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WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2023

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND THE MULTI LOCATION MEETING OF CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM, ON WEDNESDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 2023 FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Martin S. Davies
Telephone (direct line):	01267 224059
E-Mail:	MSDavies@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

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

A G E N D A

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7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).
8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

Note: In order to be considered at a formal meeting each petition must include 50 registered elector signatures for paper copies and 300 register elector signatures for e-petitions. The total number of Carmarthenshire Electoral Signatures up to the 50 thresholds has been verified. We have not checked the signatures thereafter.

 - 8 .1 PETITION TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TO STOP BANKING WITH BARCLAYS

‘We call on Carmarthenshire County Council to:

 - remove their business from Barclays at the earliest

possible time and transfer to an ethical bank (or should there be no ethical bank able to deal with their corporate needs, move to the least worst bank in sector);

- apply pressure on Barclays to change their investments policies to those that prioritise the needs of the climate and future generations.'

8.2 PETITION TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REGARDING THE DETERIORATION OF BURRY PORT HARBOUR

'We the undersigned electors in the County of Carmarthenshire petition the Carmarthenshire County Council:

- To recognise that the condition of Burry Port harbour and marina has steadily deteriorated to what is essentially an unworkable state despite the long term lease to a private marina operator, and we register our deep concern and dissatisfaction.
- To ensure, as Landlord and Statutory Harbour Authority, all terms of that lease are fully enforced without further delay.
- To inspect the property and issue notices of any breaches of these terms within the next month, and if the leaseholder fails to take appropriate and effective action, to pursue your rights under the lease.
- To take note that we have no faith or confidence that the Water Injection Dredging method will clear the harbour of the heavy sand that needs removing, which makes up the vast bulk of the accumulated sediment, and we do not consider this to be an appropriate or effective action.
- We want to see the harbour and marina return to the best possible condition, to be a safe, functioning, attractive facility that is a genuine benefit for both the harbour users and our whole community.'

9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (NONE RECIEVED)

10. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION (AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE)

10.1 DYFED PENSION FUND COMMITTEE - 23RD NOVEMBER 2022

10.2 PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24TH NOVEMBER 2022

10.3 EDUCATION, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 1ST DECEMBER 2022

- 10 .4 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 8TH DECEMBER, 2022**
 - 10 .5 LICENSING COMMITTEE - 9TH DECEMBER, 2022**
 - 10 .6 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 12TH DECEMBER 2022**
 - 10 .7 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 13TH DECEMBER 2022**
 - 10 .8 PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15TH DECEMBER 2022**
 - 10 .9 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 16TH
DECEMBER, 2022**
 - 10 .10 COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 19TH DECEMBER 2022**
 - 11. THE REPORT RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS NOT FOR
PUBLICATION AS IT CONTAINS 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 COUNCIL
RESOLVES PURSUANT TO THE ACT TO CONSIDER THIS ITEM
IN PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE
MEETING DURING SUCH CONSIDERATION.**
 - 12. PENTRE AWEL**
- 405 - 418

WEDNESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor R.E. Evans (Chair)

Councillors (In Person):

P. Cooper	D.M. Cundy	C.A. Davies	B. Davies
L. Davies	L.D. Evans	N. Evans	S. Godfrey-Coles
T.M. Higgins	P.M. Hughes	J.D. James	R. James
J.P. Jenkins	G.H. John	D. Jones	H. Jones
A. Lenny	A. Leyshon	K. Madge	D. Nicholas
M. Palfreman	D. Price	E. Rees	E. Skinner
D. Thomas	G.B. Thomas	M. Thomas	J. Tremlett
F. Walters			

Councillors (Virtually):

S.M. Allen	L.R. Bowen	K.V. Broom	J.M. Charles
S.A. Curry	A. Davies	W.R.A. Davies	T.A.J. Davies
G. Davies	H.L. Davies	K. Davies	L.M. Davies
S.L. Davies	T. Davies	M. Donoghue	A. Evans
D.C. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	W.T. Evans	A.D. Harries
J.P. Hart	J.K. Howell	P. Hughes-Griffiths	M. James
B.W. Jones	A.C. Jones	G.R. Jones	M.J.A. Lewis
N. Lewis	A.G. Morgan	D. Owen	B.D.J. Phillips
S.L. Rees	B.A.L. Roberts	E.M.J.G. Schiavone	J. Seward
R. Sparks	E.G. Thomas	A. Vaughan Owen	P.T. Warlow
D.E. Williams			

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 and Children's Services
 A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure
 P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
 L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
 R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability
 I.R. Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager
 G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services
 L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
 S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
 M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer
 J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer (minute taker)

Also Present (Virtually):

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.11 am

[Note: The Chair, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2(3) reconfigured the order of business on the agenda to enable Agenda Item 10 to be considered earlier in the meeting].

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Cranham, H.B. Shepardson and J. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
M. James	5 - Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan	Councillor James' workplace location is named within the report.
M. James	6 - Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 Draft Second Deposit	Councillor James' workplace location is noted as a strategic point within the report.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair provided an update on recent activities and events where he and his consort had represented the Council, which included:

- A visit hosted by the Council for the Young Farmers Club.
- The unveiling of the Carmarthen Archives facility.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, in accordance with part 2 (2)(c) of the Council's Corporate Procedure Rules, made an announcement on the severe financial pressures facing the Council, and other Welsh Local Authorities, arising from the current economic situation brought about by a number of factors, including the potential 300% increase in energy costs, rampant inflation and pay awards.

The Cabinet Member reported that further information would be available on 14 December 2022 following publication of the Welsh Government Draft Revenue Support Grant settlement, following which the formal budget consultation process would commence. It was emphasised that the Council's main source of funding was provided by the Welsh Government, which in turn was reliant upon the block grant allocated by Westminster. Accordingly, only 20% of the Council's income was generated from council tax. An assurance was provided to the Council that potential efficiencies were being explored in all areas of the Council, including services, capital schemes, school budgets, fees and charges, leaving vacancies unfilled and utilisation of the Council's reserves. In light of the cost of living crisis, the Council would endeavour to keep any council tax increases to a minimum.

4. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 9th November, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

5. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2021/22 ADOPTED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

[NOTE: Cllr. M. James had earlier declared an interest in this item and remained in the meeting during the deliberation of the report and voting thereof.]

The Council considered the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2021/22 on the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Local Development Plan (LDP) Regulations 2005.

The report concluded that positive progress had been made in implementing many of the adopted Plan's policies and objectives, however some elements and components had not delivered as intended and these had been compounded by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the associated restrictions.

It was noted that in accordance with the Council's statutory duty, the AMR had been submitted to the Welsh Government and published on the Council's website by 31st October 2022.

It was reported that an informal consultation process would undertaken to afford interested parties the opportunity to comment on the key issues raised. Whilst not a statutory requirement, the consultation would provide an important opportunity for views to be submitted and, where appropriate, for those views to contribute to the content of subsequent AMR's. The content of the AMR along with that of the previous documents would also be used to inform the preparation of the Revised LDP 2018 – 2033 and its associated evidence base.

RESOLVED that:

- 5.1 The Annual Monitoring Report for the adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) be approved.**
- 5.2 The findings and evidence contained within the Annual Monitoring Report be utilised to inform evidence gathering in the preparation of the revised LDP 2018 -2033.**
- 5.3 Officers be authorised to make typographical or factual amendments as necessary to improve the clarity and accuracy of the Annual Monitoring Report.**

6. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:

6.1. REVISED CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2033 DRAFT SECOND DEPOSIT

[NOTE: Cllr. M. James had earlier declared an interest in this item and remained in the meeting during the deliberation of the report and voting thereof].

Further to Minute 7 of the Cabinet meeting held 14th November 2022, the Council considered a report setting out the Draft Second Deposit Revised Local Development Plan (LDP) which identified the Council's land use Vision, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Growth requirements for the County through to 2033. The LDP included a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and provisions, including site specific allocations for housing and employment use, as well as environmental and other spatial considerations. It was recognised that a series of factors had impacted upon the progress and content of the Plan including, but not limited to, phosphate levels in protected rivers and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Approval was sought for the publication of the LDP and supporting documents as part of a formal public consultation for a minimum statutory period of 6 weeks commencing in January 2023. Thereafter, it would be subject to public examination by a Welsh Government appointed Planning Inspector with a view to its formal adoption in 2024.

In response to a concern raised in respect of the length of the LDP it was clarified that the report format was prescribed by Welsh Government, and therefore it was necessary for the Council to comply with that format in preparing the documentation.

Reference was made to the recent Census results in respect of population growth and the decline in the number of Welsh Language speakers and clarity was sought on how these would be addressed within the LDP. It was highlighted that the LDP, together with its supporting information, were emerging documents which would develop through to the point of publication. This reflected the availability of some pieces of evidence and timelines associated with the LDP's preparation to ensure that the most current information was included at the point of publication. An assurance was provided that the LDP, as a holistic document, was integrated with a range of other key Plans and Strategies within the Authority.

The Forward Planning Manager provided an overview of the engagement methodology and consultation process adopted whereby the LDP was presented by way of written representations which would be supplemented with digital illustrations and maps to encourage interaction. In response to a query, the Forward Planning Manager reported that the consultation process would provide an appropriate mechanism to address concerns or inconsistencies in respect of the site allocations and how they were portrayed within the LDP.

Tribute was paid to the late Councillor Mair Stephens during her term of office as Chair of the Cross Party Panel. The Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs and Planning Policy, in response to comments made, clarified that local residents were prioritised for affordable housing and should be encouraged by Members to register for affordable and/or social housing, as appropriate.

The Forward Planning Manner clarified to Members that the LDP sought to re-energise town centres in terms of their vitality and viability, with the retail function being supported by other complementary services to increase footfall and vibrancy.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

- 6.1 To approve the content of the Draft Second Deposit Revised Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 (and supporting documents) for formal public consultation.**
 - 6.2 To approve the rolling forward of the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance in relation to the Burry Inlet and the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation for adoption concurrent with the Revised LDP.**
 - 6.3 To note the Draft Briefing Note on the emerging Economic and Housing Growth Report and agree the recommended revised Growth Option.**
 - 6.4 To grant officers delegated authority to make any typographical or factual amendments as necessary in order to enhance clarity of meaning.**
- 7. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:**

7.1. 31ST OCTOBER, 2022

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 31st October, 2022 be received.

7.2. 14TH NOVEMBER, 2022

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th November, 2022 be received.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that an urgent question had been submitted in accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule CPR 11.4b.

QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES TO COUNCILLOR GLYNOG DAVIES, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND WELSH LANGUAGE

“Can the Cabinet Member for Education provide an update to the rise of scarlet fever cases in our schools in the last week?”

Response by Councillor Glynog Davies – Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language:-

“Thank you very much Chair and thanks Rob for the question, this very timely question and extremely important question of course. To be honest, if there wasn't a question I did intend to ask permission from the Chair to say a word about this. The Scarlett fever came to my attention first of all when I heard that there were many children in the local school in Brynaman suffering from Scarlet fever. This was a big concern for me as the Chair of Governors and also to the staff in the school. Over the last few weeks two dozen children in the school have suffered. Two of the children have had to have treatment in hospital and one is still in the Heath in Cardiff. Scarlet Fever, or Scarletina as it's called, it's a very very serious disease, it's very infectious and it is caused by a bacteria, the group A streptococcus bacteria, we are very familiar with the term 'Strep A'. It's spread very easily, direct contact with the person who is suffering from it or through the air, you know droplets in the air, you know coughing or sneezing – the disease is then spread. And of course, remember it can also be spread from using the same equipment or utensils as other people. The symptoms of scarlet fever is a rash that feels like sandpaper to touch; other symptoms include a high temperature, a flushed face and a red swollen tongue - you might have heard of 'strawberry tongue'. Once diagnosed the treatment is quite simple and usually involves a course of penicillin antibiotics. Now one worry that's been drawn to my attention I was speaking to a man, my son, who is a GP and there is shortage currently of antibiotics. Right, we have now cases in Carmarthenshire, I know that 5 schools that have been infected to varying degrees and some, as mentioned, have had to have hospital treatment. There are cases in many other counties, and we are working very closely with Public Health Wales. We are working with them and responding immediately to these cases. On Monday morning, our Headteachers were briefed on this very important matter, and we have shared an information letter provided by Public Health Wales about the symptoms and also how to respond. It's very important that we do raise awareness about this; the staff in our schools are aware of this, and they are keeping an eye on the situation, looking out for children with a high temperature or have a sore throat or a rash. The message is to keep the individual who is suffering away from school for 24hrs after the start of the antibiotic treatment, it's very important. Schools have to follow these guidelines which they have received, and we are working very closely with our schools. If there are two or more cases in the same setting within the school within a 10-day period the school would have to notify the health protection team for further guidance, they are available for them. And remember as well, what we did during the pandemic of course, we were very careful, we washed our hands regularly, so do this again. You know, don't cough or sneeze openly; remember the slogan 'catch it, bin it, kill it', you know that is so important. This can, of course, prevent the spread of infection. A letter has been prepared by the Officers and has been sent to parents and carers; you know if they are concerned about anything the clear message is to contact your GP immediately and we will do everything in the education department to help as well. Public Health Wales are monitoring the situation very carefully so thank you once again for the question”.

Supplementary Question by Councillor Rob James:

“Do you believe there will be a case, where there is a high number of 'STREP A' cases in our school that we will engage with our Governing Body to see if we can increase our cleaning, as you say it's a very infectious disease and cleanliness is obviously an important factor, so I'll be interested to hear your input into that.”

Response by Councillor Glynog Davies – Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language:

“Yes a very very important point indeed Rob. We are monitoring the situation. That is what I can tell you at the moment and we are working closely with Public Health Wales. We are accepting guidance from them as to what we should be doing. If it becomes that severe then we might have to take a similar action as to what we did during the COVID pandemic. Currently that is not happening, but as I said we are listening, we are talking daily to Public Health Wales, and we are listening to them and receiving their guidance and we will obey whatever they tell us. Diolch Rob.”

10. PRESENTATION OF A PETITION

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Ms M. Ballard who had been invited to present to, and address the Council on the following petition relating to Road Safety in Black Lion Road, Cross Hands as follows:

“We, the undersigned, residents of Black Lion Road, want speed-calming measures installed along our road to ensure that the speed limit of 30mph is respected by drivers. We also want the dangerous staggered junction to be changed as a matter of urgency; this is a road hazard and a safeguarding issue”.

Ms Ballard outlined to the Council the rationale for the petition which had received 130 signatures reflecting the concerns of the community on road safety within Black Lion Road, Cross Hands.

The Cabinet Board Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services advised that the issues raised in the petition would be investigated by the department and a report would then be presented to a future meeting of the Council's Cabinet.

Following the presentation, Ms Ballard formally handed the petition to the Council.

RESOLVED that in accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule 10.14 the petition be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

11. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION (AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE)

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda under 11.1 – 11.11 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE

COUNCIL 25 JANUARY 2023

MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2022 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Cabinet Recommendations:

That the Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Update Report for 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022, including changes to the limits for Interest Rate Exposure, be approved.

Reasons:

To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.

Cabinet Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. A. Lenny

Directorate: Corporate Services

Name of Director: Chris Moore

Report Author: Anthony Parnell

Director of
Corporate Services

Treasury and
Pension
Investments
Manager

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY COUNCIL 25 JANUARY 2023

Mid-Year Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.

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

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 2022-2023

2. Finance

The authority's investments during the period returned an average return of 0.94%, exceeding the 90-day un compounded SONIA rate.

The average gross interest earned on investments for the period amounted to £920k and interest paid on loans was £8.18m.

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

Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	N/A
If yes include the following information: -	
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
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

Include any observations here

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
CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services - Code of Practice Revised 2017		County Hall, Carmarthen

MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT

1ST April 2022 – 30TH September 2022

A. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

1. Introduction

The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2022-2023 was approved by Council on 2nd March 2022. 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 2022 to 30th September 2022 and satisfies the reporting requirement stated above.

There was one policy change to the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for this period. Due to the increased level of income and cash available for investment, the Director of Corporate Services made the decision in April 2022 under emergency powers to increase the counterparty limits for the DMADF and Money Market Funds (as per section A. 4). To reflect these changes, the limits for Interest Rate Exposure have been updated for 2022-2023 (as per section B. 2.1.1).

2. Economic update

In August 2022, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased Bank Rate to 1.75%, and in September 2022 moved rates up a further 50 basis points to 2.25%. The MPC continues to work through the challenges of getting inflation back on track over a three-year period.

The core of the government's new policies are tax cuts and regulatory simplification. This position has now been superseded following the change of Chancellor, who has announced a reversal of the planned tax cuts and changes to the level of Government spending. It is currently too early to say how these revised policies will impact growth and inflation, but the expectation is that the plans will reduce the concerns about the level of unfunded expenditure that had previously alarmed the markets.

The Bank Rate forecast set out below will be dependent on joint communications from the Bank of England and the government.

The US Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has increased its rate by 3% this year to date and is expected to increase rates further before the end of 2022. Similarly, the European Central Bank (ECB) has also started to tighten monetary policy, albeit from a low starting point, as have all the major central banks apart from Japan. It is US monetary policies that are having the greatest impact on global bond markets.

What happens in Ukraine will also impact the global economy, but particularly in Europe. The search for alternative providers of energy, other than Russia, will take both time and effort.

3. Prospects for Interest Rates

Based on the average projection from a number of sources we can expect the trend in base rates over the year to be as follows:

	Dec 2022	Mar 2023	Jun 2023	Sep 2023	Dec 2023
Base Rate %	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.50

(Source: LINK Asset Services)

Link Asset Services undertook its last review of interest rate forecasts on 27th September 2022 after the MPC meeting on 22nd September 2022, where the decision was made to increase the Bank Rate to 2.25% from 1.75%.

The revised 3 year projection based on this review is:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	%	%	%
Revised Average Bank Rate	3.13	4.63	3.19
Original Average Bank Rate (TM Strategy 2022-23)	1.13	1.25	1.25

4. 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 returns on the investments a 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 2022 and 30th September 2022 analysed between Banks, Building Societies, Local Authorities and Money Market Funds, are shown in the following table:

Investments	01.04.22				30.09.22			
	Call and notice	Fixed Term	Total		Call and notice	Fixed Term	Total	
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m	%
Banks	39.50	0.00	39.50	25	27.50	14.00	41.50	21
Building Societies	0.00	7.00	7.00	4	0.00	7.00	7.00	4
Money Market Funds	25.00	0.00	25.00	16	40.00	0.00	40.00	21
DMADF (DMO)	0.00	57.00	57.00	36	0.00	76.50	76.50	39
Local Authorities	0.00	32.00	32.00	20	0.00	30.00	30.00	15
TOTAL	64.50	96.00	160.50	100	67.50	127.50	195.00	100

Investments on call are available immediately on demand. Fixed term investments are fixed to a maturity date. The current longest investment is maturing on 7th July 2023.

The DMADF (DMO) limit was increased in April 2022 to £125m from £100m by the Director of Corporate Services under Emergency powers. The limits on Money Market Funds were also increased to £10m (each) from £5m.

During the period the total investments made by the Council and repaid to the Council (turnover) amounted to £1,060.50m. This averaged approximately £40.57m per week or £5.80m per day. A summary of turnover is shown below:

	£m
Total Investments 1st April 2022	160.50
Investments made during the period	547.50
Sub Total	708.00
Investments Repaid during the period	(513.00)
Total Investments 30th September 2022	195.00

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. Previously, the "7 day LIBID rate" was the recognised rate which the Council would aim to exceed when lending money, however the LIBID rates ceased from 31st December 2021. Following discussions with our Treasury advisors at Link, a decision was made to utilise the "90 day un compounded SONIA rate" (backward looking) to benchmark our investment performance going forward. This benchmark will be reviewed periodically with our advisors.

For the period under review the average “90-day un compounded SONIA rate” was 0.91% whereas the actual rate the Council earned was 0.94%, an out performance of 0.03%. This outperformance can be quantified as £29k additional interest earned compared to the “90-day un compounded SONIA rate”.

The average gross interest earned on investments for the period amounted to £920k. This includes £220k interest on monies held for the Swansea Bay City Deal region.

The income from investments is used by the Authority to reduce the net overall costs to the Council taxpayer.

5. Security, Liquidity and Yield (SLY)

Within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022-2023, 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 at Appendix 1 is the Investment Summary and Top 10 Counterparty Holdings as at 30th September 2022.

6. 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 2022 and 30th September 2022 are shown in the following table:

Loans	Balance at 01.04.22 £m	Balance at 30.09.22 £m	Net Increase/ (Net Decrease) £m
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	387.61	398.61	11.00
Market Loan	3.00	3.00	0.00
Salix, Invest to Save, HILS & TCL	10.13	10.11	(0.02)
TOTAL	400.74	411.72	10.98

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.

The 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 homeowners, 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.

6.1 New Borrowing

The following loans were borrowed during the period:

Loan Reference	Amount (£m)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Period	Maturity Date
PWLB 548866	5.00	3.91%	12th September 2022	47yrs	28th September 2069
PWLB 548868	5.00	3.90%	12th September 2022	48yrs	28th September 2070
PWLB 548870	5.00	3.90%	12th September 2022	49yrs	28th September 2071
PWLB 548872	5.00	3.89%	12th September 2022	49yrs 10mths	31st July 2072
Total	20.00				

6.2 Interest Paid

Interest paid on loans during the period was:

PWLB Interest Paid £m	Market Loan Interest Paid £m	Total Interest Paid £m
8.11	0.07	8.18

7. Rescheduling and Premature Loan Repayments

No rescheduling opportunities arose during the period and there were no premature loan repayments. However, due to the current economic climate and the consequential structure of interest rates opportunities may arise in the future.

8. Leasing

No leases were negotiated during the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.

B. PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT

1. Prudential Indicators

As part of the 2022-2023 Budget and the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2022-2023, the 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 the Executive Board.

1.1 Affordability Prudential Indicator

1.1.1 Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

The indicator set for 2022-2023 in the Budget was:

	2022-2023 %
Non-HRA	3.95
HRA	30.90

An examination of the assumptions made in calculating this indicator concluded that there have been no changes in this period.

1.2 Prudence Prudential Indicators

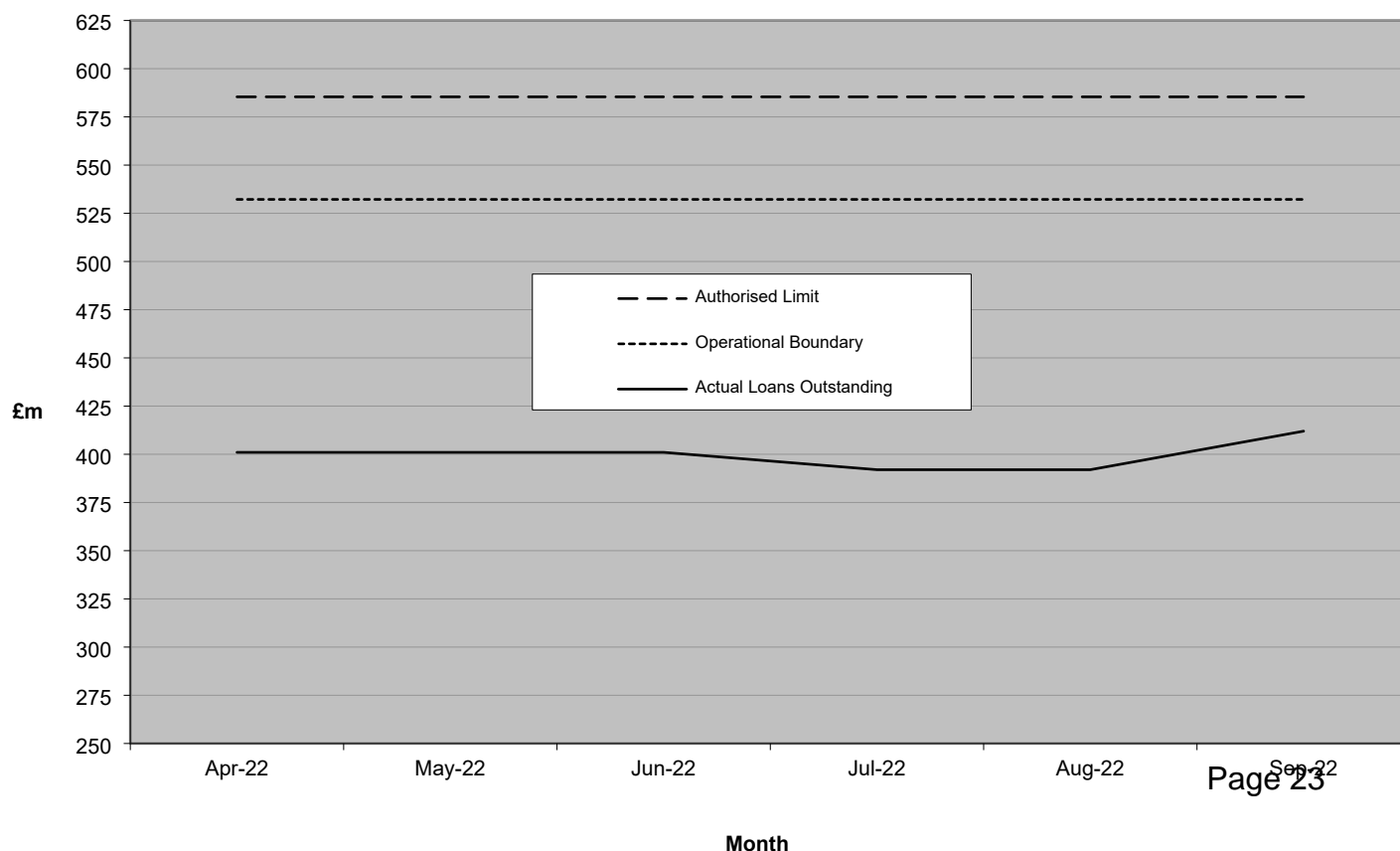
1.2.1 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The Director of Corporate Services reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with this prudential indicator.

