
- ⦿ We have developed a new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence policy that has introduced special leave for people in an abusive relationship, this is seen as sector leading.

- ⦿ Our Premature and Hospitalised Baby Pay and Leave Scheme supports parents with premature or sick babies where we are able to offer additional paid leave after the birth of a child who requires an extended stay in hospital.

Recruitment and retention

- ⦿ We continue to manage high levels of recruitment (approximately 130 vacancies at any one time @ 1 June 23) and supported departments to recruit overseas workers to help bridge the skills gaps in some services (via the UK immigration sponsorship scheme).
- ! Recruitment and retention in some areas is problematic and, in many service areas, is a national issue (e.g. social care roles). However, we have put strategies in place to support services including regrading payment of a market supplement, schemes to upskill our social care workforce such as the Care Academi, a range of well-being initiatives.
- ⦿ To support our lower paid staff, we have reviewed our pay model, paid Real Living Wage supplement when applicable and are currently looking at different flexible working solutions in some service areas.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

The Transformation Board manages the work of the Transformation Workstreams
The Corporate Governance Group ensures we adhere to the Code of Governance and the Annual Governance Statement.

5i Democratic Services

Positive feedback from Elected Members on the service provided by Democratic Services Unit.

Why is this important?


- ⦿ Democratic Services manages the Council's decision-making process. The Council constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose.
- ⦿ As part of that process, the service will:
 - Maintain and develop the Council's decision-making processes to include the preparation of agendas, reports and minutes, facilitating the broadcasting and hosting of multi-location meetings and ensure decision made are accountable and transparent.
 - Manage and provide Scrutiny and Committee Services support to the Council and its various Committees.
 - Support services to Elected Members, including maintaining and managing local councillor information on our website (includes information on declarations of interests; gifts and hospitality; Committee membership; remuneration etc) and providing a support service for enquiries and advice on the Council's Constitution and Members' Code of Conduct.
 - Administer appeals relating to school admissions and school permanent exclusions.
 - Service and host joint working arrangements – i.e. Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Panel, Wales Pension Partnership Joint Governance Committee and Y Partneriaeth
 - Service Council's arm's length companies namely Llesiant Delta Well-being Governance Group and CWM Environmental Ltd Shareholders Board.
 - Manage internal meetings between Group Leaders, Constitutional Review Group and also Cabinet member meetings with Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs.
 - Manage members' constituency casework via a Councillor Enquiry system, processing Councillor expenses and making arrangements for attending conferences and seminars. A new updated Councillor Enquiry process with the facility for members to view logged cases was released earlier in the year.
 - Support to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council in their civic duties.
 - Develop and update the Democracy web pages and managing democratic room bookings.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ⦿ Over 4,300 Member enquiries were received by the unit during 2022/23. 73.4% of the departmental responses were replied to within the target timescale of 7 days.
- ⦿ Over 1,235 service requests logged on behalf of Members during the period 18 August 2022 to 30 April 2023.
- ⦿ 323 appeal files opened between 09/05/22 and 08/05/23. Plus 2 exclusion appeals.
- ⦿ Over 300 meetings serviced during the year.

Progress in 2022/23

	<p><u>Audit Wales Follow-up Review: Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future? – Carmarthenshire County Council – July 2022</u></p> <p>Findings</p> <p><i>Overall, the Council has made some progress in addressing previous proposals for improvement but still needs to strengthen arrangements to assess the effectiveness and impact of its scrutiny function.</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An action plan was returned to Audit Wales and Audit Wales have met with the Cabinet and the Chairs and Vice of Scrutiny forum at separate meetings to discuss the findings.2. The report and Action Plan will go to CMT, Corporate and Performance scrutiny and then Governance and Audit Cttee.3. Recommendations will be addressed in Business Plans and tracked on PIMS.	

- ⦿ The Service successfully put in place the arrangements for the New Council following the Local Government Elections in May 2022. This included negotiating with Group Leaders and unaffiliated members on establishing the politically balanced composition of committees and representatives on external bodies.
- ⦿ We put in place and updated the Council’s records and website in respect of arrangements to increase in Carmarthenshire elected members from 74 to 75 and the changes to the ward structure following a review of the electoral wards by the Local Government Boundary Commission.
- ⦿ The service worked with Learning and Development on the Member Induction Programme for both new and returning members.
- ⦿ We have successfully moved the Council to multi-location meetings (hybrid) which is a legal requirement of the 2021 Act.
- ⦿ We introduced a Petition Scheme and Public Participation Strategy also a requirement of the 2021 Act.
- ⦿ In accordance with the legal requirement to allow members to attend either physically or remotely, the service made arrangements to hold multi-location meetings from the Annual Meeting on the 25 May 2022. We also now broadcast all formal meetings which has increased the number of meetings webcast since lockdown from 50 to over 200 per annum.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Democratic and Legal Services however have a leading role in support the governance of the Democratic process. Taking a lead role in the Constitutional Review Working Group, Group Leader meetings & Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum and administering the democratic process as a whole.

5j Policy & Performance

We reset the Council's Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives and Carmarthenshire PSB's Well-being Plan

The reset of the above Council and PSB's Well-being Objectives sets the scene for the next 5 years and was a major piece of work to progress. The Council Service Delivery Plans have aligned to deliver the Well-being Objectives. We also undertook significant consultation with residents, staff, businesses and Trade Unions.

Why is this important?

- ⦿ This service leads on a range of corporate statutory duties and strategic requirements on behalf of the whole Council. This is done by liaising with and advising Council departments and Cabinet on a range of corporate matters. The key areas of work covered by the unit are as follows:
 - **Corporate Policy** requirements relating to Equalities, Welsh language, Well-being of Future Generations, Armed Forces, Tackling Poverty and Complaints.
 - **Performance Management** making sure we achieve what we set out to do in our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives and through monitoring ensuring outcomes are better than they would otherwise be.
 - **Data Insight** leading in the management, collection and analysis of key data to aid evidence-based decision making and supporting key policy areas.
 - **Partnership working** between public sector organisations in the County, through the Public Services Board (PSB) including community safety.



How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ! Only **52.7% of complaints received were completed within the statutory deadline** during 2022/23 (*Comp/001*), this is a decline on the previous year of 57.8%. The number of complaints received have increased by 54% (an additional 500 complaints). There are several issues which are believed to continue to have an impact upon the ability of Investigating Officers to meet the statutory timescales. The significant increase in the number of complaints received, the complex nature of some complaints, service pressures, capacity due to competing priorities and leave periods also affect the time taken to complete investigations. The Corporate Complaints Team continue to work closely with teams who are unable to meet the statutory timescales due to significant service pressures to provide advice and guidance to support the resolution of complaints. ⓘ See **Appendix 5b**.

Progress in 2022/23

Corporate Policy


Tackling Poverty – See Well-being Objective 2a

Community Safety – See Well-being Objective 3d

Welsh Language -See Well-being Objective 3c

Equality and Diversity

- ⦿ The Welsh Government has published an Anti-Racist Action Plan for Wales. The Policy & Involvement Team are supporting the revision of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) Action Plan and relevant actions will be added to the SEP. Relevant actions will also need to be monitored by departments.
- ⦿ The Equalities & Diversity (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) Task & Finish Group has prepared a report and recommendations will be implemented during 2023-24.

	<u>Equality Impact Assessments – National Report: More than a Tick Box Exercise (September 2022)</u>
<p>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important part of the approach to tackling inequality in Wales. EIAs help public services meet their legal duties to avoid discrimination in the decisions they make and to promote equality of opportunity and cohesion.</p> <p>The report shows that within individual public bodies there are good examples of aspects of the process of conducting an EIA. The report will help all public bodies learn from those that are doing well and trying new approaches.</p> <p><u>Our response</u></p> <p>In response we prepared an Action Plan to address the recommendations.</p>	

Complaints

- ⦿ Monthly reports continued to be provided throughout the year to Directors on Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, with numbers given for those which have been closed, upheld and completed within the timescale and also the numbers which are currently still open, and which are beyond the expected response timescale. Additional scrutiny of the information provided by departments has resulted in queries and requests to the Corporate Complaints Team for additional information by some divisions and the team have been pleased to assist.

Involvement, Participation and Consultation

- ⦿ We worked with other Council services to further develop the Council's involvement and use of data as part of a Council wide approach to involvement, participation and consultation.
- ⦿ Our involvement work and use of data will now be embedded as part of the new Council Corporate Strategy in terms of how we ensure continuous engagement and involvement in all that the Council does and how we perform. There are wider discussions through the Regional Partnership Board's Continuous Engagement Framework group. The Democratic Participation Strategy has been published on 1 May 2022


Performance Management

Our 2021/22 Annual Report was the first time we had to report under the terms of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, and we published it as part of our Annual Report on our Well-being Objectives.

- ⦿ We outlined the requirement of the new Act and our Performance Management Framework to members in November 2022 as part of the induction programme.
- ⦿ Following local government elections in May 2022 the new administration published its vision statement and we reset the Corporate Strategy to focus on 4 rather than 13 Well-being Objectives. We also held a workshop with members to contribute towards the development of the new Strategy.
- ⦿ We developed a new approach to business planning which is now focused on divisional delivery plans which aligns to the new Well-being Objectives, thematic and services priorities and core business enablers. The

first phase focused on actions and measures for the 2023-24 period and the second phased with focus in self-assessment of performance during 2022-23 in order to inform future business planning. Engagement and Assurance sessions with each of the Council’s Departments will be held during June and July 2023.

- ⦿ For monitoring we introduced a more integrated way of looking at quarterly performance reporting and the Corporate Management Team held quarterly meetings entirely dedicated to performance management that have proved very worthwhile.
- ! We need to improve how we communicate how the Council is performing to residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions.
- ! We will need to consolidate governance arrangements for the new Corporate Strategy.

	<p><u>Examination on the setting of Well-being Objectives</u></p>
<p>The examination is to assess the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when setting its well-being objectives.</p> <p>The review found that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Council has applied the sustainable development principle in the setting of its new well-being objectives but could strengthen its arrangements for citizen involvement and monitoring its progress.</i></p>	

Partnership working

- ⦿ The PSB Support Team in the Council led the development of the PSB’s Well-being Plan for 2023-2028. Work was undertaken with PSB partners to agree its Well-being Objectives based on the findings of the Well-being Assessment which had also been led by the team. The Well-being Objectives were identified as:
 - Ensuring a sustainable economy and fair employment
 - Improving well-being and reducing health inequalities
 - Responding to the climate and nature emergencies
 - Tackling poverty and its impacts
 - Helping to create bilingual, safe and diverse communities and places.
- ⦿ Discussions were held with PSB partners to consider the collective action the PSB could take forward to contribute towards these objectives. The Council’s PSB Support Team completed a draft Well-being Plan with suggested actions, informed by feedback from meetings with Board members, Welsh Government seminars on Tackling Poverty, Climate & Nature Emergencies, Health Inequalities and Improving Community Well-being and documentation including the Future Generations Report 2020 from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner. The team have also directly engaged with officers from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner as part of the statutory requirements of developing the Well-being Plan.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

<p>The Corporate Governance Group ensures that the above ambitions and processes are maintained. A series of cross-party Advisory Panels are important engagement fora to support the Cabinet Member for the respective service areas. The Corporate Policy Team support the following Advisory Panels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling Poverty • Welsh Language • Rural Affairs.

5k Electoral Services & Civil Registration

Increases in both the number of births and deaths registered during the year and a significant increase in the number of weddings and civil partnerships supported due to delays caused by the pandemic.
Local election in May 2022 successfully delivered

Why is this important?

- ⦿ **Electoral Services** - our electoral system is underpinned by a legal framework which establishes how elections are delivered. It sets out who is allowed to vote and the various ways they can cast their vote and have their say.
- ⦿ **Registration Service** – the Council’s Registration Service has the statutory function of providing a responsive service to the public for the registration of births, stillbirths, deaths; notices of marriage and civil partnership and consequent ceremonies; production of legal documentation and the approval of premises for marriages and partnerships; it is also responsible for citizenship ceremonies. The Service offers a range of non-statutory ceremonies and also delivers on request, the ‘Tell Us Once’ service on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ⦿ **90% of births were registered in Carmarthenshire within the statutory timeframe of 42 days** during 2022/23, this is in line with the Welsh average of 91% and an improvement on 84% in 2021/22. The number of births registered in Carmarthenshire increased by 2.3% in 2022/23 to 2,392 compared to 2,338 the previous year, this consists of all births which took place in the County and includes parents who are resident in neighbouring counties but attended Glangwili for their child’s birth. Actions are being implemented to work with the maternity services to raise awareness among parents of the need to make arrangements to register the birth within the first few weeks, as many are leaving it too late to ask for an appointment. *(CivilReg/001)*
- ! **55% of non-coronial deaths were registered within the statutory timeframe of 5 days during 2022/23.** Since COVID, there’s a requirement for deaths to be signed off by doctors and the Medical Examiner Service, with pressure on the NHS and the need for medical professionals to complete paperwork and discuss it with the Medical Examiner Service, before forwarding it to the registrars. This increases the length of time it takes for all necessary documentation to be received by the registrars. The number of death registrations in Carmarthenshire increased significantly in 2022/23, including an increase of 34% in cases requiring coronial involvement or investigation before the registrars were able to register the death. The impact of these matters was a decrease in deaths registered within 5 days from 60% in 21/22 to 55% in 22/23 in Carmarthenshire. The Welsh average also dropped from 69% last year to 50% this year. This is mostly beyond our control, we attend local and national stakeholder groups for the Medical Examiner Service and have established good links, we intend to provide better information for families while they wait and to work with the health board and the Medical Examiner Service to make all processes more efficient. *(CivilReg/002)*
- ⦿ The **May 2022 Local Elections** were successfully delivered, with a 41.76% turnout which placed us in the top five for highest turnout of Welsh Local Elections. We conducted an effective campaign to ensure that all 16-



and 17-year-olds and foreign nationals newly enfranchised living within Carmarthenshire were registered and were encouraged to participate in getting them to vote. We did this by carrying out a comprehensive campaign with relevant videos that were shared with our stakeholders.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ As a consequence of the pandemic, a new cohort of 10 casual deputy registrars was recruited in April-May 2022 to enable the service to successfully meet the extremely high demand for ceremonies last summer. Most of these staff have been retained and have been trained during the winter months to register births and deaths and to take notices. This additional staff resource will allow us to be more flexible in the number of weddings we are able to deliver as well as keeping adequate availability for birth and death appointments. This new cohort has also added resilience to the team of Registrars in the event of such a pandemic happening in the near future.
- ⦿ We pride ourselves on the development and strengthening of our stakeholder meetings. We meet on a regular basis to ensure that improvements are continuously being made to the death registration journey, ensuring that the bereaved families are at the heart of any decision making. A valued member of the stakeholder group is the Coroner for Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire jurisdiction. The Coroner and his team engage with the Registration Service regularly, again ensuring that inquests and their subsequent registration of the death can be carried out in a timely fashion.
- ⦿ 2022 was a very busy year with weddings and civil partnerships, Registrars worked with the couples to ensure we delivered a unique, personal service. The numerous complimentary cards of gratefulness received by the Registrars for making their day extra special is a sign that we delivered. Each wedding we see as a marketing opportunity so that guests and families will take away that a Registry wedding can be special and where possible we will tailor the service to what the couples want.
- ⦿ The Elections team delivered successful Local Government Elections in May 2022, with many internal staff contributing by either being part of the Election Project Board, working at polling stations or on the count. We particularly pride ourselves on the campaign that we put out leading up to and including election day. This could not have been delivered without close collaboration with our Marketing and Media team and its success will be built upon for future elections.
- ⦿ We have also delivered a number of by-elections and have taken the decision to engage the Modern Democracy app. This has enabled us to “modernise” the way that elections at the polling station is delivered by providing electronic registers that in turn provide live turnout via an election management portal and instant documents required at close of polls. We see this step as a positive move to us contributing to paper saving and efficiency.
- ⦿ We work with our internal partners to carry out data matching of our records against Council Tax, Housing Benefits, Payroll and Education records to ensure the Electoral Register is accurate and up to date. Our electorate is currently 147,792 of which 35,072 vote by post this equates to 23% of our electorate. We continue to promote alternative ways of voting if electors find it inconvenient to vote at polling stations.
- ⦿ We commenced an electoral review of our Town and Community Councils which will ensure we have the right governance on those councils. This review is due to end in October 2023 with any recommendations adopted coming in with the Local Elections in 2027.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Departmental Management Team and Council democratic processes.

51 Estates & Asset Management

Reviewed our Corporate Asset Management Plan 2023-2028

to ensure that our property related aims and uses align with our Corporate Strategy and Well-Being objectives. The plan identifies the challenges and key priorities over the next 5 years for the Council's Services from a property perspective.

Why is this important?

The service is responsible for implementation of a strategic approach to the Council's management of its property resources to meet the Council's regeneration aims.

Key Service Areas include:

- Service and Strategic Property Reviews.
- Identifying opportunities for major land-based project development in order to attract significant investment to the County, with a focus on the reshaping our town centres.
- Providing comprehensive advice to the Council and its partners on all matters related to capital investment/disposal in property/land related activities.
- Statutory asset valuations & advice for Local Authority and partners for financial accounting requirements.
- Managing the Council's diverse portfolios covering Office, Depot, Commercial, Industrial & Rural estates together with Livestock & Provisions Markets.
- Providing a facilities management service across the administrative portfolio and associated premises.
- Undertaking and advising on Community Asset Transfers.
- Managing the Council's property records.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- ! We only generated **36%** (£565,200) of the capital receipts we set out to achieve in our capital program £1,567,000 (2.1.2.12). Delays in planning submissions for residential development has resulted in significant capital receipts targeted for this financial year not being realised as well as demand for problematic sites having slowed down. Our 2023/24 Capital receipts program has been set at £2,588,000 which also reflects this year's slippage.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ During the year we considered options for ensuring the most effective use of the Council farm estate to support affordable farming initiatives and maximising development/diversification opportunities, particularly in relation to regeneration of renewal energy. The review concluded that the County Farm Estate be retained and managed under the current policy whilst rationalising and considering development opportunities as they arise. A new Rural Estate Plan will be drafted over the next 12 months to highlight the extent and performance of the current portfolio, together with the key issues and future strategy of the Estate to enable the Council to maximise the opportunities available to support its well-being objectives. We will also continue to engage with the Climate Change & Nature Emergency Advisory Panel and the Rural Affairs Advisory Panel to consider their views in finalising the Rural Estate Plan.

This is a review of the Council's arrangements for managing its assets with a focus on office accommodation and buildings from which the Council delivers services to its residents. It looks at how the Council strategically plans the use of its assets, how it monitors the use of its assets and how it reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its arrangements.

Findings

Overall, it found that: The Council is strengthening its arrangements for asset management and recognises that there are opportunities to use the sustainable development principle more to improve this work.

Recommendations

1. The Council needs to apply and embed the sustainable development principle in the way it plans, delivers and monitors the management of its assets.
2. The Council needs to improve the performance management of its assets by:
 - a. developing a set of performance and outcome measures that reflect the Council's ambitions for its assets and monitor these measures at a corporate level, including reporting to overview and scrutiny committee(s);
 - b. benchmarking performance on asset management with other organisations.

Our Response

1 Sustainable Development

- To balance the Council's short-term requirements and its ability to meet longer term needs, a cross departmental Strategic Land use group is undertaking a phased review of the Council's land assets to highlight potential opportunities in relation to its key aims of carbon sequestration, phosphate mitigation, tree planting, community use and enhancement of biodiversity.
- In addition, the Maintenance Section continues in its programme to undertake detailed condition surveys of our various portfolios in order that we have a clear picture of future liabilities as part of any key decisions with property implications. Services have prioritised assets for survey purposes.
- Following service consultations on hybrid working space requirements, a timetable and programme of works and moves is in place.
- These actions will ensure alignment with our objectives of ensuring that we become more resilient, support regeneration in our communities in light of global responsibilities and acting to prevent or reduce worsening land associated issues. They will also assist in delivering a sustainable future for our estate.

2 Performance Management

Sustainability of our Estate

- Our Energy team working on acquiring display Energy Certificates for all relevant CCC portfolios.
- In addition, baseline data from current Display Energy Certificates (DECS) to be supplied by the Energy Team.
- Ongoing Performance monitoring will cover delivery of the programme for necessary DECS together with movements in grades and consumption data.

Condition of our Estate

- Baseline data set for portfolios subject to recent condition reports. In addition, programme of remaining Condition Surveys agreed by 1st April 2023. Performance monitoring will cover delivery of programme noted above and resulting movement in grades and backlog maintenance figure once baseline is set

Utilisation / Efficiency of our Estate

- Occupye Desk monitoring system to be installed across various sites by December 2023.
- In relation to benchmarking performance on asset management with other organisations, via our participation in the Property & Estates Group of the Association of Chief Estates Officers (ACES) and the Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales (CLAW), we will be undertaking a review of benchmarking performance as part of the group's ongoing discussions with Data Cymru on delivering suitable indicators

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

Corporate Property Strategic Management Group considers key issues facing corporate estate . Transformation Board Workplace workstream considers hybrid working arrangements and opportunities across office and depot sites. Cross Departmental Strategic Land Use Group reviews land holdings to highlight and develop opportunities on sustainability, community and Net Zero Carbon commitments.

5m Risk Management

Risk Management contributes to achieving our vision, protecting our front-line services and supporting a socially sustainable economic environment. *(Director of Corporate Services)*

Why is this important?

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives - Audit Commission

- We recognize the benefit of being proactive with the management of risk and have invested funds to identify and minimize risks in both financial and non-financial terms.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

- Only **49%** of motor vehicle incidents were reported to Risk Management within 5 working days (RM/001) this is the first year of collating this measure.
- **66%** of departmental reports were returned to Risk Management within 15 days from request (RM/002) this is the first year of collating this measure.
- All **91 (100%)** of motor claims reports were provided by risk management within 7 working days (RM/003) this is the first year of collating this measure.
- **95%** of liability claims reports were provided by risk management to insurers within 10 working days (RM/004) this is the first year of collating this measure.

Progress in 2022/23


Carmarthenshire Transformation Strategy



The Risk Management Steering Group examines how Risk Management can be developed and ensures that risk management is embed in decision making throughout the organization. A review undertaken by the Transformation team concluded that *'The Terms of Reference of the Risk Management Steering Groups and its various sub-groups have recently been reviewed. This will allow the strategic group to adopt more of a strategic approach to its consideration of risk management issues, such as undertaking regular reviews of the Corporate Risk Register'*

- We are embedding **good risk management** into all our processes. Corporate and project Risks are captured within Risk Registers. We use 'Web based risk register software' which allows departments to input, access, maintain and manage all risk.
- **The Corporate Risk Register** is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee on a six-monthly basis following bi-monthly review and critical assessment of the risks by Corporate Management Team.

- ⦿ **Risk workshops** held for staff and Governance and Audit Committee throughout the year.
- ⦿ Workshops have been held for our Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service to develop a **Risk Appetite Statement**.

	<p>Following the Audit Wales Review of Risk Management Arrangements in July 2019 the recommendations and actions have been progressed.</p>
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- ⦿ Increased emphasis on **risk-based auditing** rather than re-active in our internal audits. Our Internal Audit plan was devised mostly from risks cited within the Corporate Risk register and Departmental risk registers.

What and how we can do better

See our [delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7](#)

Governance Arrangements

<p>The Council has a Risk Management Steering Group which reports its activity to the Governance and Audit Committee by presenting for information the minutes of the group.</p> <p>The Risk Management Steering Group comprises Cabinet Member Risk Champion (Cabinet Member for Resources), Departmental Risk Champions and is chaired by a Head of Service.</p>

5n Business and Cabinet Support Unit

A significant year of change following Local Government Elections

The May 2022 Local Government Elections saw a new Cabinet being formed and there was a significant period of change as portfolios were determined.

Why is this important?

- ⦿ The **Business and Cabinet Support Service** is responsible for providing a range of corporate, departmental and service specific support within the Chief Executive's Department:
 - business support to the Chief Executive, the Leader and members of the Cabinet
 - forward work programme support to Corporate Management Team
 - departmental Management Team support
 - administrative support in connection with the functions of the Lieutenancy
 - support for Royal Visits, ceremonial duties, honours and presentations made by the Lord-Lieutenant on behalf of His Majesty the King
 - creditors and debtors' processes for department
 - mail handling at County Hall, Carmarthen
 - staff ID system
 - support to Electoral Services team in relation to postal votes.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

No specific service measures, as the work of the team is responsive to organisational business.

Progress in 2022/23

- ⦿ Following the Local Government Elections in May 2022, the Cabinet has agreed to publish a vision statement. The Vision Statement was approved at Cabinet on 18.07.22.
- ⦿ The vision includes priorities, projects, and plans the Cabinet wants to achieve over the course of the administration. This vision statement is delivered through the Council's Corporate Strategy and detailed reports and recommendations on specific projects and programs will be presented through the democratic process over the next five years.
- ⦿ We have produced, maintain and publish a Forward Work Plan for the Cabinet.
- ⦿ We supported the new administration to develop the new Cabinet portfolios.
- ⦿ We provided the support to Heads of Service / Service managers within the department to ensure any recommendations from internal audits, or new ways of working are implemented accordingly and in a timely manner. An example of this is the P2P - No Purchase Order, No Payment initiative - where we have worked with our budget managers and creditors to ensure the necessary paperwork is in place prior to invoices being submitted for payment. This has been seen as a positive step in ensuring our creditors are paid in a timely manner.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

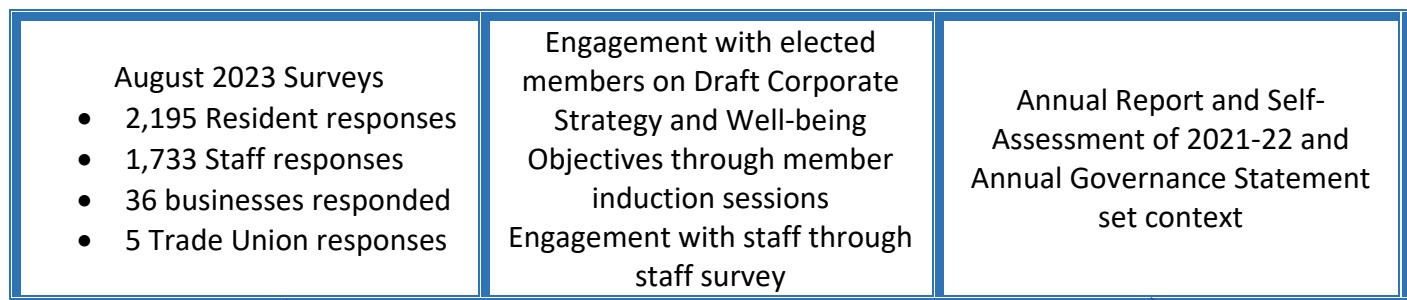
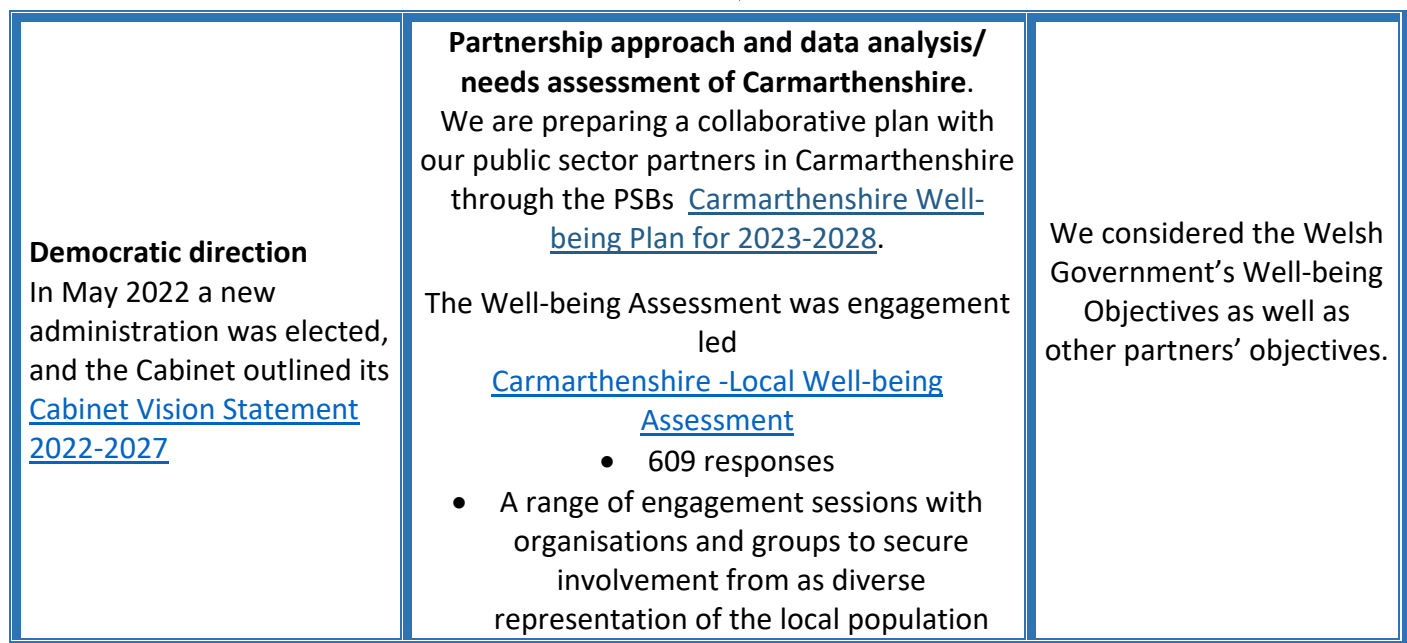
The service manages the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet forward work programmes.

APPENDICES

How our Well-being Objectives were identified

Our Corporate Strategy 2018-23 ‘Life is for Living, let’s start, live and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment’ was due for renewal. The impact of COVID-19, the Climate emergency and Cost of Living crisis and Transformation needs all set the scene for a revised approach. The Local Government Elections in May 2022 was a good opportunity to review and refresh our Well-being Objectives.

Our previous Corporate Strategy had 13 Well-being Objectives and it was felt that a more compact set of priorities was required. Business Planning Engagement and Assurance sessions in November-December 2021 with Departmental Management Teams identified change was needed to a more thematic approach.



All Cabinet/Scrutiny Councillor workshop January 2023
February 2023 - Cabinet & County Council

Lead Cabinet Members and officers identified for each Well-being Objective and business planning was redesigned to fully align with Well-being Objectives.	New Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives
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Delivery of the Corporate Strategy will be outlined in divisional delivery plans. The business planning cycle has been re-designed and is currently being undertaken in 2 stages:

- 1. Identify Actions, Measures & Risks** – based on 2021-22 self-assessment, Cabinet Vision Statement commitments, risk register etc – to be completed by end of February 2023
- 2. Self-assessment of performance** – sessions to be held in April/May 2023. Will inform Council Annual Report for 2022-23 but also will be used to consider 2024-25 delivery plan process (which will start in July 2023)

The introduction of the Integrated Impact Assessment for all Cabinet/Full Council proposals from April 2023 will ensure the 5 ways of working (and other impact assessment requirements) are embedded into the Council’s work.

Applying the sustainable development principles and 5 ways of working

The sustainable development principle is about ensuring that...

‘... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’

5 ways of working

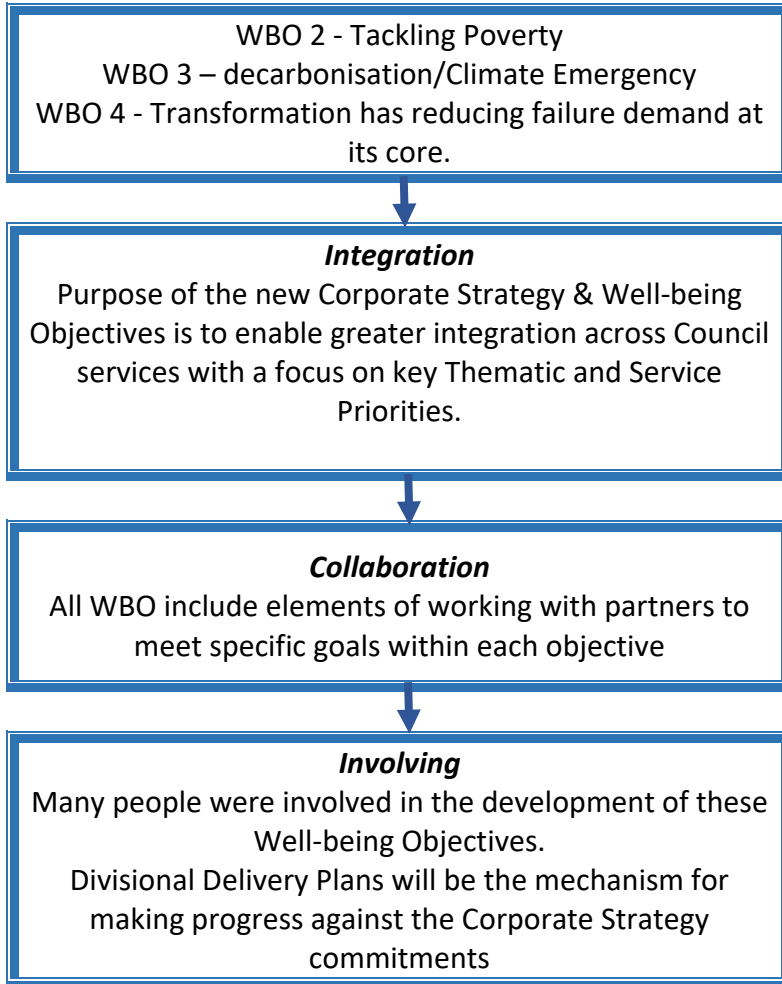
Long term	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involving
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Promotion of the Well-being Act specifying on the SD principle and the 5 Ways of Working through training workshops, seminars and promotion

Consideration of the 7 National Goals and how the Council can maximise its contribution to those goals was central to the development of the new corporate strategy and Well-being Objectives.	Business Planning for 2023+ was redesigned to align to the new Well-being Objectives – 2 phase approach: 1. Identify Actions, Measures & Risks 2. Self-assessment of performance
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Long Term
Cabinet Vision Statement & Corporate Strategy

Prevention
This is a guiding principle across our priorities but particularly as follows.
WBO 1 - prevention and early intervention.

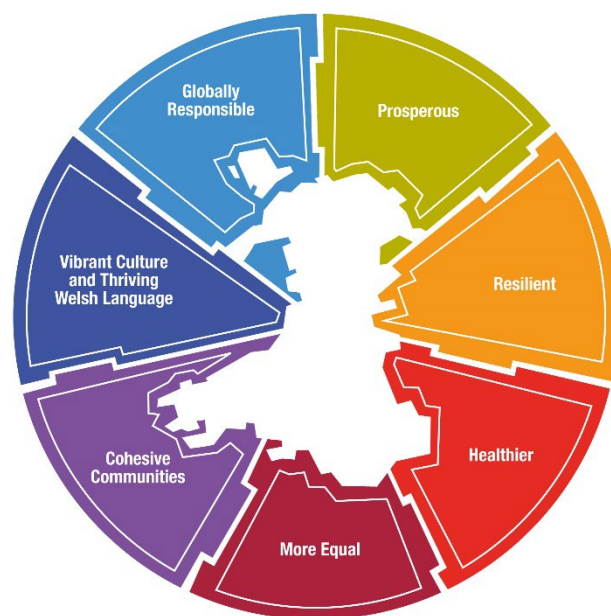


Statutory Requirements

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

The general purpose of the Act, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales, take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with sustainable development principles. The law states that: -

- a) We must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The sustainable development principle is
'... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
- b) We must demonstrate use of the 5 ways of working: Long term, integrated, involving, collaborative and preventative
- c) We must work towards achieving all of the 7 national well-being goals in the Act. Together they provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards.



The Well-being of Future Generations Act provides a shared vision for all public bodies in Wales to work towards. As a public body subject to the Act we are required to set and publish Well-being Objectives that maximise our Contribution to the Well-being Goals.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The **Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021** provides for the establishment of a new and reformed legislative framework for local government elections, democracy, governance and performance. It replaces the Local Government Measure 2009. [Part 6 of the Act outlines new duties in respect of Performance and Governance of Principal Councils](#) and includes specific duties for the Council:

- Duty to keep performance under review;
- Duty to consult on performance;
- Duty to report on performance – based on self-assessment approach;
- Duty to arrange a panel performance assessment;
- Duty to respond to a panel performance assessment report.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that a Council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements. The performance requirements are the extent to which:

- we are exercising our functions effectively;
- we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- our governance is effective for securing the above.

How our Well-being Objectives contribute to National Well-being Goals



Well-being Objectives	7 National Well-being Goals						
	Prosperity	Resilience	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant Culture and	Global Responsibility
1. Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life. (Start Well)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Enabling our residents to live and age well. (Live & Age Well)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous. (Prosperous communities)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council. (Our Council)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Regulatory Reports 2022/23

Several regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months.

- ⦿ There are some local reports that are specific to Carmarthenshire, these are noted as local below.
- ⦿ National / Thematic reports are undertaken by regulators to look at all councils in Wales (in an integrated programme of work consulted and agreed upon with local government) to identify best practice.
 - Most of these reports contain recommendations. Sometimes the recommendations are for Welsh Government and / or local government or other stakeholders.
 - Not all recommendations contained in reports may apply to Carmarthenshire as in some instances we could be the area of best practice proposed, be already doing what is identified or it may be, just not be applicable.

The following list of regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months:



July 2022	Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030		National
August 2022	Carmarthenshire County Council – Springing Forward – Workforce Management	2 Recommendations	Local
August 2022	Assurance and Risk Assessment progress update		Local
September 2022	Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?	4 Recommendations	National
October 2022	National Fraud Initiative 2020-21		National
October 2022	Follow-up Review: Planning Services		Local
November 2022	‘Time for Change’ – Poverty	8 Recommendations	National
December 2022	Assurance and Risk Assessment Progress Update – Carbon Reduction	1 Recommendation	Local
December 2022	A picture of flood risk management		National
December 2022	‘A missed opportunity’ – Social Enterprises	3 Recommendations	National
January 2023	Community resilience and self-reliance	2 Recommendations	National
January 2023	‘Together we can’ – Community resilience and self-reliance		National
March 2023	Carmarthenshire County Council Annual Audit Summary 2022	2 Recommendations	Local
March 2023	Digital Inclusion in Wales		National



February 2023	Deprivation of Liberty		National
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October 2022	Effective approaches to assessment that improve teaching and learning	6 Recommendations	National
October 2022	A review of the current 16-19 curriculum in Wales	11 Recommendations	National
October 2022	Initial Teacher Education reform in Wales: emerging strengths and areas for consideration		National
January 2023	Apprenticeships: early feedback on delivery under the new contracts		National
February 2023	Educational visits in further education colleges		National
February 2023	Digital and online learning in further education colleges		National

Other Regulatory Assessments



- **Welsh Government – OSG Gateway Review :Strategic Assessment of Swansea Bay City Deal**

July 2022	Swansea Bay City Deal OGC Gateway™ Review: Strategic assessment Report	4	Regional
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[Published Statistics \(ombudsman.wales\)](https://www.ombudsman.wales)

2022/23 Performance Assessment

Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 we have a duty keep under review if we are fulfilling the 'performance requirements' on the extent to which:

- we are exercising our functions effectively.
- we are using resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and
- our governance is effective for securing the above.

Our Approach

Assessment aligned to our Well-being Objectives

Using well-being objectives to frame the self-assessment enables the Council to integrate the reporting requirements of both the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into a single report. This approach provides the context within which we exercise our functions, use resources, and ensure governance is effective as follows:

- It ensures the self-assessment is strategic, focusing on the organisation, rather than individual services and on the extent to which the Council is achieving its well-being objectives and intended outcomes.
- It allows us to reflect at a strategic level on how all our functions (including corporate activities) are contributing to the achievement of our well-being objectives, how we are operating and what action we need to take to improve further and continue to provide effective services now and for the long-term.
- Using well-being objectives as the overarching framework encourages a more holistic view of Council performance, recognising that many services 'join-up' and contribute to one or more well-being objective.
- We continue to manage individual service performance via Divisional Delivery Plans.
- Considering the extent to which the Council is meeting the performance requirements is a corporate, organisational assessment rather than an assessment of individual services. However, each division has undertaken a self-assessment, and these have been considered in order to inform the overall assessment.

Assessment of each division

Each division within the Council undertook a self-assessment on the extent to which they were meeting their 'performance requirements' relating to functions, resources, and governance. For each of those criteria, the assessment set out three questions:

1. How well are we doing?
2. How do we know?
3. What and how can we do better?

Each divisional self-assessment was discussed at an Engagement and Assurance session between the senior officers of the division and representatives from corporate services to understand key issues and moderate self-assessment findings. Any key service specific findings will be addressed in 2024/25 business plans (unless needing urgent consideration within the current delivery cycle).

Exercising functions effectively to deliver strategic priorities

The Council's divisions collaborate and integrate to deliver our Corporate Strategy and we monitor the actions and measures set. We can monitor progress on these actions and measures by Cabinet Portfolios, Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet Vision Statement, Well-being Objective and by Department and Service. Over 80% of our actions and targets were achieved for the year.

Department	Function	On Target	
		# actions & measures	%
Chief Executive	People Management	168	85%
	Regeneration, Policy and Digital		
	Administration and Law		
	Media & Marketing		
	Electoral & Civil Registration Service		
	Business Support		
Education & Children	Children's Services	123	93%
	Strategy and Learner Support		
	Education Services & Inclusion		
	Access to Education		
Communities	Adult Social Care	59	87%
	Integrated Services		
	Homes & Safer Communities		
	Leisure		
	Commissioning		
	Property		
Place & Infrastructure	Waste and Environmental Services	165	72%
	Transportation and Highways		
	Policy and Performance – Business Support		
	Place and Sustainability		
	Non-Housing Maintenance		
Corporate Services	Revenue & Financial Compliance	29	85%
	Financial Services		

Overall performance on delivering the actions and measures realigned to deliver the first year of the new Corporate Strategy for 2022/23.

2022/23	On Target	Off Target
Number of actions and targets set	544	122
%	83%	17%

Overall functions performed effectively and 83% of planned improvement actions and targets were achieved. Any off-target areas were explained and remedial action set.

Exercising functions effectively by applying the sustainable development principle

Public bodies must meet their duty under the Well-being of Future Generations Act acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle, which means that they must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

To show that they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle, a public body must take account of five ways of working.

Divisions were asked to assess how well they were applying the sustainable development principle on a 1-5 rating basis.

	Collaboration	Integration	Involvement	Long Term Focus	Prevention
Chief Executive's Department					
People Management	5	4	4	4	5
Regeneration, Policy and Digital	5	4	4	4	4
Administration and Law	4	3	3	3	3
Media & Marketing	4	4	3	2	3
Electoral & Civil Registration Service	5	4	4	4	4
Education & Children's Services Department					
Children's Services	3	3	3	3	3
Strategy and Learner Support	5	4	5	5	4
Education Services & Inclusion	4	3	3	5	3
Access to Education	3	3	3	3	3
Communities Department					
Adult Social Care	5	3	5	4	4
Integrated Services	5	5	3	3	3
Housing and Public Protection	4	3	3	4	3
Leisure	5	4	3	5	5
Business Support & Commissioning	5	5	3	3	3
Place & Infrastructure Department					
Waste & Environmental Services	5	4	4	5	4
Transportation and Highways	4	3	4	4	4
Policy and Performance P&I	4	4	4	3	4
Place and Sustainability	4	4	3	5	4
Non-Housing Maintenance	4	4	4	4	3
Corporate Services Department					
Revenue & Financial Compliance	5	3	3	4	3
Financial Services	5	3	4	4	3
Average score	4	4	4	4	4

Key overall findings from the divisional self-assessments

Collaboration
There is a need to further identify how our well-being Objectives can be supported by partners and how we can support their Well-being Objectives.
Integration
There is a need to further consider the seven corporate areas as a framework for self-assessment and apply the five ways of working to those areas. This will support the Council to ensure it is governing itself to maximise its contribution to the well-being goals and meet its well-being objectives.
We need to ensure cross Council buy-in/support to the decarbonisation and climate change work programme. Place & Infrastructure is leading but need all service areas to build decarbonisation and climate change into service consideration. Further consideration is needed in terms of how Council budget spend can be aligned with addressing climate/carbon impact. We need to set clear expectations centrally for operational teams to deliver and a consistent approach to remove the risk of services working against each other or to different standards.
Involvement
There is a need to continue to develop our understanding of the service user perspective and establish what involvement and participation work is already taking place to identify service user satisfaction with performance. This would also include doing more with our engagement and assurance of non-service users.
There is a need to improve sharing across the Council of data/information from service user engagement and resident consultation undertaken directly by services.
There is a need to improve the use of contact centre/Hwb, Delta Well-being, complaints and service satisfaction data and information to improve service planning.
Long term focus
There is recognition that work undertaken on preparation of the PSB well-being assessment and Council Corporate Strategy is developing our long-term focus but this still tends to be 5 year horizon scanning and not longer term. This needs further development.
Prevention
There is a need to ensure that the Prevention Strategy, which is being led by the Communities Department, is extended and develops to become a whole population approach to prevention which applies across the Council. It is envisaged this will reduce demand for statutory intervention and maximise the potential of individuals.
There is a need to focus on enabling behaviour change by residents and Council staff to influence change and manage expectations.

Using resources economically, efficiently, and effectively

The Well-being of Future Generations Act provides the context within which a Council should be exercising its functions, using its resources and ensuring its governance is effective, with the aim of maximising its contribution to the well-being goals. The Act sets the framework within which a Council must consider its performance, in terms of service delivery, corporate capability and capacity to meet the needs of current users, without compromising the needs of future generations.

The statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations Act contains a core set of activities common to the corporate governance of public bodies.

In their self-assessments, divisions were asked to rank on a 1-5 score basis the support provided by these corporate services.

	Corporate Planning	Financial Planning	Workforce Planning	Procurement	Asset Management	Risk Management	Performance Management	Regulatory recommendations	ICT	Marketing and Media
People Management	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	5
Regeneration, Policy and Digital	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4
Administration and Law	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3
Media & Marketing	4	4	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	3
Electoral & Civil Registration	3	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
Children's Services	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	3	3
Strategy and Learner Support	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	5	3
Education Services & Inclusion	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	3	3
Access to Education	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4	3	3
Adult Social Care	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	4
Integrated Services	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	3
Housing and Public Protection	4	4	2	2	4	3	4	4	3	4
Leisure	3	5	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	5
Business Support & Commissioning	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	5	4	4
Waste and Env. Services	4	4	5	5	2	4	4	5	4	5
Transportation and Highways	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	2
Policy and Performance	1	3.5	4	4	2	3	4	4	4	4
Place and Sustainability	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3
Non-Housing Maintenance	1	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Revenue & Financial Compliance	3	4	3	5	3	5	3	5	4	4
Financial Services	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	5	4	4
Average Score	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4

Key overall findings from the divisional self-assessments

Corporate Planning	There is a need to review Council Governance to align with the new Corporate Strategy. This includes a review of existing working groups, corporate governance boards and advisory panels etc
	To further develop the Corporate Data Suite to support the Corporate Strategy and address any performance/intelligence gaps and the development of a data suite dashboard.
Financial Planning	There is a need to further develop engagement from all departments to both the budget setting process as well as greater ownership of monitoring in some areas.
	There is a need to re-visit the approach to service planning and budget setting in order to ensure greater alignment.
Workforce Planning	There is a need to further develop the Council's approach to workforce planning areas including: focusing on recruitment, retention, training, competencies, and coaching, with the aim of growing our own workforce and creating an attractive offer for young people. This should build on the staff consultation survey findings.

	There is a need to monitor and report on the progress of each divisions analysis of current workforce and future workforce requirements, along with the skills and competencies which will be needed to deliver new, different, or improved services.
	There is a need to further strengthen the Council's approach to giving staff a voice and involving them in making positive change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The involvement of staff in service improvement projects is a key part of our Transformation programme. • The Joint Consultative Forum was established during the year to improve communication and dialogue between our trade union colleagues and senior leaders (includes officers and elected members)
	There is a need to ensure that the Council complies with the new Social Partnership and Public procurement Duty.
	There is a need to continue to address challenges with recruitment and retention of the staff faced by most services, with a particular focus on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing and improving the Council's staff reward and recognition programme 2. Further developing staff progression programmes – right across the Council but 3rd & 4th tier managers in particular 3. Improving the recruitment system including the approval to recruit process.
Procurement	There is a need to ensure the Council complies with the new Social Partnership and Public procurement Duty with a particular focus on considering socially responsible public procurement
Asset Management	There is a need to further consider our approach to planned maintenance requirements balancing short and long-term costs of any programmes of work.
Risk Management	There is a need to update the risk management strategy and review it in line with the Corporate Strategy.
	There is a need to further integrate risk management reporting into quarterly observation performance monitoring reports.
Performance Management	There is a need to set a Council wide service planning and performance monitoring timetable for the financial year so that departments know when to expect various requirements. To include business planning (budget planning); self-assessment; quarterly reporting; end of year annual reporting
	There is a need to further develop and refine the quarterly observations report and links with departments. This will include a New Corporate Data Suite developed to align with the Council's Corporate Strategy and well-being objectives. Development of the data suite dashboard will be a key priority during 2023-24
External and Internal Regulation	There is a need to continue responding to regulatory report recommendations in a constructive way and act on recommendations quickly.
ICT	There is a need to continually review and ensure management systems are fit for purpose and developed as appropriate.
	There is a need to establish key Digital Steering/Working Groups across all departments. With digital demand ever increasing, it has been key to get the buy-in from Directors and Heads of Service for the need of a prominent Digital Group for each directorate.
	There is a need for the digital service to continue working closely with departments to outline their long-term-focus with their own departmental strategies. This will include formalising long-term plans for departments in a digital context and working back

	towards medium to short term focus to understand what need to be priorities to ensure the long-term needs can be delivered
Communications / Marketing and Media	There is a need to further develop the Council’s planned communications. There are well established arrangements for reactive/crisis response communications but there is a need to improve planned communications that focus on the issues that people want to know most about. Promotion of Council core business provision, as well as the new projects /programmes/policies/decisions.
	There is a need to manage public expectation in terms of what the Council can offer/do – resources and capacity do not always match up with public expectations of what the Council can deliver. There is increasing demand and complexity for services at a time of reduced resources and capacity.

Against an extremely challenging economic backdrop of high inflation and unprecedented wage growth not seen for a generation, the Council delivered a small underspend against budgets.

The 2022/23 financial year saw a significant shift in the risks to the economic climate. The perceived risk on further COVID-19 resurgence has not materialised, albeit the virus remains endemic. As restrictions were fully removed, most Council services were able to return to pre-pandemic operation levels. The anticipated reduction in commercial income has manifested during the year, though not as badly as feared, with activity levels gradually recovering during the year.

This has been supplanted by a cost-of-living crisis, with inflation reaching a 40 year high, remaining stubbornly above 10% during the year (though it is widely expected to fall during 2023/24). Interest rates rose from 0.75% in March 2022 to 4% by March 2023. The extraordinary increase in energy prices, which was only partially mitigated by government support schemes, has impacted households and businesses alike. This has been taken into account when reviewing bad debt provisions. Despite this, the labour market remained tight during the year, with difficulties recruiting suppressing the true impact of in-year financial pressures. Driven by this environment, public sector pay offers were above expectations at the time of budget setting, and this issue is likely to be repeated in 2023/24 based on the NJC Employers’ offer already published.

Whilst UK Government finances have improved since the Autumn budget of the short- lived Truss/Kwarteng administration, the outlook remains concerning, with public sector borrowing forecasts around £50bn higher than a year ago, and current indications of challenging future funding settlements, particularly in the years following the next general election.

Against this backdrop, our overall financial standing has been maintained at a prudent level, with an increase in the level of general balances at the year-end. The Authority also holds earmarked reserves which are held for specific purposes, whether this is to address liabilities now or in the future e.g., insurance reserves or for financing specific capital schemes. The Authority has been able to augment these balances at the year-end to provide additional resources towards future pressures and risk mitigation.

Effective Governance

[Annual Governance Statement](#) (Section 3 of Statement of Accounts 2022/23)

It is important that a Governance Statement includes an evaluation and conclusion and provides a clear judgement on whether the governance arrangements outlined are fit for purpose. To enable this judgement the Council's Internal Audit service conducted a review of our arrangements against the adopted standards (see 3.3 below).

Internal Audit Report extract:

Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance	
Post Review Assurance Level	Description for Assurance Level
Acceptable	Moderate controls, some areas of non-compliance to agreed controls Medium/Low risk of not meeting objectives Medium/Low risk of fraud, negligence, loss, damage to reputation
Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.	

NEW GOVERNANCE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TARGET DATE
AGS 2022/2023 No.1	To embed the governance arrangements around the New corporate strategy and Well-being objectives 2022-27 ICTCP 5g2	Corporate Policy - Performance	31 March 2024
AGS 2022/2023 No.2	We will ensure that Corporate Performance Management and Internal Audit work together, to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement plays its part in the Overall Council's Self-Assessment. ICTCP 5g1	Corporate Policy – Performance	31 July 2023
AGS 2022/2023 No.3	Data Insight Team to support in the development and analysis of consultation activity arising from the Local Government and Elections Act (specifically with residents, businesses, trade unions and staff).	Corporate Policy – Data Insight	31 March 2024

Consultation Activity

Following the local elections in May 2022 the Council set out to understand the views of Carmarthenshire's residents and businesses, the Council's staff and trade unions on several areas to inform future planning and priority setting through a series of surveys.

During that time those surveys were conducted against a backdrop of continuing austerity and increasing demand for services exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, climate and nature emergencies and post-pandemic recovery. This year has been no different and as an organisation we continue to grapple with these challenges whilst striving to do our best for our residents, businesses and staff in what we know is a challenging time for many.

By design, this year's surveys largely mirrored the previous year's allowing for the collection of comparable evidence that can be monitored over time. A breakdown of response rates is provided below.

Survey	Response Rate		Findings Inform...	
	2022	2023	Change	
Residents Survey	2,195	3,943	80% increase	Service planning & assessment
Staff Survey	1,733	1,459	16% decrease	People Management & Workforce Strategy
Business Survey	36	110	206% increase	Economic recovery & growth plans
Trade Union Survey	5	3	40% decrease	Staff relations

All survey results are currently being analysed with findings informing the development of action plans which will be embedded into divisional delivery plans and monitored on an ongoing basis. A summary of the main findings for the residents' consultation is provided below.

Residents Survey

Of the nine statements posed in relation to the Council and its performance, respondents agreed or strongly agreed with 56% of them. This is consistent with trends seen for the previous year. Whilst this is the case, eight of the nine Average Index Scores (AIS) have seen slight decreases on the previous year's result which suggests that on balance disagreement levels were slightly higher this year. *See Appendix 6 (page 204) on AIS*

The **lowest** scoring statements are consistent with last year's, namely:

- The Council lets people know how it's performing,
- The Council provides opportunities for me to participate in decision-making,
- The Council makes good use of the financial resources available,
- Investment is focused in the correct areas.

A further 16 statements were posed in relation to key themes, with respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with 69% of them. This is down slightly from 73% for the previous year, however these results are not directly comparable as an additional statement was added to the survey this year.

The highest scoring statements are consistent with last year's, namely:

- *I like living in Carmarthenshire,*
- *It's important that local people are supported to buy homes locally,*
- *It's important that consideration is given to supporting people's mental health and well-being.*

Conversely, the lowest scoring statements are also consistent with last year's and relate to the following themes:

- *A perceived lack of good transportation links,*
- *A perceived lack of support for local businesses,*
- *A perceived lack of support for local people to take advantage of local opportunities,*
- *The low degree to which the climate emergency is being addressed locally.*

Residents were asked to rank several themes in order of how they should be prioritised for investment. The results are largely consistent with last year's with 'Health and Social Care' being ranked highest once again and 'Digital Connectivity' lowest. There was, however, some movement with 'Education and Children's Services' and 'Affordable Housing' moving up over the 'Environment' and 'Tackling Poverty' which slipped lower.

Furthermore, the challenges noted by residents are largely consistent with the previous year's results also.

Pressure associated with the cost-of-living crisis remains a major concern for the majority, with references made to the rising cost of energy, fuel prices, rising rate of inflation, rising cost of food, low incomes and state pensions and the rising cost of council tax.

Access to Health and Social Care services also remain a source of worry, with residents making specific reference to accessing mental health support, accessing dental services and GP services, accessing care and support for relatives with complex needs and concerns around growing older and ageing well.

Additionally, a perceived lack of fit for purpose public transport is a barrier to many. This is a pertinent issue in Carmarthenshire given the county's rural nature. These barriers can reduce living standards, increase isolation and inhibit people from accessing vital services and employment.

Overall residents agree that the Council provides good quality services, however, similarly, to last year, Council services were still reported as a concern for many, with themes aligning with those indicated last year, which include:

- Infrequent and unreliable refuse and waste collection,
- Access to fit for purpose leisure services and the perceived high cost of these,
- Highway quality i.e. pot holes etc.,
- Housing repairs and maintenance,
- General aesthetic of outdoor areas and the environment, public footpaths i.e. dog fouling, littering, fly tipping.

To conclude, the consistency between the results for this year and last year provides challenge and opportunity. The opportunity presented to the Council through these findings is that we have a clear

understanding of what can be considered the most long-standing and pressing issues for our residents. This suggests that arising actions and proposals can be focussed and targeted based on robust evidence.

The challenge lies in delivering interventions which result in real change for our residents with the depleting resources available to us as an organisation. A number of these issues are entrenched and will require significant attention and effective partnership working however, the Council is committed to exploring viable options.

Over the coming months, an action plan will be co-produced with relevant services which will be addressed through delivery plans and monitored to address the most pressing issues.

Staff Survey

When considering the results in their totality, overall staff views and feelings are largely positive (represented by a score over 0). As expected however, there are some instances where variations appear within the positive results, especially at a departmental level, a summary of these findings is provided below.

The following statements received the **highest scores**:

- **I know what is expected of me at work:** Clear job expectations promote efficiency, reducing confusion and enhancing productivity.
- **I know what my manager expects of me:** Transparent communication between employees and managers fosters a collaborative and supportive work environment.
- **My job makes an important contribution to the Council's objectives:** Recognising the significance of individual roles reinforces a sense of purpose among employees.
- **I have the right skills and equipment to do my work:** Providing necessary resources and training empowers employees, enabling them to perform at their best.
- **I feel I can perform to the best of my ability every day:** A positive self-assessment of performance indicates job satisfaction and confidence.
- **I can be myself at work:** A culture of inclusivity and authenticity encourages diversity of thought and fosters a supportive workplace.
- **I feel my employer supports equality in the workplace:** A commitment to equality and diversity promotes a fair and respectful workplace.
- **My Service is effective at what it does:** Perceived effectiveness indicates a well-organised and capable work environment.

These high scores and positive implications suggest that the organisation is focused on providing clear expectations, supportive management, valuable roles, necessary resources, an inclusive culture, and effective services, all of which contribute to a positive work experience and organisational success.

The following statements received the **lowest scores**, albeit these scores still represent overall agreement:

- **I know what is happening across the organisation:** Lack of information about organisational activities can lead to decreased transparency, potential miscommunication, and hindered collaboration.
- **My ideas and opinions are listened to and used to improve the way things are done:** Limited feedback channels may discourage employees from sharing valuable insights, potentially missing out on innovative ideas for process improvement.
- **I regularly receive recognition or thanks from others for doing a good job:** Insufficient acknowledgment of employees' efforts may impact motivation, job satisfaction, and overall morale.
- **The decisions my Service makes are based on evidence:** A lack of evidence-based decision-making

might lead to suboptimal outcomes and hinder the service's ability to make well-informed choices.