	2022-2023	As at	2022-2023
	Estimate	30.09.22	Forecast
	£m	£m	£m
Capital Financing Requirement			
CFR – non housing	285	283	283
CFR – housing	178	170	170
CFR - housing subsidy buy-out	69	69	69
Total CFR	532	522	522

1.2.2. 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.



	Authorised Limit for External Debt		Operational Boundary for External Debt	
	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23
	Estimate	Forecast	Estimate	Forecast
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Borrowing	584.9	584.9	532.1	532.1
Other Long-Term Liabilities	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1
Total	585.4	585.4	532.2	532.2

	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Authorised Limit	585.4	585.4	585.4	585.4	585.4	585.4
Operational Boundary	532.2	532.2	532.2	532.2	532.2	532.2
Loans Outstanding	401	401	401	392	392	412

Neither the Authorised Limit nor the Operational Boundary have been breached.

2.1 Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

2.1.1 Interest Rate Exposure

Position as at 30th September 2022:

	Fixed Interest Rate £m	Variable Interest Rate £m	TOTAL £m
Borrowed	408.72	3.00	411.72
Invested	(127.50)	(67.50)	(195.00)
Net	281.22	(64.50)	216.72
Limit	512.00	51.00	
Proportion of Net Borrowing Actual	129.76%	(29.76)%	100.00%
Limit	150.00%*	5.00%	

*Revised limit, increased from 125.00%.

The authority is within limits set by the 2022-2023 indicators.

2.1.2 Maturity Structure of Borrowing

	Structure at 30.09.22 %	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
Under 12 months	0.52	15	0
12 months to 2 years	1.77	15	0
2 years to 5 years	6.76	50	0
5 years to 10 years	8.89	50	0
10 years to 20 years	20.80	50	0
20 years to 30 years	20.28	50	0
30 years to 40 years	22.52	50	0
40 years and above	18.46	50	0

The authority is within the limits set by the 2022-2023 indicators.

2.1.3 Maximum Principal Sums Invested Longer than 365 Days

	2022-2023 £m
Limit	10
Actual as at 30 th September 2022	NIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet considers and approves the report including changes to the limits for Interest Rate Exposure (as per section B. 2.1.1)

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Totals		
Total	£195,000,000	
Calls & MMFs	£67,500,000	35%
Fixed Deposits	£127,500,000	65%
Specified	£67,500,000	100%

Weighted Average		
Yield		1.77%
Maturity (Days)		
Total Portfolio	Total Portfolio	64.74
Long Term	Short Term	
AAA	-	1.00
AA	F1	84.31
A	F1	74.32
BBB	F2	0.00
CCC	C	0.00

Risk Factors		
< 1 year	£13,383	0.007%
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	£13,383	0.007%

Maturity Structure		
< 1 Week	£67,500,000	35%
< 1 Month	£32,500,000	17%
2 - 3 Months	£54,000,000	28%
3 - 6 Months	£24,000,000	12%
6 - 9 Months	£10,000,000	5%
9 - 12 Months	£7,000,000	4%
12 Months+	£0	0%
Total	£195,000,000	100%

SLY Model

Carmarthenshire County Council

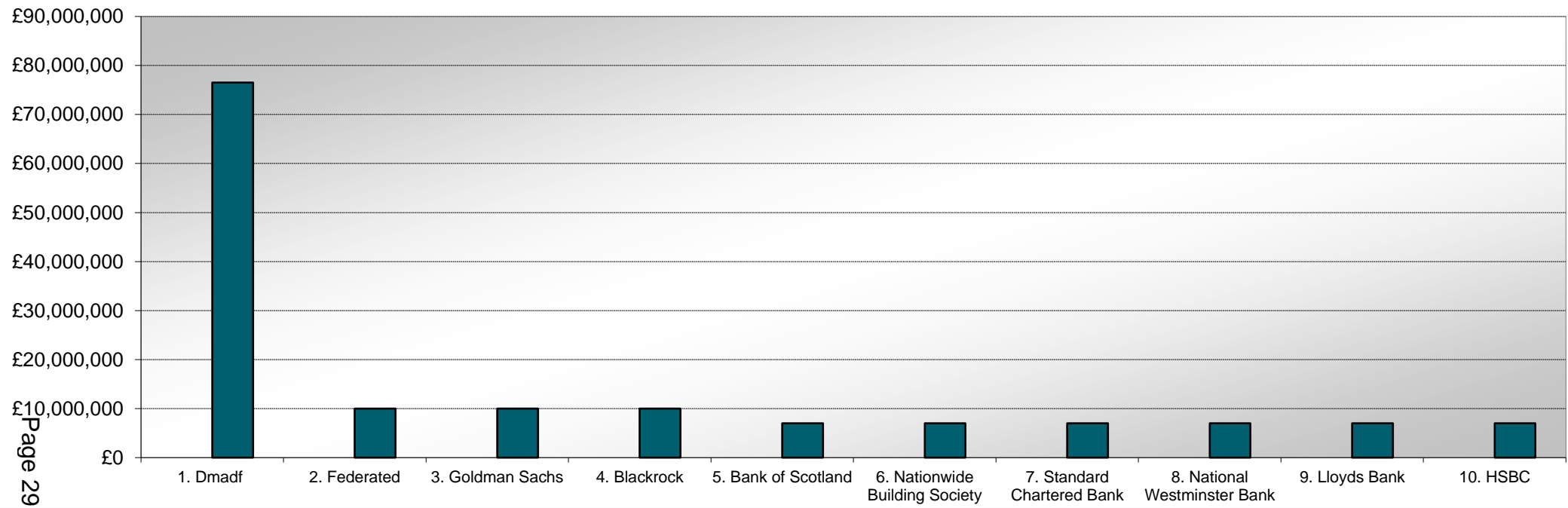
30/09/2022

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Top 10 Counterparty Holdings

Carmarthenshire County Council

Counterparty	Principal	% of Total Holding	WAM (Days)	WAYield	WADefault
1. Dmadf	£76,500,000	51.52%	69	2.16%	0.003%
2. Federated	£10,000,000	6.73%	1	1.91%	0.000%
3. Goldman Sachs	£10,000,000	6.73%	1	1.75%	0.000%
4. Blackrock	£10,000,000	6.73%	1	1.76%	0.000%
5. Bank of Scotland	£7,000,000	4.71%	1	0.50%	0.000%
6. Nationwide Building Society	£7,000,000	4.71%	49	0.35%	0.013%
7. Standard Chartered Bank	£7,000,000	4.71%	1	2.04%	0.000%
8. National Westminster Bank	£7,000,000	4.71%	182	2.30%	0.047%
9. Lloyds Bank	£7,000,000	4.71%	280	2.00%	0.072%
10. HSBC	£7,000,000	4.71%	1	1.62%	0.000%



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COUNCIL 25TH JANUARY 2023

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2023/24

Purpose:

This report seeks formal adoption of the Council Tax Reduction scheme (which replaced Council Tax Benefit in April 2013) for 2023/24

The scheme can be approved subject to the regulations being approved and coming into force.

The draft regulations are not expected to change and will be the version provided for the Senedd debate on the 17th January 2023 which if approved would come into force on 20th January 2023.

Cabinet Recommendations:

‘UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL subject to the regulations being approved and coming into force on 20th January 2023 that it:-

- 9.1. Formally adopts the standard all-Wales Council Tax Reduction scheme provided for in the**
 - a. Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, and**
- 9.2. Implements the annual up-rating figures (used in entitlement calculations) and other technical amendments, included in the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 due to come into effect 20th January 2023 and these Regulations apply in relation to a council tax reduction scheme made for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2023;**
- 9.3. Continues to exercise its discretion with regard to the limited discretionary elements of the prescribed scheme as outlined in the Executive Summary.’**

Reasons:

- a) Welsh Government has made regulations that retain the 2013/14 Council Tax Reduction scheme (with limited amendments) for 2014/15 and subsequent years.
- b) There is an obligation upon authorities to formally (re-)adopt a Council Tax Reduction scheme by 31st January each year otherwise the “Default Scheme” will apply which means Council will be unable to exercise its discretion with regard to the limited discretionary elements in the prescribed scheme.
- c) If the Council wishes to exercise its powers in relation to the limited areas of discretion available to it, it is required to do so as part of the formal scheme adoption process.

Cabinet Decision Required	YES
Council Decision Required	YES - 25 th January 2023

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Cllr Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources

Directorate: Corporate Services Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh Report Author: Ann Thomas	Designations: Head of Revenue and Financial Compliance Revenue Services Manager	Tel & Email addresses: <u>HLPugh@Carmarthenshire.gov.uk</u> <u>AnThomas@carmarthesnhire.gov.uk</u>
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COUNCIL
25TH JANUARY 2023**

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2023/24

1. As part of the Welfare Reforms introduced in recent years the former Council Tax Benefit scheme (CTB) was abolished with effect from April 2013. In its place is a localised Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme which in Wales has been devolved to Welsh Government, although with significantly less funding than the cost of the former CTB scheme.
2. The standard scheme introduced by Welsh Government for 2013/14 and (with minor amendments) subsequent years, is a uniform all-Wales scheme, albeit with limited areas of local discretion available to authorities.
3. Despite being an all-Wales scheme, individual Councils are required by the Prescribed Requirements Regulations to formally adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31st January each year.
4. The limited areas of local discretion, and the policy adopted by Council in respect of those discretions, are shown below for information. There is no recommendation for change:

Discretion: to disregard part or the whole amount of War Disablement pensions and War Widows Pensions when calculating income.

Policy: The Council exercises its discretion and fully disregards War Disablement pensions, War Widows Pensions and analogous payments, when calculating income for the purposes of assessing entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.

Discretion: The ability to increase the standard extended payment period of 4 weeks given to people after they return to work, when they have been in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit.

Policy: The Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to extended payments and therefore continues to adopt the 4 week period within the standard scheme.

Discretion: The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax Support awards for working age and/or pension age, customers beyond a standard period of 3 months prior to the claim.

Policy: The Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to backdating applications and therefore continues to adopt the 3 month maximum period within the standard scheme.

Discretion: The ability to provide more than the minimum information prescribed as part of the notifications of decisions procedures.

Policy: The Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to the provision of additional information and continues to provide the information prescribed as part of the notifications decisions procedures.

5. The scheme will be materially unchanged for 2023/24 however, in addition to the normal annual up-rating of certain financial figures used for assessing individual entitlement and some technical adjustments (as is being provided for in ***The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023***), the statutory instrument makes a number of other amendments as follows;

- People from Ukraine

This amendment is designed to support Ukraine nationals and as a consequence of the refugee crisis caused by the Russo-Ukrainian War. Similar changes will be made by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for required components of local council tax support schemes in England.

The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations make provision to ensure that any Ukrainian national who has been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom under or outside the immigration rules or who has a right of abode is not treated as not being habitually resident in Great Britain for the purpose of determining their eligibility for a council tax reduction. The effect of these amendments is that people in this group will be eligible to be included in a local authority's CTRS and will be eligible for a discount if they meet the other requirements of the CTRS

- People from Ukraine: Protection for hosts for the Homes for Ukraine scheme

This amendment is designed to ensure that no applicant living in Wales hosting a person from Ukraine under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is negatively impacted.

The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations make provision that any Ukrainian national who has been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom or who has a right of abode is to be treated as dependent on the applicant host for the purpose of calculating entitlement to a council tax discount. This has the effect of preserving the level of entitlement of the host applicant.

- European Economic Area citizens

The 2013 CTRS Regulations currently provide an exception for European Economic Area (EEA) citizens. EEA citizens are now subject to immigration control (and therefore a class of persons who must not be included in an authority's scheme). This amendment will mirror the English regulations

The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations to remove the exception for EEA citizens who are now subject to immigration control

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
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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 Moore

Director of Corporate Services

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Council Tax Reduction scheme retained for 2014/15 and subsequent years will continue to assess claimants' entitlement on their full Council Tax liability, as happened under the 2013/14 scheme and the former UK-wide Council Tax Benefit scheme.

A local equalities impact assessment was undertaken by the Council in anticipation of the original draft 2013/14 scheme which if implemented, would have reduced all claimants' entitlement. In the event the final 2013/14 scheme was more generous with claimants' entitlement being based on the full charge as will be the case for subsequent years, unless changed. It has not therefore been considered necessary to undertake a further EIA.

The only changes to the scheme other than the normal annual up-rating of the financial figures used to assess applicant's entitlement, and some technical adjustments are the following:

- **People from Ukraine will be treated as being habitually resident in Great Britain for the purpose of determining their eligibility for a council tax reduction and will be eligible to be included in the local authority's Council Tax Reduction scheme and will be eligible for discount if they meet the other requirements of the scheme.**
- **There is protection for hosts for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme to ensure that no applicant living in Wales hosting a person from Ukraine under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme is negatively impacted.**
- **EEA citizens who are now subject to immigration control will no longer be eligible to be included in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.**

Council has no power to vary these amendments.

2. Legal

Under the Prescribed Requirements Regulations the Council is obliged to make a Council Tax Reduction Scheme each year.

The legislation provides for a default scheme to apply in the absence of the Council making a scheme; the Council is nevertheless under a statutory duty to adopt its own scheme, even if it chooses not to apply any of the discretionary elements.

The National Assembly for Wales on the 26th November 2013 approved the Regulations governing the operation of Council Tax Reduction Schemes in Wales for 2014/15 and subsequent years.

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes amending Regulations for 2023/24 have been laid on 6th December 2022 and are scheduled for debate on 17th January 2023 and if approved by Welsh Government will come into force on 20th January 2023. They will up-rate figures contained in the main regulations that are used to calculate a claimant's entitlement to a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme and introduce further technical / procedural amendments. Council has no power to vary these.

3. Finance

The scheme for 2023/24 continues to have financial implications for authorities.

The former Council Tax Benefit system was fully funded by the Westminster Government however less funding was given to Welsh Government with regard to the replacement scheme.

The initial funding distributed to Councils by Welsh Government has not increased since the new scheme was introduced in 2013/14. Accordingly individual authorities must make up on-going shortfalls due to higher expenditure as a result of any additional caseload and/or higher Council Tax levels.

The Council's proposed provisional budget provision for 2023/24 is £17,780,387

The additional cost to the Council to continue exercising its discretionary powers and disregarding War Widow and War Disablement Pensions (and other analogous payments) is estimated as £8k.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Chris Moore

Director of Corporate Services

1. Scrutiny Committee N/A

2. Local Member(s) N/A

3. Community / Town Council N/A

4. Relevant Partners N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

As there are no proposed changes to the scheme other than those over which Council has no jurisdiction, no public consultation exercise has been undertaken.

There is no requirement to consult and no formal consultation has been undertaken in respect of statutory instrument in ***The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023***.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED

Yes

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

Title of Document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013	CFP - Council Tax Reduction folder http://www.legislation.gov.uk/all?title=The%20Council%20Tax%20Reduction%20Schemes%20and%20Prescribed%20Requirements%20%28Wales%29%20Regulations%202013
Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014	CFP - Council Tax Reduction folder http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/66/contents/made
Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023	SL(6)297 - Rheoliadau Cynlluniau Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor (Gofynion Rhagnodedig a'r Cynllun Diofyn) (Cymru) (Diwygio) 2023 (senedd.cymru) SL(6)297 - The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 (senedd.wales) [laid before the National Assembly for Wales on 6 th December 2022:]

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APPENDIX A

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023-24 – Detailed Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 With effect from April 2013, the Council Tax Benefit system was replaced with a localised Council Tax Reduction scheme. In Wales, the replacement scheme was devolved to Welsh Government but continues to be administered by local authorities.
- 1.2 The former Council Tax Benefit system was fully funded by the Westminster Government, however, less funding was given to Welsh Government with regard to the replacement scheme. However Welsh Government made a late decision to make up the shortfall which meant that up to 100% reduction would still be available to qualifying claimants.
- 1.3 The initial funding distributed to Councils by Welsh Government has not increased since the new scheme was introduced in 2013/14. Accordingly individual authorities must now make up any on-going shortfalls due to higher expenditure as a result of any additional caseload and/or higher Council Tax levels.

2 Council Tax Reduction scheme – 2014/15 Onwards

- 2.1 The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 are the regulations that govern the operation of Council Tax Reduction Schemes in Wales for 2014/15 and subsequent years. These were approved by Welsh Government on the 26th November 2013. Also approved were the default regulations which would apply if an authority failed to adopt the scheme.
- 2.2 The Prescribed Scheme regulations and Default Regulations are extensive and detailed, comprising almost 300 pages and are not therefore appended to this report.
- 2.3 The scheme is subject to the annual up-rating of certain figures used by authorities to assess individual customers' entitlement and is also subject to periodic technical adjustments. These amendments are contained in ***The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023***.
- 2.4 These regulations have been laid in the Welsh Assembly on 6th December 2022 and will be debated by Welsh Government on 17th January 2022. If approved, they will come into force on 20th January for 2023/24. These complex regulations will update the main regulations and therefore form part of the 2023/24 scheme.

- 2.5 This statutory instrument amends the previous Regulations to uprate certain figures used to calculate entitlement to a council tax reduction, and the amount of any such reduction awarded in the 2023-24 financial year.
- 2.6 These will include Personal Allowances as well as carer and disabled premiums, and the financial figures in respect of these allowances have been increased in line with the cost of living crisis. They have been uprated in line with the Consumer Price Index September figure from the previous year (2021), which is 10.1%.
- 2.7 The financial figures in respect of pensioner rates have been amended and are aligned with Housing Benefit. These have been calculated with assistance from the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 2.8 The financial figures for the income bands and deductions made in respect of non- dependants have also been uprated.
- 2.9 In addition to uprating the financial figures, the statutory instrument makes a number of other amendments as follows.

People from Ukraine

- 2.10 This amendment is designed to support Ukraine nationals and as a consequence of the refugee crisis caused by the Russo-Ukrainian War. Similar changes will be made by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for required components of local council tax support schemes in England.
- 2.11 The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations make provision to ensure that any Ukrainian national who has been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom under or outside the immigration rules or who has a right of abode is not treated as not being habitually resident in Great Britain for the purpose of determining their eligibility for a council tax reduction. The effect of these amendments is that people in this group will be eligible to be included in a local authority's CTRS and will be eligible for a discount if they meet the other requirements of the CTRS

People from Ukraine: Protection for hosts for the Homes for Ukraine scheme

- 2.12 This amendment is designed to ensure that no applicant living in Wales hosting a person from Ukraine under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is negatively impacted
- 2.13 The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations make provision that any Ukrainian national who has been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom or who has a right of abode is to be treated as dependent on the applicant host for the purpose of calculating entitlement to a council tax discount. This has the effect of preserving the level of entitlement of the host applicant.

European Economic Area citizens

- 2.14 The 2013 CTRS Regulations currently provide an exception for European Economic Area (EEA) citizens. EEA citizens are now subject to immigration control (and therefore a class of persons who must not be included in an authority's scheme). This amendment will mirror the English regulations
- 2.15 The proposed amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations to remove the exception for EEA citizens who are now subject to immigration control
- 2.16 It also makes a number of consequential and technical amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations that are associated with wider welfare changes made by the UK government. This will ensure Council Tax Reduction Schemes reflect changes made to interrelated social security benefits which often determine entitlement to a reduction.
- 2.17 Although the scheme will be uniform across Wales the Prescribed Requirements Regulations require the Council to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31st January each year, regardless of whether it applies any of the discretionary elements (see part (3) below).
- 2.18 If the Council fails to make a scheme, then the default scheme shall apply under the provisions of the Default Scheme Regulations. The default scheme is the same as the prescribed scheme except that Council can only use its discretionary powers if it adopts the Prescribed Requirements Regulations scheme.

3. Discretionary Powers

- 3.1. Although a national scheme has been approved by Welsh Government, within the Prescribed Requirements Regulations there continues to be limited discretion given to Councils to apply additional discretionary elements that are more generous than the national scheme. It should be noted however, that there are no additional monies available from Welsh Government to fund the discretionary elements.

- 3.2. There are four areas of discretion available to authorities, as follows:

- a) Discretion to increase the amount of War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and analogous payments, that are disregarded when calculating income of the claimant;

[Note: The Council, in common with all other authorities in Wales, has previously, exercised its discretion and fully disregarded War Disablement pensions, War Widows Pensions in the calculation of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

This approach has been retained by the Council for the Council Tax Reduction scheme. The estimated cost to the Authority for 2023/24 is approximately £8k.]

- b) The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons after they return to work where they have previously been receiving a Council Tax Reduction that will cease as a result of their return to work;

[Note: The 4 week “run on” was an established feature of the former Council Tax Benefit scheme, the existing Housing Benefit scheme and is retained for the all-Wales, standard Council Tax Reduction scheme.

If the Council were to increase this period it would deviate from the established arrangements, create a serious anomaly with the on-going Housing Benefit system and increase the cost to the Council]

- c) The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax Reduction with regard to late claims prior to the new standard period of three months before the claim;

[Note: The previous Council Tax Benefit regulations allowed maximum backdating of 6 months for working age customers, 3 months for pension age customers]

- d) The ability to provide more than the minimum information prescribed as part of the notifications of decisions procedures.

[Note: The Regulations already provide for the provision of detailed information to be included in the notification of decisions including the ability to advise of the impact and consequences of failure to notify a change in circumstances.

- 3.3. In relation to its discretionary powers, the Council has to date, adopted the following approach since Council Tax Reduction scheme was introduced:

Council:

- a) exercises its discretion and fully disregards War Disablement pensions, War Widows Pensions and analogous payments when calculating income for the purposes of assessing entitlement to Council Tax Reduction
- b) does not exercise its discretion in relation to extended payments and therefore adopts the 4 week period specified within the standard scheme,
- c) does not exercise its discretion in relation to backdating applications and therefore adopts the 3 month maximum period specified within the standard scheme

- d) does not exercise its discretion in relation to the provision of additional information, and continues to provide the information prescribed as part of the notifications decisions procedures

4. Adoption of Scheme

4.1. Under the requirements of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 the Council is obliged to make a Council Tax Reduction scheme. Furthermore, in order to do so, the regulations require the Council to determine its approach to the discretion powers available to it.

4.2. It is therefore recommended that subject to the regulations being approved and coming into force for 2023/24:

a) Council adopts a scheme in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 and any subsequent amendments that may be required by legislation from time to time, in particular:

i. Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023

and

b) Council adopts the discretionary powers as follows:

- i. Council exercises its discretion and for the purposes of assessing entitlement to Council Tax Reduction disregards in full War Disablement Pension, War Widows & Widowers Pensions and any analogous payments as permitted under the Regulations
- ii. Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to extended payments and therefore applies the 4 week period specified within the standard scheme.
- iii. Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to backdating applications and therefore adopts the 3 month maximum period specified within the standard scheme.
- iv. Council does not exercise its discretion in relation to the provision of additional information and continues to provide the information prescribed as part of the notifications decisions procedures.

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COUNCIL **25TH JANUARY 2023**

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 TO 2025/26 REVENUE AND CAPITAL AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2023/24

Purpose:

Cabinet to consider and agree the revenue and capital budgets of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and rent setting proposals for 2023/24. This will subsequently be considered by County Council on 25/01/2023.

Cabinet Recommendations:

'UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

10.1 To increase average housing rent by 5.5% (£5.18) per dwelling per week as per WG Social Housing Rents Policy;

- **Properties at target rents will increase by 5.36%, and;**
- **Properties where rent is below target rent, rent will increase by 5.36% plus a maximum progression of £1.00;**
- **Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target.**

This will produce a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+, resource our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan and is supported by Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team;

10.2. To maintain garage rents at £9.00 and garage bases at £2.25;

10.3. Apply the Service Charge Policy to ensure tenants who receive the benefit from specific services pay for those services;

10.4. To increase charges for using our sewerage treatment works in line with rent increase;

10.5. To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2023/26 (2024/25 & 2025/26 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix A;

10.6. To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2023/24 and the indicative spends for 2024/25 to 2025/26 as set out in Appendix B.'

Reason

To enable the Authority to set its Housing Revenue Account Budget and the Housing Rent levels for 2023/24

Cabinet decision required: YES

Council decision required: YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:-

Cabinet member for Resources Cllr Alun Lenny

Cabinet member for Housing Cllr Linda Evans

Directorate**Corporate Services****Name of Director:**

Chris Moore

Report Author:

Steve Williams

Designations:

Director

Senior Accountant

Tel Nos.

01267 224120

E Mail Addresses:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COUNCIL
25TH JANUARY 2023

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 TO 2025/26
REVENUE AND CAPITAL
AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2023/24

SUMMARY & PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report has been prepared in conjunction with officers from the Communities Department and brings together the latest proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for the Housing Revenue Account 2023/2026. The report will be presented to the Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on the 19th December 2022 as part of the budget consultation process.

The report has been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, which is the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+) for the future. The proposed investment within the current business plan delivered the CHS by 2015 (to those homes where tenants agreed to have work undertaken), provides investment to maintain CHS+ and continues investment for our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan. The report also details how rents will increase for 2023/24.

Appendix A provides the proposed Revenue Account Budget for 2023/24.

Appendix B of this report provides the proposed Capital Programme for 2023/26.

The HRA budget for 2023/24 is being set to reflect:

- Social Housing Rent Policy (set by WG)
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

Appendix A – Revenue Account Budget 2023/24
Appendix B - Capital Programme for 2023/26
Appendix C – Minute Extract – Communities, Homes and
Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 19th December 2022

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 Moore

Director of Corporate Services

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

1. Finance

The report details the HRA proposals to be considered by scrutiny. If the proposals are agreed the budget for the HRA will be set for 2023/24 with an expenditure level of £54.3M. The average rent will increase from £94.26 to £99.44 (5.5%).

The proposed Capital Programme will be £33.8M for 2023/24, £34.4M for 2024/25 and £35.5M for 2025/26

6. Physical Assets

The capital programme continues the works to maintain the Carmarthenshire Home Standard+ and deliver the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan as per the 30-year business plan.