- **My Service listens to customer feedback:** Ignoring or not adequately addressing customer feedback could result in diminished service quality and customer satisfaction.
- **My Service makes it easy to work with colleagues from different Services:** Difficulty in not working together across different teams or services could hamper overall efficiency and hinder cross-functional collaboration.
- **My Service makes it easy to work together with other organisations:** Challenges in inter-organisational collaboration might limit opportunities for partnerships and joint initiatives, potentially hindering progress.
- **I know what is happening in my team/work location:** Lack of information within teams or specific work locations can lead to decreased cohesion, unclear objectives, and potential inefficiencies.

These lower scores and implications suggest areas where improvements could be made to enhance communication, recognition, evidence-based decision-making, customer feedback integration, collaboration both internally and externally, and providing clarity about team and organisational activities. Addressing these aspects could lead to increased engagement, efficiency, and overall organisational success.

Departmental level findings will be shared with relevant departmental leads who will be responsible for developing actions to address areas which require attention.

Business Survey

Of the 15 statements regarding the Council and its performance, 33% answered agree or strongly agree, compared to 20% last year. With the percentage of respondents answering disagree falling to 67% from 80%. From this we can see that the overall opinion is beginning to improve.

The highest scoring statements this year were consistent with those from last year, such as:

- *I can access Council services through my preferred language,*
- *When I access Council services, I find the staff to be approachable and friendly,*
- *My relationship with the council is good.*

With two statements improving in this year's results:

- *I can easily access up to date information about Council services,*
- *The Council lets people know how it is performing.*

The lowest scoring statements also remained consistent, namely:

- *The Council is using its resources on the right things and is achieving the intended results,*
- *The Council is using its resources to get good value for money,*
- *The Council is using its resources well and in the right way.*

There is a correlation between the lowest scoring statements, as they all relate to how the Council uses its resources.

Scores for statements regarding local services and support remained the same, with 45% of the statements being responded with agree or strongly agree, while 55% of the statements were disagreed with.

The highest scoring statements in this regard were:

- *The area in which I operate my business is safe,*
- *Local level Politics/Democracy is important to me.*

Despite having an improved score this year, the lowest scoring statement remained the same, namely:

- *Businesses are supported within the local area.*

However, we did see a slight decline in the score regarding Carmarthenshire being a good place to do business. This could be in relation to the current economic climate across the UK.

Businesses continue to be concerned with rising costs and are finding it more difficult to keep up with rising expenses. As mentioned last year, some business owners are unsure of what financial help is still available to them.

The local economy continues to be the highest priority for investment. Followed by Education and Children's services, which is ranked higher this year than the previous.

The climate emergency had the most drastic decline in terms of investment priority. This was ranked as the 2nd highest priority in 2022 but has ranked 10th this year.

An action plan will be co-produced with the relevant services and addressed through delivery plans to address the most pressing issues.

Trade Union Survey

Overall, respondents disagreed with three of the five statements posed in relation to the Council and its performance. This is an improvement on last year, whereby respondents disagreed with all statements. In conjunction with this, it is positive to note that the scores for all five statements have seen some level of improvement since last year, albeit small.

The statement in relation to Council services working well scored lowest, suggesting that the level of disagreement was more acute. The two statements on utilising resources economically and effectively received mixed responses with all respondents answering, '*Don't know*' or '*neither*'. It is difficult in this respect to make a judgment on this, however this may be indicative of a wider issue whereby Trade Unions are not aware of how resources are utilised and therefore feel unable to answer.

The summary findings report will be reviewed, and an action plan developed to address the arising themes with a focus on increasing engagement for subsequent consultations.

Annual Governance Statement

① The Annual Governance Statement ([Section 3 of the Statement of Accounts](#))

Carmarthenshire County Council (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. It must also ensure that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively and to secure continuous improvement in this regard.

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the Governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including having appropriate arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council sees Corporate Governance as “doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.” The Governance Framework comprises the systems, processes, cultures, and values by which the Authority is directed and controlled and also the way it accounts to, engages with and leads the Community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services

Assurance Executive Summary

The Corporate Governance arrangements of the Council are acceptable.

Table - Internal Audit Report extract:

Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance	
Post Review Assurance Level	Description for Assurance Level
Acceptable	Moderate controls, some areas of non-compliance to agreed controls Medium/Low risk of not meeting objectives Medium/Low risk of fraud, negligence, loss, damage to reputation
Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.	

Annual Governance Statement

Update on outstanding governance issues identified in previous Annual Governance Statements

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Target Date	Action/Progress	Status
AGS 2020/21 No.2	Implement The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act requirements	Corporate	May 2022	The elements that have not been implemented to date have a timetable that needs to be met to deliver the Act's requirement / timescale. Elements of performance & governance implemented. Elections – in hand	Ongoing Parts of the Legislation that needed to be implemented have been completed. Self-assessment element has been incorporated. Awaiting guidance from WLGA re: peer assessment. Part completed – performance element completed.
AGS 2021/22 No.1	Develop recruitment strategy and workforce plan alongside implementation of new recruitment software to ensure recruitment service can be streamlined and maintained.	People Services Manager	March 2023	In progress – new software in place – testing system and rolling out training – from March 2023 Strategy will follow once system in place.	Commenced. Testing complete and post-test updates to the system underway. (May 2023). Workforce strategy to CMT 30 March Dedicated workforce related CMT meeting on 4 th may and progress on new software Strategy to Pre cabinet on 18 th May
AGS 2021/22 No.4	Develop an Engagement and consultation plan for the local authority.	Media and Marketing Manager	March 2023	Work has commenced – reflecting on the staff survey findings and IIP	Commenced Engagement with TU – introduced a joint consultancy forum – group leaders and Chief also attends. Aim to improve engagement and consultation. Staff feedback completed
AGS 2021/22 No.5	Further development work on handling complaints and investigating complaints.	Head of ICT and Policy	March 2023	Piece of work being carried out on the resource needed to investigate complaints. Triangulate this with FOIA and Member enquiry	Commenced Review of handling of complaints has been completed. Next piece of work to review the investigation process at stage 2 for consistency in approach and standards needed.
AGS 2021/22 No.6	Review the customer service that we as a Council provide and how we can further improve the customer journey.	Media and Marketing Manager	March 2023	From 1 st December 2022 – Development of Hwbs – more access to customers – thematic days introduced.	Commenced Falls into the Digital Customer Transformation workstream – which monitors the progress. SPFunding – Hwb Fach y Wlad – to be implemented

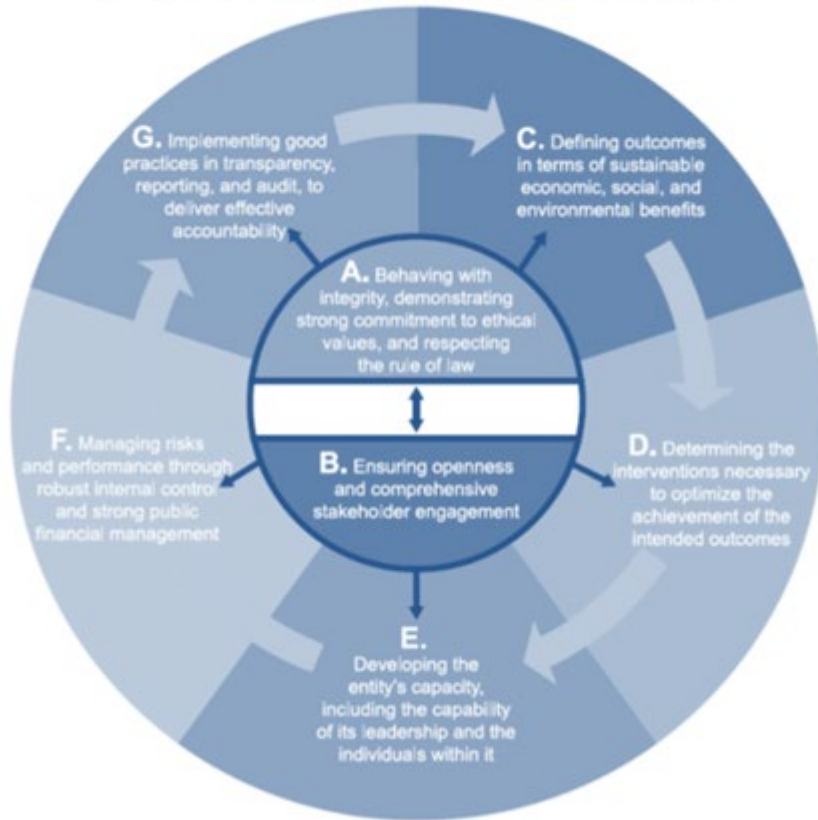
AGS 2021/22 No.8	Establish clear governance mechanism to drive progress against each Well-being Objective and identify priority themes and service areas to support delivery of the well-being objectives	Head of ICT and Policy	March 2023	Governance mechanisms now in place – completed. Four well-being objectives identified and thematic priorities and service priorities framework in place. Divisional plans format issued w/c 5 December 2022	Commenced Delivery plan of Corp strategy all going through Scrutiny process at the moment. Governance mechanism has been established.
AGS 2021/22 No.12	Review the Governance arrangements for both Local Authority Trading Companies (LATC) with a view to aligning the arrangements and clarifying the roles of Members and Scrutiny Committees in relation to the LATCs.	Direct of Corporate Services Head of Legal and Administration	March 2023	Monitoring Officer review carried out and completed. Report is being finalised. CWM taking a governance review report to the CWM Board.	Commenced Update: Monitoring Officer Governance update review carried out and completed. Report is being finalised. CWM has taken a governance review report to the CWM Board. – Cwm action Complete

Governance Issues Action Plan

NEW GOVERNANCE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TARGET DATE
AGS 2022/2023 No.1	To embed the governance arrangements around the New corporate strategy and Well-being objectives 2022-27 <small>ICTCP 5g2</small>	Corporate Policy - Performance	31 March 2024
AGS 2022/2023 No.2	We will ensure that Corporate Performance Management and Internal Audit work together, to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement plays its part in the Overall Council's Self-Assessment. <small>ICTCP 5g1</small>	Corporate Policy – Performance	31 July 2023
AGS 2022/2023 No.3	Data Insight Team to support in the development and analysis of consultation activity arising from the Local Government and Elections Act (specifically with residents, businesses, trade unions and staff).	Corporate Policy – Data Insight	31 March 2024

Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



The Annual Governance Statement ensures we address the following seven principles-



Complaints

Only 52.7% of complaints received were completed within the statutory deadline during 2022/23 this is a decline on the previous year's 57.8%. The number of complaints received have increased by 53.8% (an additional 500 complaints)

Complaints closed by Departments April 2022 - March 2023			
Department	Complaints (S1 & S2)	Closed within timescale	% done on time
Communities	151	67	44.4%
Adults Social Care	55	39	70.9%
Education & Children	30	14	46.7%
Place and Infrastructure	1052	526	50.0%
Chief Executive's	59	36	61.0%
Corporate Services	76	68	89.5%
Cross Departmental	7	3	42.9%
TOTAL	1430	753	52.7%

There are a number of issues which are believed to continue to have an impact upon the ability of Investigating Officers to meet the statutory timescales. There has been a significant increase in the number of complaints received by the Council. In 2022/23, a total of 1,430 complaints were closed, compared to 930 the previous year – an increase of 53.8%. Other factors such as the complex nature of some complaints, service pressures, capacity due to competing priorities

and leave periods also affect the time taken to complete investigations. The Corporate Complaints Team continue to work closely with teams who are unable to meet the statutory timescales due to significant service pressures. Key areas of concern are highlighted within the reports to Directors and the team provide advice and guidance to support the resolution of complaints.

Our Learning

- ⦿ Complaints provide valuable feedback and are viewed by our staff as a positive opportunity to learn from experiences. This helps to drive continual service improvement and to prevent similar things happening again.
- ⦿ For our customers, communication and regular feedback are integral to good services. Customers understand the service pressures that the public sector are facing; however, they must be kept up to date on issues in relation to the services that they use.
- ⦿ Services and information must be accessible, with different access points and ways of communicating. We must continue to provide and develop a wide range of options for people to contact us.
- ⦿ For our staff, complaints provide a first-hand account of the customer's views and experience, and resolving complaints early saves resources and creates better customer relations.

Our colleagues across the Council need access to timely data and information so that they can support the implementation of the Corporate Complaints Policy.

① See 5j - Policy and Performance (page 167)

Calculating Average Index Score (AIS)¹⁵Introduction

Sometimes known as a 'weighted average', the AIS is a way of condensing the 'strength of opinion' down into one single number. By using an AIS it makes it easier to compare results across multiple data sets (e.g. across departments) and across different time points (e.g. annually). An AIS is often used to balance the frequency of the values in a data set. For example, this survey gathers responses from residents in Carmarthenshire where we have a diverse population. To ensure that all residents are listened to, and their views are represented proportionately, a weighted average has been utilised.

The AIS is useful for questions using Likert scales with options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Through data analysis the values produced will range from 2 (*everyone* strongly agrees) to minus 2 (*everyone* strongly disagrees).

Example

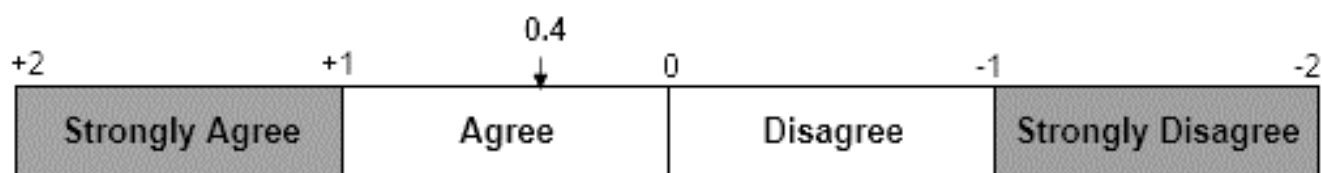
10 people are asked whether they 'strongly agree', 'tend to agree', 'unsure', 'tend to disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that Wales will win the six nations.

Results...

3 strongly agree (each response worth 2, so = **6**); 3 tend to agree (each response worth 1, so = **3**); 1 no opinion (= **0**); 1 tend to disagree (each response worth -1, so = **-1**); 2 strongly disagree (each response worth -2, so= **-4**)

The AIS is calculated by adding all the numbers in bold: So, $6 + 3 + 0 - 1 - 4 = 4$;

Then dividing by the number of responses (10 in this case). The average index score is: $4 \div 10 = 0.4$ (as depicted below)

**AIS Key:**

- A score below 0 indicates overall **disagreement**;
- A score between 0 and 1 indicates overall **agreement**, and
- A score between 1 and 2 indicates overall **strong agreement**.

¹⁵ Explanation of the Average Index Score calculation and example.

What and how we can do better/Identified areas for Improvement

Our delivery plans to achieve our objectives:

WBO 1	Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life (Start Well)		
WBO1a	Thematic Priority: Healthy Lives – prevention /early intervention		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
	Safeguarding children and young people		
1	Provide relationship-based children’s social work practice that incorporates systemic thinking and the principles of Signs of Safety. PIMS 16569	April 2024	John PR Fleming
2	Implement an effective quality assurance framework to ensure assessments and plans are outcome focused, co-produced, and evidence the voice of children and young people. PIMS 16570	April 2024	John PR Fleming
3	Support the multi-agency child protection arrangements and ensure we are compliant with the national safeguarding procedures. PIMS 16574	April 2024	Rebecca Robertshaw
	Supported Housing		
4	Work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of a range of supported accomodation to meet the needs of young people, including disabled young people, aged 16-25. (CV18) PIMS 16571	April 2024	Bethan T James
5	Develop a sufficient supply of in-house residential placements to support the ambition to rebalance the market and take profit out of children’s care.(CV 18) PIMS 16249	April 2024	Louise Quartermass
	Fostering and Adoption		
6	Deliver a range of high-quality intervention services so that children, young people, and their families have access to support at the right time, keeping families together where it is safe to do so, and in the child’s best interest. PIMS 16253	April 2024	Jayne Meredith
7	Increase the sufficiency and range of in-house foster care and supported lodgings placements. (CV 21) PIMS 16252	April 2024	Jayne Meredith
	Corporate Parenting & Child Welfare		
8	Develop a Corporate Parenting Strategy which promotes ownership and accountability across the council so that we are the best Corporate Parent and our looked after children and care leavers have every opportunity to reach their full potential. PIMS 16573	April 2024	Bethan T James
	Leisure		
9	We will develop a new schools and community aquatics plan for the County.	March 2024	Carl Daniels

WBO1b	Service Priority: Early years		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
	Early Years		
1	Deliver a range of preventative services for children, young people, and their families, which reduce waiting lists, minimise duplication and improve the interface with wider support services. PIMS 16572	April 2024	Noeline Thomas
2	Implement the phased expansion of Flying Start in line with Welsh Government guidance. PIMS 16376	April 2024	Noeline Thomas

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
3	The % of child attendance at an allocated Flying Start free childcare placement for eligible 2-3 year olds to prepare for school readiness 9.1.8.1. (2022/23 result 72.5%)	23/24 Target 75%	Noeline Thomas
4	Review the Family Support Strategy to ensure that early intervention support services are meeting the needs of children, young people and families across the county, utilising opportunities for integrating services across the Children and Communities Grant and Housing Support Grant. PIMS 16378	April 2024	Noeline Thomas
5	Promote the 30 hours Childcare Offer and support registered providers and eligible parents through the roll out of the new National Digital Service . PIMS 16575	April 2024	Noeline Thomas
6	Implement the Childcare Sufficiency Action Plan (2022-27) , including the development of Welsh medium childcare and support the sector to recover from the Pandemic. PIMS 16250	April 2024	Noeline Thomas
7	Implement key priorities in the Maternity and Early Years Operational plan and Regional Maternity and Early Years Strategy in partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board and Voluntary Sector and move towards an integrated delivery model. PIMS 16379	April 2024	Carol Alban
8	Improve how Children's Services provide information, advice, and assistance (IAA) to support families, through digital communication including the Family Information Service and links to the Welsh Government Dewis website. PIMS 16578	April 2024	Noeline Thomas

WBO1c		Service Priority: Education	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Education Outcomes		
1	We will ensure an appropriate rate of progress of pupils' skills development in schools where progress is not sufficient. PIMS	April 2024	
2	We will ensure the progress of learners across all pupil referral units. PIMS	April 2024	
3	We will ensure the progress of all low attendees, strengthening capture and analysis of all available data. PIMS	April 2024	
4	We will continue to refine the system to monitor and improve the learning and holistic progress of specific groups of learners. PIMS	April 2024	
5	We will further improve pupil behaviours and attendance. PIMS	April 2024	
6	We will continue to review processes to reduce the number of exclusions. PIMS	April 2024	
7	We will ensure an effective whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing PIMS	April 2024	
B	Education Services		
1	Continue to support schools to strengthen pupil progression through effective pedagogy and curriculum design. PIMS	April 2024	
2	Continue to strengthen the accuracy and impact of self-evaluation processes across all schools PIMS	April 2024	
3	Ensure continued impact of our schools causing concern strategy. PIMS	April 2024	
4	Ensure that the Partneriaeth strategy and professional learning offer meets the needs of schools and learners effectively. PIMS	April 2024	
5	Continue to improve leadership development at all levels, including addressing recruitment challenges. PIMS	April 2024	
6	Strengthen schools' understanding of the education digital standards. PIMS	April 2024	

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
7	Continue to embed ALN practice as part of ALN transformation. PIMS	April 2024	
8	Continue to develop support for schools to improve behaviour. PIMS	April 2024	
9	Continue with support for schools to improve attendance, especially in schools where there are lower levels of attendance or persistent absenteeism. PIMS	April 2024	
10	To consider the capacity of central teams e.g., inclusion services to enable us to support schools and learners effectively. PIMS	April 2024	
11	Continue to engage with Welsh Government regarding changes to approach to, and resourcing for, EHE learners. PIMS 16825	April 2024	
12	Continue investment in school buildings across the county and overhaul Carmarthenshire's Modernising Education Programme (MEP) to meet the needs of the 21st century. Ensuring that all new schools meet the required standards of insulation and ventilation to cut energy bills and be more environmentally friendly. PIMS 16266	April 2024	Isobelle Boodeny
13	Ensure that any proposals by officers to Elected Members in relation to reorganisation are considered and processed efficiently to align with the demands for effective provision and leadership. PIMS	April 2024	
14	Further develop communication and enhance the strategic input of stakeholders.	April 2024	
15	Further clarify our WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) strategy to certain audiences and continue with implementation, including the Professional Learning offer PIMS 17078	April 2024	
16	Continue to refine Safeguarding procedures and ensure integrity of the school safeguarding audit process PIMS	April 2024	
17	To expedite HR processes, especially around DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks to support the appointment process in schools. PIMS	April 2024	
18	Continue to manage the increasing number of schools with budgetary issues, keeping CMT (Corporate Management Team) and Cabinet informed. PIMS	April 2024	
19	Ensure alignment of capital funding to address the Council's MEP programme PIMS 17080	April 2024	
20	The Council needs to address school capacity and issues caused by a large school footprint ensuring that the revised MEP impacts positively on the effective distribution of resources, leadership and recruitment, provision, wellbeing, sustainability, reduce pressure on support services etc. PIMS	April 2024	
21	In light of potential additional financial savings required by schools, we need to review the funding formula for primary and secondary schools PIMS 17066	April 2024	Aneirin Thomas
22	Embed Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), Emotional Literacy Support Assistance (ELSA), trauma informed practice, and attachment awareness training is embedded into core training in schools so that schools meet the emotional well-being needs of vulnerable learners and looked after children. PIMS 16374	April 2024	Vicky Jeremy
23	Engage with Electively Home Educated (EHE) learners, their families, and other networks so that they can access the right help at the right time through a broad range of educational opportunities. PIMS 16375	April 2024	Rhona Evans

WBO 2		Enabling our residents to live and age well (Live & Age Well)		
WBO2a		Thematic Priority: Tackling Poverty		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	Average number of days taken to process new Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims (6.6.1.2) <i>22/23 result was 18.46 days</i>	17 days	Helen Pugh / Ann Thomas	
2	We will contribute to tackling poverty within Carmarthenshire by supporting families to claim all the financial support they are entitled.	31 March 2024	Helen Pugh / Ann Thomas	
3	We will continue to administer grants and payments on behalf of the Welsh Government & Central Government such as cost of living grant, business grants and winter fuel grants.	31 March 2024	Helen Pugh / Ann Thomas	
4	To establish rural HWB centres across the County's rural market towns that provide access to services, information, and support to rural residents (SPF - Share Prosperity Funding) (CV94) PIMS 16323	31 March 2024	Deina Hockenhill	
5	We will implement and update the Tackling Poverty Plan to respond to the current challenges faced by residents and communities. PIMS 16389	31 March 2024	Jason Jones / Gwyneth Ayers	

WBO2b		Service Priority: Housing		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	We will develop a new 10 Year strategic vision and direction for Housing PIMS 16430	31 March 2024	Jonathan Morgan	
2	Develop new investment programmes for Council House stock based on stock condition surveys and decarbonisation ambition. PIMS 16415	31 March 2024	Rachel Davies	
3	Develop a plan for alternative provision of temporary accommodation PIMS 16423	31 March 2024	Angie Bowen	
4	We will implement a new Empty Homes Plan PIMS 16424	31 March 2024	Gareth Williams	
5	We will develop a costed programme to invest and expand our in-house provision of residential care PIMS 16425	31 March 2024	Rachel Davies	
6	We will deliver additional affordable homes as part of the housing regeneration development programme (including general needs, specialist housing and those targeted at town centres and rural areas) PIMS 16427	31 March 2024	Rachel Davies	
7	We will improve turnaround times and reduce the backlog of repairs, Voids and DFGs and value for money PIMS 16432	31 March 2023	Jonathan Fearn	

WBO2c		Service Priority: Social Care	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	We will continue to monitor the number of those in hospital waiting for a package of care, to inform how we develop our Home First approach. PIMS 16360 (CV14)	N/A	Alex Williams
2	We will develop a prevention strategy for adult social care to ensure people get the right support at the right time. PIMS 16410	31 March 2024	Avril Bracey
3	We will implement a new model for learning disability day services	31 March 2024	Avril Bracey
4	We will implement service delivery changes in mental health as part of the Transforming mental health agenda PIMS 16412	31 March 2024	Avril Bracey
5	We will work with the Health Board to provide readily accessible and appropriate levels of support to all with Mental Health issues with an expansion of access and support to Children and Vulnerable Adults. PIMS 16367 (CV12)	31 March 2024	Avril Bracey

WBO 3		Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous (Prosperous Communities)	
WBO3a		Thematic Priority: Economic Recovery and Growth	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Business		
1	We will continue to provide support to businesses through grant aid & highlighting procurement opportunities to local businesses in Carmarthenshire. PIMS 16343	March 2025	Mike Bull
2	Provide a coordinated network of business support to start up and established businesses including self-employed and micro businesses. This will include business engagement, retaining an up-to-date list of businesses in county, linking businesses with funding opportunities, provide advice and information and encouraging entrepreneurship PIMS 16342	March 2025	Mike Bull
	<i>Digital Economic Growth</i>		
3	Lead and deliver the £55 million investment in Digital Infrastructure across the Swansea Bay City Region (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea) PIMS 17020	March 2024	Gareth Jones
B	People		
1	The Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) will continue to work with employers across the region to ensure that the RLSP inform Welsh Government what skills are required in the region and where WG funding needs to be channelled.	March 2025	Jane Lewis
2	Deliver the £30million Skills and Talent Programme to create a skilled workforce for the future, developing opportunities as part of the work of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership PIMS 16488	March 2025	Jane Lewis
3	Provide support through Employability programmes, identifying key training and skills opportunities through engagement with businesses & identifying key skills required 3a27	March 2025	Jane Lewis
4	We will continue to review and monitor the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund, ensuring that the programme is on track PIMS 16485	March 2025	Helen Morgan

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
C	Place		
1	In Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford we will deliver the masterplan actions and continue to support and develop new initiatives and projects through direct delivery and by supporting third parties with available sources of funding. Regen. PIMS 16338, 16339, 17003	March 2025	Tess Bufton
2	Support the delivery of the Councils Strategic Economic Objectives by the determination of major planning applications within agreed timescales. CV61	80%	Hugh Towns
3	Adoption of the Revised Local Development Plan in accordance with the Delivery Agreement.	Dec 2024	Ian Llewelyn
4	To implement the adopted LDP and monitor its success or otherwise against its identified delivery measures ensuring policies, procedures and practices are being adhered to.	April 2024	Ian Llewelyn
5	Support the delivery of the Council's Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan, supporting the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes across the County over the next 5 years, through acquiring land and buildings identified in the Draft Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan, together with any other land and/or buildings that would add value to the Council's Housing and Regeneration priorities and aspirations. PIMS 17011	March 2025	Peter Edwards
	<u>Pentre Awel</u>		
6	To ensure that all tenanted areas at Pentre Awel (Zone 1) are fully let in advance of/ or as soon as practicable after opening.	Oct 2024	Sharon Burford
7	Deliver on the Pentre Awel Welsh Language Action Plan recognising the potentially impacts Pentre Awel could have on the Welsh Language. PIMS 17029	2027	Sharon Burford
8	Through Pentre Awel delivery meet the objectives set out within the City Deal business Case covering, job creation, education courses to be delivered and projected health impact. This includes creating c.1800 jobs. PIMS 17019	2027	Sharon Burford
9	Pentre Awel Zone 1 to include a new leisure centre and aquatics complex. PIMS 16351	October 2024	Sharon Burford
10	Support and encourage people to lead active and healthy lives, ensure supply chain opportunities for local businesses, and local recruitment. PIMS 16994	March 2024	Sharon Burford/ Mike Bull/ Rhian Phillip
11	Focus on the further development of the Foundational Economy sector within Carmarthenshire whilst supporting the principles of the Circular Economy. PIMS 16487	March 2024	Rhian Phillips

WBO3b		Thematic Priority: Decarbonisation & Nature Emergency	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	Develop a draft local area energy plan for Carmarthenshire. (PIMS No. 16538)	Apr 2024	Kendal Davies
2	Develop emissions trajectories to meet our Net Zero target (PIMS No. 17105)	April 2023	Kendal Davies
3	Develop Climate Change & Nature Emergency strategy to meet trajectories for service areas (PIMS No. 17106)	Apr 2024	Kendal Davies
4	Complete installation programme of 'Smart' and Sub-metering technology to enable live reporting of consumption and allow identification of carbon saving opportunities in of our non-domestic buildings and street lighting infrastructure (PIMS No. 14812)	Apr 2024	Kendal Davies

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
5	Working with the Council's Strategic Land-use review group, identify and progress the planting of woodland on suitable sites, demonstrating the principles of responsible afforestation, and in consultation with local communities. Identify three further areas of woodland to be planted, to deliver against climate and nature emergency declared by CCC. This action is subject to grant aid being available to fund much of this work. (PIMS No. 16282)	Apr 2025	Gus Hellier
6	The development of strategic regional Eco-Park on a phased basis with focus on renewable energy production, waste management, and resource efficiency, Ultra Low Emission Vehicle charging facilities, coupled with industrial space for the manufacturing, processing and service industry base.	Mar 2025	Dan John
7	Review the current vehicle fleet strategy with a view to utilising the most suitable and low emissions vehicle technology (including electric or other power sources) over the coming years. (PIMS No. 16286)	March 2024	Antonia Jones
8	Develop a strategy to achieve Net Zero Carbon as part of property design specifications (PIMS No. 16548)	Mar 2024	Andrew Tidy
9	Develop and implement the new Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP2) (PIMS No. 16564)	Mar 2024	Ben Kathrens