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

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:-	19/12/22	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-		
Attached at Appendix C		

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDERS 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
Social Housing Rents Policy		Financial Services, County Hall, Carmarthen
30 year Housing Business Plan		Financial Services, County Hall, Carmarthen

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES COUNCIL

25TH JANUARY 2023

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND HOUSING RENT SETTING 2023/24

REVENUE AND CAPITAL

DIRECTOR & DESIGNATION.	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO.
C Moore Director of Corporate Services	Corporate Services	01267 224120
AUTHOR & DESIGNATION	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO
S Williams Senior Accountant	Corporate Services	01267 228836

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report explains the proposed 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for both revenue and capital. It has been prepared in conjunction with officers from the Communities Department. The Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the HRA budget on 19th December 2022 as part of the budget consultation process. The views expressed by that committee are attached to this report (Appendix C) for Cabinet's consideration when they set the 2023/24 HRA budget and Housing Rents.

1.2. The HRA budget for 2023/24 is being set to reflect:

- Welsh Government's Policy for Social Housing Rents (Rent Policy) issued 17/11/22, which this year is governed by the Welsh Government's Minister for Climate Change instruction that the maximum increases in the rent envelope for any local authority does not exceed 6.5%
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan

1.3. The HRA budget is prepared to maintain the HRA Business Plan, deliver our affordable homes aspirations and manage and maintain our homes on a daily basis. As a ring-fenced account this expenditure is balanced by income primarily generated through rents charged to tenants. Supporting the HRA Business Plan is a 30 years financial model which is submitted to and scrutinised/approved by WG annually (as part of the Major Repairs Allowance application).

Carmarthenshire County Council along with the other 10 local authorities (LAs) in Wales who retained their Housing Stock, exited the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy (HRAS) system on 1/4/15, which allows Local Authorities more flexibility in the management of their stock going forward.

Part of the agreement to exit included LAs with retained stock were required to adopt the new Social Housing Rents Policy set by the Welsh Government (WG). It aimed to develop a coherent and consistent rent policy framework that would apply to all social landlords, reflect local variations in affordability and housing market values, providing for a more equitable distribution of rents for social sector tenants across Wales, while at the same time ensuring the viability of individual social landlords. County Council approved the implementation of the policy on 24/02/15. This policy provided consistency for 4 years from 2015/16 to 2018/19. WG provided an interim policy for 2019/20 while they await the results of the Affordable Housing Supply Review. The result of this review was to retain the existing policy for a further 5 years which was implemented in 2020/21 with some additional/amended requirements. Below are the main points detailed in Social Housing Rents Policy and WG letter dated 17/11/22:-

- An annual rent uplift (total rent envelope) of up to CPI+1%, each year for 5 years from 2020-21 to 2024-25 using the level of CPI from the previous September each year. September 2022 was 10.1%.
- CPI+1% will be the maximum increase allowable in any one year but CPI+1% must not be regarded as an automatic uplift to be applied by social landlords. Landlords decisions on rent should take into account the affordability of rents for tenants as set out below.
- The level of rents for individual tenants can be reduced or frozen or can rise by up to an additional £2 over and above CPI+1%, on condition that total rental income collected by the social landlord increases by no more than CPI+1%. This provision is designed to enable social landlords to restructure rents payable where necessary.
- Should CPI fall outside the range of 0% to 3%, the Minister with responsibility for housing will determine the appropriate change to rent levels to be applied for that year only. **As CPI was 10.1% in September 2022 this clause was activated** and the Government Minister for Climate Change has instructed that the maximum increase in the rent envelope for any local authority does not exceed

6.5%. The Minister also commented that affordability remains at the heart of the rent settlement and excessive financial burdens should not be placed upon tenants in these very challenging times.

- Social landlords should advise the Welsh Government where they have concerns about the impact that rent policy has upon their business plan or financial viability, or on their ability to meet their obligations to tenants and lenders.
- As an intrinsic part of the five-year rent policy, social landlords will be expected to set a rent and service charge policy which ensures that social housing remains affordable for current and future tenants. As part of their annual decision on the level of rent uplift/reduction to be applied they should make an assessment of cost efficiencies, value for money and affordability for tenants which should be discussed at the Cabinet/Council.
- During the pandemic, governmental resources have been re-prioritised meaning this year's rent data-set collection was suspended at the start of the COVID 19 crisis, therefore there is no up to date, robust data available to generate Target Rent Bands for the year ahead. WG have therefore considered the role of the Target Rent Bands in conjunction with representative bodies and individual stakeholders. Discussions revealed that whilst Target Rent Bands played a valuable role when they were introduced, the landscape today is very different and for most landlords they do not play a significant role in local rent setting. WG have therefore taken the decision to suspend them again for this year. The impact of this decision in next year's rent setting, and if there are unexpected and unintended matters arising from this decision, will be re-considered. This results in setting the 2023/24 rents without Target Rent Bands.

Additional commitments and initiatives to last year's plan include :-

- No evictions due to financial hardship for the term of the settlement, (financial year 2023/24), where tenants engage with landlords.
- Continue to provide targeted support to those experiencing financial hardship to access support.
- Maximise the use of all suitable social housing stock, with a focus on helping those in the poorest quality transitional accommodation move into longer term homes that meet their needs.
- Undertake a joint campaign to encourage tenants to talk to their landlord if they are experiencing financial difficulties and access support available.
- Build on existing engagement with tenants in rent setting decisions, including explaining how income from rent is invested and spent.
- A commitment to invest in existing homes to keep them safe, warm and affordable to live in.

- Explore, in partnership with Welsh Government, options to prevent home loss for owner occupiers and those in the private rented sector.
- Work in partnership with tenants, Welsh Government, funders and other partners to develop a consistent approach to assessing affordability across the social housing sector in Wales.
- Participate in an assurance exercise early in the 2023/24 financial year to reflect on application of the rent policy to date. This will build on the work undertaken by social landlords over the past 3 years and inform future work to develop a consistent approach to assessing affordability.

WG want LA's to consider the "whole cost of living in a property", looking at not only rent and service charges but energy costs also in order to reduce the financial burden on tenants. In recognition of the greater stability and certainty due to the rent policy WG also want to strengthen joint working with LA's in a wider rental agreement. WG also want LA's to produce annual assessments of affordability, value for money and demonstrate finding efficiencies as part of monitoring compliance.

All local authority budgets have been put under increased pressure due to the cost of living crisis, which has followed the difficult covid period and the ongoing war in Europe.

Social housing has not been sheltered from the impacts of the above.

Below is a schedule of the main budget components to be impacted significantly (items with * impacted positively):-

- 1.Commission for collection on behalf of Dwr Cymru
- 2.Capital Financing Charges*
- 3.Payaward 2022/23
- 4.Payaward 2023/24
- 5.Interest on cash balances*
- 6.Void loss assumption
- 7.Revenue R&M
8. Central Support Costs
9. Additional staffing costs for R&M delivery
- 10.Energy costs relating to Service Charges
11. Additional cost of in year ODR's
- 12.Rents*

1.4 Capital investment

A capital investment of £231m was undertaken to deliver the CHS+ by 2015. This included £117million of unsupported borrowing. This investment was being funded by Major Repairs Allowance received from the WG, capital receipts from the sales of land and dwellings, HRA revenue funding, external grants and borrowing. This ensured the delivery of work programmes to all our tenants' homes (with the exception of where the work was declined by tenants). Since achieving the CHS+, a further £92M will have been spent on maintaining the standard and £68M on providing additional affordable homes in the HRA by the end of 2022/23.

The HRA Business Plan 2023-26 highlights the approach that will be taken over the next three years and will be presented by the Head of Housing and Public Protection in this meeting. It includes further investment over the next 3 years of £60million to maintain the CHS+ and £43million for our Affordable Homes programme. This will be supported by an on-going cost certainty exercise to ensure our investment is targeted to maintain the CHS+ and deliver our Affordable Homes targets.

The timing and method of potential sale of HRA land is being kept under review to ensure that receipts are maximised to support the Business Plan however there are no anticipated sales in current plan and current land is retained for development of housing. Land sales are scrutinised on an individual basis, decisions on sale/retention depend on housing demand within that area.

The profile of capital expenditure required to maintain the CHS+ and invest in affordable homes is detailed in appendix B. The plan is extremely sensitive to change and is currently being fully reviewed every 6 months, with ongoing monthly monitoring to identify any potential issues.

1.5 Decarbonisation

WG ministers commissioned a report "Better Homes, Better Wales, Better World". The report recommended that "Political parties in Wales should make a strategic commitment to national residential decarbonisation and stick to it."

This included "setting ambitious energy targets for homes to achieve net zero carbon by 2050".

This will have a significant impact on future investment plans.

The HRA Business Plan details our proposed approach to decarbonisation of our HRA stock, headlines include:-

- Make Fabric Energy Efficient
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Development, Training, Skills through using research, smart technologies etc.
- Reduce Demand through working with tenants
- Off Grid Solutions – Decarbonise Supply by harnessing the natural environment.

2. BUSINESS PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

2.1. There are many assumptions within the Business Plan, including future rental levels, interest rates, inflation, pay awards etc. Business Plan guidance from the WG was received 12/12/22 and requires a submission of a viable plan by 31/03/2023.

Underpinning the HRA Business Plan is the 30 year financial model which has many assumptions including:

- **Rents** The WG Social Housing rents policy allows local authorities to increase rent by CPI plus 1%. As September 2022 CPI fell outside the 0%-3% parameters in the policy, the Minister for Climate Change set a maximum increase of 6.5%. It is proposed in this report that the rent envelope is increased by 5.5%
- **Major Repairs Allowance (MRA)** is a grant from WG which is provided to support our works in maintaining the standard and is audited annually. This has not been increased for future years but has been varied for changing stock numbers. Our MRA is estimated to be £6.2million for 2023/24.
- **Capital Receipts** We have suspended our Right to Buy for tenants (WG has also subsequently suspended RTBs) so there are no planned receipts from sales of houses. There are no intentions for any land sales in the current plan.
- **Grants** This is an increasingly important element of our financing. We are likely to receive over £9.3M in 2023/24. Social Housing Grant can now be utilised by local authorities as well as RSL's.
- **Void Loss** incurred on dwellings currently set on long term basis at 2%. Current performance, partly due to covid is higher at 3.5% due to restricted activity in 2022/23. We have allowed for voids at 3.5% for 23/24.
- **Central Support Costs** are based on services received by departments, these have been validated accordingly.
- **Stock Numbers** have been updated based on affordable homes delivery plan.
- **Interest on Balances** is estimated to be £145k based on an interest rate of 0.85% (average interest earned).

2.2.

Members will be aware that as part of the HRAS exit agreement in 2015 Local Authorities were required to agree a Borrowing Cap, which was a requirement put in place by the UK Government. This restricted what a Local Authority could borrow in respect of the HRA, for this Authority the limit was set at £228M. The minister for Housing and Regeneration wrote to LA's 29/10/2018 detailing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had confirmed that the removal of HRA borrowing caps applied to Wales as well as England. This was a significant change in policy designed to encourage LA's to build at pace and scale and to deliver their affordable homes ambitions. This places a responsibility on LA's to develop Business Plans which are financially sustainable as well as ambitious. This has led to a review of how we fund our capital investment programme to release additional resources in a prudent manner. We are therefore now developing the New Build programme with a greater number of schemes being commissioned and developed by the Council internally.

However, although the borrowing cap has been released, it should be noted that there is a significant responsibility on the County Council to ensure any borrowing for the HRA is sustainable, prudent and affordable within the HRA financial Business Plan. An officer working group has been developed with WG to establish some key ratios to help manage these plans. Work is currently ongoing.

As most of the schemes delivering Housing projects have a significant lead-in time, there will be an ongoing review of what is needed to maintain CHS+ and deliver our affordable housing ambitions, which will utilise the borrowing available as we develop our plans.

3. EXPENDITURE

The expenditure levels in the Business Plan have been set in line with the anticipated Business Planning guidance.

Maintenance and Stock Improvement

Revenue repairs and maintenance expenditure is forecast to be £17.2million in 2023/24. This is an increase on the 2022/23 budget (£12.3million) which reflects transfer of resource to Communities from Environment, local building costs, forecast outturn for 2022/23, changes in stock numbers and additional revenue costs relating to void properties.

The capital programme provides resources to: -

- maintain our stock to the CHS+ (including carrying out improvements to previously declined properties)
- deliver our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan commitments

Maintain our Stock

For 2023/24 the capital programme to maintain the CHS+ is £21.1million. This gives an overall spend of £38.3million on stock improvement and maintenance (the total for 2022/23 was £29.6million). This will be further informed by stock condition data which will be gathered in 2023/24.

Affordable Housing Commitment

Housing Finance Grant (HFG2) funding for new affordable housing ended in 2019/20. This funding was provided as a revenue source, requiring the authority to borrow the money and WG repaying the capital charges. It effectively supported £7million of capital expenditure, the revenue consequence of this is generating £246k annually.

We will be bidding for any other additional resources available to support our Affordable Homes delivery. WG have confirmed the details of alternative funding for delivering more Affordable homes as Social Housing Grant.

We have set aside £43million over the next three years as part of the capital programme to increase the supply of affordable homes. Within 2023/24 £12.7million has been identified for the housing development programme (including development costs).

The capital programme and funding sources for this programme up to 2025/26 are detailed in Appendix B.

Validation

The proposed Business Plan includes the following validations for 2023/24, which is in line with the proposed budget strategy:

- general payroll costs are +5% (average). It is recognised that the Chancellor of Exchequer has expressed a view regarding a pay freeze but currently impact of this is unclear and therefore not to allow for payaward would be imprudent.
- general inflation has been accommodated at +5%
- revenue R&M at 10%

Capital Financing and Subsidy

The capital financing costs reflect the borrowing requirement inclusive of the exit from HRAS.

Details of the budget for Housing Revenue Account for the period up to 2025/26 is shown in Appendix A.

4. INCOME

4.1. As outlined in Paragraph 1.3 above, WG have re-confirmed the original policy that was in place up to 18/19 with increases in rent being CPI plus 1% for the next 5 years (subject to certain parameters).

Carmarthenshire's current average rent for 2022/23 is £94.26. In the private sector median rents for 2 bedrooms are £126, 3 bedrooms are £150 and 4 bedrooms are £212 in 2022

4.2. Target Rents

Target rents bands have been removed for 2023/24 (as detailed in 1.3), actual rents including a 5.36% increase are detailed below: -

	Houses and Bungalows (£)					Flats (£)				Bedsits (£)
	1Bed	2Bed	3Bed	4Bed	5+Bed	1Bed	2Bed	3Bed	4+Bed	
Actual Rent 2023/24 with 5.36% increase	89.27	99.18	109.09	119.00	128.93	80.74	89.75	98.70	107.70	71.78

This produces average rent of £99.44 for 2023/24

Carmarthenshire's 2022/23 actual rent is the 3rd lowest of eleven stock retaining authorities at £94.26 (Welsh LA's average £99.19).

WG have advised LA's that a 6.5% increase should be the maximum applied in 2023/24.

4.3.

Implementing the 5.5% overall increase for Carmarthenshire and implementing rental progression of £1, has the following impact:

For those properties at target rent the increase will be: -

Consumer Price Index (CPI for Sept 2022) @10.1%-4.74% = 5.36%

For those properties where rent is below target rent, the increase can be:

Consumer Price Index (CPI for Sept 2022) @10.1%-4.74% = 5.36%

plus a maximum of £1 progression in order to achieve an average rent increase of 5.5%.

Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target, there are only 6 of these properties remaining. When a property becomes empty it is placed at the appropriate rent.

Based on applying the above for 2023/24 at 5.5% rent increase this would produce an average rent of £99.44 (increase of £5.18)

Details of the rent increases on individual households are below:-

Receive an increase of :-	5% increase
No increase	6
£3.00 to £3.99	38
£4.00 to £4.99	2,232
£5.00 to £5.99	6,101
£6.00 to £6.99	876
	9,253

Table : No .of Householders affected by average increases.

30% of tenants are now in receipt of universal credit, 28% of tenants are on full Housing Benefit (HB), 18% are on partial HB and 24% receive no HB. Of those receiving no assistance in the form of universal credit or housing benefit there are approximately 839 tenants of pensionable age.

The proportion of dwellings below the rent they should be paying is 14% as a result of the £1 progression implemented last year and the rent being changed as a result of properties becoming vacant. This was over 85% when we began the harmonisation process.

4.4. Garage Rental Income

The HRA currently receives a net rental income of £126k per annum. This equates to a weekly charge of £9.00 per week. Garage bases are £2.30 per week. It is not proposed to increase these in 2023/24.

4.5. Service and Heating charges

Service charges are calculated in line with the policy adopted in 2011. These charges are made to cover the additional services we provide as a landlord that are not covered within the rent and to ensure that all communal areas are kept in a good condition.

These charges will vary annually as they are based on actual expenditure from the previous financial year. By implementing the Service Charge Policy we are ensuring that tenants who receive additional services pay for them in a fair and transparent way.

The unprecedented increases in energy costs will probably result in expenditure rising significantly in 2023/24 to £1.3M from £0.5M in 2022/23. The current policy allows for a maximum increase of £3 per tenant per week and is applicable to approximately 1250 tenants. These increases will then be included in the service charging process for recovery in 2024/25 generating £200k of income. Options will need to be considered to achieve a sustainable charging policy longer term.

4.6. Sewerage Treatment Works

We have 15 pumping stations serving approx. 154 properties, the cost of running and maintaining the stations falls on the HRA. We also have 8 cesspits. It is proposed for 2023/24 that current charges are increased as per our rent increase.

4.7. Commission on Collection of Water Rates

In addition to the rent collection process we act as an agent on behalf of Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water, which generates a net income of £350k in the form of commission. Dwr Cymru have served notice of their intention to repatriate this service from April 2023 not only for Carmarthenshire but all the local authority and RSL's in Wales. This means the Authority and the Housing Revenue Account will lose the net income.

4.8. Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is a new monthly payment for people who are either unemployed, or working but on a low income. It will eventually replace six legacy benefits, including Housing Benefit. For Carmarthenshire, it was introduced in December 2018. We currently have nearly 2,779 tenants on Universal Credit.

We anticipate, unless things change, that a further 4,000 tenants could transfer over the next two to three years. From a business point of view, evidence from other social housing providers has shown that rent arrears will increase in the short to medium term and we have allowed for this within this plan in terms of our bad debt provision.

To date, there has only been a slight increase in rent arrears overall. This is lower than we had been expecting and certainly compares very favourably with the experience of other social housing providers.

The CHS+ Business Plan presents more detail on this, including the actions that are being undertaken to mitigate the impact for Council tenants.

5. BALANCES

5.1. If a rental increase is set at 5.5%, the overall proposed budget will result in a deficit on the Housing Revenue Account of £4.6million for the year, however this has been accommodated in the long-term plan leaving £13.9million in balances at the end of 2023/24. It should also be noted in Appendix A that balances are required to support the current strategy of funding our capital expenditure and continue to make our business plan affordable over a 30-year period.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- **To increase average housing rent by 5.5% (£5.18) per dwelling per week as per WG Social Housing Rents Policy.**
 - Properties at target rents will increase by 5.36% and
 - Properties where rent is below target rent, rent will increase by 5.36% plus a maximum progression of £1.00
 - Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target.

This will produce a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+, resource our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan and is supported by Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team.

- **To maintain garage rents at £9.00 and garage bases at £2.25.**
- **Apply the Service Charge Policy to ensure tenants who receive the benefit from specific services pay for those services**
- **To increase charges for using our sewerage treatment works in line with rent increase.**
- **To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2023/26 (2024/25 & 2025/26 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix A.**
- **To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2023/24 and the indicative spends for 2024/25 to 2025/26 as set out in Appendix B.**

APPENDIX A	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
REVENUE SPENDING TO:	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)
Repair and maintain homes	17,233	18,319	19,411
Supervision and management	9,625	10,071	10,499
Support services e.g. legal and finance	1,866	1,903	1,941
Provision for Bad debts	606	636	668
Direct Revenue financing	10,000	5,000	5,000
Capital charges	14,929	15,474	16,197
TOTAL	54,258	51,403	53,716
REVENUE FUNDING FROM:	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
REVENUE FUNDING FROM:	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)
Tenant rents	46,247	48,540	51,063
Service charges	981	1,227	1,275
Interest received	137	71	76
Housing Finance Grant 2	246	246	246
Water rates commission	-	-	-
Grants / Other	2,050	2,136	2,220
TOTAL	49,661	52,221	54,879
Surplus/(Deficit in year)	- 4,598	818	1,163
HRA end of year position			
Balance brought forward from last year	18,494	13,896	14,714
HRA Budgeted surplus(+) / deficit (-)	- 4,598	818	1,163
Balance carried forward	13,896	14,714	15,877

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APPENDIX B			
CAPITAL SPENDING TO: -	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)
<i>Maintain the standard:</i>			
All Internal works	2,378	2,287	2,300
All External Works	1,000	2,000	1,000
Voids and Major Works to homes	6,000	5,000	6,000
Structural works - Estates and boundary walls (inc. identified structural works)	900	1,800	2,000
Decants	150	150	150
<i>Support Tenant and Residents:</i>			
Sheltered Scheme Investment	370	500	850
Assisted Living Projects	1,200	450	800
Adaptations	2,000	2,000	2,000
Environmental works	250	300	250
Garages	100	100	100
<i>Provide more affordable homes:</i>			
Housing Development Programme	12,730	14,900	15,500
<i>Decarbonisation:</i>			
Works to deliver decarbonisation	2,835	2,623	2,055
<i>Support the delivery of CHS+:</i>			
Programme management	1,500	1,560	1,622
Stock condition information	416	387	350
Risk Reduction Measures	1,987	285	470
Sewerage treatment works & associated costs	20	20	20
TOTAL	33,837	34,362	35,467
CAPITAL FUNDING FROM: -	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2024/26
	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)
Welsh Government Grant - MRA	6,225	6,225	6,225
Welsh Government Grant - IHP & other	9,272	9,052	7,000
Direct Revenue Financing	10,000	5,000	5,000
External Borrowing	8,340	14,085	17,242
TOTAL	33,837	34,362	35,467

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**EXTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR THE:
COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

MONDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2022

**4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND HOUSING RENT SETTING
FOR 2023/24**

The Committee considered a report on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24, being presented as part of the budget consultation process, that brought together the latest proposals for the Revenue and Capital budgets for the Housing Revenue Account to be presented to the Cabinet and Council for determination.

The Committee was advised that the report had been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering and maintaining the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+) for the future. The proposed investment within the current business plan delivered the CHS by 2015 (to those homes where the tenants agreed to have work undertaken) provided investment to maintain CHS+ and continued investment for the Housing and Regeneration Delivery Plan.

The report also detailed how rents would increase for 2023/24 with the HRA budget being set to reflect:-

- Social Housing Rent Policy (set by Welsh Government)
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan

The Committee was reminded that with regard to the setting of the Housing Rents, the Authority on the 24th February 2015 had adopted the Welsh Government's Social Housing Rent Policy for the four year period ending in 2018/19 providing consistency over that period. For 2019/20, the Welsh Government had provided an interim policy while it awaited the results of the Affordable Housing Supply Review. Following that review, the Welsh Government had decided to retain the policy for a further 5year period from 2020/21 – 2024/25 with some additional/amended requirements, as detailed within the report.

This policy allowed local authorities to uplift the total rent envelope by CPI + 1% for each of the 5 years running to 2024/25. It also allowed for the level of rent for individual tenants to rise by up to an additional £2 over and above CPI+1% for the rent harmonisation, on condition that the total rental income collected by the social landlord increased by no more than CPI+1%.

However, should CPI fall outside the range of 0% to 3%, the policy provides for the Minister with responsibility for Housing to determine the appropriate change to rent levels to be applied for that year only. As CPI was 10.1% in September 2022, that clause had been activated this year and the Welsh Government Minister for Climate Change had instructed the maximum increase in the rent envelope for any local authority should not exceed 6.5%

Having regard to the above, the report recommended an average housing rent increase of 5.5% (£5.18) per dwelling. If the Committee endorsed that increase, it would result in a £4.6m deficit on the Housing Revenue Account. However, that had been accommodated for within the long-term plan leaving £13.9m in balances at the end of 2023/24. It was also noted that, as Detailed in Appendix A, balances were required to support the current strategy of funding capital expenditure and continuing to make the business plan affordable over a 30year period

The following issues / questions were raised on the report

- Reference was made to the role of individual stakeholders in relation to Target Rent Bands. It was confirmed the Council was undertaking an affordability survey as part of its tenant engagement on the proposals and the responses received to date would be reported back as part of the consultation process
- With regard to the levying of services charges for tenants, it related to communal charges within sheltered accommodation for example energy costs, with the cost being based on the usage within each home. Presently, the charge was £3 per week, however, due to the recent increase in fuel charges, the authority was incurring a £600k loss on that provision.
- Appendix B to the report indicated a doubling of external borrowing to fund capital expenditure and clarification was sought on whether any associated risks had been mitigated. The Director of Corporate Resources confirmed that as the Council's borrowing was over the long term e.g. 40 - 50 years, any rate rises should not prove to be a risk over that period. As the Housing Business Plan was over a 30year period, short term variances could be managed within the plan. However, it was important rents were set at the right level to maintain its integrity.
- In relation to the proposal that garage rents be maintained at the current levels, it was confirmed that was due to a review being undertaken and there were no investments plans for the service.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE
CABINET/COUNCIL:-**

- 5.1 to increase the average housing rent by 5.5% (£5.18) per dwelling as per the Welsh Government's Social Housing Rents Policy thereby producing a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+ and resource the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan, as supported by the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team;**
- 5.2 To maintain garage rents at £9.00 per week and garage bases at £2.25 per week;**
- 5.3 To apply the service charge policy to ensure tenants who received the benefit from specific services paid for those services;**
- 5.4 To increase charges for using the Council's sewerage treatment works in line with the rent increase;**
- 5.5 To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2023/26 (2024/25 t& 2025/26 being soft budgets) as detailed in Appendix A;**
- 5.6 To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2023/24 and the indicative spends for 2024/25 to 2025/26, as set out in Appendix B to the report.**

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COUNCIL 25TH JANUARY 2023

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2023-26 CARMARTHENSHIRE'S HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Purpose:

- To explain the vision and detail of our housing investment programme over the next three years, including our housing stock improvement plans, the new build programme, plans to become net zero carbon and what they mean for tenants;
- To recognise the effect the cost-of-living crisis has had on many of our tenants and our commitment to:
 - help and support tenants to ensure they feel safe and secure in their homes, increasing income levels where possible and ensuring that they are in receipt of all grants and benefits they are entitled to; and
 - ensure that no one is evicted from our homes as a result of financial hardship.
- To confirm the income that we will receive from tenants' rents and other funding sources over the next three years and how this enables us to develop a capital programme exceeding £103m, which will:
 - improve and maintain our existing housing stock, reduce the number of empty Council homes and deal with the backlog of repairs, keeping tenants informed of progress;
 - support the delivery of over 2,000 new affordable homes in our communities to ensure more homes are available for those who need it;
 - support the Council's Net Zero Carbon principles, creating energy efficient homes, minimising carbon emissions and promoting affordable warmth for tenants to reduce the cost of maintaining a home;
 - help stimulate economic growth, creating jobs and training opportunities in the county; and
 - help build strong sustainable communities – places where people are proud to call home.
- To confirm the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of our housing investment and Council new build programme over the next three years; and
- To produce a business plan for the annual application to Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) Grant for 2022/23, equating to 6.2m.