WBO3c Thematic Priority: Welsh Language & Culture

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Welsh Language		
1	Continue to increase and promote the use of the Welsh language within the administration of the County Council. CV90 PIMS 16303	31/03/2024	Jason Jones
2	Work with stakeholders to increase the proportion of Welsh-medium apprenticeships. CV91 PIMS 16304	31/03/2024	Paul R Thomas
3	To welcome and support the delivery of the Carmarthenshire Urdd Eisteddfod to Llandovery (CV90) PIMS 16332	30/06/2023	Deina Hockenhull
4	Deliver Welsh Government's Arfor 2 programme in Carmarthenshire and coordinate regional activity with Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Sir Fon Councils (CV42) PIMS 16350	31/03/2024	Jason Jones
5	Encourage and develop more use of Welsh in the ECS department PIMS 16388	31/03/2024	Aeron Rees
6	We will review the current Internal Use of the Welsh language policy PIMS 16408	31/03/2024	Llinos Evans
7	Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms in respect of the Welsh Language employment standards. PIMS 16462	31/03/2024	Paul R Thomas Alex Machin
8	Provide a range of development opportunities for new and existing employees to improve their Welsh language skills. PIMS 16463	31/03/2024	Paul R Thomas Alex Machin
B	Welsh Culture		
1	We will continuously review cultural exhibits and events to ensure that they are regularly updated, timely and relevant. Take full advantage of the rich history of Carmarthenshire. (Cabinet Vision) – Archives / Museums exhibition and engagement plans in place PIMS 16362 (CV75)	31/03/2024	Jane Davies
2	We will develop Oriol Myrddin Gallery in Carmarthen as the West Wales Arts Centre PIMS 16363 (CV73)	31/03/2024	Jane Davies

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
3	We will work with local communities to develop cultural and historical trails accessible to residents and tourists. Encourage residents to take ownership of their local areas by creating community trails based on local knowledge, and look at ways of developing trails based around the many castles and historic sites across the county PIMS 16368 (CV74)	31/03/2024	Jane Davies
4	We will develop a new Libraries strategy in line with evolving National Public Library Standards with a focus on reviewing outreach services PIMS 16440	31/03/2024	Jane Davies

WBO3d	Thematic Priority: Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion
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Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	We will develop a three-year community cohesion plan for the region PIMS 16429	31 March 2024	Kay Howells
2	We will work with Dyfed Powys Police to support delivery of the Intact Serious Violence & Organised Crime Strategy PIMS 16642	31 March 2024	Jason Jones/ Kate Harrop
3	Address the recommendations of the Audit Wales National Report: Together We Can – Community resilience and self-reliance (January 2023) PIMS 17141, 17142	March 2024	Gwyneth Ayers
4	We will deliver a new risk-based Food Hygiene and Food Standards Programme for 23/24 PIMS 16781	March 2024	Sue Watts

WBO3e	Service Priority: Leisure & Tourism
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Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	We will develop a sport for all approach to support a broad range of participation in sports, from beginners to elite - working to support all Community Sports Clubs to become self-sustaining with development support. PIMS 16361 (CV77)	31 March 2024	Carl Daniels
2	We will complete a feasibility study for a Skateboard Park and further develop the BMX Pump track in Pembrey. PIMS 16364 (CV70)	31 March 2024	Richard Stradling
3	We will assess the need and produce a strategy for all weather pitches across the county. PIMS 16366 (CV72)	31 March 2024	Carl Daniels
4	A new Outdoor Education offer for the County - develop a new model for a County-wide residential and non-residential offer PIMS 15073	31 March 2024	Ian Jones
5	We will expand the Health and Well Being Referral programme. PIMS 16439	31 March 2024	Carl Daniels
6	We will deliver a new 3G sports pitch at Ammanford. PIMS 16365 (CV69)	31 March 2024	Carl Daniels

WBO3f		Service Priority: Waste		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	Improve the way we manage waste in Carmarthenshire, increasing the waste reused, recycled or composted. Delivering against national beyond recycling strategy. (PIMS No. 16562)	March 2024	Geinor Lewis	
2	Utilise a phased approach for the implementation of a new kerbside waste collection system in 2024/25, that is compliant with Welsh Governments' Blueprint collection methodology. This will mean that households will receive a weekly recycling, food and glass collection services from 24/25. Vision 48 (PIMS No. 16297)	March 2025	Yana Thomas	
3	Support and develop local volunteer activity with Keep Wales Tidy to help empower communities across Wales to tackle poor local environment quality issues in their area (=PIMS No. 16567)	March 2024	Geinor Lewis	
4	Deliver the recommendations of the fly tipping task and finish group (PIMS No. 16898)	March 2024	Dan John	

WBO3g		Service Priority: Highways & Transport		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
A				
1	Develop the Regional Transport Plan to inform the development of a sustainable, low carbon transport system that supports economic growth within the County (PIMS No. 16885)	31/03/2024	Simon Charles	
2	Engage with and lobby Welsh Government on their commitment to construct a bypass for Llandeilo. CV59 (PIMS No. 16290)	31/03/2024	Steve Pilliner	
3	Lobby Welsh Government to reopen the Amman Valley railway line to passengers as part of the Swansea Bay Metro. CV40 (PIMS No. 16292)	31/03/2024	Simon Charles	
4	Develop Community Transport Strategy to enable access to essential services from rural communities. CV51 (PIMS No. 16288)	31/03/2024	D Alwyn Evans	
5	Review the current vehicle fleet strategy with a view to utilising the most suitable and low emissions vehicle technology (including electric or other power sources) over the coming years. CV49 (PIMS No. 16286)	31/03/2024	Antonia Jones	

WBO 4		To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council)		
Organisational Transformation				
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	Develop and implement a Transformation Delivery Programme for 2023/24 PIMS 16465	31/03/2024	Jon Owen	

5	Core Business Enablers		
5a	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	Continue to embrace and promote agile working, hybrid meetings and new ways of working across the organisation. V108 PIMS 16313	31/03/2024	Jon Owen
2	Further increase our use of the latest digital technology to further transform the services delivered by the Council. V110 PIMS 17092	31/03/2024	Julian Williams
3	We will in line with our Digital Transformation Strategy 2021-2024, continue to engage, prioritise and implement department needs to allow them to deliver effective services. V110 PIMS 17093	31/03/2024	Julian Williams
4	We will ensure a robust approach to Cyber security and sustainable solutions are implemented for Information Governance. PIMS 17102	31/03/2024	John Williams
5	We will fulfil our statutory obligation under the Data Protection Act and ensure we are up to date with revisions in law being introduced in the UK. PIMS 16494	31/03/2024	John Tillman

5b	Marketing & Media including customer services		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	To develop a Corporate Communications Plan that will incorporate internal communications, engagement, digital, advertising, and customer services. PIMS 16422	31/03/24	Deina Hockenull
2	Develop solutions to communicate effectively with all staff including frontline staff and ensure corporate brand is consistent across all services reflecting the use of the intranet and readership of staff newsletters etc (cv103) PIMS 16334	31/03/24	Rhiannon Evans
3	To continue to advise and support services in making better use of technology and managing digital content to deliver a better experience for customers.(cv110) PIMS 16336	31/03/24	Lowri Jones
4	Work with and support web editors within services to improve web content to deliver smarter, efficient service processes, to deliver a better experience for customers. (cv110) PIMS 16336	31/03/24	Lowri Jones
5	To introduce the Corporate Customer charter PIMS 17288	31/03/24	Deina Hockenull

5c	Legal		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	To develop a set of key performance indicators for the Legal Services and Land Charges service. PIMS 16525	Mar 2023	Robert Edgecombe
2	To collaborate with HM Land Registry (HMLR) so as to enable HMLR to become the registering authority for Local Land Charges for the County of Carmarthenshire in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Infrastructure Act 2015. PIMS 16526	Timeline to be prescribed by HMLR	Robert Edgecombe

5d		Planning		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required – <i>PAM/0018</i>	85%	Hugh Towns	
2	Adoption of the Revised Local Development Plan in accordance with the Delivery Agreement. (<i>PIMS No. 15674</i>)	Apr 2024	Ian Llewelyn	

5e		Finance		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	We will ensure an unqualified audit of the final accounts.	31.03.24	Randal Hemingway	
2	Ensure the Council manages its budgets effectively and prudently.	31.03.24	Randal Hemingway	
3	Use of the Council's reserves to invest in the County and support future development.	31.03.24	Randal Hemingway	
4	We will provide significant financial support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region.	31.03.24	Randal Hemingway	
5	To lead and advise on the key financial considerations on the delivery of major corporate projects such as the Pentre Awel Project <i>PIMS 16945</i>	31.03.24	Owen Bowen	
6	The % of undisputed invoices which were paid in 30 days (<i>CFH/006</i>)	95%	Randal Hemingway/ Kevin Gerard	

5f		Procurement		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	We will work with departments to deliver compliant tender exercises through the implementation of a category management approach	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
2	We will continue to provide a significant procurement support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region Carmarthenshire led projects	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
3	We will monitor effective Contract management throughout the Authority	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
4	We will continue to develop our approach to spend analysis	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
5	Number of weeks training recruitment delivered to people through Community Benefits in the 21 st Century School Programme, Housing and Regeneration projects (<i>CP/001</i>)	3229	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
6	The number of jobs created through Community Benefits in our construction projects (21 st century school programme, housing, and regeneration projects) (<i>CP/002</i>)	60	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	
7	The number of STEM pupil engagements (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) through Community Benefits in our construction projects (21 st Century School programme, Housing & Regeneration projects) (<i>CP/003</i>)	1622	Helen Pugh/Clare Jones	

5g		Internal Audit		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	To provide independent assurance on the effective operation of the organisation's risk management, governance, and internal control processes	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	
2	Evaluating controls and assisting management in the improvement of internal controls	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	
3	Actual Achievement against Annual Audit Plan (6.4.1.3)	90	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	
4	% Of draft reports issued within 10 working days of the fieldwork completion date (IA/001)	80	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	
5	% Of management responses received within 15 working days of the draft report being issued (IA/002)	80	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	
6	% Of final reports issued within 10 working days of management responses being received (IA/003)	80	Helen Pugh/Caroline Powell	

5h		People Management		
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer	
1	Further develop existing reward and recognition frameworks that value innovation and creativity PIMS 17289	Sept 2024	Alex Machin	
2	Further develop a framework for the Council's Leadership and Management framework to support the workforce to transform and deliver. PIMS 16470	March 2024	Dirk Neuman	
3	In conjunction with Marketing & Media, further improve internal communications by developing a new Internal Communications Strategy PIMS 16473	March 2024	Cheryl Reynolds	
4	Fully implement the new Learning Management System to support the provision of targeted Learning & Development interventions that support the strategic aims of the organisation while streamlining processes. PIMS 16471	Sept 2023	Tony Belton	
5	Develop and implement a health & well-being plan and programme to support the health & well-being of all our staff PIMS 16475	March 2024	Heidi Font	
6	Measure: The number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee. EOY 22/23 Result = 11.6 days	Target 9.6 days	Heidi Font	
7	Work to position our recruitment competitively and work towards continuously improving recruitment levels across the organisation. Seeking to understand the steps needed to become the employer of choice in West Wales (CV103) PIMS 16358 Transformation Strategy - Create a strategy to attract, recruit and retain talent.	June 2023	Lindsey Evans (Future Leader)	
8	Develop a comprehensive Workforce Data Framework and ongoing monitoring and review mechanisms at a corporate level. (Audit Wales Springing Forward – workforce Management Recommendation). PIMS 17095	June 2023	Alison Wood / Gwyneth Ayers (Future Leader)	
9	Support services to ensure the management of all Health & Safety risks across the authority. PIMS 16474	March 2024	Heidi Font	
10	Consider the short and long-term capacity of our workforce to deliver the current administration's vision. (CV105) PIMS 16357	March 2024	Alison Wood / Ann Clarke	

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
11	Address the findings of the annual employee engagement survey and repeat the survey on an annual basis. PIMS 16472	Sept 2023	Cheryl Reynolds
12	We will work with Colleagues from other Divisions e.g., Procurement, to work with Welsh Government, Public Service partners and Trade Unions in further progressing the Real Living Wage agenda. (CV 109) PIMS 16353	March 2024	Alison Wood
13	Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms in respect of the Welsh Language employment standards PIMS 16462	March 2024	Alison Wood / Alex Machin
14	Review employment safeguarding framework and develop a development programme for recruiting managers. PIMS 16464	Sept 2023	Alison Wood / Alex Machin
15	To work with groups to promote the council as an employer across all communities including within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community. CV 99 PIMS 16305	Ongoing	Alison Wood / Alex Machin
16	Develop & implement a Transformation Delivery Programme for 2023/24. PIMS 16465	Mar 24	Jon Owen
17	Continue to embrace and promote agile working, hybrid meetings and new ways of working across the organisation. (CV108) PIMS 16355	March 2024	Jon Owen
18	Develop and implement a new Learning & Development Policy PIMS 16479	Sept 23	Alex Machin

5i		Democratic Services	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	To develop and update the Member Development Programme with colleagues in Learning and Development PIMS 16528	Ongoing	Gaynor Morgan
2	In line with the current review of the member enquiry process to feed in and work with IT, Customer Service etc in bringing about improvements to the existing Councillors enquiry process in order to continue to administer enquiries on behalf of elected members and to support them in their day to day constituency work. PIMS 16529	Ongoing	Gaynor Morgan

5j		Policy & Performance	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Corporate Policy		
1	We will continue to work with and provide ongoing support to departments to ensure compliance with the Council Complaints Policy, including developing guidance on undertaking Stage 2 Investigations PIMS 16679	31/03/2024	Kate Harrop
2	We will improve the use and monitoring of complaints information and intelligence in order to support learning and service improvement PIMS 16683	31/03/2024	Kate Harrop
3	We will prepare an annual report on complaints and compliments received by the Council PIMS 16684	31/09/2023	Kate Harrop
4	To increase understanding and response to the Armed Forces Covenant across the Council and with external stakeholders PIMS 17059	31/03/2024	Hayley Edwards

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
5	We will publish an annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Equalities Plan for the period 2022/23 PIMS 16682	31/10/2023	Llinos Evans
6	We will work towards the World Health Organisation Age-friendly Communities Framework, by completing the application process and mapping of local evidence PIMS 16497	31/03/2024	Llinos Evans
7	We will ensure that the Council facilitates an on-going discussion with interested parties and stakeholders to ensure delivery and further development of the Council's rural affairs strategy, working in a multi-agency and multi-sector way. MFR-54 PIMS 16418	31/03/2024	Gwyneth Ayers
B	Performance Management		
1	The Council should explore the options available to share performance information in a more transparent and easily accessible way. This extends to sharing with residents (where possible) how and why financial resources are spent and invested where they are. (From Residents Survey 2022) PIMS 16495	30/09/2023	Robert James
2	Develop and improve the way in which performance information is shared with businesses and ensure that businesses are aware of the way decisions are made and the rationale behind these decisions. This will become increasingly important given the financial challenges facing the public sector. (From Business Survey 2022) PIMS 16675	30/09/2023	Robert James
3	To embed the governance arrangements around the New corporate strategy and Well-being objectives 2022-27 PIMS 16671	31/03/2024	Robert James
4	We will ensure the Council fully embeds the requirements relating to performance and governance of the Local Government and Elections Act and align them to our current duties relating to the Well-being of Future Generations Act PIMS 16673	31/03/2024	Gwyneth Ayers
5	To work with Marketing and Media to ensure alignment of the Council's Communication Plan with the new Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives PIMS 16669	31/07/2023	Robert James
6	We will ensure that Corporate Performance Management and Internal Audit work together, to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement plays its part in the Overall Council's Self-Assessment PIMS 16670	31/07/23	Robert James
7	Support the improvement of communication and involvement with staff on Council performance management information. (From Staff Survey 2022) PIMS 16676	30/09/2023	Robert James
8	We will continue to enhance the use of information and intelligence from a range of sources to inform quarterly Performance Management Monitoring Reports PIMS 16680	31/03/2024	Gwyneth Ayers
9	To liaise with Audit Wales and other regulatory bodies on their local and national audit programmes PIMS 16681	31/03/2024	Gwyneth Ayers
10	To develop a toolkit to promote the Sustainability Principle and the 5 Ways of Working. PIMS 16690	30/09/2023	Robert James
11	To make arrangements for the Panel Assessment (required under the Local Government & Elections Act), appointed by the council to undertake an assessment of the extent to which the council is meeting its performance requirements, and to respond to the panels assessment report. PIMS 16693	31/03/2024	Gwyneth Ayers

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
C	Data Insight		
1	To iteratively develop a comprehensive and balanced set of performance measures, indicators and information across all services supporting the Transformation - Service Design and Improvement Workstream PIMS 16646	31/03/2024	Rachel Clegg
2	We will work with other Council services to further develop the Council's involvement & use of data gathered as part of a Council wide involvement, participation, & consultation framework. (PIMS 12435) (WAO Regulatory Recommendation 'Use of Data')	31/03/2024	Llinos Evans
3	Data Insight Team to support in the development and analysis of consultation activity arising from the Local Government and Elections Act (specifically with residents, businesses, trade unions and staff). PIMS 16674	31/03/2024	Rachel Clegg
4	To continue to develop the Corporate Data Suite to support the Corporate Strategy for 2022-2027 and key policy areas PIMS 16687	31/03/2024	Rachel Clegg
D	Partnership working		
1	We will implement the Public Services Boards (PSBs) Well-being Plan (2023-28) developing a new delivery framework to ensure progress on the well-being objectives and steps PIMS 16496	31/03/2024	Kate Harrop

5k		Electoral Services & Civil Registration	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	Staff at all levels should be challenged to add more value to the organisation and in turn should be supported to fulfil this role. The Council should be confident that the service is robust enough to continue to deliver high quality elections and a registration service even if there were changes to key personnel PIMS 16452	Apr25	Amanda Edwards
2	Customer involvement in developing the future of the service (Registrars) by consulting customers in order to appraise future options to ensure they meet future customers' needs and wants PIMS 16459	Sept23	Andrea Rowlands

5l		Estates & Asset Management	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	A new Rural Estate Plan will be drafted over the next 12 months to highlight the extent and performance of the current portfolio, together with the key issues and future strategy of the Estate to enable the Council to maximise the opportunities available to support its well-being objectives PIMS 17290	21/03/24	Stephen Morgan

5m		Risk Management	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	We will address the recommendation or proposals for improvement arising from the Wales Audit Office review of Risk Management arrangements	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride
2	We will maintain an effective insurance programme and manage claims in a timely manner	31.03.24	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
3	% of motor vehicle incidents reported to Risk Management within 5 working days (RM/001)	40	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride
4	% of departmental reports returned to Risk Management within 15 days from request (RM/002)	50	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride
5	% of motor claims reports provided by risk management within 10 working days (RM/003)	80	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride
6	% of liability claims reports provided by risk management to insurers within 20 working days (RM/004)	80	Helen Pugh/Suzanne Wride

5n		Business Support	
Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
1	Produce a forward work programme for Corporate Management Team (CMT). PIMS 16448	31/03/24	Nicola Evans
2	Ensure all CMT actions are followed up. PIMS 16449	31/03/24	Nicola Evans

Population Indicators and Performance Measures - Annual Report 2022/23

This table shows the overarching indicators and measures for each Well-being Objective and Thematic Priority. It provides a visual representation of performance direction (compared with the previous available data) and comparative ranked position with the other local authorities in Wales (where possible). It should be viewed as a summary, complemented by the further in-depth analysis and context provided in the main body of the report.

		Has our result improved year on year			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st			
		Previous result	Most Current Result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results													
					←→ Arrows start from previous position											● ● to our most current position ■													
Well-being Objective 1 - Start Well																													
1	Children living in Poverty	31.3%	34.6%	↓	36.3%																						27.0%		
2	Children aged 4-5 years overweight or obese (Child Measurement Programme NHS)	30.4%	31.4%	↓	31.4%																						21.1%		
3	Children on the Child Protection Register (per 10,000 population)	21	27	↓	89																		Same				22		
WBO1a - Thematic Priority: Healthy Lives - Prevention/early intervention																													
4	Number of children looked after by local authorities at 31 March	165	190	↓	1,040	Comparable data is for the previous year																							100
5	Number of children looked after in foster placements at 31 March	125	145	↓	635																						70		
6	Number of Referrals of Children and Young people attending counselling	1053	1497	↓	1,497																						198		
7	Live single births with a birth weight of under 2,500g	4.9%	4.9%	↔	8.5%																						3.3%		
Well-being Objective 2 - Live & Age Well																													
8	Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at Birth - Male	60.4	59.7	↓	55.6																						68.7		
9	Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at Birth - Female	61.1	61.8	↑	55.3																						69.3		
10	% of People Living in Material Deprivation	12.0%	16.7%	↓	21.5%																						8.4%		
11	Adult Mental Well-being Score Average Total Score out of a possible 70	48.8	48.3	↓	45.7																						49.6		
12	Adults who have 2 or more healthy lifestyle behaviours	92.4%	92.5%	↑	86.1%																						95.7%		

		Has our result improved year on year			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st	
		Previous result	Most Current Result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results											
					Arrows start from previous position											● ● to our most current position											
WBO2a - Thematic Priority: Tackling Poverty																											
13	Households Living in Poverty	35.6%	34.5%	↑	43.1%																						23.5%
14	Median Weekly Pay (Full Time Workers)	£573.70	623.4	↑	£538.8																						£714.8
15	Housing Affordability Ratio	5.74	5.61	↑	9.47																						4.38
16	Poverty is a problem in my area - Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	0.23	TBC		No comparable data available																						
Well-being Objective 3 - Prosperous Communities																											
17	Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI)	£17,164	£17,349	↑	£14,478																						£22,321
18	Number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads	81	83	↓	128	Same																					8
19	Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) pollution in the air	5.9	4.2	↑	12.1																						2.5
20	Crime rates	15,914	16,381	↓	No comparable data available																						
WBO3a - Thematic Priority: Economic Recovery and Growth																											
21	Employment	68.7%	72.3%	↑	69.6%																						79.1%
22	Unemployment	3.7%	2.2%	↑	5.4%																						Below 2.2
23	Highest Level of Qualification - Level 4 or above	37.6%	40.0%	↑	24.3%																						61.3%
24	No qualifications	7.7%	7.0%	↑	15.5%																						3.3%
25	% of people claiming unemployment related benefits for over 12 months	0.2%	0.1%	↑	0.2%																						0.0% <small>Joint with 15 others</small>
26	Business births	720	820	↑	215																						2350
27	Business Deaths	500	670	↓	1,510																						185
28	Businesses are supported within the local area – Business Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	-0.1	TBC		No comparable data available																						
29	Local people/businesses are well supported to take advantage of local opportunities - Residents/Business Consultations - Average Index Score (AIS)	-0.05	TBC		No comparable data available																						

		Has our result improved year on year			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st		
		Previous result	Most Current Result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results												
					Arrows start from previous position											● ● to our most current position ■												
WBO3b - Thematic Priority: Decarbonisation and Nature Emergency																												
30	Capacity of Renewable Energy Equipment Installed (MW)	316 MW	321 MW	↑	19																					Same	409	
31	No. of Properties (Homes & Businesses) at risk of Flooding	Not comparable	15,198	Not comparable	41,046																							2,818
32	The Climate Emergency is Being Addressed Locally - Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	-0.1	TBC		No comparable data available																							
WBO3c - Thematic Priority: Welsh Language and Culture																												
33	No. of People that Can Speak Welsh	43.9%	39.9%	↓	6.2%																				Same		64.4%	
34	Number of those aged 3-15 that can speak Welsh	15,514	15,004	↓	1,766																						Same	
35	% of people (16+) attending or participating in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times per year	64.2%	56.0%	↓	46.0%			Same																				77.6%
36	It's important that the Welsh language is promoted and protected - Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	0.69	TBC		No comparable data available																							
WBO3d - Thematic Priority: Community Safety, Resilience, and Cohesion																												
37	I like living in Carmarthenshire – Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	1.32	TBC		No comparable data available																							
38	I feel that I can live the life I want to live without the fear of judgment or prejudice - Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	0.71	TBC		No comparable data available																							
39	I feel safe in my community - Residents Consultation - Average Index Score (AIS)	0.78	TBC		No comparable data available																							

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CABINET

30 OCTOBER 2023

TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2023 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

Recommendations / key decisions required:
That the Cabinet considers and approves the report.

Reasons:
To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities from 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. A. Lenny

Directorate: Corporate
Services

Name of Director: Chris Moore

Report Author: Anthony
Parnell

Designations:

Director of Corporate
Services

Treasury and Pension
Investments Manager

Tel/ Email address:

Tel: 01267 224120 E Mail:
CMoore@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01267 224180 E Mail:
AParnell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CABINET
30 OCTOBER 2023**

TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2023 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities from 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **C Moore** **Director of Corporate Services**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Within the requirements of the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Report 2023-2024

3. Finance

Gross interest earned on investments for the period amounted to £2.06m and interest paid on loans was £0.92m.

The Authority did not breach any of its Prudential Indicators during the period.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: **C Moore**

Director of Corporate Services

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	Yes
Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
Date the report was considered:-	18/10/2023
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

2. Local Member(s) N/A

3. Community / Town Council N/A

4. Relevant Partners N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services - Code of Practice Revised 2017		County Hall, Carmarthen

CABINET
30/10/2023

**QUARTERLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND
PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT**

1st April 2023 – 30th June 2023

A QUARTERLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

1. Introduction

The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2023-2024 was approved by Council on 1st March 2023. Section B 1.1(2) stated that Treasury Management activity reports would be made during the year. This report outlines the Treasury Management activities in the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023 and satisfies the reporting requirement stated above.

2. Economic Update

In May 2023, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased the Bank Rate by 25 basis points to 4.50%, and in June 2023 moved rates up a further 50 basis points to 5.00%.

With UK inflation significantly higher than in other G7 countries, the MPC will have a difficult task in convincing investors that they will be able to dampen inflation pressures anytime soon. Talk of the Bank's inflation models being "broken" is perhaps another reason why gilt investors are demanding a premium relative to US and Euro-zone bonds, for example.

The recent resilience of the economy has been due to a number of factors including the continued rebound in activity after the pandemic, households spending some of their pandemic savings, and the tight labour market and government handouts both supporting household incomes. However, as government support fades, real household incomes are unlikely to grow rapidly. Furthermore, higher interest rates will mean GDP is likely to contract later this year.

The central assumption is that inflation will drop to the 2.0% target only if the Bank triggers a recession by raising rates from 5.00% now to at least 5.5% and keeps rates there until at least mid-2024.

3. Investments

One of the primary activities of the Treasury Management operation is the investment of surplus cash for which the Authority is responsible. As well as the Authority's own cash the County Council invests School Trust Funds and other Funds, with any interest derived from these investments being passed over to the relevant Fund.

All surplus money is invested daily on the London Money Markets. The security of the investments is the main priority. Appropriate liquidity should be maintained and return on investments the final consideration. It continues to be difficult to invest these funds as the market continues to be insecure and as a consequence appropriate counterparties are limited.

The total investments at 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023 analysed between Banks, Building Societies, Local Authorities and Money Market Funds, are shown in the following table:

Investments	01.04.23				30.06.23			
	Call and notice £m	Fixed Term £m	Total £m	%	Call and notice £m	Fixed Term £m	Total £m	%
Banks	27.50	14.00	41.50	28	34.50	7.00	41.50	21
Building Societies	0.00	7.00	7.00	5	0.00	7.00	7.00	5
Money Market Funds	40.00	0.00	40.00	27	40.00	0.00	40.00	21
DMADF (DMO)	0.00	20.00	20.00	13	0.00	80.00	80.00	41
Local Authorities	0.00	40.00	40.00	27	0.00	25.00	25.00	13
TOTAL	67.50	81.00	148.50	100	74.50	119.00	193.50	100

Investments on call are available immediately on demand.
Fixed term investments are fixed to a maturity date.

During the period the total investments made by the Council and repaid to the Council (the turnover) amounted to £459.00m. This averaged approximately £35.31m per week or £5.04m per day. A summary of turnover is shown below:

	£m
Total Investments 1st April 2023	148.50
Investments made during the quarter	252.00
Sub Total	400.50
Investments Repaid during the quarter	(207.00)
Total Investments at 30 June 2023	193.50

The main aims of the Treasury Management Strategy is to appropriately manage the cash flows of the Council, the required short term and longer term market transactions and the risks associated with this activity. Lending on the money market secures an optimum rate of return and also allows for diversification of investments and hence reduction of risk, which is of paramount importance in today's financial markets.

Benchmarks are widely used to assess investment performance. For the period under review the average "90-day un compounded SONIA rate" was 4.10% whereas the actual rate the Council earned was 4.06%, a marginal under performance of 0.04%.

The gross interest earned on investments for the period amounted to £2.06m.

The income from investments is used by the Authority to reduce the net overall costs to the Council taxpayer.

4. Security, Liquidity and Yield (SLY)

Within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023-2024, the Council's investment priorities are:

- Security of Capital
- Liquidity and
- Yield

The Council aims to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover short term cash flow needs but also to seek out value available in significantly higher rates in periods up to 12 months with highly credit rated financial institutions.

Attached in Appendix 1 is the Investment Summary and Top 10 Counterparty Holdings as at 30th June 2023.

5. Borrowing

One of the methods used to fund capital expenditure is long term borrowing. The principal lender for Local Authorities is the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

Under the Treasury Management Strategy it was agreed to borrow when interest rates are at their most advantageous.

The total loans at 1st April 2023 and 30th June 2023 are shown in the following table:

Loans	Balance at 01.04.23 £m	Balance at 30.06.23 £m	Net Increase/ (Net Decrease) £m
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	397.61	397.61	0.00
Market Loan	3.00	3.00	0.00
Salix, Invest to Save, HILS & TCL	9.96	9.82	(0.14)
TOTAL	410.57	410.43	(0.14)

The Salix interest free loans have been provided by an independent publicly funded company dedicated to providing the public sector with loans for energy efficiency projects.