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS:

'UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL TO:

- 11.1 Confirm the vision for our housing investment programmes over the next three years;**
- 11.2 Agree that the 2023-26 Business Plan can be submitted to Welsh Government;**

11.3 Note the contribution the Plan makes to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2000 homes;

11.4 Note the importance of the investment included in this plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and creating local jobs and training opportunities.'

Reasons:

- To try and balance supporting tenants in the current cost of living crisis in terms of the rent increase and wider assistance with the need to continue to invest in existing homes and increase the availability of new affordable homes.
- To continue our housing investment vision and deliver what really matters to tenants.
- To continue to support tenants by maintaining the standard and accelerate how we approach the net zero carbon agenda. This will allow for the evolution of our planned stock investment programmes so that they are fit for the future. An overall investment of £60m is planned over the next three years.
- To support the £43m investment required by the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan over the next three years in providing more social rented homes to meet the unprecedented housing need in our communities.
- To link our housing investment programme with wider regeneration initiatives with a real focus on developments in the Tyisha ward, Pentre Awel, town centres and rural towns and villages.
- To make members aware that the delivery of the Business Plan is dependent on an overall average rent increase of 5.5% with a maximum progression of £1 for those tenancies below target rent. In this plan most tenants will receive a 5.36% average rent increase which is significantly below level set by WG at 6.5% and current inflation values.
- To access MRA grant from WG (£6.2m) for 2023/24 to help maintain our existing homes.

Cabinet Decision Required **Yes – 9th January 2023**

Council Decision Required **Yes – 25th January 2023**

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Linda Evans (Deputy Leader and Homes Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Alun Lenny (Resources Portfolio Holder)

Directorate Communities Name of Head of Service: Jonathan Morgan Report Author: Rachel Davies Nathan Hartley	Designations: Head of Housing and Public Protection Investment and Development Service Manager Innovation Partnership Officer	E Mail Addresses & Tel Nos: JMorgan@cararthenshire.gov.uk 01267 228960 RaMDavies@cararthenshire.gov.uk 07884 235714 NJHartley@cararthenshire.gov.uk 07827 808865
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COUNCIL
25TH JANUARY 2023

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2023-26
CARMARTHENSHIRE HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

1. Purpose of the Business Plan

- 1.1. At the start of each year we develop a business plan which explains our vision and the three-year housing investment programmes to maintain our stock and deliver more affordable homes.
- 1.2. It is important that the plan is clear and that all readers, including our tenants, understand its contents. Meeting our tenant's expectations is a key priority within the plan.
- 1.3. The income that we receive from tenants' rents and other funding sources enables us to build an investment programme exceeding £262m (Capital - £103m and Revenue - £159m) to run our services, build more affordable homes, improve and maintain our existing stock as well as develop new standards to meet our net zero carbon ambitions over the next three years.
- 1.4. The plan also reflects on previous years achievements and through careful consideration, confirms the financial profile (based on current assumptions) for housing stock investment and delivery of more affordable homes, over the next three years
- 1.5. To help maintain the investment programme, each year we apply for Welsh Government's (WG) Major Repair Allowance (MRA) grant. We access this funding by having a detailed business plan and compliance policy. The MRA application for 2023/24 will equate to £6.2m.
- 1.6. The plan this year also has a key focus how we plan to:
 - support tenants through the current cost of living crisis;
 - introduce a new emergency social housing allocation policy to ensure throughput in the system;
 - tackle key local issues to improve services especially reducing the number of empty Council homes, dealing with the repair backlog (including our vision and frameworks for in-house and external contractor provision) and making sure our processes are robust for any condensation/damp issues; and
 - make sure our estate and tenancy management offer is as good as it can be.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Business Plan sets out our priorities, plans and activities for 2023 - 2026 for new and existing homes.
- 2.2. The plan recognises the hardship caused for many of our tenants by the cost of living crisis and how it is more important than ever that the Council provides help and support for tenants. It is important we help to increase income levels where possible, ensuring that tenants are in receipt of all the grants and benefits they are entitled to and we continue to ensure that no one is evicted from our homes as a result of financial hardship.
- 2.3. The plan also recognises the importance of carrying out responsive repairs to tenants' homes and reducing the number of empty Council homes. We recognise more work needs to be carried out in these areas and the steps the Council must take. This includes developing a new minor works framework that will enable more local contractors to work on our Council homes. We are also developing our in-house teams, developing our capacity and skills so that we become less reliant on the market and can carry out the works ourselves.
- 2.4. The Plan focuses on how our investment programmes help stimulate economic growth, boost local supply chains and ensure that we have a resilient workforce to meet the future demand of the service.
- 2.5. A comprehensive investment programme has been put together to carry out work that builds on what we were able to do in 2022/23. Through careful consideration and planning the plan looks to continually improve the standards within our existing stock, build more homes using innovative technology and ensure that current and future tenants have quality, affordable homes to live in.
- 2.6. The Council is fully WHQS compliant having met the standard during 2015 utilising a whole house delivery approach.
- 2.7. The Council has over 9000 homes and our approach goes beyond general repair and maintenance, it is based on looking at the whole life of the homes. Adopting this approach means that we can guarantee that what we do today, will be fit for purpose and sustainable for years to come.
- 2.8. Over the next three years we plan to deliver a comprehensive work programme that will see an investment of £60m in our existing homes and £43m in building new Council homes.
- 2.9. To maintain this level of investment we have considered a rent increase within the Plan. In previous years we have taken care to set this in accordance with the WG rent policy of Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%. Applying this in 2023/24 would mean an exceptionally high and unaffordable overall average rental increase of 11.1% for all tenants.
- 2.10. As the Consumer Price Index in September 2022 falls outside the 3% threshold set within the policy, the Housing Minister has discretion to set the maximum rental increase for all social housing providers for 2023/24. It has been set at 6.5%. The current assumptions in this plan have been based on a rental increase of **5.5%** overall, which includes a maximum £1 progression for those tenancies below target rent.

- 2.11. In this plan most tenants will receive a 5.36% average rent increase which is significantly below level set by WG and current inflation values.
- 2.12. The plan has been divided into **five** key themes that will drive our business for the next three years. They are as follows:

Theme 1- Supporting Tenants & Residents

The cost of living crisis has caused hardship for many of our tenants and providing help and support to ensure that they are able to live comfortably in their homes is more important than ever. We will:

- ensure that there are no evictions from our homes due to financial hardship and work with tenants to put a plan in place to help them make their weekly rental payments;
- provide financial advice and support to ensure that tenants claim all the financial assistance they are entitled to. This will include helping tenants apply for the benefits and grants, including the Homelessness Prevention Grant;
- do everything we can to support tenants' well-being. Increasing bills and being unable to afford food and other essential items will cause stress and anxiety. We will ensure we support tenants and provide access to local schemes that support mental health and well-being;
- continue to roll out our housing stock retrofit programmes that will make our homes more energy efficient and help reduce fuel bills for tenants; and
- review our current approach to estate and tenancy management services.

Theme 2- Investing in Homes & Our Estates

Maintaining the standard is a statutory duty, and the Council has made a commitment to maintain the stock through this plan and programme of work. This year we will continue to roll out our optimised retrofit programmes helping to make our tenants homes more energy efficient. We are also carrying out a new stock condition survey which will help develop our new investment programmes and provide cost certainty for the future.

Tenants tell us that getting repairs done on time and maintaining homes to a good standard is important to them. Both the pandemic and Brexit have had a significant effect on the local construction market, causing market failure and affecting the availability skills, capacity and materials. In addition to this, costs escalated with many of our framework contractors choosing to prioritise higher paid private sector work instead of carrying out repairs to our homes.. This has significantly affected our ability to carry out responsive and maintenance works on our homes. This has caused a big backlog in both the number of repairs we have outstanding and the number of empty Council homes that have not been let.

Carrying out the backlog of repairs and letting our Council homes quickly are our priorities. To enable us to do this we are developing a new minor works framework that will enable more local contractors to work on our Council homes. We are also developing our in-house teams, developing our capacity and skills so that we become less reliant on the market and implementing a new repairs scheduling system called Total Connect, over the next 12 months. Total Connect will enable tenants to request and track their repairs and help us ensure that the works carryout on tenants' homes meet their needs and are done at a time that is convenient and suitable for our tenants.

We will also make sure that our homes are safe by reviewing risk reduction measures, particularly around fire safety, radon and electrical installations.

Lastly we will be making sure our processes to deal with condensation and damp issues are as robust as they can be, especially in light of recent tragic events.

Theme 3- Providing More Homes

Providing more affordable homes has been a priority for the Council for a number of years. Our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan sets our strategic direction and is focused on supporting the delivery of over 2000 additional homes over the next five years by:

- meeting housing need in all areas of the county;
- developing new innovative energy efficient Council homes with low running costs, helping to mitigate fuel poverty and helping some of our most vulnerable families through the cost of living crisis;
- providing sustainable solutions to address the unprecedented rise in homelessness cases seen in recent months due to external market conditions affecting the private rented sector which is reducing the supply of homes; and
- stimulating economic growth in the county, creating jobs and growing the green economy.

Since beginning our ambitious journey to increase the supply of affordable homes in 2016, we have delivered over 1,600 homes, exceeding our delivery targets every year meeting housing need and helping some of the most vulnerable people and families in our communities.

Our plans to increase the supply of homes ensure that we do so in the most cost-effective way, using a range of delivery vehicles that offer flexibility, scale and pace. The effects of the current unprecedented housing crisis and the rise in homelessness cases has required greater focus on our buying private sector homes programme making more homes available quickly to help address the increasing demand for housing.

To support the above we are also introducing a new emergency social housing allocation policy to ensure better throughput in the housing system.

Theme 4- Providing Affordable Warmth and Decarbonising our Housing Stock

Reducing tenants fuel bills, promoting affordable warmth and reducing carbon emissions is also a key priority. Our aim is to make all of our homes energy efficient and achieve a minimum Band C Energy Performance Rating as quickly as possible.

We have already delivered retrofit schemes as part of the WG Optimised Retrofit Programme. The works have included:

- an optimised retrofit programme utilising the fabric first approach and introducing renewable technology to both empty and occupied homes; and
- developing a programme to replace gas boilers that were falling out of compliance with hybrid heat pumps.

Although the sample sizes of our retrofit projects are small, the data and learning we have gained is immeasurable. The next challenge, however, is how we accelerate these programmes forward to include more homes at pace. The cost of living crisis has made this a key priority for the Council and we will be revisiting our programmes to determine what can be brought forward that will directly help our tenants by reducing their fuel bills.

Our Council new build standards embrace decarbonisation. Our homes are highly efficient and already achieve a Band A Energy Rating with SAP levels between 92 and 105. We have developed a housing performance matrix that allows us to build to different energy standards depending on the development. Our ambitious plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 homes in the next 5 years will include developing innovative energy efficient homes with low levels of carbon emissions that can produce and store energy.

Whilst decarbonising the housing stock is a huge challenge, there are several benefits to this approach, including:

- reducing fuel bills for tenants and helping to mitigating fuel poverty;
- strengthening our local economy by providing long term investment programmes;
- providing more training and work opportunities for local people; and
- ensuring our tenants homes are fit for purpose now and for generations to come.

There are several barriers in place that make it difficult to predict when all our homes will achieve a minimum Band C energy performance rating, these include:

- high cost to fully retrofit a typical home that has already received investment;
- lack of local skills and trades to deliver the work;
- shortage of materials both locally and nationally; and
- limited capacity of the national grid to deal with the increased energy demands of more electrical equipment such as heat pumps and solar panels as they are installed in our homes.

We have, however, always understood that the most practical way to decarbonising our homes is through a fabric first approach. This means ensuring our homes are well insulated with an increased air tightness so homes stay warmer for longer and therefore reduce heating demands for tenants. Although we do see innovative technologies such as solar panels, heat pumps and battery storage equipment becoming more prominent in housing, we see these as additional benefits that will be installed further down the line as the national grid continues to improve and skills, trades and materials become more available.

Theme 5- The Local Economy, Community Benefits & Procurement

We fully embrace the role of housing-based investment in stimulating, supporting and developing the local economy. The housing stock investment and Council new build programmes will provide sustained periods of trade and benefit to local contractors and builders, creating more jobs, training opportunities and other community benefits. The decarbonisation of our homes will also become a fundamental part of our future stock improvement programmes. Rolling this out across our entire housing stock will result in increased job opportunities and further training opportunities as we explore new ways of providing low carbon, energy efficient homes for our tenants.

The Council's first five new build developments have already created 19 new jobs and 1,344 waged training weeks. Our current housing investment programmes are predicted to deliver 21 new jobs and a further 3,668 waged training weeks.

During construction, contractors will also contribute to the wider local economy by increasing footfall into town centres and spending money in rural market towns/villages by accessing local amenities such as shops, supermarkets, restaurants and cafés.

It is, however, extremely important that all contracts demonstrate good value for money and through the South West Wales Regional Contractors and the Minor Works Frameworks we will challenge their costs, the principles and methods of construction to make sure that we achieve this.

- 2.13. Annually the Council reviews the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan which sets out the investment needed to maintain the housing investment programmes. The Council has a robust 30-year business plan in place and since April 2015 has become self-financing having exited the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System (HRAS).
- 2.14. We will also pursue, where possible, other funding streams and grants to maximise our income that will support and complement the work programmes and/ or services outlined in the Business Plan. In 2022/23 we received over £10m in grant funding through successful bids to Welsh Government.
- 2.15. Also included in the plan is how we measure and verify compliance. We believe that we report compliance accurately in achieving and maintaining the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, and we will continue to do so.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. We believe that this Business Plan sets out a clear intent to improve our housing stock, looking to the future as we roll out optimised retrofit works. This will help our environment and lower tenants fuel bills, as well as building more affordable homes to meet an ever-increasing demand on front line homelessness services.
- 3.2. The cost of living crisis has caused hardship for many of our tenants and providing help and support to ensure that they are able to live comfortably in their homes is more important than ever.
- 3.3. Investing £103m in capital projects over the next three years will stimulate our local economy which will help our communities to grow and build resilience for the future, but in doing so we must ensure that there is capacity within the industry to deliver.
- 3.4. Finally, we have set out what the key assumptions are to make sure the Business Plan is balanced, remains viable and is realistic on what we will spend the money on and how it is funded.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. To confirm the vision for our housing investment programmes over the next three years.
- 4.2. To agree that the 2023/24 Business Plan can be submitted to Welsh Government.
- 4.3. To note the contribution the Plan makes to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2000 homes.
- 4.4. To note the importance of the investment included in this plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and creating local jobs and training opportunities.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES – HRA Business Plan 2023/2026

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: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing & Public Protection

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The HRA Business Plan will act as the framework for policy development across Housing and Public Protection and will contribute to wider agendas and programmes.

2. Legal

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out our statutory duty to maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard in our existing stock.

3. Finance

Maintaining and investing in our housing stock will continue to present significant financial challenges and risks to the County Council.

A capital investment of £231m has been undertaken to deliver the WHQS by 2015. This included £117m of unsupported borrowing. Since achieving the WHQS, a further £92m will have been spent on maintaining the standard and £68m on providing additional affordable homes in the HRA by the end of 2022/23.

Through careful management, the financial model remains viable to not only maintain the housing stock and evolve the current standard but also delivers more affordable homes. A summary of costs over the next three years is included in the plan.

An overall rent increase of 5.5% with a maximum £1 progression for those below target rent for 2023/24 is also assumed in the plan.

5. Risk Management

The housing investment programme is identified as a moderate risk in the Council's Risk Management Plan. A risk management plan has been developed to mitigate and review all risks associated with the programme.

Failure to deliver a viable Business Plan to Welsh Government by the end of March 2023 will mean the MRA of £6.2m for 2023/24 being withdrawn.

6. Physical Assets

The housing investment programme will involve the management, maintenance and improvement of the Council's housing stock. This will be carried out within the context of our asset management principles which are defined within the plan. Any decision to acquire, convert or dispose of homes, land and/or garage areas will be considered in line with these principles.

This plan will also result in an increase in the number of homes in the Council's housing stock through the Council new build and purchasing private sector homes programmes.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing & Public Protection

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination		YES
Scrutiny Committee	Communities, Homes & Regeneration	
Date the report was considered:-	19 th December, 2022	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:- RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET/COUNCIL TO:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm the vision of the Housing Investment Programme over the next three years;• Agree the 2023/24 Business Plan could be submitted to the Welsh Government• Note the contribution the Plan made to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2,000 new homes• Note the importance of the investment included in the Plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and creating local jobs and training opportunities.		
2.Local Member(s) – N/A		
3.Relevant Partners		
Engagement with stakeholders and partners has taken place in order to develop this Plan through digital interaction.		
4.Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations		
Ongoing engagement with tenants, has taken place in order to develop this Plan.		
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
HRA Business Plan 2023/2026	Housing General Files	Council website- Democratic Services

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Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26

Carmarthenshire's Housing Investment Programme



sirgar.llyw.cymru
carmarthenshire.gov.wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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Foreword by our Cabinet Members

We again introduce our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan for 2023-2026. This plan sets out our priorities and activities for new and existing Council homes for the next three years. Our plans are exciting and ambitious. They will help stimulate economic growth, improve health and well-being and build strong sustainable communities.

We are fully aware, however, that the current cost of living crisis has, and will cause difficulties for many of our tenants and is really affecting the way they live. Many are having to make difficult financial decisions on a daily basis just to make ends meet to feed their families and heat their homes. This unfortunately is a growing trend that currently shows no signs of change with no easy solution. We know that many people look to the Council to provide support in difficult times and it is more important than ever that we continue to do that. We will provide help and support to tenants to ensure that they feel safe and secure in their homes, increasing income levels where possible and ensuring that they are in receipt of all the grants and benefits that they are entitled to. We will continue to provide advice and financial support to help tenants pay their rent and utility bills, buy food and other essential items for their families. It is also crucial that we continue to ensure that no one is evicted from our homes as a result of financial hardship.

As Cllr Lenny has already outlined we are proposing that the rent increase will be 5.5% for tenants for next year, well below inflation. This will also ensure, however, that we continue to invest in existing homes for tenants and build much needed new ones

As well as the cost of energy, food and other everyday essential items continuing to rise, we have also seen an unprecedented rise in homelessness caused by external market conditions affecting the private rented sector. This is having a dramatic effect on the supply of affordable homes for rent in the county, with many single person and family households by no fault of their own becoming homeless.

Providing more affordable homes has always been important to us, but now with the cost of living crisis and the steep rise in homelessness it is more important than ever. We have already delivered over 1,600 additional homes and our new development programme will support the delivery of a further 2,000 homes, supporting the regeneration of our town centres, rural towns and villages and our major regeneration sites including the Transforming Tyisha programme. We have also accelerated our buying private sector homes programme and remodelled some of our existing stock, helping to increase supply quickly meeting the needs of some of our most vulnerable individuals and families.

Carrying out responsive repairs to our tenants' homes and letting empty Council homes quickly is also a critical part of our business. Since the pandemic we have struggled to get works undertaken quickly on our homes. This is due to conditions affecting the local construction market, causing market failure and affecting the availability skills, capacity and materials. Construction costs have also soared, with many of our framework contractors choosing to prioritise higher paid private sector work instead of repairs and maintenance works to our homes. This has caused a significant backlog in

both the number of repairs we have outstanding and the number of empty Council homes that have not been let. We recognised that this situation cannot continue and are addressing this by developing a new minor works framework that will enable more local contractors to work on our Council homes. We are also developing our in-house teams, developing our capacity and skills so that we become less reliant on the market and can carry out the works ourselves.

We are continuing to plan our new decarbonisation and retrofit investment programmes. The Council is leading the way on our approach to decarbonising homes, which will make our homes more affordable for our tenants, provide healthier living conditions and create a greener Carmarthenshire. This plan shows a firm commitment to support the investment required for decarbonising our homes which will involve improving the fabric performance of our homes, installing low carbon heating solutions and renewable technology. This programme of works will make a significant contribution to tackling the climate emergency and follows the Council's principles of becoming a Net Zero Carbon Authority by 2030.

Through this plan we will continue to deliver a comprehensive programme of works to our homes and maintain services to all of our tenants. It will also help stimulate the local economy creating new jobs and training opportunities. During the three years of this plan, we will invest over £260m into social housing in Carmarthenshire (Capital £103m and Revenue £157m).

Finally, we would like to thank tenants, staff and members for their continuous support in driving our ambitious plans forward. We know that there is a lot more to do and that the cost of living crisis will play a key role in shaping the Council's priorities over the next 12 months. However, the details within this plan clearly lay out our priorities and opportunities going forward. The plan provides confidence that we will continue to invest in new and existing homes, improve our tenants' lives, reduce carbon emissions and help our communities and economy become stronger than ever before.



Cllr. Linda Davies Evans
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for
Homes



Cllr. Alun Lenny
Cabinet Member for Resources

Introduction

Introduction

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is the standard set for all social housing in Wales by Welsh Government (WG). The WHQS was first introduced in 2002 and aimed to ensure that all homes are of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future tenants. WG set a target for all social landlords to improve their housing stock to meet the WHQS by 2020.

Carmarthenshire's tenants developed their own standard, called the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard (CHS), and this was successfully delivered in 2015, well in advance of the WG timescales.

Following the successful delivery of the CHS (and WHQS), we have continued to work with our tenants and external partners to continue to improve and evolve our standards, embracing where possible decarbonisation and affordable warmth measures.

Purpose of the HRA Business Plan

At the start of each year we develop a business plan which explains our vision and the three-year housing investment programmes to maintain our stock and deliver more affordable homes.

It is important that the plan is clear and that all readers, including our tenants, understand its contents. Meeting our tenant's expectations is a key priority within the plan.

The income that we receive from tenants' rents and other funding sources enables us to build an investment programme exceeding £262m (Capital - £103m and Revenue - £159m) to run our services, build more affordable homes, improve and maintain our existing stock as well as develop new standards to meet our net zero carbon ambitions over the next three years.

The plan also reflects on previous years achievements and through careful consideration, confirms the financial profile (based on current assumptions) for housing stock investment and delivery of more affordable homes, over the next three years

To help maintain the investment programme, each year we apply for Welsh Government's (WG) Major Repair Allowance (MRA) grant. We access this funding by having a detailed business plan and compliance policy. The MRA application for 2023/24 will equate to £6.2m.

The plan this year also has a key focus how we plan to:

- support tenants through the current cost of living crisis;
- introduce a new emergency social housing allocation policy to ensure throughput in the system;
- tackle key local issues to improve services especially reducing the number of empty Council homes, dealing with the repair backlog (including our vision and frameworks for in-house and external contractor provision) and making sure our processes are robust for any condensation/damp issues; and

- make sure our estate and tenancy management offer is as good as it can be.

Advancing the HRA Business Plan

This Plan is updated annually considering the views of tenants and stakeholders, the latest stock condition information, updated financial information, WG guidance and any revised Council policies. Current events are also taken into consideration that directly impact our services and our tenant's wellbeing, such as the current cost of living crisis and the unprecedented housing pressures

Progress against the actions within the plan, associated budgets and strategic direction will be monitored regularly by the Housing Investment & Development Team. The plan also acknowledges the link between good quality housing and estate management with the seven goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

A copy of the governance structure and the well-being goals are provided in Appendix A.

2022/2023 Achievements

The effect of the cost of living crisis in 2022/23 presented difficulties for many tenants across the county. Providing help and support for our tenants to ensure that they can continue to live comfortably in their homes, provide food and other essential items for their family has become more important than ever.