This interest free Invest-2-Save funding is to assist in the conversion of traditional street lighting to LED, which will help deliver a legacy of reduced energy costs and associated carbon taxes.

The Home Improvement Loan Scheme (HILS) repayable funding is provided by the Welsh Government to help individual home owners, small portfolio landlords, developers and charities to improve homes and increase housing supply.

The Town Centre Loan (TCL) repayable funding is provided by the Welsh Government to provide loans to reduce the number of vacant, underutilised and redundant sites and premises in town centres and to support the diversification of the town centres by encouraging more sustainable uses for empty sites and premises, such as residential, leisure and for key services.

5.1 New Borrowing

No new loans were borrowed during the period.

5.2 Interest Paid

Interest paid on loans in the period was:

PWLB Interest Paid £m	Market Loan Interest Paid £m	Total Interest Paid £m
0.85	0.07	0.92

6. Rescheduling and Premature Loan Repayments

No rescheduling opportunities arose during the period and there were no premature repayments of debt.

7. Leasing

No leases were negotiated in the period ended 30th June 2023.

8. Conclusion

The Treasury Management function for the period ended 30th June 2023 has been carried out within the policy and guidelines set in the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023-2024.

B. QUARTERLY PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT

1. Introduction

As part of the 2023-2024 Budget and the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023-2024, Council adopted a number of Prudential Indicators. These Indicators are designed to ensure that any borrowing or other long-term liabilities entered into for capital purposes were affordable, sustainable and prudent.

The Indicators are required by the Local Government Act 2003 and the Revised Prudential Code of Practice in order to control Capital Finance. The Prudential Code also required that those Prudential Indicators that were forward looking should be monitored and reported. Some of the indicators are monitored by officers monthly and are only reported if they are likely to be breached, others are to be monitored quarterly by Cabinet.

2. The Monitored Prudential Indicators

2.1 Affordability Prudential Indicator

2.1.1 Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

The indicator set for 2023-2024 in the Budget was:

	2023-2024
	%
Non –HRA	3.45
HRA	28.03

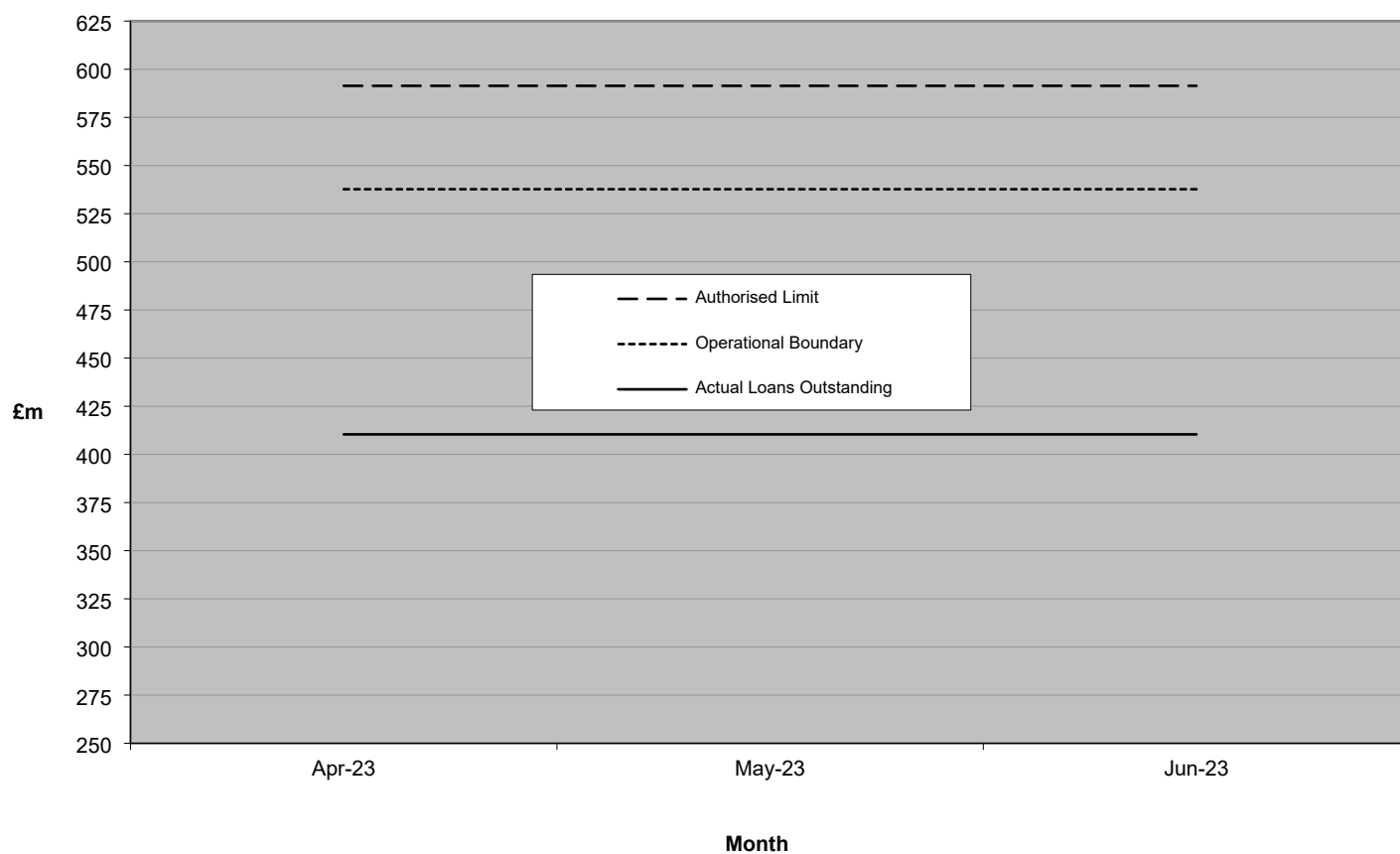
An examination of the assumptions made in calculating this indicator concluded that there have been no changes in the period.

2.2 Prudence Prudential Indicators

2.2.1 The Gross Borrowing and Capital Finance Requirement (CFR) indicator

The indicator set by the Budget for Gross Borrowing and CFR was that the Section 151 Officer envisaged no difficulty in meeting the requirement of the Gross Borrowing being less than the accumulated CFR for 2023-2024. An examination of assumptions made when calculating the Prudential Indicator show that there have been no material changes.

2.2.2 Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary



The actual value of loans outstanding must not exceed the Authorised Limit. In normal activity actual loans outstanding should be close but less than the Operational Boundary. The Operational Boundary can be breached in the short term due to adverse cash flows.

	Apr-23 £m	May-23 £m	Jun-23 £m
Authorised Limit	591.4	591.4	591.4
Operational Boundary	537.7	537.7	537.7
Loans Outstanding	410.4	410.4	410.4

Neither the Authorised Limit nor the Operational Boundary have been breached.

2.3 Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

2.3.1 Interest Rate Exposure

Position as at 30th June 2023:

	Fixed Interest Rate £m	Variable Interest Rate £m	TOTAL £m
Borrowed	407.43	3.00	410.43
Invested	(119.00)	(74.50)	(193.50)
Net	288.43	(71.50)	216.93
Limit	518.00	52.00	
Proportion of Net Borrowing Actual	132.96%	(32.96)%	100.00%
of which:			
Borrowing	99.27%	0.73%	100.00%
Invested	61.50%	38.50%	100.00%
Limit	125.00%	5.00%	

The Section 151 Officer reports that the authority exceeded this requirement in this period due to increased investments in Variable Interest Rate products such as Money Market Funds.

2.3.2 Maturity Structure Of Borrowing

	Structure at 30.06.23 %	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
Under 12 months	1.98	15	0
12 months to 2 years	2.79	15	0
2 years to 5 years	6.01	50	0
5 years to 10 years	8.39	50	0
10 years to 20 years	21.20	50	0
20 years to 30 years	21.68	50	0
30 years to 40 years	21.12	50	0
40 years and above	16.83	50	0

The authority is within the limits set by the 2023-2024 indicators.

2.3.3 Maximum principal sums invested longer than 365 days

	2023-2024 £m
Limit	10
Actual as at 30 th June 2023	NIL

3. Conclusion

This report demonstrates compliance with the reporting requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet considers and approves the report.

Glossary of terms:

CFR - Capital Financing Requirement - a measure of the Council's underlying need to borrow to fund capital expenditure.

DMADF - Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility - deposit facility run by the Debt Management Office (**DMO**) which is part of the HM Treasury, taking deposits at fixed rates for up to 6 months.

MMF - Money Market Fund - a 'pool' of different types of investments managed by a fund manager that invests in lightly liquid short term financial instruments with high credit rating.

MPC - Monetary Policy Committee - is a committee of the Bank of England, which meets for three and a half days, eight times a year, to decide the official interest rate in the United Kingdom (the Bank of England Base Rate).

PWLB – Public Works Loans Board - an Executive Government Agency of HM Treasury from which local authorities and other prescribed bodies may borrow.

SONIA - Sterling Overnight Interbank Average Rates – is a widely used benchmark based on actual transactions and reflects the average of the interest rates that banks pay to borrow Sterling overnight from other financial institutions and other institutional investors.

Totals			
Total	£193,500,000		
Calls & MMFs	£67,500,000	35%	
Fixed Deposits	£126,000,000	65%	
Specified	£0	0%	

Weighted Average			
Yield			4.33%
Maturity (Days)			
Total Portfolio	Total Portfolio		40.25
Long Term			
Short Term			
AAA	-		1.00
AA	F1		47.06
A	F1		57.87
BBB	F2		0.00
CCC	C		0.00

Risk Factors			
< 1 year	£9,484		0.005%
1 - 2 years	£0		0.000%
2 - 3 years	£0		0.000%
3 - 4 years	£0		0.000%
4 - 5 years	£0		0.000%
Total Portfolio	£9,484		0.005%

Maturity Structure			
< 1 Week	£76,500,000		40%
< 1 Month	£47,000,000		24%
2 - 3 Months	£46,000,000		24%
3 - 6 Months	£12,000,000		6%
6 - 9 Months	£12,000,000		6%
9 - 12 Months	£0		0%
12 Months+	£0		0%
Total	£193,500,000		100%

SLY Model

Carmarthenshire County Council

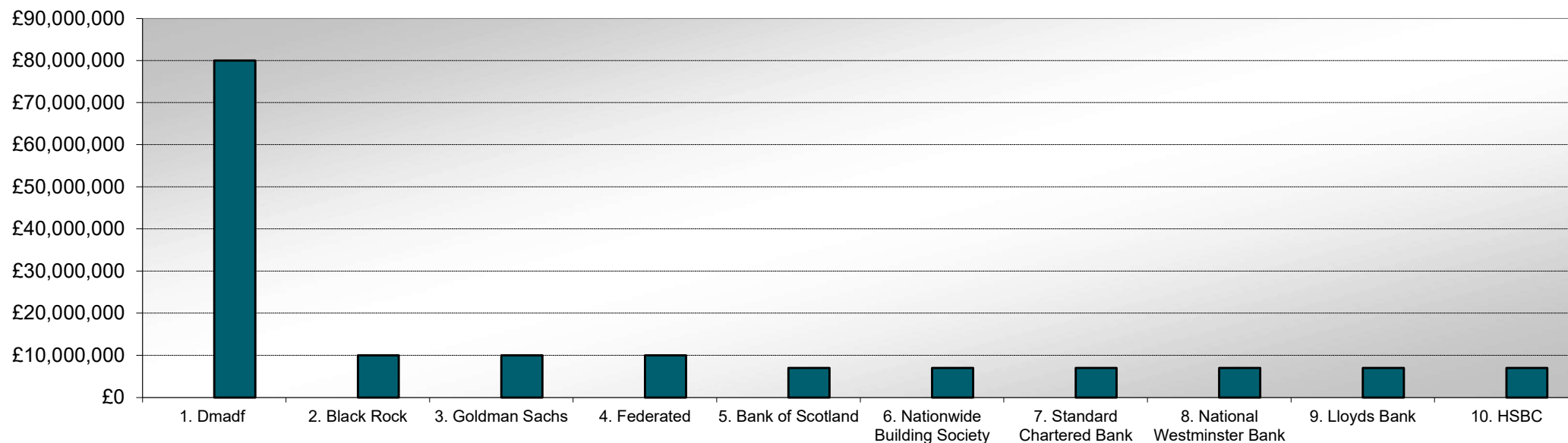
30/06/2023

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Top 10 Counterparty Holdings

Carmarthenshire County Council

Counterparty	Principal	% of Total Holding	WAM (Days)	WAYield	WADefault
1. Dmadf	£80,000,000	52.63%	35	4.60%	0.002%
2. Black Rock	£10,000,000	6.58%	1	4.52%	0.000%
3. Goldman Sachs	£10,000,000	6.58%	1	4.47%	0.000%
4. Federated	£10,000,000	6.58%	1	4.52%	0.000%
5. Bank of Scotland	£7,000,000	4.61%	1	4.52%	0.000%
6. Nationwide Building Society	£7,000,000	4.61%	119	3.58%	0.031%
7. Standard Chartered Bank	£7,000,000	4.61%	1	4.96%	0.000%
8. National Westminster Bank	£7,000,000	4.61%	271	4.55%	0.070%
9. Lloyds Bank	£7,000,000	4.61%	7	2.00%	0.002%
10. HSBC	£7,000,000	4.61%	1	4.46%	0.000%



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CABINET

30TH OCTOBER 2023

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To approve the outcome of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the recommended amendments to Conservation Area Boundaries.
- To authorise officers to undertake necessary regulatory processes necessary to formally amend the Conservation Area boundaries as recommended.

Reasons:

- To set out the outcome of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the associated consultation exercise.
- To reflect the Councils legal duties under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- To outline the next steps and future stages towards the adoption of the appraisals and their outcomes.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr Ann Davies, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs & Planning Policy

<p>Directorate Environment</p>	<p>Designations:</p>	<p>Tel Nos. 01267 246270</p>
<p>Name of Head of Service: Rhodri Griffiths</p>	<p>Head of Place and Sustainability</p>	<p>E Mail Addresses: RDGriffiths@sirgar.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report Author: Ian Llewelyn</p>	<p>Forward Planning Manager</p>	<p>01267 228816 IRLlewelyn@sirgar.gov.uk</p>

CABINET

30TH OCTOBER 2023

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

This report builds on the work undertaken to review ten of the designated Conservation Areas across the County and the subsequent preparation and consultation of the appraisals for each of the identified Conservation Areas.

The report outlines the process and feedback received as part of the associated formal public consultation, setting out the final draft conservation area appraisals and any recommended amendments the Conservation Areas themselves. The report also sets out the next steps in relation to the regulatory process required to formally amend the Conservation Areas.

This series of appraisals will support decision making and future investments in the areas selected as well as the town centre recovery plans and the Ten Towns initiative.

2. Background

Conservation areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place - in other words, the features that make it unique. Conservation area designation introduces some extra planning controls over the way owners can alter or develop their properties in order to protect those historic and architectural elements which make the place special.

There are 27 Conservation Areas in Carmarthenshire, and the Council has a legal duty to review these and submit any proposed changes for consideration to the public according to Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. As many of the Conservation Areas have not been reviewed since their creation, some as long ago as the 1970's, there is a lack of up-to-date information on the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas to guide those preparing and assessing development proposals.

The Council undertook reviews of 10 Conservation Areas in Carmarthenshire and to develop a series of resources to support heritage regeneration in the County. This reflected an opportunity that arose thanks to the successful application to the Community Renewal Fund combined with sufficient staff resources being available to enable the management and ongoing review of the programme. However, the time limitations associated with this grant meant it was not thought feasible to assess all 27 Areas in the short period stipulated. Consequently 10 were selected as being the area's most in need of review because of their historic significance (most specifically the 4 in Carmarthen), in addition to them being in the 10 Towns programme.

The Conservation Areas selected for appraisal were:

- Carmarthen Town,
- Priory Street, Carmarthen
- Lammas Street, Carmarthen
- Picton Terrace, Carmarthen
- Laugharne,
- St Clears,
- Kidwelly,
- Llanelli,
- Llandeilo, and
- Newcastle Emlyn.

Note: Llandovery was part of a Townscape Heritage Initiative programme within the last 15 years and was therefore not considered as such a high priority, despite it being one of the 10 Towns with a highly significant Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area Appraisals can be viewed through the link below:

- Carmarthen Town Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450C6
- Lammas Street, Carmarthen Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450C9
- Picton Terrace, Carmarthen Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450CC
- Priory Street, Carmarthen Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450CD
- Kidwelly Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450CE
- Laugharne Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C339FDEC4297464AA6953A044A9450D2
- Llandeilo Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=8DB875093C15458F959DD320278BB050
- Llanelli Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=8DB875093C15458F959DD320278BB051
- Newcastle Emlyn Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=8DB875093C15458F959DD320278BB052
- St Clears Conservation Area
https://planning-carmarthenshire.msaproxy.net/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=8DB875093C15458F959DD320278BB053

In commissioning Donald Insall Associates to undertake the appraisals they were also commissioned to develop an historic buildings Character Appraisal Toolkit. This will be promoted by the Place and Sustainability Service and specifically the Built Heritage Team to engage people living in the remaining 17 Conservation Areas to start to assess the historic character of their local areas. It is proposed that the Conservation Area Appraisals of these remaining areas will be undertaken by the Built Heritage Team with the support and engagement of local communities in an ongoing programme.

Consultation

The consultation on the content of the draft Conservation Area Appraisals was undertaken between the 24th June 2022 and 26th August 2022. The consultation was undertaken through an online questionnaire along with webinars on each of the towns as well as face to face drop-in sessions.

As part of the online questionnaire 16 responses were received. A further 93 comments were submitted as part of the face to face and webinar sessions. All comments received have been duly considered and have informed the content of the draft assessments forming part of this report.

Conservation Area Boundary Amendments

As part of the preparation of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the associated Management Plan, a review of the Conservation Area boundary has been undertaken to understand the rationale for designating the area, and whether development since its initial designation means that this boundary should be revised.

This review has been undertaken to each of the ten Conservations Areas through a series of site surveys, as well as desk-top research and consultation with stakeholders, and the public. Any proposed alterations to the boundary of a Conservation Area are set out in the appraisal documents, with a map identifying the proposed amendment along with a more detailed rationale. The following conservation areas are subject to proposed amendments to their boundaries:

- Carmarthen Town,
- Priory Street, Carmarthen
- Lammas Street, Carmarthen
- Picton Terrace, Carmarthen
- Laugharne
- St Clears
- Kidwelly
- Llandeilo

In relation to Llandeilo, it is further proposed to create a separate Conservation Area for the Dinefwr Estate. Currently the Dinefwr Estate and the town of Llandeilo are captured within one conservation area. However, the appraisal recognises that the Dinefwr Estate and Llandeilo town have two very different historic and architectural characteristics, the former based around a few structures within a designed landscape and the latter a town centre with commercial and residential dwellings. The management of these spaces also requires two very different approaches. As such, it is proposed that the existing Conservation Area be split into two, with the Dinefwr Estate becoming its own Conservation Area, allowing these individual qualities to be recognised.

There are no amendments proposed for the Conservation Area boundaries for Newcastle Emlyn and Llanelli.

Next Steps

In line with statutory requirements formal notice will be given via the London Gazette and local newspaper. This will occur once the report has been approved at meeting of County Council. Following which the revised conservation area boundaries will be formally published and utilised in decision making.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	No
----------------------------------	-----------

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Rhodri Griffiths

Head of Place and Sustainability

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

In considering the well-being goals, the better management of historic built environment contributes to:

- A prosperous Wales: By improving the public realm and capitalising on the historic built environments potential to be a positive place to work and live.
- A Healthier Wales: By engendering a sense of place and positive wellbeing
- A Wales of cohesive communities: By promoting the attractiveness, viability and safety of our historic towns
- A globally responsible Wales: By improving the long-term value and viability of the built environment which has Carbon embodied in it.
- A vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language: by promoting built heritage for people to enjoy and appreciate.

Particularly in relation to the Conservation Area Appraisals in Carmarthen and Llanelli, the Carmarthenshire Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan have been considered as part of the conservation Area Appraisals and management plans.

The Growth Plans for Kidwelly, Laugharne, Llandeilo, Newcastle Emlyn and St Clears have been considered as part of the consultation process and the conservation Area Appraisals and management plans.

The appraisals will subsequently inform the preparation and content of the emerging Revised Local Development Plan and the scope and content of any subsequent Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2. Legal

To comply with the Duties of the local Authority under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in relation to the formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

3. Finance

The Conservation Area Appraisal review work was undertaken through grant funded as part of the Community Renewal Fund.

Implementation will be undertaken through current identified resources, namely the Built Heritage Team, using the existing staffing budgets.

6. Physical Assets

There are a number of properties on the Council's asset register which are situated in the Conservation Areas and may be affected as part of the proposed changes identified in this report. Officers will continue to liaise to ensure the changes and any implications are fully understood.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Rhodri Griffiths

Head of Place and Sustainability

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	Yes
If yes include the following information: -	
Scrutiny Committee	Communities, Homes and Regeneration
Date the report was considered:-	5th April 2023
<p>Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:- Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny on the 5th April 2023 resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 that the Conservation Area Appraisals Report be approved. 4.2 That a letter be sent from the Chair to the Welsh Government to highlight the challenges and contradictions between conservation areas and the climate emergency and that it considers how it can best support in both preserving and saving the environment. <p>Energy efficiency in historic buildings was also discussed at Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny on the 3rd October with the matter to be added to the committees forward work programme.</p>	

2. Local Member(s)

Members were engaged as part of the consultation process.

3. Community / Town Council

Community and Town Councils were engaged as part of the consultation process.

4. Relevant Partners

Contributions were sought throughout the process from a range of partners and stakeholders.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Contributions were sought throughout the process from internal and external sources.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	Yes
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

There are none

CABINET 30TH OCTOBER, 2023

STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Purpose:

There is a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to their Council on the delivery and performance as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services.

This is the annual report by the Director of Social Services on the performance of our Social Care Services in the county.

This report provides Members with the opportunity to question the content and gives an opportunity for the Statutory Director to consider any comments elected Members may have for the future. It should be noted the report is still in draft and will be further proofread and reformatted prior to completion.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

That the Annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2022/23 be approved.

Reasons:

Political scrutiny of this report is considered by the Director to be an important element in the development process and will be amended throughout the various stages to the final publication of this report in the summer of 2023.

Cabinet Decision Required:	YES – 30 th October 2023
Council Decision Required	YES – 6 th December 2023

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. J. Tremlett (Health & Social Services Portfolio Holder)

<p>Directorate: Communities</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Jake Morgan</p>	<p>Designation: Director of Community Services (Statutory Director of Social Services)</p>	<p>Tel: 01267 224698</p> <p>Email addresses: JakeMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET

30TH OCTOBER, 2023

STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Annual Report examines each Service area within Social Care and shows how service strategies, actions, targets and service risks will be addressed and delivered operationally by the service this year based on the approved budget.

The Annual Report (attached) comprises an overview provided by the Director of Social Services, which provides information on how we have performed in 2022/23 and an assessment on the future, together with our strategic priorities for 2023/24.

The Report links closely with the Directorate Business Plans for Community Services and Education & Children's Services departments.

Following publication of the report to the public (after it has been presented to full Council), Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Welsh Government will complete their analysis and review of the report. There will be a formal meeting with CIW in October to discuss their analysis and proposed plan. This will be followed by an Annual Letter to Council in late November/early December, confirming their analysis and inspection plan. The process will link in closely with the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Annual Letter from the Wales Audit Office.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **Jake Morgan**

Director of Social Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Annual Report will be an important contribution to the Council's Improvement Plan.

2. Legal

The Annual Report forms an important part of the statutory duties of the Director of Social Services:

"The Director will present to Council, publish and report on an annual statement of plans for performance and improvement"

3. Finance

There are no financial implications in the report. However, the report highlights some budget pressures which will need to be considered in the budget setting process for 2024/2025.

4. ICT

The PIMS system will be used to provide evidence of the Annual Report. Comment is made in the body of the report as to the need to better integrate Health & Social Care IT.

5. Risk Management Issues

Key risks have been addressed in this report with a link to the departmental and corporate risk register.

6. Physical Assets

Physical assets are included in this report in relation to service delivery.

7. Staffing Implications

Staffing implications are included in this report.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jake Morgan

Director of Social Services

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination		YES
Scrutiny Committee	Health & Social Services	
Date the report was considered:-	4 th October, 2023	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-		
RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINET that the report be received.		

2. Local Member(s) - Not applicable.

3. Community / Town Council - Not applicable.

4. Relevant Partners - Not applicable.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - Not applicable.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE.

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
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Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report

DRAFT 2022/23

Updated 17/10/23 -SS



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Dates of Officers and Political meetings

05/09/2023	DMT
07/09/2023	CMT
04/10/2023	Scrutiny
16/10/2023	Pre Cabinet
30/10/2023	Cabinet
06/12/2023	Council

Introduction



This is my **tenth** annual report as Statutory Director of Social Services. Social Services is only a part of my corporate role. There is a statutory requirement for me to report on the performance annually to demonstrate the improvements and the significant challenges we faced during 2022/23. I also set our priorities for the current year 2023/24.

I am grateful for the council's support and commitment to Social Services as we face unprecedented workforce and demand pressures.

The inability to recruit sufficient Homecare, Residential Care and Social Work Staff reached a critical point in late 2022. In common with almost all authorities this led to long waiting lists for assessment and care. Since then, workforce initiatives including a care Academi, increased degree sponsorship and improving some terms and conditions have improved and stabilised the position in all areas. However, at the time of writing, we still face significant gaps in Homecare and Social Work.

The council faced significant financial pressures in 2022/23, we needed to deliver against a robust efficiency programme in Adult Services. Children & Family Services were well protected corporately albeit increased demand and costs create a significant challenge for the council this year as the number of looked after children continue to rise. Our prevention and demand management work along with many other initiatives in supporting us to work as efficiently as possible whilst we continue to strive to improve service user outcomes. The position for 2024/25 looks more challenging and key decisions may need to be made by the council to meet need in different ways.

Despite this, performance remains good in most areas despite unprecedented levels of demand. In particular: We still have the lowest number of looked after children for our population in Wales; Our development of Supportive Living resources for adults with Mental Health and a learning disability is really transforming lives as this programme gathers pace; our Home-first service is reducing those needing long term care at pace and our development of in house resources to rebalance the market is on the cusp of delivering a range of new and innovative resources.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all Council staff who have worked incredibly hard throughout the year to deliver the services highlighted in this report. I have been so impressed by their dedication, patience and professionalism in the way they have risen to the huge challenges. I also want to express our sincere thanks to all our statutory partners, third sector and volunteers who have contributed so much to ensuring better outcomes for those who need our help most.

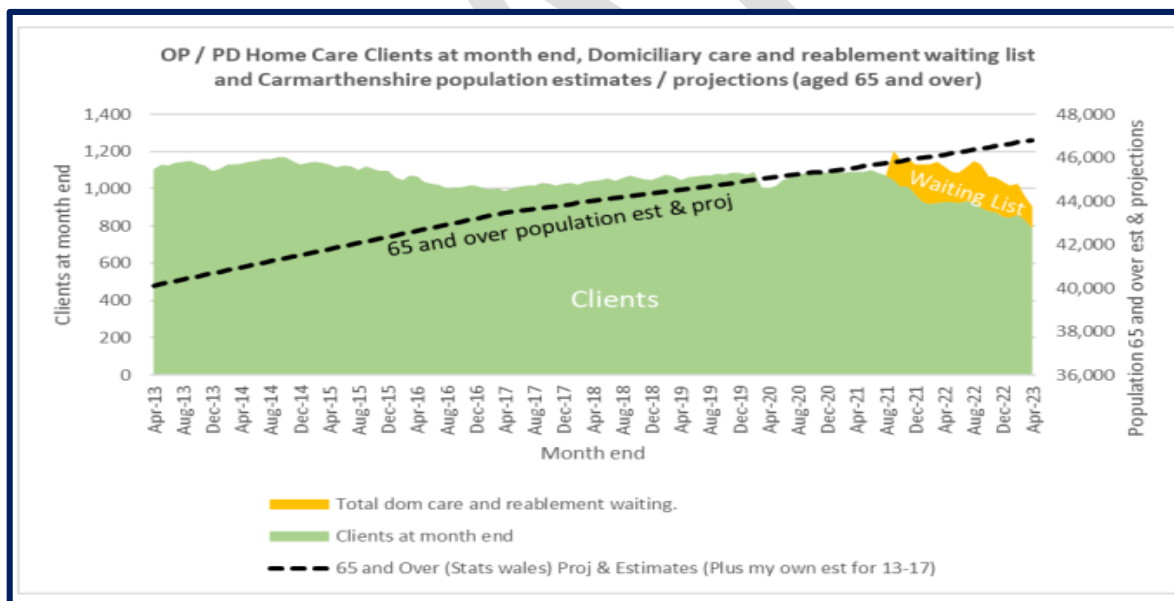
Jake Morgan, Statutory Director of Social Services

Overview

Adult Services

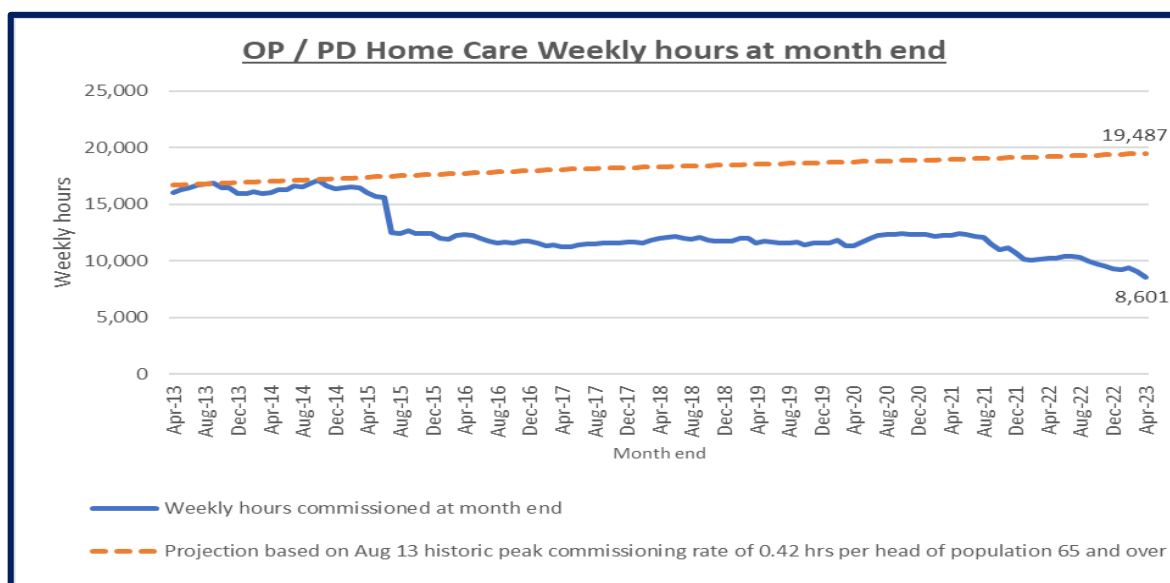
The last year has continued to present ongoing challenges for Adult Services. Similarly, to all Councils across the UK we have been grappling with the dual challenge of increased demand and complexity of those people who need our support as well as decreasing capacity to support them linked to the ongoing social care workforce crisis. In simple terms, we do not have enough social workers or Homecare staff to firstly assess all of those that require assessment and secondly support them once they have been assessed.