Over the last 12 months we have:



- supported over 594 tenants to maximise their income levels through unclaimed grants and benefits, generating over £926k of additional income and helping to support tenants through the cost of living crisis;
- provided additional support and well-being services to vulnerable households across the county;
- won the MJ award for Best Social Housing Initiative for helping young people to live independently and manage their tenancy;
- developed a new Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to help people experiencing homelessness find secure, settled self-contained accommodation as quickly as possible;
- continued to deliver affordable homes across the county, exceeding our targets and delivering in excess for 1,600 additional homes since the start of the programme;
- delivered 114 new build Council homes in Ammanford, Burry Port, Pembrey and Llanelli;
- advanced plans for a further 200 affordable homes across the county on developments being developed directly by the Council or by working in partnership with a private sector development partner;



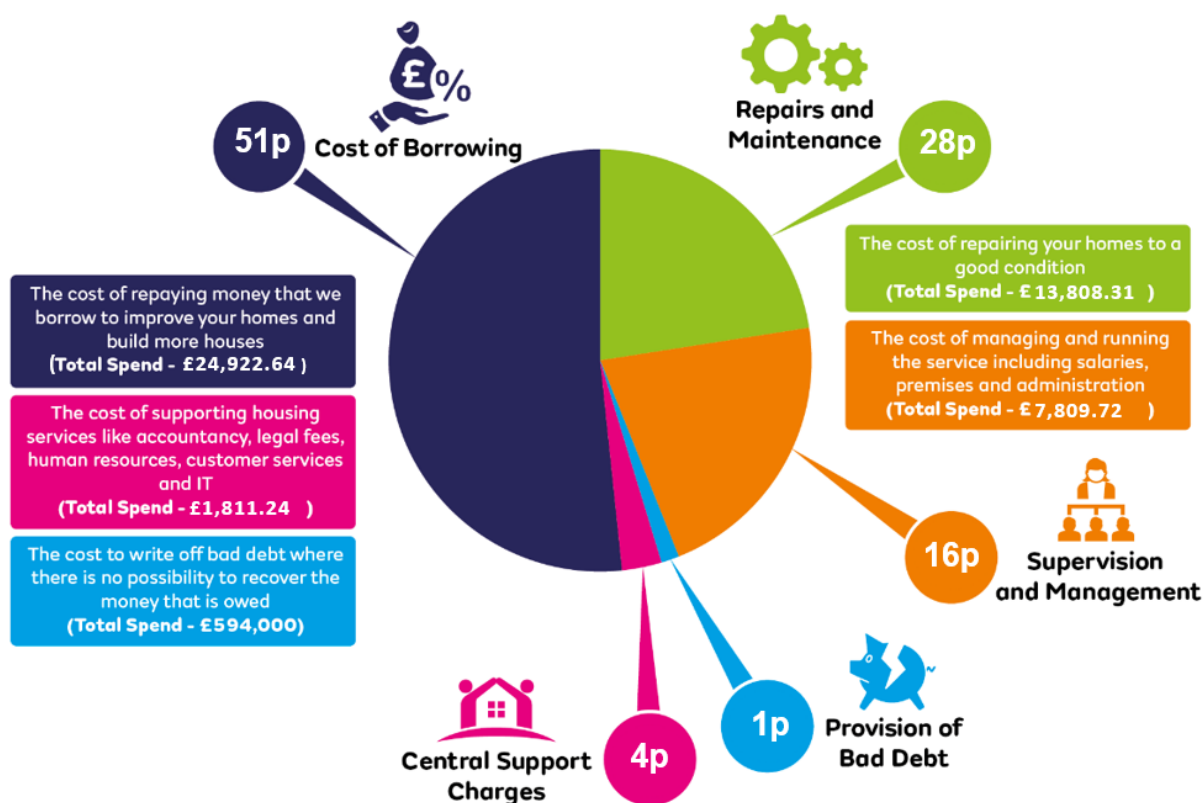


- purchased over 30 homes on the open market, increasing our housing stock quickly and helping to address homelessness in the county;
- created 24 additional supported accommodation units for individuals with learning disabilities and mental health;
- continued to provide temporary accommodation solutions to individuals and families threatened with homelessness;
- reduced the number of Council empty homes to below 300;
- procured a partner to deliver super-fast wi-fi to our sheltered schemes;
- progressed with the decarbonisation programme for the housing stock through the Optimised Retrofit Programme (phase 2 & 3), providing us with crucial data on how best to decarbonise our homes, reduce energy bills and supporting tenants through the cost of living crisis;
- installed a new Intelligent Energy System (IES) within all new build and retrofitted homes, enabling us to monitor the performance of the homes and ensure that tenants are able to use the new technologies installed;
- updated all our processes and prepared new contracts in preparation for the new Renting Homes (Wales) Act;
- conducted an audit of all our CCTV equipment to ensure it remains fit for purpose;
- successfully recruited a new team of stock condition and verification officers that will maintain and update our stock condition information; and
- implemented a new asset management system (CX Assets) that will allow us to model our own housing stock and develop a robust decarbonisation investment programme.

The following sections will provide the context and detail of what we plan to deliver over the next three years. This includes how we intend paying for it and the wider benefits of the investment programme. We will cover **five** key themes that will drive our business for the next three years.

What your rent was used for 2022/2023

How every £1 of rent was used

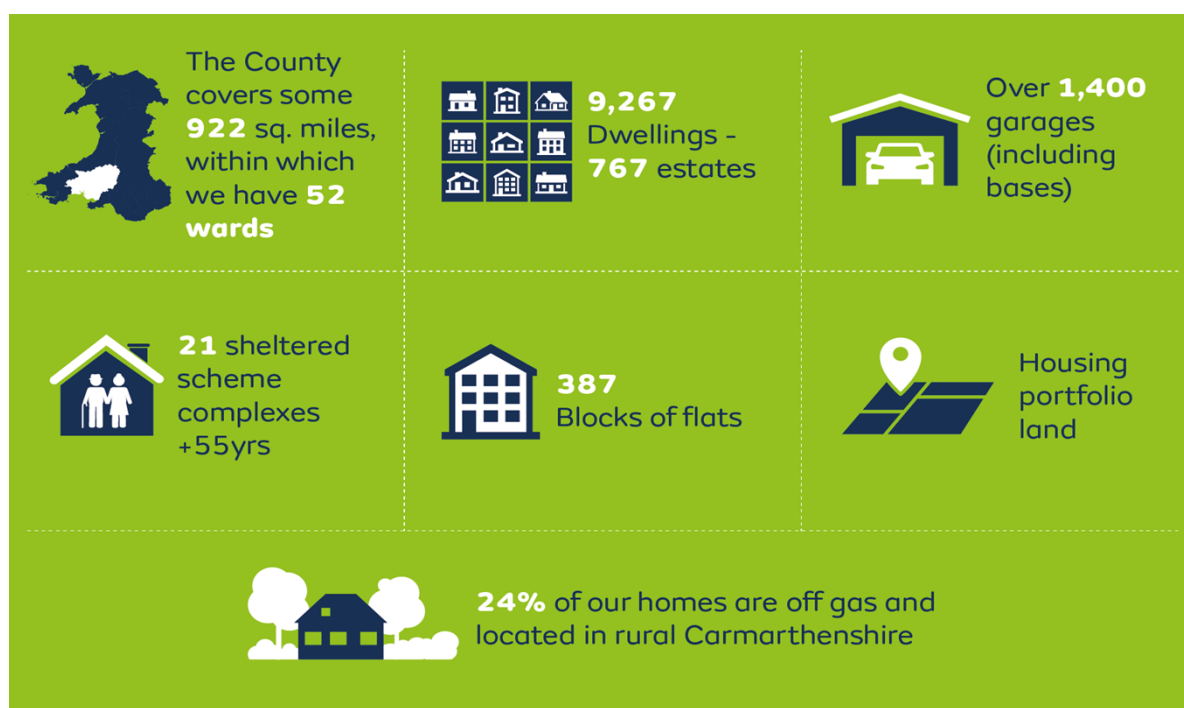


Context

The HRA Business Plan

This plan covers all housing services and assets in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It sets out our objectives and what this means for tenants and leaseholders across a range of housing activities. The plan relates to policies that affect how we deliver our services and looks at wider on-going events that may impact our tenants and how we plan to resolve/mitigate them whilst still delivering our everyday services.

Our county:



Further details of our housing assets and the profile of our tenants and applicants are set out in Appendix B.

This plan outlines the delivery programmes that will enable us to maintain full compliance with the WHQS and build upon the work that has already been completed.

We will focus on:
Demonstrating sustained commitment and investment in the repair and maintenance of our homes. This includes dealing with the back log of repairs already reported by tenants.
Developing initiatives that will help tenants overcome the effects of the cost of living crisis.
Continuing to let our empty Council homes as quickly as possible, maximising the number of homes we have available to address housing and homelessness pressures.
Delivering our Council new build programmes and achieving the priorities outlined in the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.
Decarbonising our existing housing stock by carrying out a retrofit programme of works that aligns with cyclical maintenance.
Getting value for money, good quality workmanship and making sure that our suppliers share our values.
Increasing housing supply, meeting housing need and increasing the availability of single person accommodation across the county.
Reviewing our sheltered housing schemes to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.
Maximising grant funding opportunities to continue to deliver our new build and decarbonisation programmes at scale and pace.
Maximising the wider benefits of our housing investment, stimulating the economy, creating jobs and training opportunities for local people.

We will invest over £60m in our existing homes over the next three years. £7m will be used directly to meet our net zero carbon ambitions, making our homes energy efficient and reducing fuel costs for our tenants. The plan has a revenue provision of £54m for repairs and maintenance and over £43m will be invested in building new Council homes. Whilst this is an ambitious investment programme which capitalises on additional WG grant funding, it also considers the current financial challenges that face the Council. These include soaring inflation levels in excess of 10%, high energy costs for buildings and fuel, increasing wage bills and the loss of income from the Welsh Water rate collection commission.

Approach to managing our assets

Our approach goes beyond repairs, maintenance and improvements. It is based on looking at the whole life of the homes and the tenants that will live there. It also makes sure that these homes are in the right location, are affordable and are in good condition. Applying an effective asset management strategy will help us continue to achieve this. It will go beyond general component compliance, ensuring value for money, and helping tenants where possible to overcome increasing costs caused by the cost of living crisis.

Underpinning this are the following principles:	
Communication & Engagement	Engaging with tenants, stakeholders and members and meeting their aspirations and priorities. It is important that we communicate with our tenants before, during and after the work has been completed and learn from their experiences.
Stock Condition & Verification	Continue with our stock verification programme to inform our cyclical work programmes, linked to decarbonisation measures and review/revisit any homes that do not meet our current standards.
Risk Reduction	There will be legislative changes from time to time particularly around building safety, health impact and general building regulations. We will respond and adapt to these changes and align our work programmes.
Responsive Repairs	Responding to unplanned failures in homes is critical to our services, for tenants and to avoid further deterioration or disrepair to the building or its components. We will respond to any reported defects within the agreed timescales, prioritised by urgency. We will also ensure that we programme in and carry out the backlogged repairs that have accumulated and make sure we have robust processes in place to deal with condensation and damp related issues.
Empty Council Homes (Voids)	We will bring empty homes back into use quickly and efficiently. This will help alleviate the demand on front line homelessness services, maintain standards and lower void loss from missed revenue.
Improving Communities & Estates	We will review our estate and tenancy management offer to further improve our neighbourhoods, community cohesion and create a sense of place that people are proud to live in. We will also work with local contractors to ensure that our greenspaces within our new and existing housing developments are maintained to a high standard.
Procurement	Our procurement strategies ensure value for money and where possible use locally based suppliers or contractors to stimulate the local economy, develop skills and talents for future generations. We also look to ensure that suppliers share our values including the need to reduce their carbon emissions. It is important that we allow a range of suppliers to become a part of our future decarbonisation programmes to ensure we achieve shared learning across the construction industry.

The Compliance Policy (Appendix F) shows how we will achieve this, through allocating adequate resources to maintain the standard, a robust asset management system, verification of the data and validation to ensure cost certainty over the 30 year financial model.

Ensuring our assets are economical to maintain and meet our strategic objectives and future needs

Homes	<p>Every year there are a small number of homes that need major work where the previous tenants have either declined the investment works, or where inherent structural defects are identified. We will monitor these and take the appropriate action.</p> <p>Before committing to do any major works, we ensure that the cost of work is proportional to the value of the property and demand for housing. For consistency, extensive work programmes, for one or more homes, will be assessed based on the Most Satisfactory Course of Action (MSCA). This allows us to establish the net value of the homes over a 30-year period and whether we should invest further or look at alternative solutions.</p>
Garages	<p>We have detailed asset information on the types of agreements used and the condition of our garages, by establishing who uses the garages and/or bases. We will standardise all agreements and charges and consult owners and leaseholders on future options for garage sites including repairs or even demolition if they are unsafe, unused or would have a positive impact on the surrounding area if the land was used for something else.</p>
Land	<p>We own areas of land across the County. As part of our commitment to affordable housing, we have already identified areas of land that could be used for development, prioritising those in areas of greatest housing need and meeting the Council's wider strategic regeneration priorities. We will ensure that developable land is maintained to safeguard the future development plans for that site.</p> <p>We may sell land which we have no use for and is costly to maintain. The capital receipts from any sales will contribute to maintaining our stock or purchasing additional land for development.</p>
Sewage Treatment Works	<p>We currently have 15 treatment works serving 154 homes and 8 septic tanks. Based on the results of a recent options appraisal a programme of remedial works has been developed that will ensure that all treatment works continue to comply with licence discharge conditions. As part of this process, we will revisit the charging arrangements for tenants and private homeowners benefiting from the treatment works and monitor the ongoing maintenance of these facilities.</p>

Theme 1 – Supporting Tenants and Residents

Recognising the effects of the cost of living crisis for tenants

The cost of living crisis has created hardship for many tenants and vulnerable families in our communities and this situation is unfortunately likely to continue throughout 2023/24. At these difficult financial times it is more important than ever that we provide help and support for tenants to ensure that they feel safe and secure in their homes, increasing income levels where possible and ensuring that they are in receipt of all grants and benefits they are entitled to. We provide advice and financial support to help tenants pay their rent and utility bills, buy food and other essential items for their families. It is also crucial that we continue to ensure that no one is evicted from our homes as a result of financial hardship.

We know that poverty and deprivation is already a real issue affecting many households in Wales and the cost of living crisis has exacerbated this for many families. Poverty rates are also highest in social rented and private rented households, many of whom are in poverty after paying their housing costs alone.



The Joseph Rowntree Foundation describes poverty as -
“Not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy the essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation and even discrimination because of your financial circumstances.”

We know that...

- 35.6% (29,444) of all households in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty. The household income in these homes is less than £19,641 per annum;
- the number of households living in poverty in Carmarthenshire is 1.6% higher than the Welsh national average;
- 31.3% of children in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty;
- the average weekly wage in Carmarthenshire is £566.90, this is significantly lower than the Welsh average (£570.60) and the UK average (£613.10);
- 18% of pensioners in Wales are living in poverty, equating to nearly 1 in 5 people; and
- 11% of adults in Wales are in income poverty.

Supporting tenants through the cost of living crisis

It is crucial that we continue to provide help and support for tenants to ensure that they are able to live comfortably in their homes. We have also agreed to a number of commitments set by the Ministers to ensure that tenants are supported by Social Landlords during these difficult times. These are summarised on page 13.

Commitment	What we will do:
There will be no evictions due to financial hardship for the term of the rent settlement in 2023-24, where tenants engage with their landlords.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did not evict any tenants during 2022-23 due to financial hardship. • We will continue with our no evictions policy and provide help and support to tenants to help them feel safe and secure in their homes.
Social landlords will continue to provide targeted support to those experiencing financial hardship to access support available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed an in house pre tenancy service that provides advice and support to tenants prior to them taking up occupation of their new home and for 6 months after, to ensure that they are able to sustain their tenancy. • Housing Officers continue to monitor and support tenants through their tenancy and provide support where necessary to ensure that they are accessing the income they need to pay their rent and manage other household bills.
A joint campaign, encouraging tenants to talk to their landlord if they are experiencing financial difficulties and accessing the support available, will be launched across Wales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ensure that our tenants can access services and that there are clear lines of communication available. This is important in ensuring that tenants have the right support at the right time. • Our tenants can access our services through the Corporate Hwbs in our three main townships and we also do outreach work in rural areas. • Where tenants are vulnerable and do not engage well, officers will continue to work closely with support providers and actively campaign to ensure that these households and individuals have the help they need to sustain their tenancies with regular contact.
Social landlords use the rent they receive to increase the supply of homes for some of the most vulnerable people and families in our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to deliver our ambitious new build programmes that will support the delivery of over 2000 homes in our communities. • We will continue to increase the supply of homes quickly through our buying private sector homes programme for both general and specialist housing need. • We will work with private sector partners to deliver housing solutions at scale and pace that meet the individual needs of an area. • We will buy additional land to support the delivery of more homes in the county.
We know that any increase in social rent may impact those social tenants who pay all or part of their own rent. These tenants, in particular, need to be protected from being placed into financial hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure there are no evictions from our homes due to financial hardship, we will work with tenants to put a plan in place to help them make their weekly rental payments. • We will provide financial advice and support to ensure that tenants claim all the financial assistance they are entitled to. This will include helping tenants apply for the benefits

through trying to cover the costs of keeping a roof over their heads.	<p>and grants they are entitled to, including the Homelessness Prevention Grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will do everything we can to support tenants' well-being. Increasing bills and being unable to afford food and other essential items will cause stress and anxiety. We will ensure we support tenants and provide access to local schemes that support mental health and well-being.
Social landlords will help protect and enhance the provision of good quality housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to invest, repair and maintain our homes.
Social landlords have agreed to maximise the use of all suitable social housing stock, with a focus on helping those in the poorest quality transitional accommodation move into longer term homes that meet their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to ensure our new emergency allocation policy directly matches people in temporary accommodation to suitable permanent accommodation that meets their needs. • We will also continue to increase the supply of single person accommodation by re-modelling some of our three bedroom homes into two bedroom properties with ensuite facilities for use as shared accommodation to help provide a permanent accommodation to single people living in temporary accommodation.
Social landlords will invest in existing homes to keep them safe, warm and affordable to live in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to roll out our housing stock retrofit programmes that will make our homes more energy efficient and help reduce fuel bills for tenants. • Bring all of our Council homes up to a Band C Energy Performance Rating (SAP 69 and over) as quickly as possible. • Continue to install new technology to help monitor building performance and the way tenants use the new technology installed in their homes.
Social landlords will participate in an assurance exercise in April 2023 to reflect on the application of the rent policy to date. This will build on the work undertaken by social landlords over the past three years, and inform future work to develop a consistent approach to assessing affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are committed to participate in the assurance exercise and provide any information or help that will promote consistency across the sector and how we assess affordability in light of the current economic pressures. In a recent tenant affordability survey 69% of our tenants told us that our rents were affordable.



To ensure our tenants maximise their income and provide financial security for their families, we will continue working with tenants to enable them to claim grants and benefits they are entitled to and help them through the cost of living crisis.

To help tenants we have...

- provided support to over 594 tenants to ensure that they claim all benefits and grants that they are entitled to. This has already generated over £926,000 of additional income for our tenants; and
- helped tenants secure over £218,000 of recurring benefit and grant payments. This will ensure that tenants also receive this additional income in the future.

Tenant engagement and communication

The commitment and support of our tenants and members is important to us. It helps us maintain, improve and expand our housing stock and our services for the future. Tenant and community engagement has always underpinned the delivery of our services, but we want to do more. We want to get better by:

- engaging as widely as possible with tenants, and including those who don't usually take part;
- keeping in touch with tenants about the repairs that are due to be carried out on their homes. This includes when we will carry out the backlog of repairs that have built up, contractor capacity and market failure;
- developing our in house team and developing skills and capacity to carryout housing repairs ourselves; and
- ensuring our tenants have an opportunity to influence decisions about their homes and the area where they live.

We will do this by...



Keeping in touch and supporting tenants

- engaging with our tenants on a daily basis. Our Housing Officers will talk to tenants to understand their needs and views in their homes and in the community;
- implementing Total Connect, a new repairs scheduling service, within the next 12 months. This will help us keep tenants informed about when any repairs are due to be carried out on their homes, ensure that the repairs are carried out at a time that is convenient for tenants and enable tenants to order and track their own repairs ;
- having tenant and community event days where tenants and residents can share their views whilst participating in community activities; and
- providing digital platforms that are safe and secure for tenants to raise concerns, give ideas or promote events that involves their community.

What are our tenants telling us?

1,938 tenants took part in our latest tenant satisfaction survey, which represented a 26% response rate overall. A third of the total number of responses were collected online (660) compared to a quarter of responses received in the last survey and 47 surveys were completed in Welsh (2%).

77%

of respondents were
satisfied with the service overall



The majority of those that responded were happy with the overall quality of their home and the surrounding neighbourhood.



When asked if more could have been done during the pandemic, most tenants said that we had done as much as we possibly could to support them.



Repairs and maintenance continues to be something that matters most to our tenants.



Our tenants are likely to recommend living in our homes and the service in general, to family and friends.

Generally, our satisfaction rates were greater than the average for other stock retaining authorities and equal to other registered social landlords. Satisfaction in responding to repairs and carrying out works was also comparable even though the delays are still affecting our capacity to carry out responsive repairs and turn around empty Council properties quickly.

What happens next?

- Gain a better understanding of differences in satisfaction rates from the STAR survey;
- develop new ways to include and engage with younger people and families;
- engage with tenants on our plans to decarbonise their homes;
- clear the backlog of repairs that have built up;
- implement the new Total Connect system that will improve our responsive repair service and enable tenants to order and track their repairs;
- develop our in-house team so that we can deliver a more effective responsive repair and maintenance service that meets the needs of our tenants;
- increase in-house contractor capacity and skills to carry out repairs to occupied and empty homes by developing a new minor works framework that enable small local contractors work with us;
- continue with the roll out of the time-banking platform “Connect to Carmarthenshire”; and
- prepare for the next STAR survey, which is to be carried out in 2023. This will allow us to determine if we have made progress in the areas tenants have highlighted and what other services we need to improve.

Responding to Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) was introduced in Carmarthenshire in 2018 and replaced six legacy benefits including Housing Benefit. We currently have 2730 tenants on Universal Credit and a further 1658 that are due to transition over. How tenants on UC currently pay their rent is shown in Appendix B.

Theme 2 – Investing in Homes and our Estates

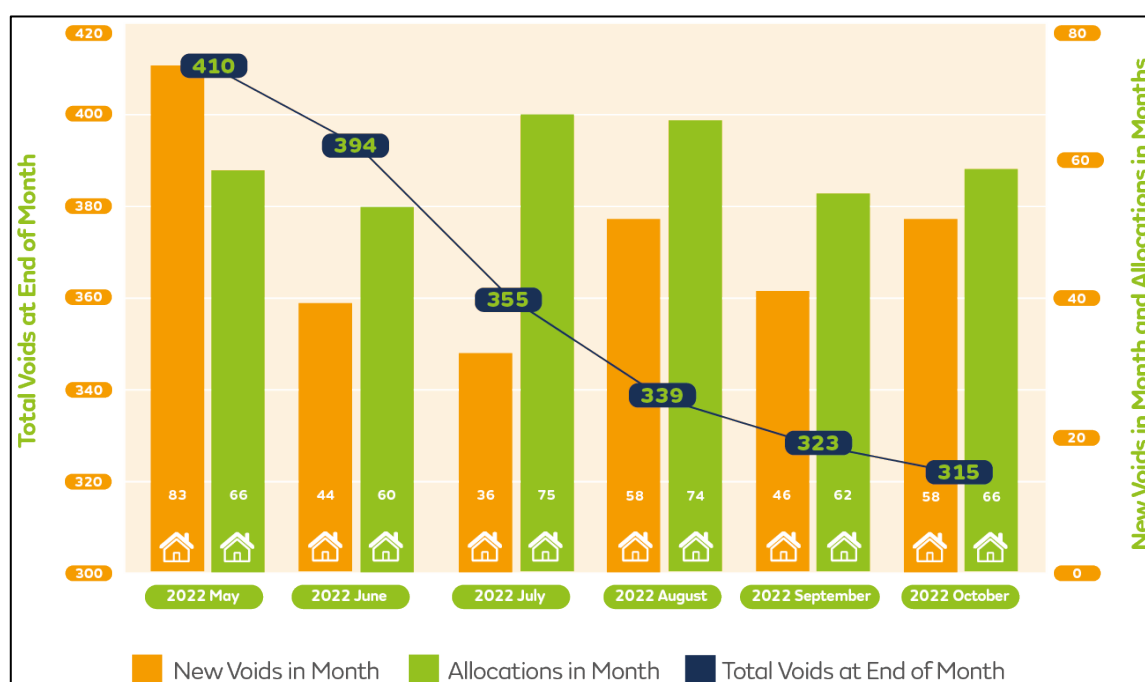
In 2015, we completed the WHQS programme of works to all homes where tenants had agreed to the work- well before WG's target of December 2020. This is in line with our agreed assumptions that all our homes will achieve the standard and future replacement programmes will be based on condition, not time. This year we will continue to review the standard to determine how we continue to move forward with our optimised retrofit and decarbonising programmes.

Maintaining the condition of our housing stock

Maintaining the WHQS standard is a statutory duty, and the Council has made a commitment to achieve and maintain the standard. The standard is contained in the Compliance Policy in Appendix F. Critical to this work is our ongoing stock condition survey for all housing assets. Robust stock condition data will enable us to plan our future programmes for the replacement of elements and components when they fail rather than on the time from when they were first installed.

Carrying out repairs and letting empty Council homes

Tenants tell us that getting repairs done on time and maintaining homes to a good standard is important to them. Both the pandemic and Brexit have had a significant effect on the local construction market, causing market failure and affecting the availability skills, capacity and materials. In addition to this, costs escalated. Many of our framework contractors have declined housing repair and maintenance works choosing to prioritise higher paid private sector work instead. This has seriously affected our ability to carry out responsive and maintenance works on our homes. This has caused a significant backlog in both the number of repairs we have outstanding and the number of empty Council homes that have not been let.



The graph on page 18 shows the number of empty Council homes between May and October 2022. Although the number of empty Council homes remains high, nearly 100 homes were brought back into use during this time. The total is now below 300.

To enable us to further improve performance in these areas we are developing a new minor works framework that will enable more local contractors to work on our Council homes. We are also developing our in-house teams, developing our capacity and skills so that we become less reliant on the market and implementing a new repairs scheduling system called Total Connect, over the next 12 months. Total Connect will enable tenants to request and track their repairs and help us ensure that the works carried out on tenants' homes meet their needs and are done at a time that is convenient and suitable for our tenants.