Homecare delivery has reduced to just over 9,000 hours a week due to the ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of care workers across sectors. This has inevitably led to minimum waits for care with the risk managed through careful triage and monitoring of people's needs. Greater emphasis on reablement, therapy led step down provision and supporting people in different ways such as Direct payments has led to a significant reduction in demand when considered against the growth in the number of older people in the county. The graph below illustrates the likely demand for homecare if we had continued with the same model of care:



Innovation had made a difference in particular our efforts at smarter commissioning and contracting, a greater emphasis on early intervention, utilising technology, and workforce better, more effective reablement and the introduction of direct payments has led to a striking long-term trend of halving the number of hours of homecare. This has enabled us to manage provision whilst maintaining a stable number of residential placements and delivering a sustainable budget. From being amongst the highest providers in Wales for Homecare we are now average when considered against our population.

The graph below illustrates the 10-year trend of provision.

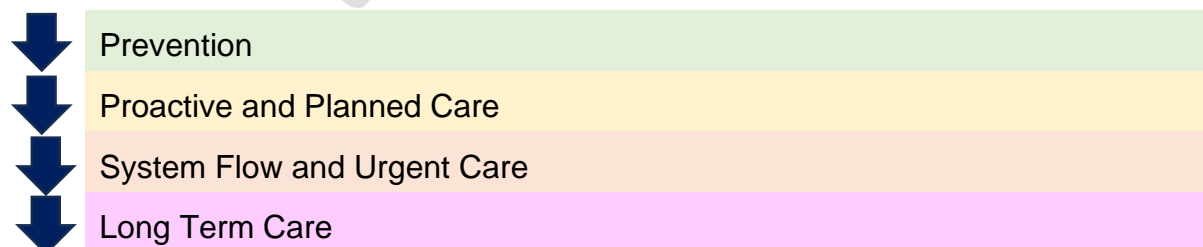


Note -The drop in 2015 reflected a more effective new contracting model and a drop in the number of paid for hours not a drop in the number of care hours delivered to service users.

A range of activities have had an impact in managing demand and demographic growth despite these efforts there is still a considerable waiting list of more than 100 people. However, had we not made these radical reforms over the last 10 years then we would have a waiting list of 500 people and spend of an additional £20,000,000 annually. This clearly illustrates how managing demand in this area is central to the overall financial health of the authority.

In **Older People and Physical Disability services** it has been demonstrated that working in partnership within our integrated management structure between Carmarthenshire County Council and the Local Health Board has been key. This partnership extends to Delta Wellbeing and our third sector partners who are critical to developing and delivering community preventative services as well as long-term care services.

Our strategic plan to manage demand is aligned to the development of pathways as follows:



Our priority has been to redesign these pathways of care to allow us to ensure our services are aligned to best support the population of Carmarthenshire as the population changes and the needs grow by at least 3% a year.

Our key priority has been on keeping safe those waiting for care. This has been a strength of the service over the last year. We have maintained our robust approach to triaging all referrals for social work assessments and prioritising those in greatest need. We continue to review those waiting for care, to ensure that needs have not changed and people remain safe through regular keeping in touch calls by dedicated Care and Support Coordinators in the teams. We also work with families to consider all options and are creative around how to meet support needs at home through a combination of informal and formal support.

We continue to make best use of the care capacity we have by using the releasing time to care methodology to actively reduce care packages where appropriate and release hours to support others. The support of our Occupational Therapists is critical in using their expert knowledge to reduce the number of carers needed from 2 to 1. As part of the annual budget efficiencies, it was agreed that we would look to increase the capacity within the review team on an invest to save basis. This is allowing us to increase the pace at which we can do reviews, and consequently release more care hours to support others.

A dedicated meeting now takes place fortnightly to review all long hospital waits. This allows us to challenge and review and ensure that all options have been considered. This has had a considerable impact on reducing those with a long wait in hospital. In addition, there are twice weekly hospital escalation panels where all difficult cases are escalated and discussed. Waits for care in hospital remain in line with the long-term average with less than 10% of hospital capacity used for people waiting for care despite well over 70% of the capacity of hospitals used for frail and elderly people.

Preventing admissions and reducing the length of stay will be key if we are to create more bed capacity for planned hospital care. With record deficits in Health Board budgets across Wales there is a very real risk that this could destabilise the implementation of initiatives that deliver medium- and long-term benefits in favour of short-term cost cutting.

To improve flow and reduce demand we have also recently changed our approach to how we deal with referrals when they come through Delta Wellbeing, our single point of access to community health and social care. All referrals are now being centrally triaged by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, rather than being triaged in the 3 separate localities by individual professional teams. Whilst it is early days, this approach is starting to reduce the number of those waiting for social work assessment both by ensuring that referrals are directed to the correct place first and through identification of preventative/early intervention services which allow us to close down the referral at information and advice. At the time of writing the report the overall number of people waiting for assessment had reduced from a post pandemic peak of 450 to 200 and we were cautiously optimistic that this change in approach would effectively help us to manage demand. The numbers of people waiting for domiciliary care had also significantly decreased from just over 250 at its peak to just over 100, most of who are in the community.

Despite the challenges, there are a number of key achievements. The Integrated Services Restructure is now complete, all Senior Managers are in post with only the

Senior Delivery Manager for Prevention in the process of being recruited. This restructure, the first for 9 years provides the platform to deal with the continued challenges. This prevention post will support the Carmarthenshire Prevention Board in clarifying its strategic intent in relation to prevention and help us to develop an action plan to address key gaps and ensure we retain a focus on long term goals as we navigate budget pressures in Health and the County Council.

Our award-winning Home First pilot whereby we triage all new referrals is helping to inform Phase 2 of the restructure. As a result, we are re-aligning our teams under the Senior Manager posts. We anticipate that Phase 2 will be complete by mid-Autumn. The Intermediate Care element of the Home First team is now fully embedded and is supporting people to leave hospital more quickly and starting to support people in crisis in the community to help keep them at home rather than admitted to hospital. This element of our changes is receiving national recognition.

Aligned to this service is Ty Pili Pala, our 14 bedded reablement unit within Llys Y Bryn Care Home which is providing excellent outcomes with 70% of those that use the service returning home with no formal ongoing care. We have also launched our integrated reablement service in partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board. Whilst recruitment has been a challenge, 90% of those supported are now leaving the service with no long-term care arrangements needed. This is an outstanding example of a service improvement that improves outcomes and reduces costs that could not be delivered without such a strong integrated approach across health and social care.

Our day services for older people are now back up and running, following the enforced closure during the pandemic, and we are slowly growing the service to ensure that we can keep pace with demand. As people chose different models of care and support, we will reshape these services to reflect need.

This model of continuous improvement leaves me cautiously optimistic that the latest set of data continues to demonstrate that our innovative approaches are having the impact that we need to ensure that residents in Carmarthenshire who need it are supported at home in as timely a way as possible within a budget that is manageable in the short term. However, as the population grows it will be impossible to both continue to absorb inflation in the sector above 10% and the frail population growing annually by nearly 3% without substantial and sustained national investment in the care of older people.

Mental Health and Learning Disability services have continued their drive to develop a range of supported accommodation to reduce their reliance on residential care. This improves outcomes and enables choice for individuals and promote their independence as more vulnerable people are able to live in our communities. This programme of work also impacts positively on the budget, by reducing over provision and cost in some cases. This ambitious programme of change slowed during the pandemic but is now progressing at pace. Several housing schemes have been opened with more to follow this year and approximately 20 individuals have stepped down from residential care.

Whilst the last year has been challenging, it has also brought opportunities, such as in day opportunities where we have had to adapt and provide less building-based services and provide activities and support people in different ways, with resources reshaped and remodelled to deliver care in the communities that people live. This was always our intention. We have also been successful in increasing the use of technology to stay connected with people and this has proved very successful. We have developed several innovative projects to provide day opportunities for people with a Learning Disability including activities in collaboration with leisure. Moving forward we are also establishing a skills hub in Crosshands which will offer skill development and accredited training.

Last year the Council provided a significant additional investment in Mental Health Services, to enable us to develop and deliver improved services. Unfortunately, despite the investment, we have been unable to recruit all the social worker posts, as a result we are embarking on an ambitious programme to “grow our own”, linked with development pathways for social care staff. More information is provided in the Workforce section of this report. We have however established a wellbeing pathway in the mental health teams with a dedicated resource focussing on early intervention and prevention. Whilst this is in its infancy it is already producing positive outcomes for individuals.

Demand for substance misuse services has increased since the pandemic. We have seen an increase in those presenting with Alcohol Related Brain Damage, so we are collaborating with colleagues in the Health Board and third sector to develop support pathways for individuals with this profile. This is also the case for individuals who have mental health and substance misuse issues.

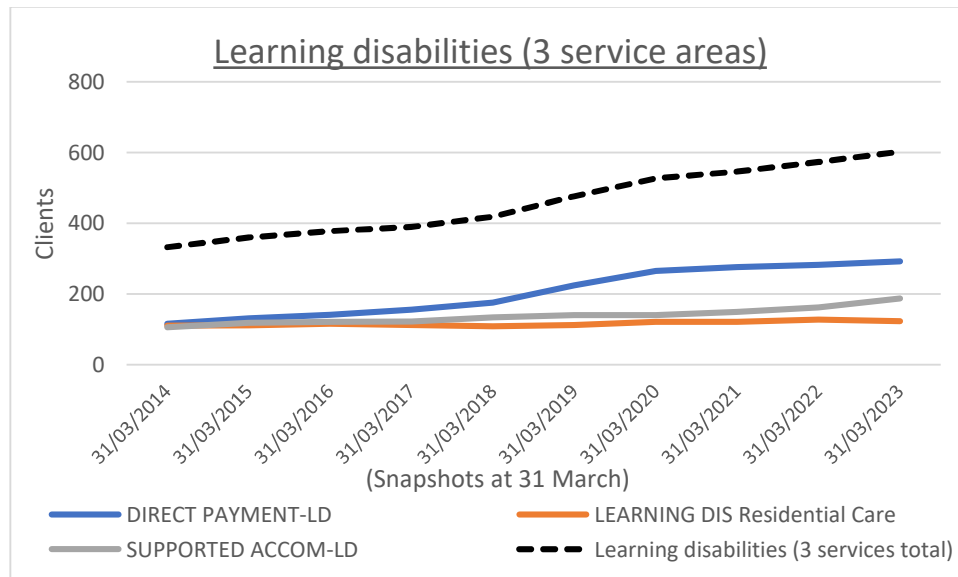
Over the last year, similarly to older adults and physical disabilities, increased demand and complexity has been a consistent feature in all the Social Work teams. This includes our Learning Disability Teams who are responding to the impact of the pandemic on individuals and their families and our Substance Misuse Team who have seen increased complexities related to increased substance misuse.

In order to manage demand going forward it will be essential to ensure that we have a robust prevention strategy to provide advice, information, assistance, early intervention and rapid response to those in crisis. This will allow us to, wherever possible, help people to maintain their independence for as long as possible, and prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and residential care. Person centred practice will be at the heart of everything we do, as well as supporting carers to continue in their caring role. We have carers champions in all teams within Adult Social Care, and all teams have either achieved or working towards their Investors in carers awards. This collaborative approach is key in delivering our service objectives. Getting this right must be the service's key focus in 2023/24.

These services are facing increasing demand that can result in delays to providing the care people need when they need it. However, strong professional leadership in the service leaves me confident that the service is managing the risk and developing the pathways of care to keep people safe and future proofing our services in times of increasing demand. However, the pace of delivery will need to increase if we are to

keep pace with rising demand and deliver a net decrease in the number of people with mental health and learning disabilities in residential care.

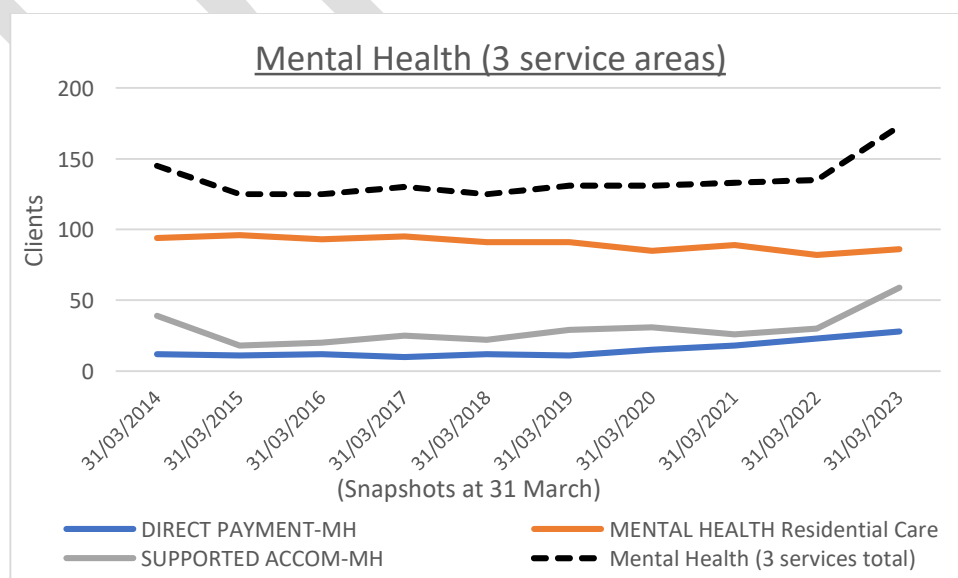
The graph below illustrates people with learning disabilities that receive a range of services since 2014.



The number of people receiving a service has doubled since 2014 with demand growing this has now demonstrated a steady growth in people receiving supported living and direct payments.

The challenge for the next few years is to build on the programme made in the last few years and further reduce the number of people receiving residential care and support adults with disabilities in the community.

The below graph illustrates patterns and demand since 2014 for people with Mental Health



In the past few years, we have been successful in slowly reducing numbers of people in residential care. Since the pandemic the demand has grown, and we have seen a growth in people with mental health in supported accommodation in the community.

Safeguarding

In relation to **Safeguarding of Adults**, we have seen an increase in safeguarding activity and an increase in the complexity of referrals, but performance is consistent, and we continue to deliver and continue to be held in high regard in relation to safeguarding and lead on many of the regional projects.

Carmarthenshire continues to lead regionally on strategic developments in relation to Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

Suicide and Self harm prevention is now a priority for the Safeguarding Board and Carmarthenshire Safeguarding Operational Group as we have seen incidents of suicide rise across the region. A regional group chaired by the Head of Adult Social Care continues to pilot an immediate multi agency response to suicide, this is being progressed on a local authority footprint to ensure we do all we can to respond to those in crisis.

I can confirm there is a robust process in place for responding to and managing professional concerns.

Corporate Safeguarding remains a priority. Corporate safeguarding are the areas outside of the core safeguarding work with vulnerable children and adults. In this area where work slowed during the pandemic, key work has been developed by human resources to improve recruitment arrangements ensuring full compliance with our policy. Schools have been a priority area with new guidance and direction issued by the Director for Education and Children.

A new policy will be launched in 2023 to ensure that corporate governance and reporting arrangements are strengthened.

Moving forward Corporate Safeguarding will be contained in a dedicated annual report published in parallel with this annual report. Improvement in reporting arrangements and making the political governance arrangements clear will be the key action in 2023/24.

Technology Enabled Care

The County Council's award-winning arm's length company Llesiant Delta Wellbeing is central in our approach to maximise the benefits and respond to fast developing approaches in health and social care monitoring and technology.

Whilst the service delivers out of hours switchboard services for the council this is a tiny part of a service that has expanded from 45 members of staff to more than 170. Whilst it supplies a range of services to most counties in Wales its primary growth area in recent years has been to the people of Carmarthenshire and West Wales.

Delta provides our Information, Advice and Assistance service for adult social care providing a single point of contact for all enquiries. This year it is projected to handle

more than 20,000 calls through qualified call handlers. Performance has improved at effective preventative advice with more than 40% of calls now diverted.

In addition, DELTA makes more than 40,000 proactive monitoring calls to isolated and vulnerable people across West Wales. This is an increase of more than 25% on last year as more vulnerable people are found to benefit from the CONNECT programme of support. The CONNECT programme is also able to offer a responder service preventing ambulance calls and unnecessary admissions to hospital. The service is expected to deliver 5000 emergency calls in the next year with less than 8% of calls needing emergency service intervention. This service has further supported hospital discharge pathways by offering a bridging and monitoring service for up to 7 days following discharge. Over the next year we anticipate more than 600 discharges will be supported in this way.

All these functions are underpinned by monitoring technology that is fitted in people's homes. Carmarthenshire has been recognised as a UK leader in delivering technology enabled proactive care. Whilst we already support the monitoring of a range of health needs in the community, I am of the view that this area will expand, and we are seeing growing interest and investment from the health sector. Through a partnership with the private sector, I believe Delta will be amongst the first in Wales to digitise the technology in people's homes and will be well placed to support the health sector in the application of artificial intelligence in the delivery of diagnostics and treatment.

Case Study 2

Intermediate Care Multi-Disciplinary Team (Home First Team and Delta):

Mrs N is a 99 year old lady who lives alone, she is very independent albeit a little shaky on her feet when mobilising, otherwise does very well at home. During the early hours of a Wednesday morning her bed sensor was activated after 30 minutes of absence. The Community Response team were alerted and dispatched within 7 minutes of the activation coming through. The Response team arrived at the property 15 minutes later to find Mrs N on the floor in her bedroom.

After completing the ISTUMBLE assessment and taking the clinical observations, Mrs N was lifted from the floor. Mrs N experienced a bump to her head, but she refused for an ambulance to be called. Responders ensured she had her lifeline to hand, should she need assistance or if anything was to change and assisted Mrs N back to bed. The following morning the GP was notified of the fall and a home visit was arranged. The GP visited Mrs N and suggested she goes into hospital for a CT Scan to check her head injury, so contacted the Welsh Ambulance Service to arrange an ambulance. This was then picked up by the Community Response Manager at Delta Wellbeing and the Paramedic via the ICMDT (Home first team) and transport was arranged with Delta Wellbeing to take Mrs N into A&E. When Mrs N was ready to go home, A&E Discharge Teams contacted Delta Wellbeing to collect Mrs N and take her home. Community Responders then settled Mrs N in, made her comfortable and ensured she had her lifeline to hand, should she need any assistance.

Over the following 7 days, a welfare visit was arranged with Mrs N to ensure that she was coping well following her fall. Any concerns are then reported to the 'Home First' team for further triaging.

Children & Family Services

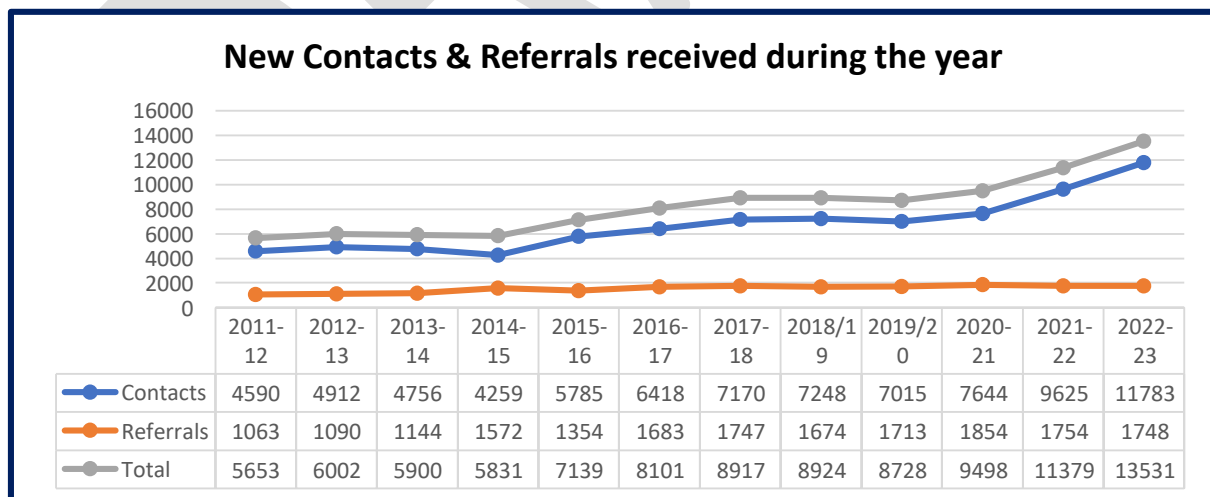
During 2022/23 Children & Family Services has seen a number of changes including a new Head of Children & Family Services, Jan Coles who started in September 2022. This is only our fourth Head of Children's services in the last 28 years! 2023 will also see most of the 3rd tier in the service retiring. This is something we have prepared for, and we anticipate a new structure will be implemented in the Autumn of 2023 with new senior managers in place across much of the service.

We are rightly proud of our children and family services and the new team will retain our focus on ensuring our children are safe, keeping our looked after children numbers low and cared for locally whilst providing comprehensive family support and early intervention services.

As the service moves on from the COVID dominated years there are significant pressures on the service. Our teams are increasingly seeing families who struggled during COVID and are now facing hardship as the cost-of-living crisis hits the poorest families the hardest. As a result, we have seen an increasing demand for our services and support and the number of contacts to the department continuing to rise. We are dealing with more than 70% more referrals than we were 10 years ago and since the pandemic we have seen a huge rise in activity reported to the initial assessment teams and recorded as contacts in the graph below.

This increase coupled with on-going challenges in recruiting social workers all added to the challenges faced by Children & Family services teams. Managing the increase in demand and the ongoing challenges in recruitment of Social Workers will be our priority for 2023/24.

The graph below illustrates the level of contact and referrals during the year.



There has been a significant rise in the number of contacts, but the referrals are stable. We believe this reflects the inter-agency activity across the Local Authority

Children & Family Services continue to embed a **relationship based systemic approach to delivering social work** in order to improve partnership working with families and increased engagement through assessment and in the provision of support, which in turn improves the well-being of children. The approach is also underpinned by Signs of Safety which allows the department to set goals in partnership with families which are achievable by them. The systemic approach is being introduced to more Teams across Children & Family services including the Child Assessment Teams. Feedback from families highlight these approaches help them feel valued and listened to. Training has been provided to newly recruited social workers along with refresher training for more experienced staff to ensure we continue to strengthen our relationship-based approach.

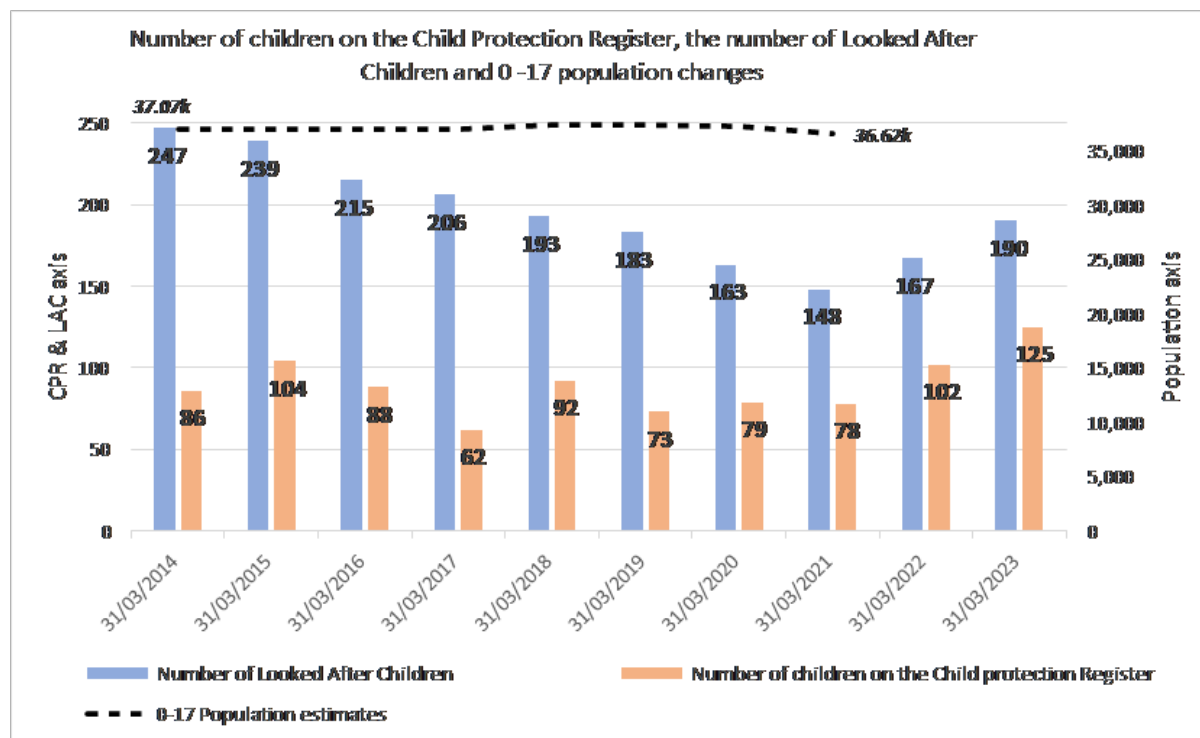
The Senior team report that the **Auditing of assessments and plans of care and support** has continued throughout the year to ensure they are developed in partnership with children and families. There is good evidence of direct work with children and the child's wishes and feelings regards their lived experiences and the support they are receiving. The assessments are also audited to ensure they reflect the five principles of the SSWBA, that families have a voice and control over intervention, focus on wellbeing, assessments and plans are co-produced with families and has a multi-agency approach. In addition, that families are provided with early intervention and preventative support to ensure they are supported earlier.

83% of new assessments completed during the year were completed within statutory timescales (within 42 working days). Although we have not met our internal target of 91% it is an acceptable result based on an approximate 'all Wales average figure' of 79% during 2021/22. Assessments are also dependent on the availability of relevant multi-agency professionals and family members which can result in some being completed outside of timescales. Assessments may require a longer period of time ensuring quality and meaningfulness to achieve better outcomes for the child. The continuous monitoring and auditing of Assessments allows feedback to teams on what improvements can be made and highlight any training needs for the service. The inability to fill social worker posts have also inevitably had an impact on our overall capacity. However, despite these added pressures we have continued to perform well.

The **regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements** are continuing to work effectively ensuring early intervention and utilisation of preventative services to reduce the need for statutory involvement wherever possible. A regional Development Day was held in May last year facilitated by Gladys White OBE which was an opportunity for staff to consider legislation, guidance, and child protection practice across the region to ensure risks are understood and consistently applied. The day was well received as it enabled an opportunity for participants to consider best practice, understand the importance of effective risk assessments and a rich debate on how thresholds and risks are understood and applied and the roles of different agencies in contributing to assessing risks. Feedback highlighted the benefit of having time to reflect on the procedures and best practice examples, work alongside colleagues from different agencies, and provided assurance that arrangements are working effectively across the region. Threshold meetings continue to be held quarterly. The '**Right Help at the Right Time**' framework launched in December. It includes a directory containing up

to date, accessible information on the range of services available at various levels of need to assist professionals when deciding whether to refer to preventative or statutory services. It is available on the [FIS website](#)

The graph below illustrates the key area on service provision and demand over the past 10 years despite the small fall in the number of children in the county.



The number of children on the Child Protection Register has seen a significant rise this year (an increase of 22.5% since last year) and have continued to rise in 2023. Recent times have been particularly challenging for families whilst every effort has been made to maintain children at home for as long as possible where risks remain a concern through a robust child protection plan. Of those children placed on the Child Protection Register during the year, the number of children that were previously on the register in the last 12 months was low at 5.9% (9/153) and we are pleased to have performed better than our target of 7.8%. De-registrations and registrations are subject to multi-disciplinary case conferences. Children are subject to child protection planning and cases are closely monitored particularly where child protection concerns remain high. Early intervention is key to practice and the involvement of preventative services to reduce the need for children being subject to child protection plans. Childcare teams are supported by the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST), Edge of Care Team (EOC), and Family Intervention Team (FIT) who provide additional intensive support. Figures are scrutinised at the Audit and Evaluation Group. Further work will be completed this year to ensure we are operating with the optimum levels on the CP register. If these numbers are sustained, then more capacity in Social Work teams will need to be considered.