Our on-going consultation with tenants has identified seven key areas of work:

Work Area	Context	Action
Repairs and Maintenance	Effective and timely maintenance service, maintaining homes to a high standard and continuing to improve the housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping in touch with tenants and advising tenants how quickly we can carry out the works when they report minor repairs. • Clearing the backlog of repairs that have built up. • Carrying out repairs in the timescales we have agreed or at a time that is more convenient for the tenant. • Introducing an appointments system for our urgent responsive repairs service, using mobile technology. • Introducing an automatic scheduling of repairs system. • Developing and implementing a new minor works framework that will help build contractor capacity and skills. • Developing our in-house teams so that we have the skills and capacity to deliver repairs ourselves and reduce our reliance on the private market.
Internal Works	For internal components such as kitchens, bathrooms, electrical upgrading and central heating, we replace components when they are in disrepair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting tenants who have previously declined works. • Ensuring homes have the appropriate smoke alarms, heat detectors or carbon monoxide detectors, and agree with tenants how we can upgrade these components to protect their safety.
Damp and Mould	Prolonged exposure to dampness and mould can affect health and wellbeing, as highlighted by recent press coverage of a tragic case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that our processes for dealing with damp and mould are reviewed to mitigate risks. • Taking a preventative approach to identifying any issues early, through welfare checks and programmed inspections. • Providing advice to tenants on what they are able to do to reduce damp and mould in their homes. • Reviewing the introduction of new technology that will allow us to monitor and intervene early to prevent mould and damp from occurring in tenants' homes.
Servicing	We assess the condition of our gas, oil, electric and solid fuel appliances and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing our annual programme of safety checks on gas fires, and gas or oil boilers, and replacing or upgrading where necessary with energy-efficient appliances.

	<p>meet our statutory servicing obligations. Protecting the health and well-being of our tenants by ensuring that all homes are fitted with fully compliant electrical systems, including hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspecting smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors installed in homes. Upgrading where necessary. • Gaining access to ensure that the necessary works are completed. • Installing servicing timers when we gain access (where a tenant repeatedly refuses access), to help protect lives.
External Works and the Environment	<p>Our homes are in a good condition and we aim to achieve economies of scale by replacing components in disrepair; including the rendering and roofing upgrading or replacement programmes and improving the estate environment around our tenants homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to review and update our annual roof and rendering programmes to include external wall insulation (EWI). • Working with a range of partners to identify opportunities to install low carbon technologies to our homes. • Continuing our programme of replacing structural boundary and retaining walls. • Ensuring sheds/outhouses, gardens, paths and fencing meet our standards.
Empty Council Homes (Voids)	<p>Our aim is to let empty Council homes as quickly as possible, reducing rent loss and reducing the pressure on front line homelessness services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make empty properties available for letting as quickly as possible and reducing the number of empty homes in the Council's housing stock. • Completing individual options appraisals if homes are no longer fit for purpose or require significant investment. • Ensuring every new tenant receives relevant information and certification about their new home.
Improving Standards	<p>Tenants have told us they want a standard that continues to evolve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving tenants a say through single-issue meetings, digital participation and challenge panels. • Developing an energy savings programme and ensure we have robust Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data to inform future work programmes. • Using the data gathered by the stock condition and verification team to determine the most sensible route for improving our standards. • Continue to implement a new asset management system for our housing stock that can be used to store data on our homes and conduct our own modelling for retrofit works. • Maximising funding opportunities that allow us to test new innovative technologies that can reduce our carbon footprint and fuel bills for tenants. • Providing adaptations for our tenants to meet their needs and maintain their independence. • Meet the needs of households on the Accessible Housing Register (AHR) through conversion or where an empty Council property with existing adaptations is matched to a new household.

Risk reduction measures

Approach to fire management - Following a review of fire risk assessments to our purpose-built blocks of flats and sheltered schemes, we have identified improvements to be made and an action plan has been developed. This provides a record of present risks, defects identified and the remedial action to be taken in a defined period. The risk assessments are monitored by the Housing Stock Investment and Decarbonisation Working Group, as set out in our governance structure. A work programme has been developed to improve the detection systems within these blocks of flats, the means of escape and the compartmentalisation of flats in the event of a fire.

Radon Testing Programme - Following guidance issued by the WG and Public Health Wales, we have started a programme of radon testing in all our homes located in areas where there is a greater probability of high radon levels. Officers from the Council install radon detectors for 3 months to gather data in specific, discreet locations within homes. Remedial action is taken if levels are higher than recommended.

Surge Protection upgrade - The demand on the electrical systems and consumer units in our homes has increased over time. The introduction of other renewable energy components and electric vehicle charging points in future will place further strain on the systems installed. Surge protection devices (SPD) are being installed which significantly reduce the risk associated with transient over-voltages.

Future developments and opportunities

Investing in Sheltered Housing – It is important that the right type of support and facilities are in the right schemes, in areas where older people wish to live and where it is convenient to access local amenities. As part of our programme, we continue to challenge whether our sheltered schemes will meet the expectations of future residents. We will also continue our annual sheltered housing programme of:

- communal boiler replacement/upgrades making boilers more energy efficient;
- maintaining and servicing lifts;
- introducing super fast broadband and Wi-Fi to all our sheltered schemes so that all tenants are connected; and
- transferring lifelines from non-scheme sites to our Telecare service (Delta Wellbeing).

Assisted living solutions for older people – Meeting the housing needs of older people over the next 10-20 years requires a mix of housing models and solutions. This range covers general needs housing, specialist housing (i.e. housing specifically for older people) and care-based provision (residential/ nursing care, hospital-based care). The new Pentre Awel Wellness Village in Llanelli will form a test bed for developing innovative housing and care solutions for older people that promotes health, well-being and independence. We have also provided accommodation for older people over the age of 60 within our new build

developments, including one bedroom flexible apartments in Glanmor Terrace, Burry Port and two bedroom bungalows in Dylan, Llanelli.

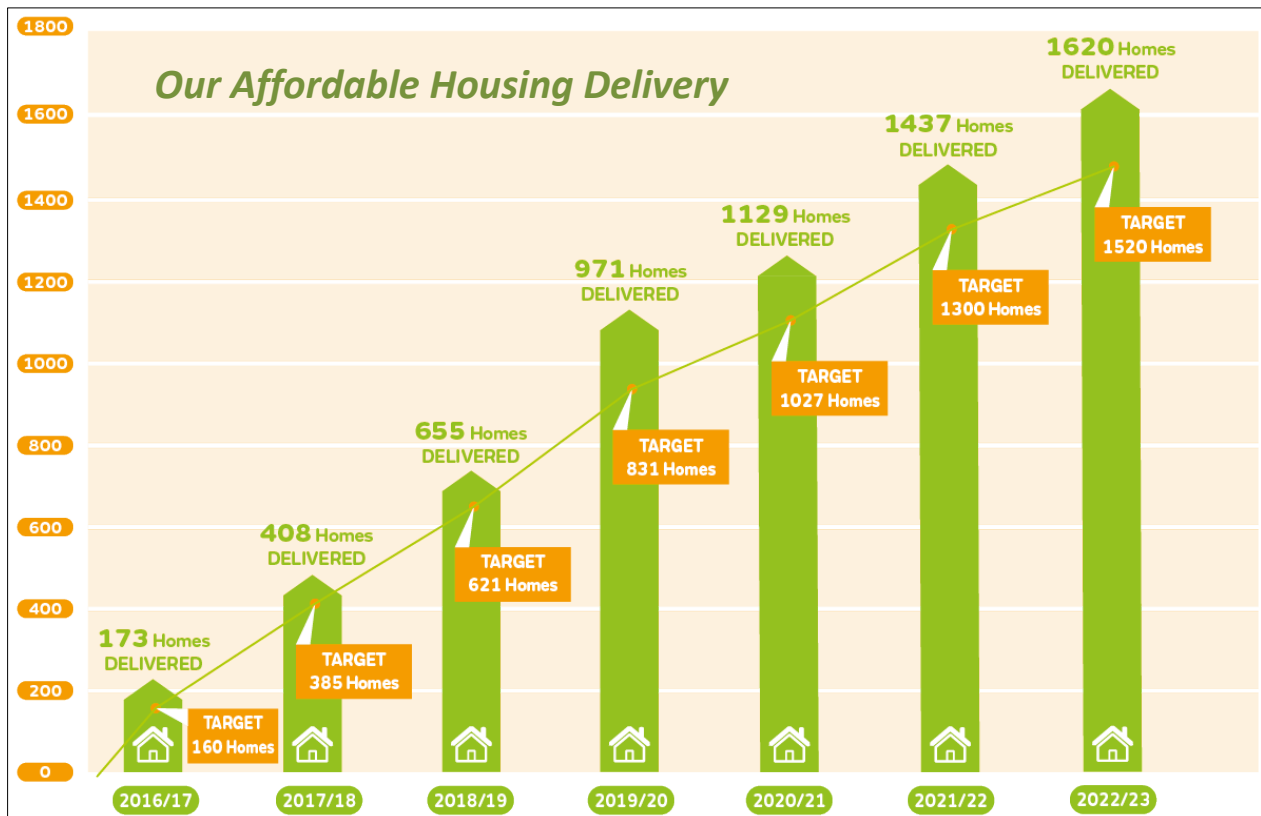
Regeneration plans for Tyisha (Llanelli) - We have developed a transformational plan in partnership with the local community to create vibrancy, cohesion and sustainability for one of our most deprived communities. Our plans will develop the area around the railway station to create a gateway into the town centre, provide improved community facilities, re-model the existing housing stock and deliver new mixed-tenure modern homes in the community for local people and key workers. This investment will provide incentives for further development, making the area more attractive. This will help lay the foundations for stimulating the economy and improving the social and economic profile of the area.

Supported Housing (Learning Disabilities & Mental Health) – we develop accommodation with support for individuals or groups of people that have learning difficulties or mental health needs. Through a planned approach and understanding the medium to long term need, we provide housing that can provide an option for transitional care arrangements. By bringing the landlord function ‘in house’, and commissioning the care separately, we can lower the cost and liability to other services and provide safe, quality and affordable accommodation for our clients. Where a need is identified we redesignate homes within the current housing stock, purchase additional properties or make homes available on our new build sites. We want to offer tenants a choice over where they would like to live and who the support provider is.

Theme 3 – Providing More Homes

Increasing the supply of homes in the County has been a priority for the Council for a number of years. Since beginning our ambitious journey in 2016, we have delivered over 1,600 homes, exceeding our delivery targets every year meeting housing need and helping some of the most vulnerable people and families in our communities.

Over 1600 additional affordable homes already delivered



With the current cost of living crisis and the housing crisis it is now more important than ever that we continue to increase the supply of homes in the county.

Our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan

In March 2022, we developed the new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan. This plan is exciting, ambitious and sets our vision and strategic direction for increasing the supply of affordable homes across the county for the next five years. This plan will build on our already successful affordable housing delivery plans, but also recognises the importance of based housing investment and development on economic growth and in shaping our communities.

The new plan will support the delivery of a further 2000 additional homes across the county over the next five years by:

- meeting housing need in all areas of the county;
- supporting the development of strong sustainable communities – places where people want to live and work;
- understanding the needs of our diverse communities, building the right homes in the right places, including homes for single people and families;
- supporting some of our most vulnerable tenants through the housing support grant programme;
- developing new innovative energy efficient Council homes with low running costs, helping to mitigate fuel poverty and helping some of our most vulnerable families through the cost of living crisis;
- providing sustainable solutions to address the unprecedented rise in homelessness cases seen in recent months due to external market conditions affecting the private rented sector which is reducing the supply of homes;
- stimulating economic growth in the county, growing the green economy, the local construction industry and our supply chains;
- creating jobs for local people;
- providing affordable homes for young and working aged people to help them remain in the county and benefit from the additional jobs created;
- helping to maintain our culture and identity especially in rural towns and villages, where we must help ensure that local people are able to afford quality affordable homes and remain in their communities;
- helping to maintain and develop our town centres by increasing the residential offer, increasing footfall and helping businesses thrive; and
- being flexible to ensure that we can respond to changing market conditions, risks and opportunities as they arise.

Meeting housing need and addressing the housing crisis

Meeting housing need has always been our main reason for providing more homes. Housing need can be met in a variety of different ways, according to the needs of the household, their financial position and the opportunities available. Our plans help address housing need in a number of different ways including:

- providing more homes for social rent, including homes for general needs households (single people and families), specialist supported housing for individuals with complex needs and accommodation for older people;
- providing a choice of mixed tenure assisted living options for older people, including our offer at the innovative Pentre Awel Wellness Village;
- providing more homes for low cost home ownership helping individuals and families own their own home;

- providing mixed tenure developments consisting of social rented, low-cost home ownership and open market homes, offering a real choice of tenures for local people and key workers depending on their individual circumstances;
- providing more affordable homes for rent and sale in rural towns and villages, helping local people stay in their communities, helping to protect the Welsh language and culture; and
- increasing the residential offer in the primary towns of Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli, increasing footfall through housing-based regeneration and helping to make our town centres vibrant once more.

Over recent months the Council has seen an unprecedented rise in homelessness which has had a significant impact on the demand for affordable housing in the county. This has been caused by external market conditions affecting the private rented sector which is reducing the supply of homes available for rent, as a result of:

- private landlords leaving the market due to concerns over the implications of the new Renting Homes Act due to come into force in December 2022. This has increased the numbers of Section 21 Notices (no-fault evictions) being served on private rented sector tenants;
- private Landlords serving Section 21 eviction notices so they can secure a higher rent as the market soars; and
- private Landlords wishing to cash in on recent rises in property prices and exiting the rental market.

These actions have had a significant effect on the supply of affordable homes. Many single person and family households by no fault of their own have become homeless. It has also had a direct effect on the Council being able to discharge its homelessness duty through the private rented sector. The lack of housing supply has also increased market rents substantially above the local housing allowance making the market unaffordable for many. A situation which is likely to get worse as the cost of living also continues to rise and inflation levels soar above 10%.

It is clear that despite the number of households being re-housed currently the demand for affordable housing due to the effect of the external housing market is continuing to increase.

Our approach

Our plans to continue to increase the supply of homes ensure that we do so the most cost-effective way, maximising all external funding opportunities, working collaboratively with partners to support the development of our communities. We do this by using a range of delivery vehicles that offer flexibility, scale and pace. The effects of the current housing crisis has required greater focus on our buying private sector homes programme making more homes available quickly to help address the increasing demand for housing.

We are also introducing a new emergency social housing allocation policy that will move away from the “bidding system to direct allocations. This will improve the throughput in the system and better manage demand and supply issues. The Policy has been developed by a Task and Finish Scrutiny group

Our current approach includes:

New Build Developments	This includes the Council developing new build homes, but it also includes collaborative working with our housing association partners to maximise all regeneration and funding opportunities.
Buying Private Sector Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number of homes in the Council's housing stock by purchasing private sector homes that are able to be let immediately for general and specialist housing need e.g. assisted living schemes for learning difficulties, mental health, and older people's housing. • Making direct approaches to purchase properties from private landlords who have served their tenants with Section 21 Eviction Notices as they wish to leave the private rented market. This will prevent tenants becoming homeless and remain in their homes. • Working directly with private developers and purchasing homes to meet housing need off plan. • Purchasing strategic properties to convert and develop into shared single person accommodation with 24hour support.
Private Sector Partnerships	Working with private sector partners to deliver housing solutions at scale and pace that meet the individual needs of an area.
Purchasing Land	Buying additional land to develop more homes to meet our strategic regeneration priorities and addressing housing need throughout the county.
Empty Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with private owners across the County to bring empty homes back into use. • Purchasing empty homes through the Land and Building Development Fund, releasing the potential of a disused asset. • Converting empty spaces above retail premises into residential use.
Section 106	Securing homes for low-cost home ownership through the planning system on private sector developments in line with the requirements of the Local Development Plan.
Simple Lettings	We work with private landlords to increase the number of homes available for rent through the Council's Simple Lettings Agency by offering a range of different agreements over different terms and timescales.

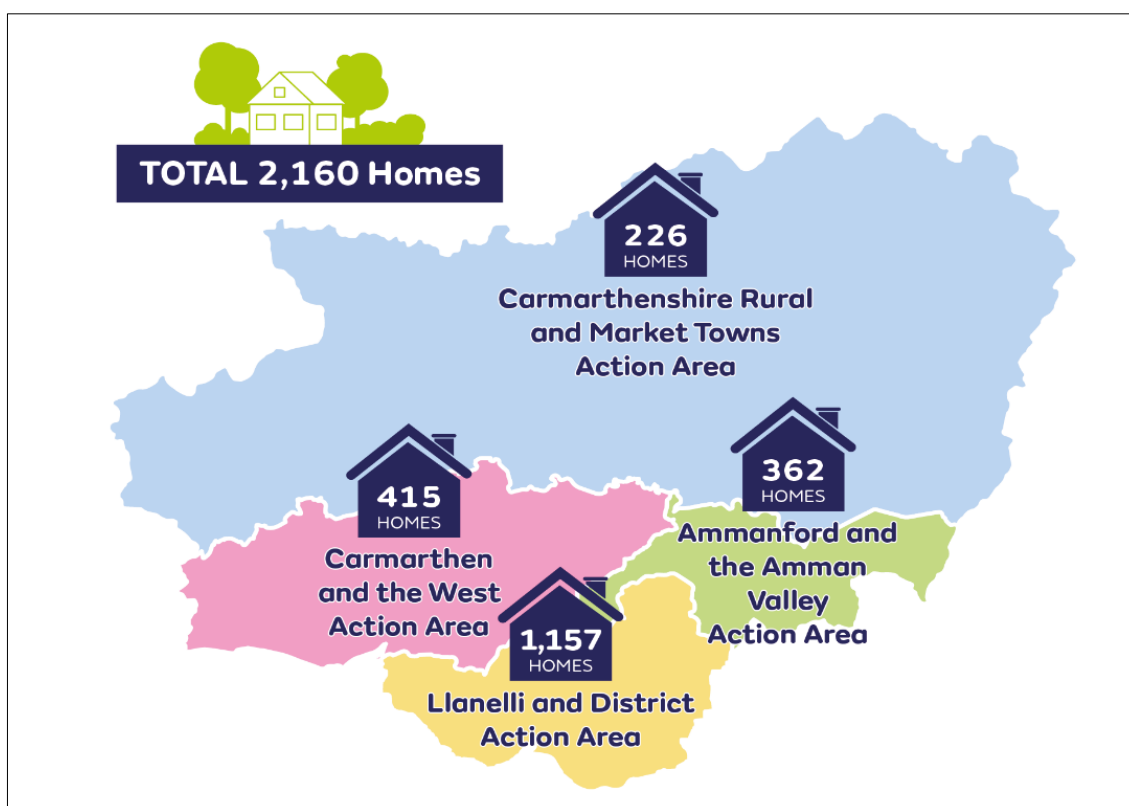
The additional homes delivered through our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan will meet the individual needs of our communities and include houses, bungalows and apartments for rent and sale. Our new build developments follow a clear set of design principles that create new communities that are sustainable, with a real sense of place. They are also energy efficient. Fitted with high levels of fabric insulation and innovative renewable technology, reducing carbon emissions, creating affordable warmth for residents, and following the Council's Net Zero Carbon principles.

Our programme to support the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes

Our programme to support the delivery of over 2,000 homes through the new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan is shown below. This programme is flexible and will change as new opportunities arise. The programme will be affected by changing market conditions and risks that will affect the viability of some developments. This may result in some developments not proceeding and being replaced by other developments.

This programme is inclusive of the homes the Council will deliver, the homes we will deliver collaboratively with our housing association (HA) partners, and the homes the Council will deliver in partnership with private developers.

Current Housing Regeneration and Development - Five Year Delivery Plan by Action Area (2022 – 2027)



***** This programme is flexible and subject to change due to changing market conditions, risks and opportunities that may arise over the next five years *****

Theme 4 – Promoting Affordable Warmth and Decarbonising our Housing Stock

Our aim is to make all of our homes energy efficient and achieve a minimum Band C Energy Performance Rating as quickly as possible. Decarbonising our housing stock, looking at our services and reducing carbon emission from our activities will be a strategic focus for us for years to come, as we aim to become a Net Zero Carbon Authority by 2030.

Whilst decarbonising the housing stock is a huge challenge there are several benefits to this approach, including:

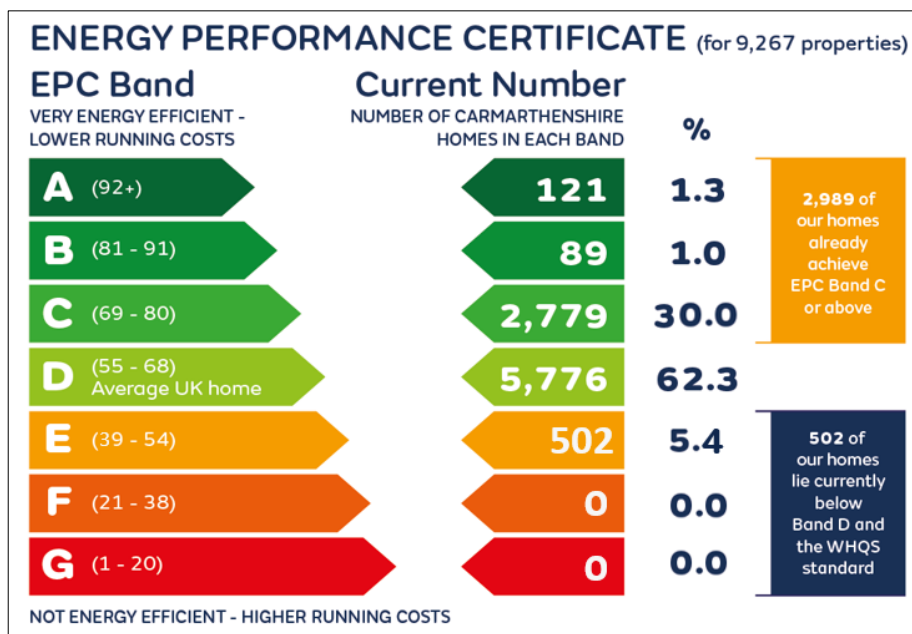
- reducing fuel bills for tenants and helping to mitigating fuel poverty, this is particularly important with the current cost of living crisis;
- strengthening our local economy by providing long term investment programmes;
- providing more training and work opportunities for local people; and
- ensuring our tenants homes are fit for purpose now and for generations to come.

What we have done so far..... existing homes

The work we have done previously through our investment programmes goes some way to improving the fabric and the thermal performance of our homes. There is more that can be done, however, that will reduce carbon emissions and make our homes more affordable for our tenants to heat.

As part of our housing investment programme to achieve WHQS, we upgraded the thermal performance of our homes by installing cavity wall insulation, increasing the amount of insulation in the loft, lagging pipes and hot water cylinders and replacing inefficient boilers. The average energy performance currently achieved by our homes is a Band D Energy Performance Rating with a SAP level of 66. This exceeds the standard set in WHQS which requires a SAP level of 65.

The energy performance of our housing stock is shown below:

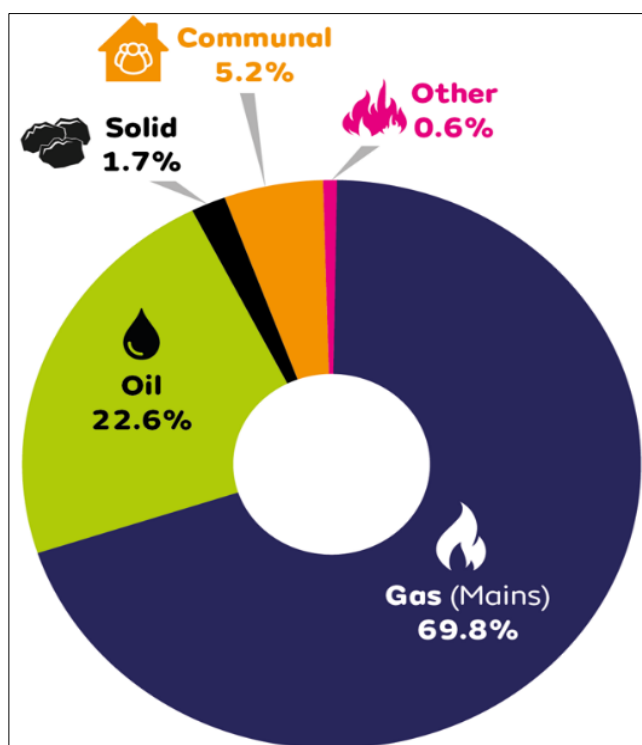


Already 30% of our housing stock achieves a Band C energy performance rating. 62% is slightly below this level, achieving Band D and with only 502 homes (5.4%) having an energy performance rating below Band D. This provides us with a solid foundation to push forward with improving the energy efficiency of all our homes to a minimum Band C, Energy Performance Rating.

In recent years, we have been actively looking for solutions that will allow us to improve the energy performance of our homes and provide affordable living for our tenants. This is a particularly important area of work with the current cost of living crisis and soaring energy bills. We have worked in partnership with WG and Cardiff University to look at our current housing stock and determine what solutions would have the biggest effect on our energy efficiency and decarbonisation programme.

During the initial pilot study with WG and Cardiff University, we were able to identify the different archetypes that make up our total housing stock. This data allowed us to model different decarbonisation solutions that would impact the majority of our housing stock and allow us to develop further decarbonisation programmes. Over 80% of the housing stock archetype is post-war, built between 1945-1990 and the majority of our stock is heated by fossil fuels as illustrated below.

How our homes are heated



The majority of our homes are heated from mains gas, with nearly a third of our stock heated from oil and other solid fuels.

The optimised retrofit programme

In 2019, it was agreed by WG that an 'Optimised Retrofitting' approach would be adopted in Wales to decarbonise homes which involves:

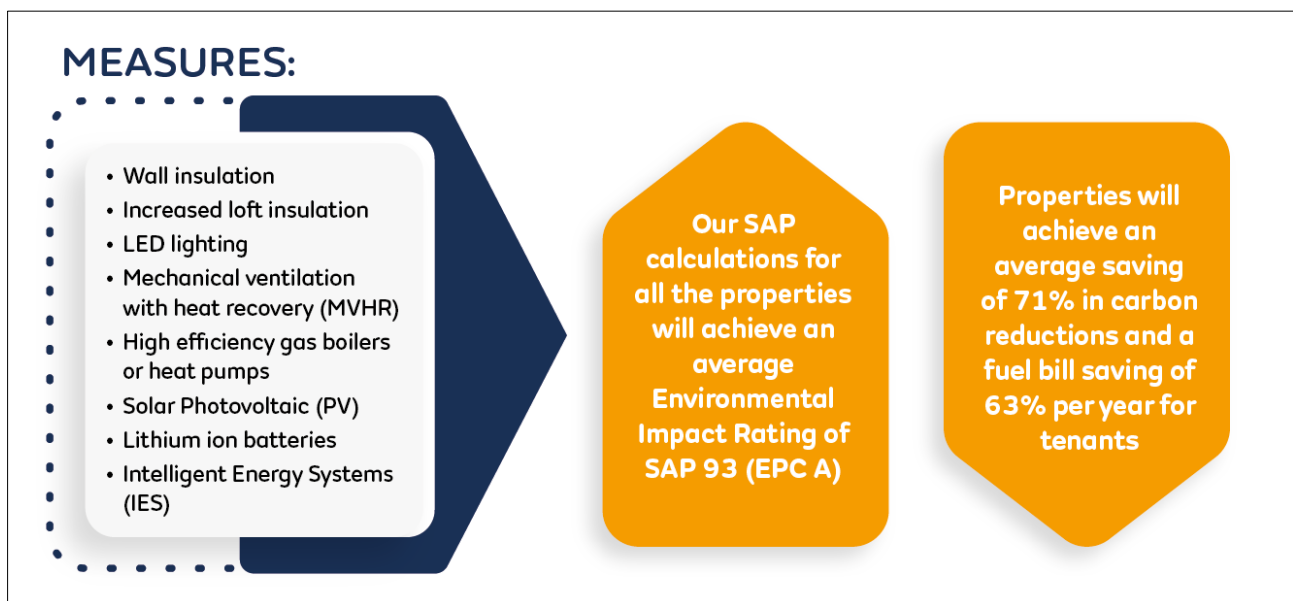
- beginning the decarbonisation programme on the social housing sector;
- pursuing a 'Fabric First' approach to retrofitting homes; and

- embracing a test and learn approach.

The work we did on our initial pilot study with Cardiff University enabled us to develop and deliver an Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP) and utilise WG funding from ORP 1 and 2. The ORP programmes were small but allowed us to test:

- an optimised retrofit programme utilising the fabric first approach and introducing renewable technology to both empty and occupied homes; and
- develop a programme to replace gas boilers that were falling out of compliance with hybrid heat pumps.

A summary of the works typically carried out on our homes through the retrofit programmes is shown below:



ORP 3 was introduced in 2022/23 and eliminated the need for competitive bidding. All funding is now pre-allocated by WG in advance over a three year period. This will allow us to programme decarbonisation and affordable warmth works at a faster rate than what would have been possible without these additional resources.




Although we recognise that there is no one size fits all approach for retrofitting our homes, we believe that with minor variations, we will be able to deliver similar works to almost a third of our housing stock, significantly reducing our carbon footprint and providing affordable warmth for many of our tenants.

What we have done so far..... new build Council homes

Our Council new build standards embrace decarbonisation. Our homes are highly efficient and already achieve a Band A Energy Rating with SAP levels between 92 and 105. We have developed a housing performance matrix that allows us to build to different energy standards

depending on the development. A breakdown of the different energy standards we currently use on our new build developments can be seen in the table below.

Energy performance matrix

	Energy Performance	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	Roof	0.15 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.10 W/m2k
	Floor	0.18 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.10 W/m2k
	External Walls	0.20 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.10 W/m2k
	Part Walls	0.21 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.12 W/m2k	0.10 W/m2k
	Windows & Doors	1.60 W/m2k	0.85 W/m2k	0.80 W/m2k	0.80 W/m2k
	SAP Rating / EPC	97 / A	97+ / A	105+ / A	105+ / A
	Ventilation	Natural	Natural	Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery	Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery
	Air Tightness	8	5	1	0.6
	Heating and Renewable Technology	Gas Solar PV	Gas or heat pumps Solar PV Battery Storage Optional	Heat Pump or Electric Panel Heaters Solar PV Battery Storage	Heat Pump or Electric Panel Heaters Solar PV Battery Storage

Our ambitious plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 homes in the next 5 years will include developing innovative energy efficient homes with low levels of carbon emissions that can produce and store energy. We will continue to focus on using a fabric first approach, innovative technology and the use of natural and local products on all future developments, and where possible we will encourage the use of modern methods of construction (MMC).

Next steps for decarbonising our existing homes

We have made a good start to decarbonising our housing stock. Although the sample sizes of our retrofit projects are small, the data and learning we have gained is immeasurable. The next challenge, however, is how we accelerate these programmes forward to include more homes at pace. The cost of living crisis has made this a key priority for the Council and we will be revisiting our programmes to determine what can be brought forward that will directly help our tenants by reducing their fuel bills.

C

Our aim is to bring all of our Council Homes up to a Band C Energy Performance Rating as quickly as possible.

Our aim is to make all of our homes energy efficient and affordable for tenants. We will achieve this by bringing all of our Council homes up to a minimum Band C Energy Performance Rating (SAP 69 and above) as quickly as possible.

There are, however, several barriers currently in place that make it difficult to deliver a full retrofit programme at scale that simply cannot be overcome in the short term. These include the:

- high cost to fully retrofit a typical home that has already received investment;
- lack of local skills and trades to deliver the work;
- shortage of materials both locally and nationally; and
- limited capacity of the national grid to deal with the increased energy demands of more electrical equipment such as heat pumps and solar panels as they are installed in our homes.

These barriers make it very difficult to predict when all our homes will achieve a Band C Energy Performance Rating.

We have always understood that the most practical way to decarbonise our homes is through a fabric first approach. This means ensuring our homes are well insulated with an increased air tightness to ensure homes stay warmer for longer and therefore reduce heating demands for tenants. Although we do see innovative technologies such as solar panels, heat pumps and battery storage equipment becoming more prominent in housing, we see these as additional benefits that will be installed further down the line as the national grid continues to improve and skills, trades and materials become more available.

Swansea Bay City Deal – Homes as Power Stations (HAPS)

The HAPS City Deal is a pioneering project that will facilitate the adoption of the Homes as Power Stations approach to integrate energy efficient design and renewable technologies into the development of new build homes and retrofit programmes carried out by the public, private and third sectors. This will tackle fuel poverty while helping residents save money on their energy bills.

The HAPS project aims to prove the concept in the public sector at a relatively small scale with the intention of then scaling up activity in other sectors across the Swansea Bay City Region, including private sector developers.

The project will facilitate the take up of renewable technologies in at least 10,300 homes (7,000 retrofit, 3,300 new build) within five years. It is linked to other housing improvement programmes, including the WG Optimised Retrofit Programme. The work we have done to date on decarbonising our existing housing stock and our new build programmes directly supports the principles of the City Deal.

The City Deal will also focus on developing a sustainable regional supply chain. It will leave a legacy of skilled jobs in the Swansea Bay City Region, while mainstreaming the concept for roll-out elsewhere in Wales and the UK.

Theme 5 – Local Economy, Community Benefits and Procurement

We recognise the importance of this Plan and its role across the wider capital investment programme to stimulate, support and develop the local economy. To support economic growth and the actions in the Economic Recovery Plan, we will be looking to further develop the Council's approach to procurement to maximise our contribution to local economic growth, focusing on social value and building sustainable communities. Our aim is to grow different economy sectors within the housing and building industry so that they and other local business benefit and thrive. It is therefore important that our investment plans:

- contribute to long term economic growth across the County;
- are sustainable in future years as we continue to invest and maintain our homes;
- enable local businesses, construction and manufacturing industries to develop, grow and lay down strong roots;
- keep the pound local, benefiting our economy and contributing directly to the prosperity of our County and its residents; and
- create new jobs and training opportunities for local people.

The housing stock investment and the Council new build programmes will provide sustained periods of trade and benefit to local contractors and builders. This will create more jobs, training opportunities and other community benefits. The Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan has a direct focus on providing more homes in town centres and rural areas, having a direct impact on business and commerce in these areas.

The decarbonisation of our homes will also become a fundamental part of our future stock investment programmes. Rolling this out across our entire housing stock will result in increased job opportunities and further training opportunities as we explore new ways of providing low carbon, energy efficient homes for our tenants. A significant proportion of the Council's housing stock is in rural market towns and in rural areas. Encouraging small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to participate in those areas will help with local employment and allow young people to stay in the community where they want to live.

Our procurement strategy aims to develop our programmes using local contractors and suppliers to stimulate the local economy. Where this is not possible initially, because of limitations on the supply and availability of local skills (e.g. homes built using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)), we will learn from these projects and put measures in place to ensure that the skills and work force needed is available locally. We will also influence this through the Regional Skills and Partnerships workstream and through expanding our own direct employment of staff to deliver work programmes alongside the private sector, including appointment of apprentices and supporting local shared apprentice programmes.

Community benefits directly delivered through housing investment

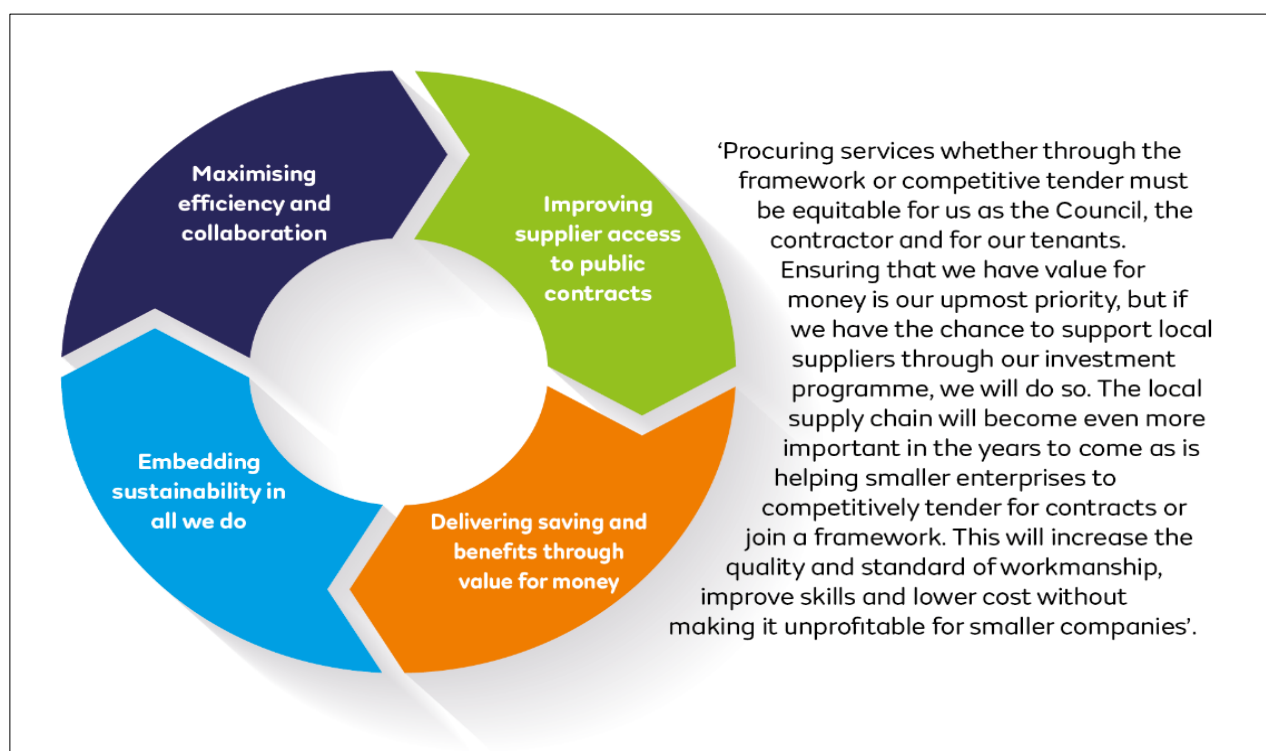
The Council's capital investment programme exceeds £30m per annum. Our procurement approach ensures that community benefits are delivered through the capital programme.

The table below demonstrates the community benefits already delivered through the Council's first five new build developments in Llandybie, Saron, Llanelli, Burry Port and Pembrey. It also shows the projected level of community benefits that will be delivered through our future housing investment programmes.

Community Benefits Delivered on our First 5 New Build Developments		Projected Community Benefits for Future Housing Investment Schemes	
	1344 Waged training weeks have been provided		3668 Waged training weeks will be delivered
	38 Work experience placements (5 days per student) were created		32 Work experience placements (5 days per student) will be delivered
	19 New entrant jobs were created		21 New entrant jobs will be created
	24 Construction careers advice and guidance events delivered		10 Construction careers advice and guidance events proposed
	57 Existing workforce employees were upskilled and provided with additional training		48 Existing workforce employees will be upskilled and provided with additional training

During construction, contractors will also contribute to the wider local economy by increasing footfall into town centres and spending money in rural market towns/villages by accessing local amenities such as shops, supermarkets, restaurants and cafés. This increased footfall in town centres will help compensate for the reduced use of the town centre commerce during and following the pandemic as local offices remain empty.

It is, however, extremely important that all contracts demonstrate good value for money and through the West Wales Regional Contractors and the Minor Works Frameworks we will challenge their costs, the principles and methods of construction to make ensure that we achieve this. We will also look to keep the workforce as local as possible and benefit the local economy by including 'environmental benefits' in a tender or contract and insisting that contractors demonstrate how they will reduce their carbon emissions.



Funding and Risk Management

Major repairs allowance

Every year we receive over £6 million from WG to support our capital investment. The grant comes with clear guidance on what it can and cannot be used for. The main condition is that it must be spent on property within the HRA. It cannot be used for revenue repairs or maintenance, demolition costs, repayment of borrowing etc. A full breakdown can be found in our MRA acceptance letter issued by Welsh Government.

The MRA makes a significant contribution towards achieving and maintaining our housing stock. A reduction in MRA levels would be detrimental to future investment plans.

Planning assumptions

To help us plan our investments, we must make certain assumptions. Changes to our assumptions may mean re-visiting the objectives included in this plan.

The current financial assumptions in the plan are based on a rental increase of 5.5%

INCOME	
Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) <i>i.e. the amount of capital funding we get from the Welsh Government</i>	£6.2m each year. This is on the basis that we receive an average of £682 per home.
Rent increase 2023/24	Welsh Government have set the maximum rent increase for 23/24 at 6.5% because the Consumer Price Index sat outside the 3% threshold (10.1%) which gives social landlords the discretion to set their own maximum rent no greater than CPI plus 1%. We have limited the rental increase to 5.5% overall with a maximum £1 progression for those tenancies below target rent. Most tenants will receive a 5.36% average rent increase which is significantly below level set by WG and current inflation values.
Future rent increase levels <i>Based on Welsh Government Policy</i>	3.5% for 24/25, 3.2% for 25/26, 3.1% for 26/27, 3.2% for 27/28, then increased to 2.5% pending revised rent policy from WG.
Borrowing and direct revenue financing (DRF)	Borrowing £40m and utilising £20m DRF over next 3 years to maintain our housing stock and develop new homes.
Expenditure/income inflation	Employees' pay at 5% for 2023/24 as per the Council Fund and general inflation at 5%.
Right to Buy receipts i.e. Money we get from tenants' buying their home	No receipts from 1 st April 2015 following suspension of Right to Buy

Balances on the revenue account <i>i.e. the amount of money we need to keep in reserve</i>	Minimum of £4.5m (based on £150 per property)	
SPENDING		
Assumed Borrowing costs <i>i.e. the amount it costs to borrow money</i>	Cost of existing and new debt: 2023/24: 4.36% Then 4.4% in future years	Cost of exiting HRAS: Average of 4.15%
Provision for Bad debt i.e. debt that we will be unable to recover	2023/24: £606K 2024/25: £636K 2025/26: £668K	

CAPITAL PROGRAMME	Budget 2022/23 (£000s)	Budget 2023/24 (£000s)	Budget 2024/25 (£000s)
Maintaining the Standard:			
All Internal Works	2,378	2,287	2,300
All External Works	1,000	2,000	1,000
Voids and Major Works to homes	6,000	5,000	6,000
Structural Works - Estates and boundary walls (inc. identified structural works)	900	1,800	2,000
Decants	150	150	150
Support Tenant and Residents:			
Sheltered Scheme Investment	370	500	850
Assisted Living Projects	1,200	450	800
Adaptations	2,000	2,000	2,000
Environmental Works & Garages	350	400	350
Providing More Homes:			
Housing Development Programme	12,730	14,900	15,500
Decarbonisation:			
Works to Deliver Decarbonisation	2,835	2,623	2,055
Support the Delivery of CHS+:			
Programme Management	1,500	1,560	1,622
Stock Condition Information	415	387	350
Risk Reduction Measures	1,987	285	470
Sewerage Treatment Works	20	20	20
TOTAL	33,836	34,362	35,467
SOURCE OF CAPITAL FUNDING	Budget 2022/23 (£000s)	Budget 2023/24 (£000s)	Budget 2024/25 (£000s)
Welsh Government Grant - MRA	6,225	6,225	6,225
External Grant Funding – IHP, SHG, ICF & Other Grants	9,271	9,051	7,000
Direct Revenue Financing	10,000	5,000	5,000

External Borrowing	8,339	14,085	17,242
TOTAL	33,836	34,362	35,467

REVENUE PROGRAMME	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)	Budget 2022/23 (£000s)	Budget 2023/24 (£000s)
Repair and Maintenance of Homes	17,233	18,319	19,411
Supervision and Management	9,625	10,071	10,499
Support Services e.g. Legal and Finance	1,866	1,903	1,941
Provision for Bad debts	606	636	668
Direct Revenue Financing	10,000	5,000	5,000
Capital Charges	14,929	15,474	16,197
TOTAL	54,258	51,403	53,716
SOURCE OF REVENUE FUNDING	Budget 2022/23 (£000s)	Budget 2023/24 (£000s)	Budget 2024/25 (£000s)
Tenant Rents	46,247	48,540	51,063
Service Charges	981	1,227	1,275
Interest Received	137	71	76
Housing Finance Grant 2	246	246	246
Water Rates Commission	0	0	0
Grants / Other	2,050	2,136	2,220
TOTAL	49,661	52,221	54,879
Difference between 'Revenue Funding' and 'Revenue Spending'	-4,598	818	1,163

HRA END OF YEAR POSITION:	Budget 2022/23 (£000s)	Budget 2023/24 (£000s)	Budget 2024/25 (£000s)
Balance brought forward from last year	18,494	13,896	14,714
HRA budgeted difference *	-4,598	818	1,163
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD**	13,896	14,714	15,877

*N.B. + is a surplus in revenue funding over spending and – is a deficit/ shortfall in revenue funding over spending

**The balances carried forward in the plan are fully committed to funding our borrowing requirements in future years.

Risk management

Each year, as part of the HRA business planning process, we identify, assess and prioritise potential risks and consider the likelihood and impact of each. This exercise is carried out by each service delivery area. Once this has been done, we identify ways in which we can reduce or manage the potential risk and impact. These are recorded corporately and monitored regularly.

The greatest risks identified in delivering this plan are:

- maintaining up to date asset information about our stock;

- uncertainty of the impact of market conditions about inflation, pricing and availability of workforce to inform the 30-year cost certainty exercise; and
- the impact of balancing investment in maintaining the existing standard, introducing new measures to support decarbonisation and continuing to deliver our ambitious housing regeneration and development programme.

All risks are monitored by the Housing Investment and Development Team.

Compliance, Verification and Monitoring

Compliance and acceptable fails

Recording compliance and acceptable fails is not a simple collection of condition information for things like kitchens, bathrooms, electrics and so on. It is a combination of occupancy and property condition information. Surveying of homes, collating of information, how we manage our data, and the ability to report 100% accurate information, are all data-hungry activities.

An acceptable failure occurs when an individual component e.g. a kitchen or bathroom, has not been completed for one or more of the following reasons:

- cost of remedy;
- timing of remedy;
- resident's choice; and
- physical constraint.

The details of our acceptable fails and compliance are set out in Appendix D, and our full Housing Standards compliance document is set out in Appendix F.

Energy efficiency

We have had several different programmes running to improve the energy efficiency of homes. These programmes have helped save tenants money on their heating costs and improve the energy performance ratings of their homes. The average SAP level across our stock is 66 (EPC rating D) which meets the current requirements of the WHQS.

Independent verification

We believe that we report compliance accurately in achieving and maintaining our Housing Stock, and we will continue to do so. We will also back this up with further verification by:

- demonstrating compliance by ensuring there is a clear separation of duties between CCC staff reporting compliance and those staff responsible for improving stock condition;
- using internal staff in conjunction with external support, where necessary to undertake desktop reviews;
- continuing to carry out a sample programme of stock condition visits every year;
- asking tenants how they would like to be part of the process of verification;
- continuing to use a range of methods to assess compliance. Some data is already independently collected, e.g. boiler inspections, EPCs and electrical tests; and
- providing Home Information packs for all new tenants, informing them of boiler inspections, asbestos advice, Energy Performance Certificates, electrical tests and when any outstanding investment works will be carried out.

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26

Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme

Appendices A-E



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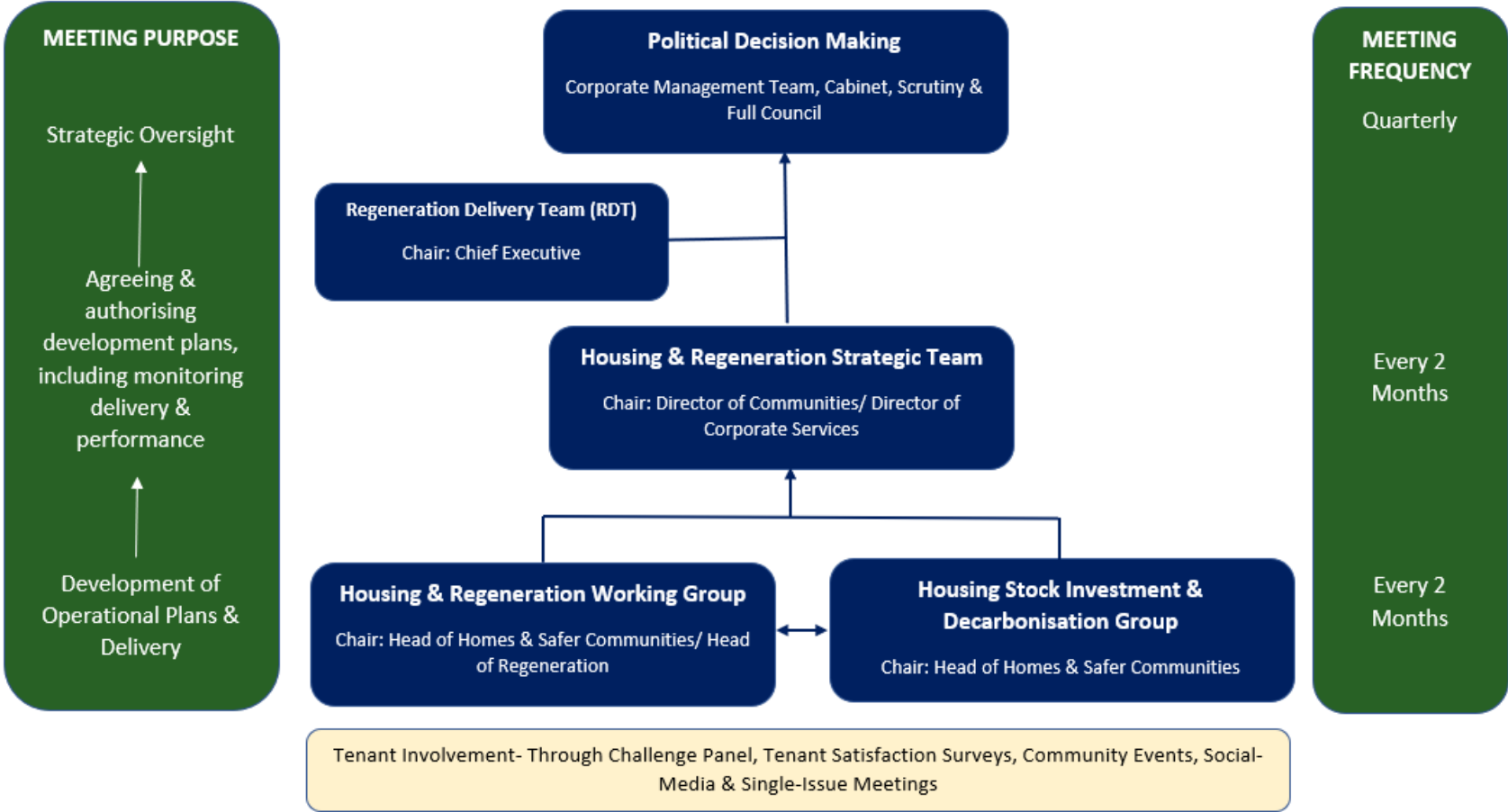
Appendix E: Decarbonisation and Affordability.....11

Appendix A: Well-being Priorities & Governance Structure

<p>A more prosperous Wales</p>	<p>We will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring long-term economic and social benefits for Carmarthenshire through the Swansea Bay City Region and future European and external funding avenues. <p>We are committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the wider community.
1	
<p>A resilient Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking tenderers to deliver community benefits in our tendering activities through the delivery of the contracts or frameworks awarded.
2	
<p>A healthier Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the value for every pound we spend, applying a community benefits approach to any tender valued over £1million. • Capturing and recording community benefits utilising WG's community benefits measurement tool. <p>We will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the availability of rented and affordable homes to support the needs of local people by building new homes, bringing empty homes back into use and ensuring an allocation of affordable homes on new developments. • Mitigating the local impacts of welfare reform by supporting affected residents through the changes. • Providing homes better suited to tenants needs by investing in adapting homes and understanding the future investment needs for our sheltered housing stock.
3	
<p>A more equal Wales</p>	<p>We will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing anti-social behaviour by working in partnership with other agencies and communities to tackle local problems.
4	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to get better by engaging as widely as possible and maximising opportunities to help build stronger communities. <p>We believe we should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give our tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area they live and ensure the services they receive achieve value for money. <p>Our vision is: -</p>
5	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p>	<p><i>"To make it easy and inviting for tenants to get involved in shaping strategic decisions and improve services through meaningful involvement by ensuring residents have the relevant skills".</i></p> <p>We will focus on what our tenants are telling us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recently undertook a tenant satisfaction survey. In total, 1,938 tenants took part in the survey. This represented a 26% response rate overall. 47 surveys were completed in Welsh (2%). • We will carry out an in-depth analysis of results to get a better understanding of the differences in satisfaction rates by age, by ward and property type; and revamp our approach to the way we listen and act on tenant's views.
6	
<p>A globally responsible Wales</p>	<p>We will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our new build activities and retrofits of renewable energy technology to our tenants' homes are cost effective and meet our ambitions and obligations related to climate emergency (in particular its commitment to becoming a net zero carbon local authority by 2030). • We meet our ambitions to save tenants money on their energy costs, support the vulnerable and stimulate a sustainable local economy.
7	

Governance Structure

All actions in this Plan will be monitored on a bi-monthly basis by the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team. This group provides strategic direction and corporate leadership to ensure appropriate progression on the initiatives included.