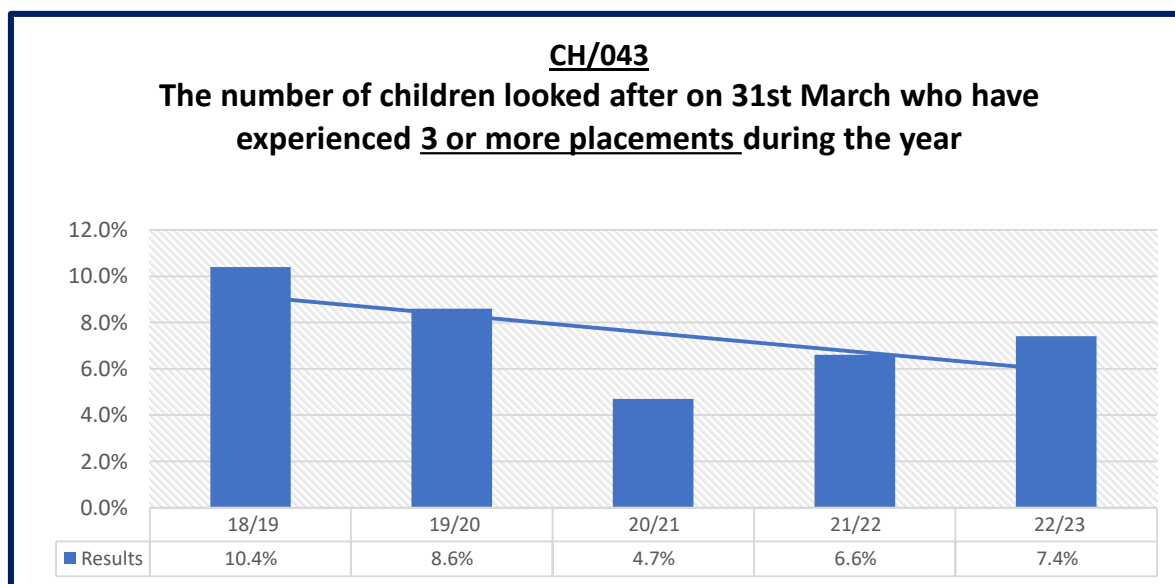
We have done all we can during the year to try and reduce the number of children becoming looked after, but despite this we have seen a sharp increase in the number of **looked after children**. Families have struggled in the aftermath of the pandemic compounded by the cost-of-living crisis which has added stress on families, issues arising increasing risks in relation to abuse and neglect, and mental health. We continue to monitor and review all children where requests are made for accommodation through our accommodation panel and try to ensure alternative support options to care are considered through Edge of Care, IFST and Family Intervention Service and other preventative services. We are developing our parenting programmes to assist families and maintain children at home or rehabilitate them home following a period of foster care. We are in the process of reviewing our service in Edge of Care and IFST to develop further support to front line teams to ensure the right help at the right time is received to support families within the local community. The significant number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers has contributed to this rise.

However, despite this work numbers have continued to rise above 200 and whilst this is still the lowest rate in Wales this is creating pressure on the budget and staffing resources which is a significant concern. Further work will be undertaken to consider what the detailed reasons are for this to ensure they can be addressed.

The education stability of children looked after remains excellent with only 3 children needing to move which has been down to the hard work of social workers, schools, foster carers and other professionals (one move was the young person's choice, one due to a change in circumstances of the young person and the other due to the distance involved). However, maintaining children in the same school has placed additional pressure on our transport service where costs have risen due to taxi services needing to be used in our rural communities.

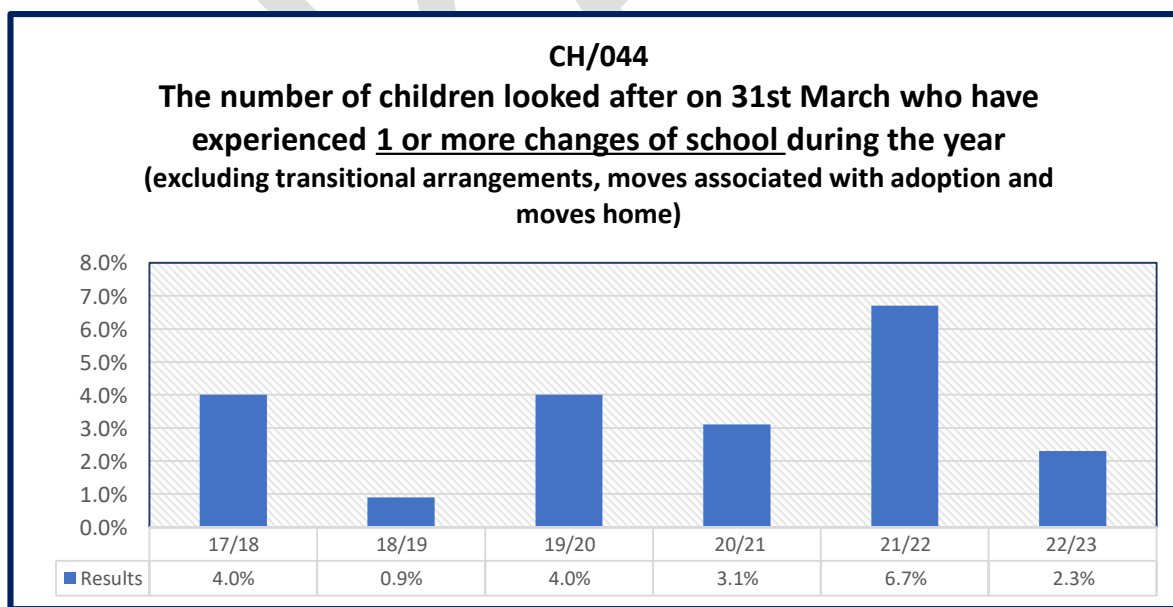
A review on how this is commissioned is underway as the individual cost of some trips seem disproportionate.

The graph below illustrates the number of children looked after who have experienced 3 or more placements.



The number of children experiencing 3 or more placement moves during the year has seen an increase, however we have only just missed our target and there have been many successful outcomes for those children and young people despite the number of moves.

This reflects the hard work the schools and other professionals have done.



The focus remains on increasing foster placement choice by recruiting more foster carers with the skills and experience to manage children who have more complex needs. If we are to manage the budget effectively the recruitment of more foster cares will be essential.

The **Fostering service** continue to drive our recruitment campaign and have close links with Foster Wales and our regional marketing officer to enable us to focus priority on recruiting more foster carers. During the year Carmarthenshire has approved and recruited 14 new foster carer households and it has been important to offer intensive support to these new carers to manage the children under a care and support plan. We have continued to provide a range of support to foster carers including 24 hrs out of hours support from the fostering service. We have a peer mentoring service of experienced foster carers also supporting all our foster carers. The uplift in fostering allowances has taken place and is a more generous offer to retain and recruit more foster carers and assists towards the cost-of-living crisis that many carers themselves have experienced. However, recruitment has only just kept up with the numbers leaving. Recruitment within this area will need substantial investment to continue to cope with the demand.

The fostering service continue to have responsibility for around 100 **special guardianship carers** who require to be reviewed for support both practically and financially on an annual basis subject to good practice guidance from Welsh Government. This work is progressing but staffing to cover this role has been difficult during the year and access to funding a fostering support worker on a permanent basis to work alongside a social worker from the fostering team has now been achieved through Welsh Government funding. This is an area of growth which will require careful monitoring in the future as many special guardianship families have experienced more hardship due to cost-of-living difficulties which is impacting on their family circumstances, and we need to support such children living in these permanent places with their extended family to avoid placement breakdown.

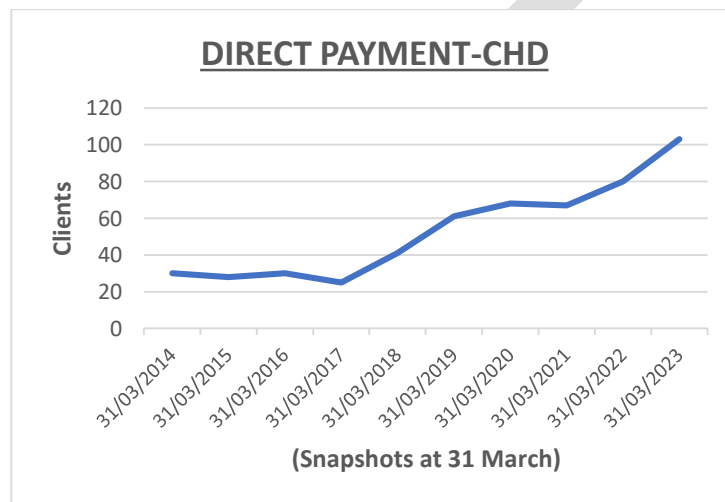
Children & Family Services has worked in partnership with the Housing Department, Youth Service and Commissioning to devise, develop and commission new **supported accommodation for young people aged 16-25** including children with disabilities. The new service is already providing improved accommodation and increasing support to young people in supported housing. One aim of the service was to move away from grouping large numbers of young people together in accommodation settings who had similar needs and experienced similar challenges. The new service comprises of smaller supported houses staffed with support workers and based around the three main towns of Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen. This will allow more young people in need of accommodation to be supported in the areas they have lived through their childhoods which has the advantage of allowing them to live near extended family who are often the young people's support network.

Children & Family Services continue to collaborate with our colleagues in the Housing Department and in Youth Support Services to ensure the developments in respect of accommodation are underpinned by the Care Leavers Accommodation Framework. The new **In-House Supported Lodgings** Service has already approved eight supported lodgings providers who are providing supportive placements to 10 young people aged 16-18 years. The Service works in partnership with Fostering and the Housing Department to enable more choice and increased capacity of placements for our young people aged 16-21 years, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or others who wish to move onto more independence. The service

provides high quality placements which support young people to meet their needs and promotes their pathways into further education, training, and work. It has increased capacity for young people who need accommodation to ensure they receive the best care and support to help give every young person the best start in life and improve their early life experiences. In addition, high quality carers are providing significant levels of support to young people who experience complex needs who have experienced homelessness.

Direct Payments

The below graph illustrates the growth in the number of children in receipt of a direct payment.



We have seen a significant increase in Direct Payments as the department has found it challenging to meet the needs of families post pandemic. A significant piece of work is underway to look at models of care in meeting the demand in the future for children with disabilities.

Mid and West Wales Regional Adoption Service (MWAS) is an integral part of the National Adoption Service (NAS) and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies in Wales to continually develop by embedding the four NAS Good Practice Guides into practice. In accordance with the guides, MWAS has already improved transitional work when children are moving to adoptive placements to ensure children and adopters are more effectively supported through the process. In addition, MWAS is also taking steps to improve support to birth parents by working with our partner Reflect to support birth parents at earlier stages in the Adoption Process. MWAS is providing a significant level of support to children and adopters to ensure the right support is provided at the right time.

The service has experienced Adoption Social Workers, Support Workers and an Adoption Psychologist who work with children and families to ensure the appropriate therapy/direct work can be provided to adoptive families to create stability for adopted children and prevent disruptions. The region is working in partnership with NAS to embed Welsh Early Permanence into its service. This will ensure children experience less loss and separation if there is a need for them to be placed with adopters which will improve their emotional well-being and outcomes as they

develop through their childhood. Carmarthenshire continues to have very few children waiting for an adoption placement and has an abundance of adopters waiting for a child therefore is in a strong position to enable choice of adopters for children to ensure the match is right for the child. Through effective marketing the service continues to attract enquiries from the public who are interested in adoption.

There are currently 4.26% of **Electively Home Educated** children who have not had a visit in the last 12 months. Last year this figure was 11.13%, reflecting a significant increase in number of visits completed. Many visits were cancelled due to illness in families (including Strep A and Scarlet fever during the last few months). Out of all visits completed, the child was spoken to in 64.97% of visits. Group work has continued to be funded by the EHE grant with workshops in Welsh, English, science, maths, outdoor learning, horticulture, art, mindfulness, and drama. Currently 14 EHE learners are being supported to complete their Art GCSEs this year. The team held a community-based wellbeing event for home educated learners which was attended by approximately 50 children. The local authority continues to work towards the Welsh Government's core offer for all EHE learners. This is being discussed at the strategic focus group for inclusion and engagement.

Team Around the Family (TAF) is fully staffed with an increased budget for 2023/25 to expand the direct work and prevent family breakdown. The annual parenting programme is being delivered providing support in terms of nurture based parenting and specific parenting for children with neurodiversity. There are no waiting lists. Where parents are unable to attend group work, the team continue to provide one-one support. The Team continues to link in with schools, health colleagues and community resources within the 3rd sector and their input is well received. The Co-ordinators ensure that there is extensive local community knowledge and engagement and the team continue to focus on early intervention and support for families in their local communities.

The new membership has been established for the **Corporate Parenting Panel**. The new guidance has been provided by WG and there is a workshop planned to develop a new corporate parenting strategy to be compliant with the expectations of this. New targets for 2023/24 will be set and there will be an increased focus on accountability from all departments across the council and councillor leads for key areas to ensure that the excellent outcomes previously attained for children looked after and care leavers in Carmarthenshire is maintained. There is increased demand across the services with some children looked after not always receiving all that they are entitled to and this will be addressed as a priority.

There is a strategic development plan in place to recruit and retain more foster carers ensuring our children's care needs can be met locally, develop residential care options in line with eliminate (removing profit from care) and extend the level of well-being and community support available to our looked after children and care leavers.

There is now a small team of 3 staff within the Corporate Parenting Team who are supporting **Trauma Informed Practice and Attachment Awareness** training and professional practice in terms of children looked after by Carmarthenshire. Trauma informed practice and restorative models is now embedded in the 4 phase inclusive behavioural model. A senior Educational Psychologist leads on training and support

for schools. There are staff trained in trauma informed practice in every school in Carmarthenshire and in every department across Education and Children's Services.

Awareness raising about the implementation of the **Code of Practice for Autism** has been a key priority this year. Ensuring that managers, commissioners and Learning and Development are aware of their responsibilities under the Code has been a crucial step to ensure individual duties are being met. This has been achieved through training and information sessions, and publicised on staff bulletins, websites and via social media. Our recent Autism Support Services Event was attended by over 300 people and contributed to ensuring that we are compliant with many of the duties within the Code. Specifically, relating to awareness raising of the diagnostic, support services and carers services available to autistic people and their families. We are part of the Regional Strategic and Task and Finish Groups collaborating with the Local Authorities and Health Board to ensure a consistent approach and best practice sharing as well as with Welsh Government commissioned 'People at Work' to ensure a shared understanding of the duty's requirements.

The Family Information Service Childcare Offer parent applications continue to be processed, and the following paid to local childcare providers delivering the offer during April-July 2023: £99,226.97* (£81,997.50 General childcare and £17,229.47 SEN). August and September figures will be included in the next quarter report as these are not currently available from Ceredigion CO delivery authority and will be reported in Qtr3 the above figure is for the legacy system and it is important to note that July's payment may also include some August payments. Ceredigion CO delivery authority allowed providers to claim early for August as it was expected that September would be busy as the funding claimed through the legacy system ended 31/08/2023. National Digital Service £542,050 the new Digital system.
Total Spend May – Jul 2023 £641,276.97

Childcare Offer Additional Support Grant

7 children received support through the CO Additional Support Grant.
5 additional children received CO ASG for CO approved holiday entitlement until Sept 2023. No further updates from Welsh Government to commence the system build to incorporate the Additional Support Grant process for providers and parents within the New Digital system. (FIS) have ensured families and professionals have received updated information on services, resources, and developments.

During July – September the FIS website had 9,744 users, 15,731 sessions, and 34k pageviews. There was a 12% increase in users in this period. Carmarthenshire Flying Start was the most viewed page due to the expansion of the service, which has created much interest with parents checking their eligibility for the service. The FIS have received 436 enquiries in this quarter.

Summer of Fun / Winter of Well-being a Welsh Government funding enabled a significant package of support to be provided designed to help children, young people and their families recover from the pandemic to ensure no child was left behind. Several organisations received funding including family and children's

centres, youth service, Actif, Menter, Pembrey Country Park and theatres where children and young people were able to access free activities and workshops.

15, 000 children and young people across the county from 0-25 years benefitted from these activities.

Carmarthenshire's **local offer** is an electronic information hub to provide disabled children and their families an easily accessible platform to source information and support within their area. Consultation with Parents and carers has taken place to ensure it is accessible for all. The web page is set up for different age groups (0-5 years, 5-11 years, 11-16 years and 16 -25 years) with sub sections that can be accessed by 'One Click' to support such as - *Health and Wellbeing, Social Care, Education, Financial Support and Housing*. On-going training is being provided to the core staff who will manage the updates of the website to ensure it remains current. The webpage was finalised and went live on 25th November 2022.

Flying Start case management discussion meetings are now aligned to the statutory services' Pods and systemic practice are working well in identifying support to meet the needs of the families. Delivery has been impacted by the lack of childcare staff. The **Flying Start App** is integral in reaching families, especially during the Flying Start expansion, providing key messages, such as health, language and play, safety messages, information, and links to the support services. The App has developed to reach families so that they can now book onto a course and have updates on their child when in childcare.

The FS team has needed to expand to meet the additional demands of the FS phase 1 expansion and prepare for phase 2 childcare expansion. The parenting team are developing services to meet the changing needs of families within the community. Staff training has taken place, especially around trauma based and systemic practice which has enabled upskilling and has built their confidence in delivering services and supporting families. Families are re-engaging with face-to-face services, with our language and play groups being oversubscribed, resulting in additional groups being run. The health visitors have continued to run clinics from the Integrated Children's Centres and the Early Years Centre in Trimsaran.

Families First have continued to develop early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people, and families across the county in line with the **Family Support Strategy**, utilising opportunities for integrated services across the children and Communities Grant and Housing Support Grants, and all programmes have been successfully delivered. Action for Children were successful in their bid for delivering the Families First (FF) parenting project for the next four years. Challenges including staff vacancies, sickness, and rising demand of services have led to small waiting lists for support in some projects.

During 2022-23 outcomes and outputs for families have been positive in this family support programme:

- ✓ **9230** individuals have been supported from the Families First (FF) programme, of which 6011 (65%) were new individuals.

- ✓ **4621** families have been supported from the FF programme, of which 2881 (62%) were new families.
- ✓ **798** single agency JAFFs were closed with a positive forward movement of 749 (94%) on the distance travelled tool.
- ✓ **145** cases were stepped down from statutory social services to FF programme, and **25** cases were stepped up to Social Services.

Direct Care Provision/Commissioned Care

External Commissioning and Support

Carmarthenshire purchases most of its residential care for children and adults from the private sector. Approximately 36% of homecare is provided in house with the remainder purchased from the private sector through a specialist framework. During the pandemic we saw market failures across the private sector with the in-house provision increasingly seen as a provider of last resort to vulnerable people. Thus, it is crucial that we maintain an appropriate balance of in-house and externally purchased care and that no single provider monopolizes provision and prices in the county. As the market for care consolidates this is becoming increasingly challenging to manage and, in some areas, we are seeing significant profits generated as the sector is under supplied to meet growing demand.

The last year has continued to be a challenging one, with ongoing covid related issues and market stability concerns. We continue to support the sector through the coordination and distribution of PPE, additional payments to the sector, and supporting Covid outbreaks. Market pressures continue in relation to workforce recruitment and retention of care staff both in-house and externally and this remains a key area of concern. This was especially evidenced in the domiciliary care sector where during 2022 we experienced our highest waiting lists for care and support at home. We are, however, cautiously optimistic that we are now seeing a downward trend and the sector appears to be more stable. We have also experienced two care home closures which were particularly complex from a legal and financial perspective which have led to contract terminations and the difficult transition of residents to alternative care homes.

Provision of residential care for children is problematic across Wales with huge costs for a very few children. There is some evidence the Welsh Government's strategy to take the profit out of the care market has reduced new investment in the sector as providers see little opportunity to make profit or expand further. Whilst I am wholly supportive of the approach we are in a difficult transition period with a severe under supply in the market for children.

There are some notable areas of progress during 2022/23. This includes the publication of the Market Stability Report which has identified a number of key recommendations to ensure market stability and sufficiency of supply. We have also developed the West Wales Adult Advocacy Strategy and regional commissioning arrangements linked to this. We have recommissioned the third sector spend and developed five community/preventative hubs across the county as part of our

strategic preventative approach to reducing demand on statutory services and supporting people to live well in their local communities. This has strengthened our strategic approach to prevention.

We have developed and published the Housing Support Programme Strategy and continue to strengthen links with housing and accommodation, but still recognise there is much to do in this area. Following bringing our direct payment support service in-house, we have developed a much-improved approach to the management of direct payments which provides greater assurance both for those that use them and the Council.

In-house Residential Care

We continue to maintain our in-house residential care provision to support residents in Carmarthenshire. We have started to remodel this provision to help meet some of the market gaps identified in the Market Stability Report and this will be an ongoing journey over the forthcoming years. As explained above, the investment in Ty Pili-Pala, a wing of Llys Y Bryn Care Home, as a 14-bedded step-down unit is proving hugely beneficial to those leaving hospital in reducing their long-term care needs. Recruitment remains a challenge in our in-house homes, but we continue to proactively market our vacancies to fill gaps as and when they emerge. We have advanced plans to expand an existing home or purchase a suitable site to further rebalance the market in the county.

In Children's Residential care we are maintaining our provision on 3 sites for children with disabilities whilst considering a new build to replace some respite provision linked to the Heol Goffa school development in Llanelli. We have developed a specialist Childrens home in Carmarthen and anticipate this will be completed by late Autumn 2024. Further developments of smaller longer term homes are under consideration to ensure we can meet need locally and in a way that is cost effective and keeps children local.

In-house Home Care

The impact of the pandemic has taken its toll on our social care workforce, and this undoubtedly has been our greatest challenge over the last year. We have continued to have trouble recruiting Homecare staff. Within this context, our Homecare Team have shown great resilience in continuing to provide care in people's homes demonstrated through a very positive inspection from the CIW.

It's the department's priority to build an efficient, strong and sustainable in-house service. This will include enhancing the in-house provision and redeveloping the reablement services. We have successfully established a triage arrangement for intermediate care with health colleagues and this is already having an impact on hospital flow and reducing waiting lists. We have also progressed an aggressive recruitment campaign, streamlined our recruitment processes, introduced additional capacity to support recruitment and improved the grading structure for home care staff, which now means that our rate of pay is amongst the best in Wales.

Currently the in-house home care service provides approximately 37% of the overall domiciliary care market in Carmarthenshire. The service is focussing on strategies that promote expansion, but recruitment and retention challenges in the care sector has impacted on this objective. Our aspiration going forward, is to grow the in-house service to provide 50% of the market over the next year which will include supporting those with more complex needs. This strategy will ensure that we are able to have greater resilience within the domiciliary care market.

Key to developing our in house service is to increase its productivity so that it is more cost effective. Work is underway to address this and close the cost gap with the private sector. Hourly pay rates and travel reimbursement are not now dissimilar between the public and private sector in Carmarthenshire. The biggest differential that impacts on cost is now sick pay and pension both of which are significantly better in the County Council.

What Others Say

A Care and Support survey was undertaken in March 2023 with users of the services with a 15% response rate, this is lower than previous years.

82% of respondents felt that their views were listened to by Social Care.

86% of respondents felt they/the person they care for were given the right information and advice when they had needed it.

80% of respondents felt that they/the person they care for was treated with dignity and respect.

84% of respondents stated that they/the person they care for has been happy with the care and support they have had.

As we have recovered from the pandemic inspections of services have resumed, comments lifted from the reports are illustrated below.

“People and their relatives speak highly about the care and support they receive. Care records are person centred and reflect people’s individual needs. Care staff are well trained, have a good knowledge of the people they care for and are enthusiastic about working in the service. Dedicated and knowledgeable managers who are well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI) lead the service. The managers are accessible and well respected by all involved. The RI has good oversight of the service and there are robust systems in place to support this. The leadership team have good working relationships and a clear vision about the service.”

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on the In house Domiciliary care service.*

“Overall conclusion following the inspection is that West Wales Shared Lives endeavours to support people to maintain their independence. The staff team are enthusiastic and want to make a positive difference to people’s lives. Carers are focused on the person’s needs, to positively impact on their well-being. People say their placements and carers support them well. Many carers feel well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI) and the management team overall, although some feel there is little or no support. Good communication channels are evident throughout the service; however, some people feel the communication is poor. There are robust systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided. It was noted that some elements of communication could be improved as well as ensuring all carers are supported and these are key priorities going forward.”

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on Shared Lives – inspection April 22*

“ People staying in Tir Eion respite service benefit from the care and support they receive through the knowledgeable and caring staff team. Promotion of people’s individual health and wellbeing underpins the aim of the service. Care and support plans are detailed and provide a good sense of the individual, their complex needs and how best to support them. External professionals are actively involved in the support people receive. A dedicated and enthusiastic manager leads the ethos of the service. Staff respect and value the manager who is well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI). There are a range of monitoring and audit processes in place, and the RI has good oversight of the service”.

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on Tir Eion Respite Centre – Inspection August 22*

“
Children are treated with dignity and respect and care staff take time to communicate with them and provide choices. Children can choose the activities they want to do and the food they want to eat. Children are encouraged to make positive choices and reminded of the benefits of this”.

CIW Inspection Report on Llys Caradog Childrens Centre - March 2023

Complaints and Compliments

Adults & Children

We have continued to learn lessons from complaints and ensure that any learning points that emerge are addressed and embedded across the service.

A Resolution and Complaints Manager commenced in post in October 2022 with the responsibility of coordinating processes relating to complaints and undertaking preventative work. The purpose of this is to increase learning within teams to improve the quality of the service provided and to reduce the volume of complaints received.

In March 2023, the team underwent an internal audit and some initial recommendations have been made including the production of a procedural document which will be a priority going forward.

Further to this, a complaints training programme has been developed, which will be rolled out in the coming months to include:

- Complaints awareness training for all staff
- Training for staff undertaking Stage 1 complaints resolutions.
- Complaints training for providers

There will also be a focus on preventative work to increase learning from complaints within the teams.

A total of 73 complaints were recorded at either Stage 1 or 2 in relation to Adult Services in 2022/23 of which 56 were investigated at the Local Resolution Stage 1 and 17 under the Formal Investigation of Stage 2. A further 41 complaints were dealt with by the department and recorded either as redirects, no further action, on hold pending safeguarding/ legal proceedings or other.

Within Children services 10 were recorded at Stage 1 and a further 3 were recorded at Stage 2.

In the same period three complaints have been escalated to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales following completion of a Stage 2 investigation. The Ombudsman has not accepted any of these complaints and no further investigation has taken place.

If there are any recommendations made following the completion of the Stage 1 or Stage 2 process, the team log these on an action plan which is sent out to relevant managers to follow up. Trends and learning opportunities will be identified from these recommendations and are brought to Process and Practice Board and subsequently disseminated in team meetings on a quarterly basis by the Resolution and Complaints Manager. In terms of governance, the Complaints Audit Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis.

The team have also been working on increasing the pool of Independent Investigating Officers and over the last year, 3 new investigators have been commissioned. Going forward more work will be done to ensure a robust selection process whilst ensuring impartiality.

The Resolution and Complaints Manager links in regularly with her counterparts both regionally and nationally to share ideas and ensure a consistent approach across Wales.

*2023/24 Social Care complaints report is available on request. *

Compliments

A total of 153 compliments were received and recorded in 2022/23.

Gair byr i ddweud bod Mam wedi trosglwyddo o Ysbyty [l'r gartref]. Mae hi'n hapus yno ar hyn o bryd a byddwn yn parhau i'w chefnogi i setlo. Diolch i ti am dy gyngor a help dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Mae'r gwasanaeth gofal o dan bwysau aruthrol ond mae yna bobl dda iawn yn cynnal y gwasanaeth a gallwn ddweud heb amheuaeth dy fod yn un o'r rheiny. Diolch."

I would like to say thank you to all the girls who have looked after me the last few months. My family and I are really grateful for the wonderful nursing that I have had. They have been caring encouraging and very professional. Please pass on my grateful thanks. I shall miss their visits and little chats".

As a family we wanted to express our thanks for the support offered at what has been a difficult transition for Mum. As Mum stated herself today, she wants to remain at home if possible, and it is good to know we are all working towards supporting her wishes.

"Newydd gorffen y supporting statement, ond I guess bo dim ishe fe nawr. Diolch i ti am y cymorth a'r cefnogaeth, mae'n teimlo fel bo pwys trwm wedi codi, allwn byth diolch digon i ti. Fe wnaï cysylltu a [the care home]

Workforce

Workforce

Our staff are without doubt our most valued asset – they are the front face of the Council and represent and uphold our key values as public servants. We recognise the challenges faced by staff and have ensured that we continue to support their welfare and wellbeing. Their resilience and dedication have been incredible. We continue to need an adequate workforce of well-trained, experienced staff with the right skills and approach needed to work with citizens and effectively in partnership with other organisations. This challenge will remain with us for some time and especially in the context of how we continue to respond post pandemic.

Our priority is to ensure that the social care workforce has the knowledge and skills to meet our business objectives and that service users in Carmarthenshire are supported by skilled and competent staff.

Our workforce strategies continue to evolve, and we must continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the region including Health, to minimise training duplication, maximise training attendance and share information regularly in order to meet the shared training needs of the sector and achieve our goals.

Being able to recruit social workers, carers, foster carers and personal assistants still remains a top priority for us in order to fill vacant posts across the sector.

We aim to attract more young people into the care profession by collaborating with schools and key stakeholders to deliver social care. We launched our carer academy during the year with now 7 members on the programme, in addition we have 26 individuals on our Social Work programmes funded by the department.

Rate your Division.

We asked all staff in the Department if they would “Rate Their Division as an Employer.” Using this national methodology it helps us to understand their experience working in the department and each division. Instead of asking hundreds of survey questions, we ask one key question:

“ How likely would you be to recommend your division as an employer to someone you know?

1 = Not at all likely and 10 = Extremely likely. ”

Our overall score for the Department result is: **Good**

Workforce remains our biggest challenge in terms of recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of social workers as well as Homecare workers. This issue is not in any way unique to Carmarthenshire. Locally we have made good progress in residential care recruitment but continue to have gaps in Social Work and Homecare.

In order to address the challenge, we established a Social Care Recruitment and Retention Group which I chair, to ensure that we have the focus that we need on the workforce challenges.

From a social work perspective, we have created 10 new social work trainee posts across both Adult and Children & Family Services to allow us to grow our own social workers. We have also recruited 2 overseas social workers who have now started in post and are working to recruit more. This strategy overall is allowing us to fill our vacancies and provides us with a long-term solution to social work capacity. We are also supporting 2 of our Occupational Therapy Assistants to do their degree with a view to becoming qualified Occupational Therapists following the launch of the new degree programme at Swansea University.

We held a joint Social Work Professional Development event back in March 2023 across Children and Adult services 350 Social workers were invited to the event. Total of 191 Social Worker attended and was well received.



Using a NPS scoring, the event NPS Score came out as 'Great' A further Social work development session is now planned for October 2023

During the event we celebrated the fantastic job many of our social workers do and asked them to reflect on examples that were magic for them. Examples of magic moments captured included:

- Doing last care and support visit with long term service user and seeing her do well with new-born baby having formed positive relationships with everyone.
- Upholding rights and promoting choices to stay in own home with his dog, despite visit from Fire Brigade.
- Working hard to get the right package of care for adult to stay at home, which was what they wanted and deserved.
- It is a privilege to sit in people's homes and be able to speak to both adults and children at the most difficult times in their lives, about the difficulties, strengths and to build relationships with them.

- Working with families in a way that restores their faith in SW. Empowers them to make positive changes, helping them to change their mindset on how to raise their children and manage challenges. Being told that she will tell others about her support from Social Services and how it has changed her family situation, when she had previously been worried about having Social Services involved.

From a care worker perspective, we have established a Care Academi which provides individuals with the opportunity to work in care settings and gain qualifications as part of a pathway to Social Work or management. Currently we have 10 people on this programme, and we are about to embark on a third stage of recruitment. We have had active recruitment campaigns to attract care workers to come to work in Carmarthenshire.

We have also supported the sector in recruitment and retention initiatives. Additional funding was allocated to local domiciliary care providers to lead on a recruitment and retention plan. The intentions being for local providers to work together to agree targeted initiatives that will raise the profile of care and to also develop/stimulate the market.

A project board was set up by providers to manage the allocation of monies and to agree priority areas. The project focused on the following areas:

- Social Care Champions: Each provider nominated a staff member to represent the role of a carer, visiting schools, colleges and attending events.
- Marketing: The group set up a web-based platform to post encouraging information to raise the profile of a career in care. This was not used to advertise jobs for care providers but had links to We Care Wales.
- Carmarthenshire Carers Awards: The group arranged a Carers Awards evening in the Stradey Park Hotel to recognise and promote the excellent work of care staff. Providers worked together to plan the event, which was a great success and which had a positive impact on staff morale.

The group continue to work on the project and are currently developing a care apprenticeship pathway for 16 to 18 year olds.

We are also building on the developments in Pembrokeshire and now extending the development of micro enterprises into Carmarthenshire. We have recruited a local Catalyst which is hosted by PLANED and will work closely with CAVS and other partners.

We have tried very hard to continue to support staff wellbeing and encouraged staff across the department to come forward as Wellbeing Champions to represent their teams as part of the Communities Wellbeing Group. This group is leading the way on taking a departmental approach to sharing good practice and also feeding through ideas of how we can support wellbeing such as better use of teams and diaries to give staff the space they need to work.

In the context of the huge challenges that they have faced, staff have continued to show determination, commitment and the highest levels of professionalism in supporting Carmarthenshire residents. They often go above and beyond what is expected of them. Testament to this is the high level of compliments that the service continues to receive as outlined above, as well as the awards that have been received over the course of the year. We are hugely grateful to our staff, but mindful that we need to support staff in every way we can to ensure that they can keep resilient and happy and productive in their work. Focussing on how we support staff and celebrate success is key to maintaining a healthy workforce This can include external recognition which has included a range of awards:

- ✪ The success of our Home First approach was recognised through 2 NHS Wales Awards for Delivery Person Centred Care and Outstanding Contribution to the Transformation of Health and Care. The team was also recognised as finalists in the UK Public Sector Transformation Awards.

- ✪ TSA ITEC Awards 2023
 - Partnerships in TEC Award (Telehealth with Hywel Dda University Health Board) WINNER
 - Transformation Award (Delta CONNECT) Finalist



- ✪ At the first Regional Safeguarding Award ceremony, Senior Manager for Safeguarding, Cathy Richards, was given the Outstanding Practice Demonstrated in the Safeguarding of Adults award.
- ✪ Adult Social Care division picked up awards at the Regional Partnership Awards:
 - Learning Disability Day Services won the innovation award for their innovative approach to day opportunities and the community groups they have set up.
 - Tir Einon respite centre and the Positive Behaviour Team were also highly commended for the team award.
 - The Regional Improving Lives Partnership Learning Disability, chaired by Sharon Frewin, Senior Manager, Community Inclusion and Dream Team a group of people with lived experience who co-chair this group were also highly commended for co-production.
 - Mark Evans, Senior Manager for Mental Health and Substance Misuse, achieved the Outstanding Contribution to Practice award for his 34-years of service.

- ✦ The Long-Term Domiciliary Care Team won the team award at the Welsh element of the British Care awards.
- ✦ Gill Grennan Jenkins, Team Manager 0-25 Service (which is across adults and children) was also highly commended for the Front-line Leadership award at this event.



In addition to the above, our Cabinet Member, Cllr Tremlett, has introduced a Team Achievement of the Month Award through which good practice is recognised internally.



DRAFT

Welsh Language

Within the Communities Department, we have ensured 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language remains a priority. We are confident that an active offer is provided in almost all circumstances. The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. Many of the staff are Welsh speakers, which means people are able to communicate in Welsh or English as they choose.

People are able to have their care provided in Welsh, as a good percentage of the staff are able to speak Welsh.

**CIW Inspection report on the In house Domiciliary care service.*

Whilst the Welsh Language Board has not met as frequently during the year, access to training has continued and a total 22 staff have completed training.

Work is underway to ensure all staff have Welsh language attainments recorded on their training profile. Of those who have a speaking language level recorded, we know that:

- 63% are level 0-2
- 35% are level 3-5

The sustainability of the Welsh language depends on providing enough educational, cultural and social opportunities to use the language daily and this is an essential part of our workforce strategy.

A revision of our strategy will provide the opportunity for us to build on the work that has already been done in Carmarthenshire, and create the conditions that will enable the Welsh Language to thrive, to ensure it can be seen and heard in our communities and amongst our workforce. The strategy will support and contribute to the Welsh Government's vision to create a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

Next Steps

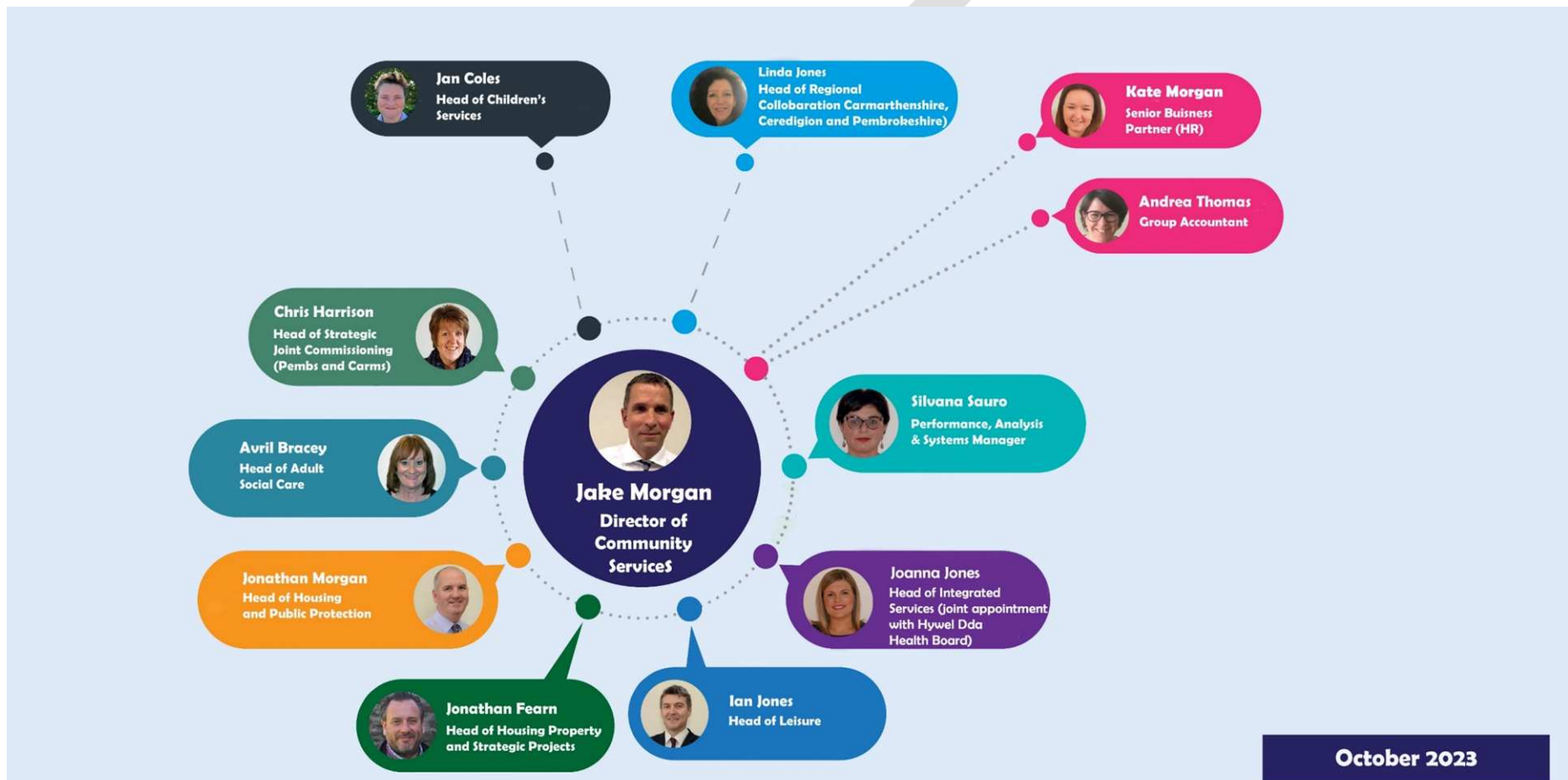
Children & Family Services

No	Action	By Who
1	Continue to provide support to keep children at home with their families and out of the care system wherever possible and better manage budget pressures in the service	
2	Invest in local efficient council run services to rebalance the market across all elements of adult and children social care enabling the service better manage budget pressures in the service.	
3	Work with the Health Board to provide readily accessible and appropriate levels of support to all with Mental Health issues with an expansion of access and support to Children and Vulnerable Adults.	
4	Support the ambition to rebalance the market and take profit out of children's care by opening a Children's Home for children with complex needs in Carmarthenshire.	
5	Further support a Care Academi giving a career pathway for care work, including professional development and training for young people leaving school. Work to double the number of staff supported to gain a Social Work degree. Continue with the recruitment campaign of Social Workers.	

Adult Social Care and Integrated Services

No	Action	By Who
1	Continue to better integrate health and care and work towards parity of recognition and reward for health and care workers.	
2	Continue to improve the support available to carers across the county	
3	Develop preventative services to meet the demands of an ageing population and those with complex needs.	
4	To work with Hywel Dda University Health Board to deliver seamless integrated Health and Social Care wherever possible.	
5	Increase the range of supported accommodation for those with complex needs, reduce the reliance on residential care and facilitate safe discharge from hospital and/or the need for residential care for vulnerable adults.	
6	Further expand the Delta Connect service to provide proactive technology enabled care to vulnerable people within their own homes together with a package of emergency support, monitoring, and wellbeing calls	
7	Work with Welsh Government to create and define a National Care Service that delivers national standards of care with local delivery of services to meet our community's needs	
8	Continue to develop a 10 Year Social Services Vision with a short-term implementation plan that is consistently appraised.	

Department's Management Structure



CABINET

30TH OCTOBER 2023

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE CARMARTHEN AND LLANELLI BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) BOARDS.

Purpose: To gain approval from Cabinet for CCC representation as an observer on the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID boards.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To consider the information contained in the report and approve the nominated representation from Carmarthenshire County Council as an observer on the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID boards.

Reasons:

- To confirm representation from CCC as an observer at the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID Boards
- To enable CCC to report on the BID levy hereditaments in line with the Operational Agreements

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. Hazel Evans Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

Directorate:

Name of Head of Service:
Jason Jones

Report Author: Tessa Bufton

Designations:

Head of Regeneration,
Policy & Digital

Town Centre Regeneration
Manager

Email addresses:

JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

TBufton@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CABINET
30TH OCTOBER 2023**

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE CARMARTHEN AND LLANELLI BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) BOARDS.

Background

Carmarthen and Llanelli BID's were formed in 2020 and 2016 respectively, the Carmarthen BID is still within its first five-year term, whilst the Llanelli BID started its second term in March 2021.

The Business Improvement Districts are business led and funded partnerships, where businesses in the defined boundary area invest money via a bid levy which is then utilised by the BID's to help improve the towns as a place to work, live and visit by delivering a series of services, including events.

Both BID's are governed by Operational Agreements between Carmarthenshire County Council and Carmarthen BID CIC Limited (Carmarthen BID) and Ymlaen Llanelli (Llanelli BID). Within the terms of both agreements Carmarthenshire County Council are responsible for the collection of the bid levy from liable businesses and administering the BID Revenue Account.

The Council provides an annual report which details:-

- (a) The total amount of the BID levy collected during the relevant Financial Year
- (b) details of the success rate for the collection of the BID levy
- (c) the Council's proposals (if any) to help improve its efficiency in the collection and enforcement of the BID levy
- (d) details of those BID levy payers who have paid the BID levy and those who have not paid the BID levy; and
- (e) the Council's proposals for bad or doubtful debts

Board Representation

Within the operational agreements it is confirmed that the BID's will form a Board that is reflective of the businesses within the BID area to ensure appropriate representation. The Boards will ensure the appropriate governance of the BID's in line with the operational agreement and aim & objectives.

At the Executive Board meeting on 21st October 2019 it was recommended to '*nominate a member representative to sit on the BID Company Board*'

During the first term of the Llanelli BID, Carmarthenshire County Council was represented by the then Leader, Cllr Emlyn Dole. There has been no representation to date on the Carmarthen BID.

It is now proposed to nominate the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism as board representative of the hereditaments of Carmarthenshire County Council in an observer capacity only. To avoid any confusion, this representation will not extend to being a board director. It should be noted that as a board observer, the Cabinet Member will be permitted to attend and participate in meetings of the board of directors and to receive all information provided to members of the board (including minutes of board meetings), but will not be permitted to formally vote on matters submitted for a vote.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the nominated representation from Carmarthenshire County Council as an observer onto the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID boards.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	NO
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CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration, Policy & Digital

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	No
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2. Local Member(s)

N/A

3. Community / Town Council

N/A

4. Relevant Partners

N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
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CABINET

30th OCTOBER 2023

<p>NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (13TH SEPTEMBER 2023) LLANDEILO BYPASS</p>		
<p>Recommendations / key decisions required:</p> <p>To consider the Notice of Motion regarding Llandeilo Bypass and to agree on any further actions.</p>		
<p>Reasons:</p> <p>Full Council, at its meeting held on the 13th September 2023, referred a Notice of Motion in respect of Llandeilo Bypass to the Cabinet.</p>		
<p>Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted N/A</p> <p>Cabinet Decision Required YES Council Decision Required NO</p>		
<p>CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor Edward Thomas – Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services</p>		
<p>Directorate:</p> <p>Ainsley Williams</p> <p>Llinos Jenkins</p>	<p>Director of Place and Infrastructure</p> <p>Cabinet Support Officer</p>	<p>LISJenkins@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET 30th OCTOBER 2023

NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (13th SEPTEMBER 2023) LLANDEILO BYPASS

At County Council on the 13th of September, the following Notice of Motion was agreed and is presented to Cabinet for further discussion:

“Llandeilo bypass

Council notes that the WELTAG1 report on the Llandeilo bypass in 2018 categorially eliminated as impractical, the concept of diverting HGVs away from Llandeilo town centre, without a bypass.

Council further notes that the Deputy Minister for Transport recently announced his intention to potentially resurrect this option pending further investigations. This would undoubtedly see HGV operators seeking shortcut diversions through rural villages in neighbouring wards on unsuitable roads or incur extra cost and time because of distance travelled. The impact would be felt by business in Llandeilo town who rely on HGVs for inward and outward deliveries, and an access only approach would render such action as ineffective and unenforceable.

This Council calls on the Deputy Minister to reconsider his announced intention and to adhere to the findings of the 2018 report. Furthermore, this council requests that the Welsh Government promptly publishes the results of the WELTAG 2 consultation undertaken in November 2020 and makes good on the commitment made in 2016/17.”

Latest information:

Discussions between Carmarthenshire County Council officers and Welsh Government officers have continued. The latest discussion took place on the 20th July 2023 where Carmarthenshire County Council officers set out concerns over the practicalities and effectiveness of potential options for managing traffic flow on the existing route through Llandeilo. Concerns were also raised with respect to diverting HGVs away from the town, setting out the resultant negative impacts and difficulties on the surrounding County road network.

Questions were asked about the likelihood of funding for the full bypass scheme and the outcome of the most current Weltag appraisal. The difficulties and challenges associated with constructing a bypass were articulated by WG officers, including budgetary challenges.

Carmarthenshire County Council's position was reaffirmed, stating that there should be a commitment from WG for the full bypass scheme, as that is the only practical solution, accepting that appropriate mitigations would be necessary to address concerns identified by the Weltag process.

Welsh Government officials committed to consider our views and hold further discussions with the Deputy Minister for Climate Change and update Carmarthenshire accordingly sometime in the Autumns 23.

Recommendation:

Carmarthenshire County Council now write a further letter to Welsh Government (Deputy Minister for Climate Change) setting out the Council's position and to formally request the information set out in the Notice of Motion.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	No
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: n/a

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: n/a

1. **Scrutiny Committee** Not applicable
2. **Local Member(s)** Not applicable
3. **Community / Town Council** Not applicable
4. **Relevant Partners** Not applicable
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** Not applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED - YES

Cllr Edward Thomas supported the NoM at the County Council meeting on the 13th September 2023

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Council Meeting 13 th September 2023 Link to agenda and minutes		https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=155&MId=6875&Ver=4

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

N/A

CABINET

30th OCTOBER 2023

**NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL
(13th September 2023)
SHADOWS DEPRESSION SUPPORT GROUP**

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To consider the Notice of Motion regarding Shadows Depression Support Group and to agree on any further actions.

Reasons:

Full Council, at its meeting held on the 13th of September 2023, referred a Notice of Motion in respect of Shadows Depression Support Group to the Cabinet.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO
Cabinet Decision Required YES
Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Jane Tremlett – Cabinet Member for Health and Social Services

Directorates: Communities

Chris Harrison

Head of Strategic Joint
Commissioning

Llinos Jenkins

Cabinet Support Officer

LISJenkins@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**CABINET
30th OCTOBER 2023**

NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (13th September 2023) SHADOWS DEPRESSION SUPPORT GROUP

At County Council on the 13th September 2023, the following Notice of Motion was agreed and is presented to Cabinet for further discussion:

- **Shadows Depression Support Group in Glanamman has made a positive impact on the population of the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys over the last three years, providing a wide-ranging mental health service which impacts the wider community.**
- **Council notes that Shadows' funding was terminated from the 5th September and there is widespread concern about the potential impact on its service users.**
- **We call on Welsh Government, Hywel Dda University Health Board, the GP cluster and Carmarthenshire County Council to work with the Shadows Depression Support Group to try and find a sustainable funding solution in order to protect services in the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys.**
- **Council further calls on Hywel Dda University Health Board to ensure that there are sufficient**
- **mental health services available to residents across all of Carmarthenshire, in both the short and**
- **long-term.**

Background

It is the Council's understanding that Shadows Depression Support Group was awarded a grant by the Health Board through Primary Care Cluster funding for a 3 year period. This grant has very recently come to an end. As part of the exit strategy for this grant, the group were invited to attend a meeting of the Health Board towards the beginning of this year. As part of this, they were asked to prepare a presentation which provided the evidence base of the benefits of the project. Our understanding is that whilst the group were able to provide some anecdotal evidence of the benefits, there was no firm data provided and therefore a further continuation grant could not be progressed. It should be noted that Cluster funding is designed as pump priming funding, and there is an expectation that projects will becoming self-sustaining at the end of the grant period.

As a Council we have a responsibility to provide statutory mental health services (Social Services and Wellbeing Act , the Mental Health Act and Mental health Measure and Together for Mental Health Strategy) we also collaborate with the Health Board in relation to developing mental health services (we are key partners in the Together for Mental Health Partnership Board) and our Social Work teams are co located with the Health Board Mental Health teams, we adopt a multi-disciplinary approach.

We are keen to work closely with the Health Board to discuss the next steps.

Shadows group were advised about our recent recommissioning of community preventative

services but were unsuccessful. We advised and encouraged the group to link with Business Wales who offer free support to small businesses and 3rd sector organisations with the tendering application and any related business help to support project activity'. The Council does however recognise the support that the group has provided over the duration of the grant, and we have received very positive feedback from all involved. We have therefore been in some tentative discussions with Shadows Depression Support Group about the potential to work together. These discussions are at the very early stage and form a part of our wider preventative approaches, we will continue to explore the potential to work together further.

Additional information

The commissioning team have since engaged with Shadows to explore opportunities to meet local need. To date, we have identified 2 services that have been confirmed for Shadows to deliver in the Amman and Gwendraeth areas. Our work around prevention is ongoing, we will ensure that Shadows are supported to engage in opportunities relevant to their service.

Funding confirmed to date: £19,576 to deliver 2 projects in the Amman and Gwendraeth localities.

PROJECT 1

VAWDASV: Support for VAWDASV survivors in the Gwendraeth Locality (Tumble, Pontyberem and Trimsaran) and Aman Locality area (Garnant). In brief the projects provide a drop in and a walk in facility in addition to planned 1:1 and Group sessions. The project is designed to be an agile service, responding to demand on the same day or next working day.

The service provided will offer emotional and material support, a safe, comfortable and confidential place to talk and ensures people are supported to access essential materials such as food, housing and healthcare. The service encourages and empowers survivors to keep communication open with supportive family and friends and will provide information to the survivor regarding other organisations that can offer further support surrounding their situation, if needed. The service also helps survivors to attend appointments when required, access services such as free law advice and provide a survivors crime prevention kit.

The VAWDASV project has received a total of £4,000 which covers £2,000 per locality.

PROJECT 2

Generic Mental Health: 1:1 and group mental health support. Similarly, to the VAWDASV project this service will cover the Amman and Gwendraeth localities and will offer both planned and drop in support. The sessions are led by facilitators with lived experience, offering a confidential and safe space to talk and receive support not just from facilitators but also through peer support. A confidential What's App support group is available including out of hours along with a library of self-help resources, information and signposting to other suitable organisations.

The Mental Health project has received a total of £15,576, which covers £7,788 per locality.

The funding for both projects is short term in nature and is only intended to bridge the gap for existing services to continue to respond to community demand whilst longer term sustainable measures are implemented.

The Commissioning Team is also supporting discussions between Shadows and both Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services and CWMPAS. This seeks to provide access to specialist information and advice which will support Shadows to maximise available opportunities to improve the sustainability of the service going forward and to inform planning for the new financial year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	No
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Chris Harrison

Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

Finance

Financial implications will depend on any level of support agreed by Cabinet.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: N/A

1. **Scrutiny Committee** Not applicable
2. **Local Member(s)** Not applicable
3. **Community / Town Council** Not applicable
4. **Relevant Partners** Not applicable
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** Not applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED - YES

Cllr Jane Tremlett proposed the amendment to the NoM at the County Council meeting on the 13th September 2023

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Council Meeting 13 th September 2023 Link to agenda and minutes		Agenda for County Council on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, 10.00 am (gov.wales)

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

N/A

CABINET

30TH OCTOBER 2023

10 TOWNS PROGRAMME CAPITAL FUND - KIDWELLY TOWN

Purpose:

To consider an application submitted by Kidwelly Town Council as part of the 10 Towns programme. The aim of the 10 towns programme is to provide designated rural market towns across the County the opportunity of economic growth and sustainability.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To approve an application submitted by Kidwelly Town Council for support as part of the 10 Towns programme on behalf of the economic growth plan team established in the town.

Reasons:

To support the opportunities identified as part of extensive community consultation and discussion with key stakeholders that will provide economic and social benefits to Kidwelly Town.

The project is seeking funding from both the Shared Prosperity Fund via the Rural Anchor and via the Authority's Ten Towns capital fund. In line with Cabinet decision on the 30th January 2023, this report is being presented to Cabinet due to the fact that the overall request for funding is in excess of £100k.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Ann Davies - Rural Affairs & Planning Policy (Ten Towns programme portfolio)
Cllr Hazel Evans – Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism (Shared Prosperity Fund portfolio)

Directorate: Name of Head of Service:	Designations:	Email addresses:
Jason Jones	Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital	Jason Jones JaJones@cararthenshire.gov.uk
Report Author: Mared Pemberton	Rural Programmes Co-ordinator	Mared Pemberton MEPemberton@cararthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET 30TH OCTOBER 2023

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

Background

The aim of the 10 Towns Programme is to increase the resilience and future growth of Carmarthenshire's rural market towns and their surrounding areas.

The Authority has committed £1m capital funding to support the respective towns to take forward some of the capital aspirations identified within their economic growth plans. This was approved by Executive Board on 21st June 2021. Subsequently, further funding has been secured via the Shared Prosperity Fund Rural Anchor Programme to support the realisation of the town's priority projects.

Kidwelly Town Council has agreed to act as the lead body on behalf of the economic growth plan team which has been established within the town which includes representatives from private, public and third sector organisations.

Application for Consideration:

Kidwelly Town Council

Total project costs: £306,809

Grant requested: £175,000 (10 Towns core fund request: £100,000 & SPF request: £75,000)

Match funding secured: £131,809 from Kidwelly Town Council

Project Summary

The application is seeking funding to improve and alter the Town Square. The reimagined space will function as a focus for the town's civic activities, informal leisure, business uses and improved location for the growing outdoor market.

The area is in the Kidwelly Town Conservation area. Improvements will include the use of traditional material, significant greening of the area, relocation of the bus shelter and repositioning street furniture to create a space that enables further commercial uses such as popups and expansion of the current successful outdoor market.

The proposed project will achieve a number of economic outputs as per below:

- 12 stall holders directly supported through extended market space.
- 6500 increased visitors to the town per annum evidenced by Wi-fi town network data
- 1 tourism initiative supported and developed
- 520 m2 of outdoor space created for events and markets
- 3 carbon zero initiatives supported.
- 1 smart town activities supported.

The development of this project will provide clear economic benefit to the town by increasing the availability of market spaces for local businesses. This will in turn bring in more visitors to the area and increase local spend. This project also provides an opportunity to realise the potential of an underutilised area by redeveloping it into a well-designed vibrant space for existing businesses, local community and visitors alike.

A public consultation has been carried out sharing the proposed designs which was positively supported prior to the planning application being submitted. Planning application PL/04951 was approved on 5th April 2023. The appropriate internal departments have been consulted upon and are in support of the application as well being recommended for approval by an internal grants panel. Subject to gaining cabinet approval, the project will commence as soon as possible with anticipated completion by December 2024.

Kidwelly Town Council has confirmed match funding of £131,809 towards the project.

Recommendation:

To approve a grant request of £100,000 from the Authority's 10 Towns Capital Fund and £75,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund as part of the Rural Anchor programme.

1. OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE

There are no alternative funding sources available for this project. Without Shared Prosperity Fund investment and Core funding, this project would not proceed.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Ten Towns initiative has been developed to support the regeneration of rural market towns across Carmarthenshire in line with the County's rural strategy Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward. This initiative will also support the delivery of the Carmarthenshire Investment Plan which is aligned with the county's existing strategies and plans including the Economic Recovery Plan, Local Innovation Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment, and the South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Corporate Strategy.

The Programme will support the objectives of the Wellbeing & Future Generations Act by targeting interventions which aim to ensure that the Welsh speaking communities of the County remain vibrant and sustainable communities.

2. Legal

The successful applicant will be issued with funding award letters in relation to both named funds in this report. Terms and Conditions will be issued to the applicant which have been verified by CCC legal department. Legal charges will be placed on assets in line with CCC Third party procedures for grant support over £25,000.

2. Finance

The project is funded from two sources: Carmarthenshire County Council capital funds and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund as part of the Rural Anchor programme. Match funding has also been secured from Kidwelly Town Council of £131,809.

5. Risk Management Issues

A programme level risk management process will be followed to ensure that risk is assessed and managed at all levels.

A key risk is the short delivery timeframe of SPF with all 3rd party grants required to be financially completed by the end of December 2024.

At a project level, a risk register will be maintained together with appropriate mitigation measures. The Rural Anchor Team who are responsible for administering both named funds will closely monitor progress of the project individual awards. Where a lack of progress is being made, applicants will need to provide clarification as to how they will be able to deliver against the original approved amount. As a last resort this may mean suspension of a project mid delivery.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	N/A
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2. Local Member(s)

Elected Members Cllr Crish Davies and Cllr Lewis Eldred Davies have been consulted on an on-going basis as part of the growth plan team meetings and are supportive of the projects.

3. Community / Town Council: On-going consultation with Kidwelly Town Council in the development of the proposal.

4. Relevant Partners

Kidwelly Growth plan team which includes a variety of key stakeholders from private, public and third sector organisations.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED	YES
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
10 towns Kidwelly	10T- KTC	County Hall

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Agenda Item 16

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

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Agenda Item 17

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Agenda Item 18

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Agenda Item 19

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