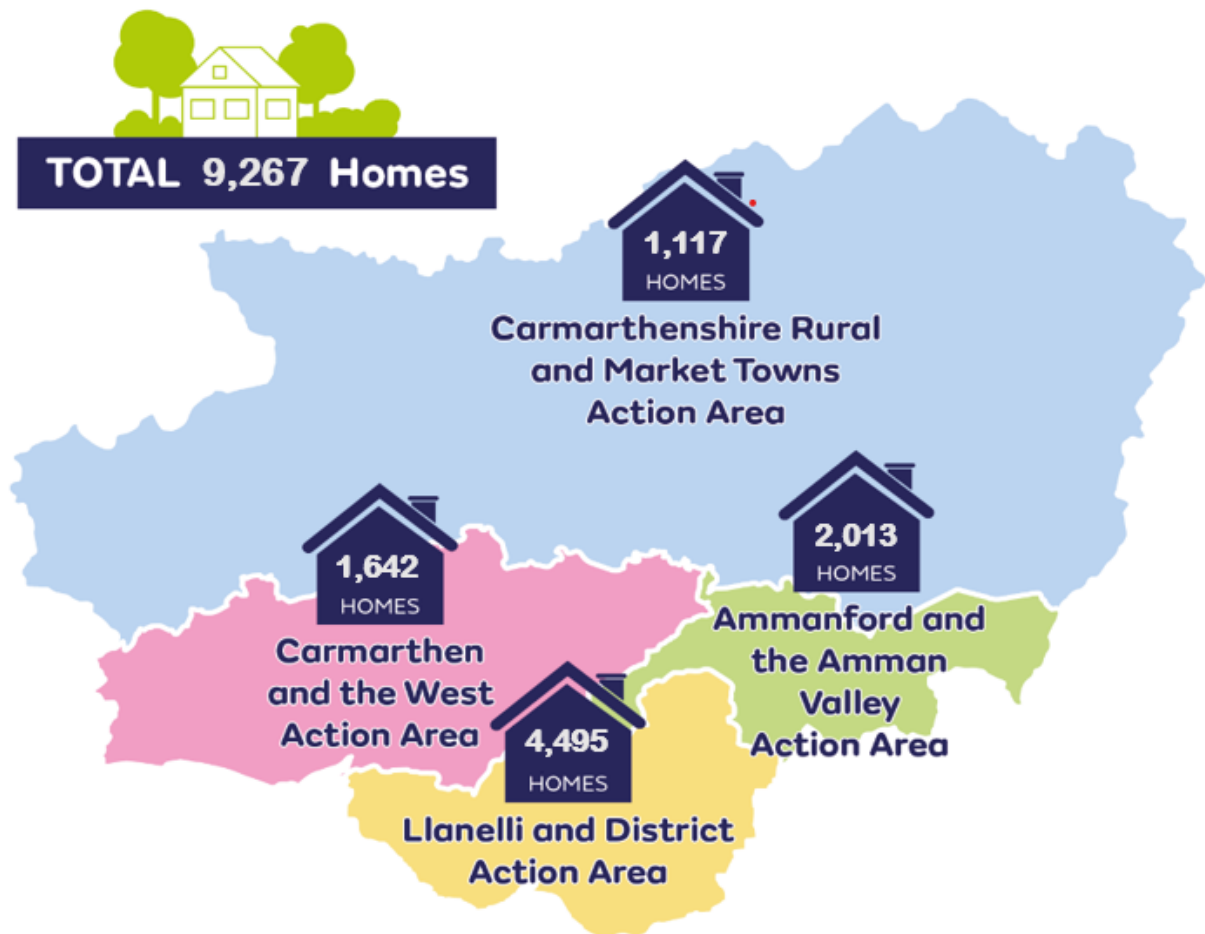


Appendix B: Stock, Tenant and Housing Choice Register Profile

Stock make up

Carmarthenshire County Council's HRA stock (as set out below) comprises 9,267 homes, including 519 sheltered homes, and an additional 211 leasehold homes.

The housing stock comprises 5,160 houses and 2,160 bungalows, with the remainder made up of 1,920 flats (including sheltered), bedsits and maisonettes. The majority of the stock is 2 and 3 bedroom homes.

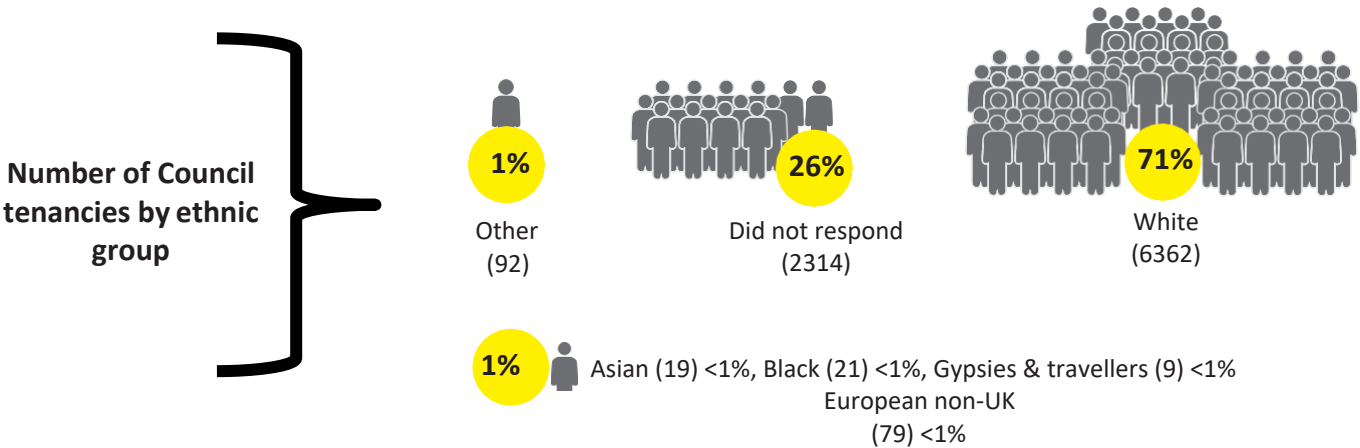
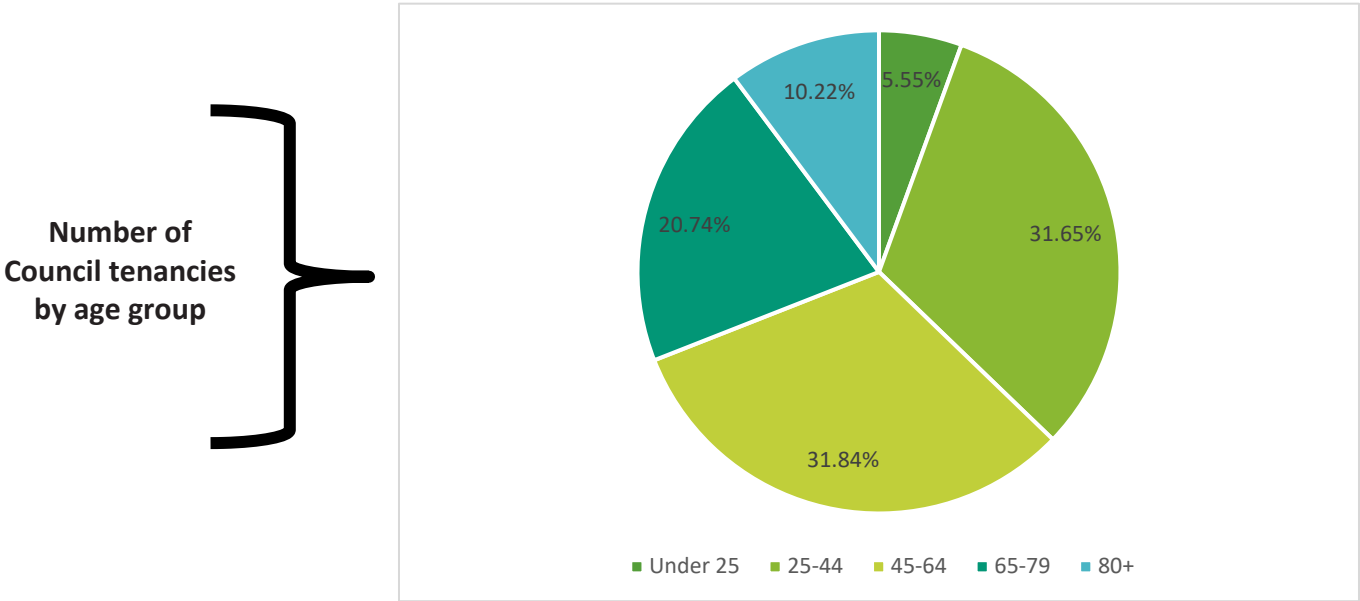


Property Type	Carmarthenshire Rural & MKT Town	Carmarthen & The West	Ammanford & the Amman Valley	Llanelli & District
Bedsit	0	5	0	3
Bungalow	536	497	502	625
Flats (Inc Sheltered)	185	329	511	895
House	396	792	1000	2972
Maisonette	0	19	0	0

Tenant profile

We know that 10% of our lead tenants are aged 80 or over and a further 21% are aged 65 to 79. As a result, 31% of our lead tenants are 65 or above. Only 5.5% of our lead tenants are under 25, the remaining 63% are aged 25 to 65.

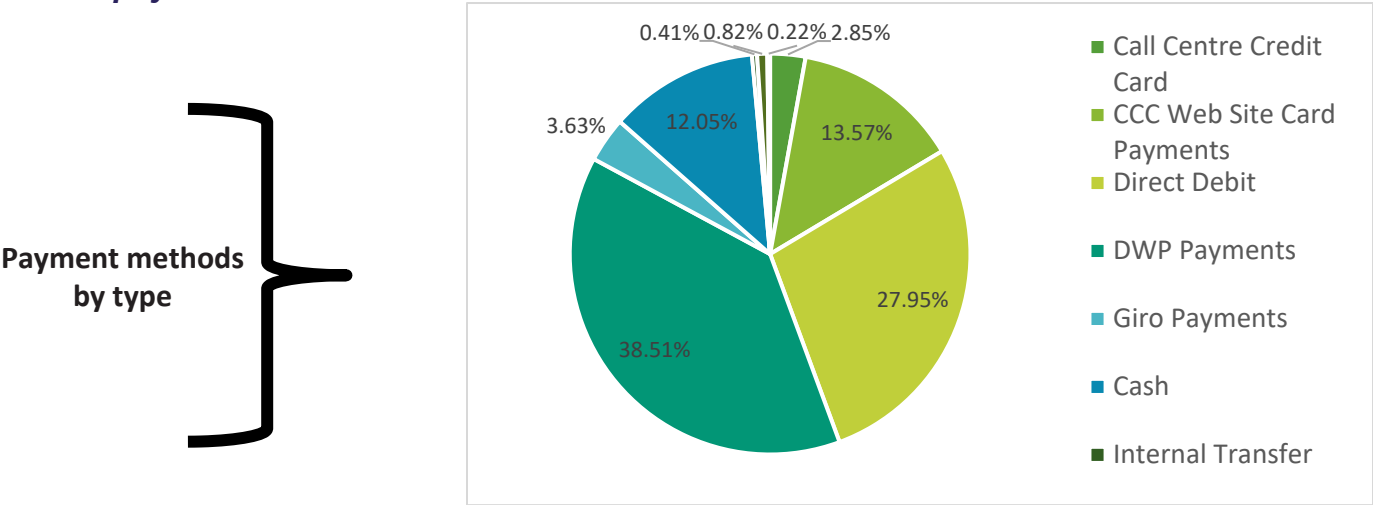
We know that 71% of our lead tenants are white British. A further 26% did not provide information about their ethnic group.



Universal Credit tenant payment profile

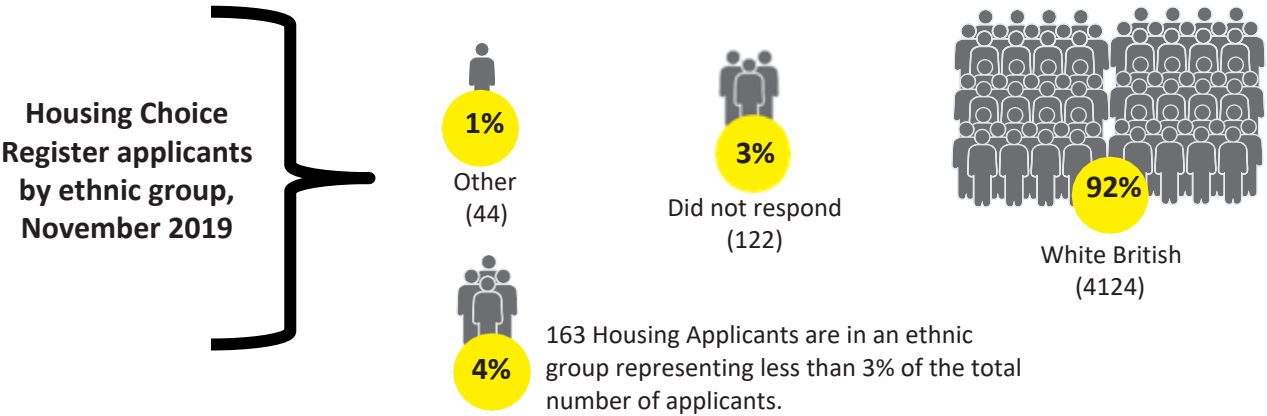
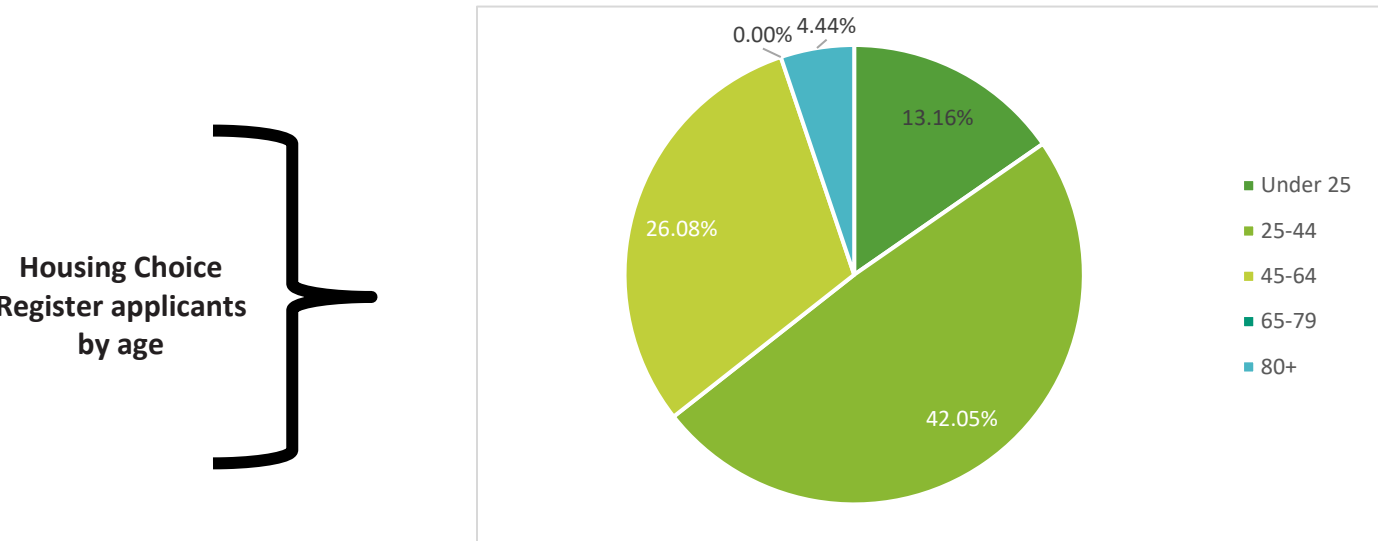
For tenants currently claiming Universal Credit, we know that 28% are paying their rent by direct debit. A further 14% are receiving Universal Credit Payments direct to CCC.

Tenant payment methods

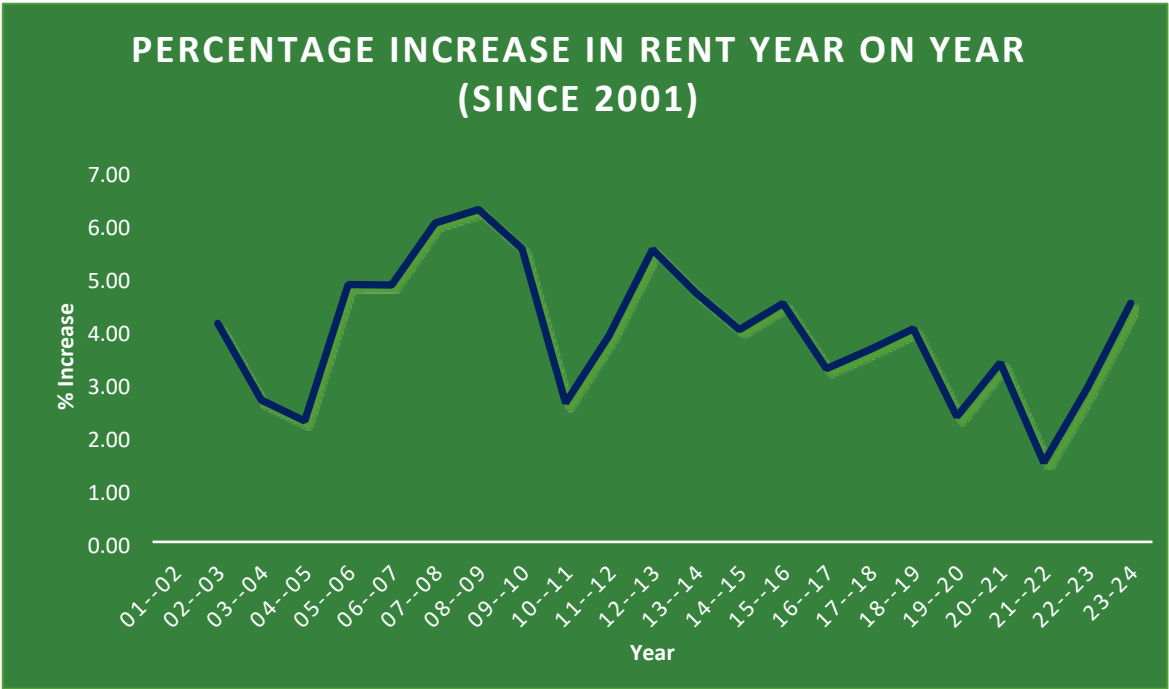


We know that 42% of our lead applicants are aged 25 to 44 with a further 15% aged under 25. 4% are aged 80+ and the remaining 39% are aged 45 to 79. We know that 88% of applicants are white British and a further 1% of our lead applicants did not provide information about their ethnic group.

Housing choice applicants



Rent Increase Profile (Since 2001)



Appendix C: *How Happy Tenants are with the Services we Provide*

Following the Pandemic we have continued to engage with tenants and other stakeholders in a number of ways. We have recently received feedback from a STAR Resident Satisfaction Survey that provided us with an overall summary for how satisfied tenants are with the overall services we provide as a Council.

The results are provided below:



The majority of tenants were satisfied with the quality of their home, however, around one in six were unhappy, and satisfaction had fallen by 4% since 2019. This year the wards with particularly high results for the quality of the home, included in Whitland, Llansteffan, Cynwyl Elfed, Llangunnor, Llanddarog and Glanymor. Conversely, those with significantly lower satisfaction were Carmarthen Town West, Laugharne and Llwynhendy.

The current perception of the rent value for money amongst tenants hadn't changed significantly since the last survey. There is also some correlation between the quality of the homes and value for money. Older tenants were again the most satisfied with value for money. This reflects a wider pattern seen amongst working age tenants, particularly the youngest generations, as they evaluate the rent compared to any other options for affordable housing in the area.

Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service was the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction, which is a much more prominent placing than it had been in 2019. This is not a surprise as significant disruption to repairs over the course of the pandemic had undoubtedly influenced tenants perception on how well we perform in this area. As always, there were differences by ward, although in most cases this correlated with the characteristics on the housing stock in those locations. The most obvious variable for overall satisfaction with the service was the age of the property, which again ties this score more closely to issues of ongoing maintenance rather than responsive repairs. That said the majority of tenants that took part were satisfied with the last completed repair.

Our tenants continue to feel that listening to their views and acting on their requests is an important part of the service and should be seen as something that will improve our services. As such, it was positive to find most of the survey respondents were indeed satisfied in response to this question, which was consistent with the national benchmark. At the opposite end of the scale only 12% were actively dissatisfied. We need to continue to uphold the standards for most tenants/ respondents and identify ways to communicate better with those least satisfied and act promptly on their requests. Nevertheless, older tenants were still more likely to say that that the Council was easy to deal with than the rest of the sample group.

Neighbourhood Services

82%

Satisfied with
neighbourhood as a
place to live

57%

Satisfied with the way
the Council deals with
ASB

69%

Satisfied with Grounds
Maintenance

Moving In

81%

Satisfied with the
condition of the home
upon moving in

84%

Satisfied with the
overall moving in
experience

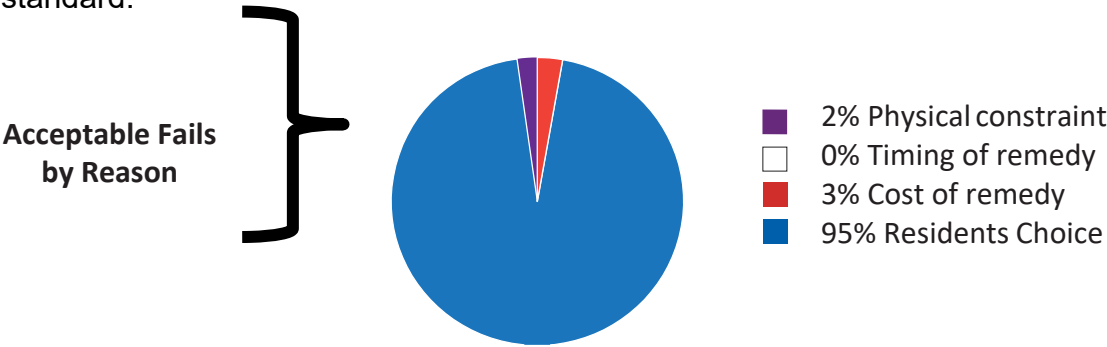
Satisfaction with our neighbourhoods as a place to live had fallen slightly, but is still in keeping with the median for other social landlords. This could be attributed to the Pandemic and residents being confined to their homes during the first lockdown period. Once again, older tenants were generally more satisfied that the younger population and similarly people living in sheltered schemes and bungalows were more satisfied with their surroundings. The predominant reason for this is that older residents are less transient and are likely to have lived in those communities for a considerable time. As expected geography played an important part in tenants perception with rural ward fairing well and other wards like Tyisha had lower satisfaction for their surroundings. Satisfaction with how we deal with ASB is somewhat unchanged from that in 2019. Age continues to be a factor and despite older tenants being more likely to report ASB, they were more satisfied with the resolution and correlates again to the area they live in. There are hotspots of dissatisfaction in some Llanelli Wards which will require further analysis.

Of particular interest to us this year was the experience of new tenants who had needed to move home within the last 18 months since the start of the pandemic. This group comprised a sizeable 19% of the total survey sample, a third of whom were aged under 35, and half under 50. The overall experience was rated positively by the vast majority of this group. However, we must remember that some of the services that we provided over the past 18 months, such as fitted flooring, white goods etc. over and above pre pandemic may have influenced this. Some new tenants were dissatisfied with the condition of the home when they first moved in particularly for pre-war built properties and in certain areas where the experience and condition of their new home was significantly worse than average with some degree of confidence.

Appendix D: Acceptable Fails

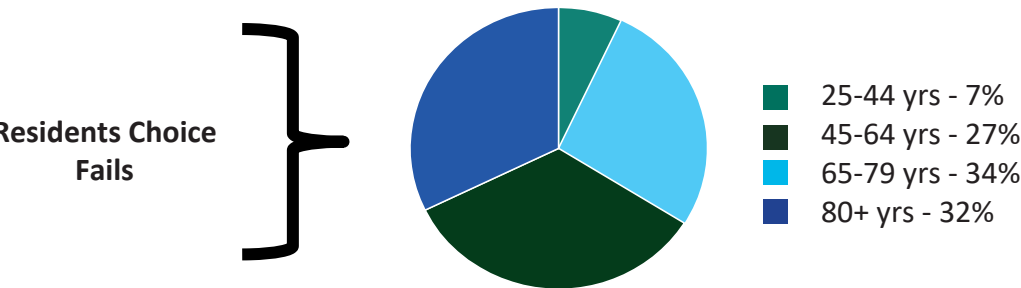
The Welsh Government Outlines ‘acceptable fails’ as a home which meets the standard but has not had all works carried out to make it fully compliant. There are different reasons for why these acceptable fails would occur.

Some tenants have chosen not to have the work done (Residents’ choice) because they were happy with their homes, have made their own improvements or some, particularly older tenants, do not want the disruption. This is, by far, the main reason why homes do not currently meet the standard.



We know that 95% of our acceptable fails are as a result of residents’ choice. The remaining 5% being the cost of the remedy or physical constraints.

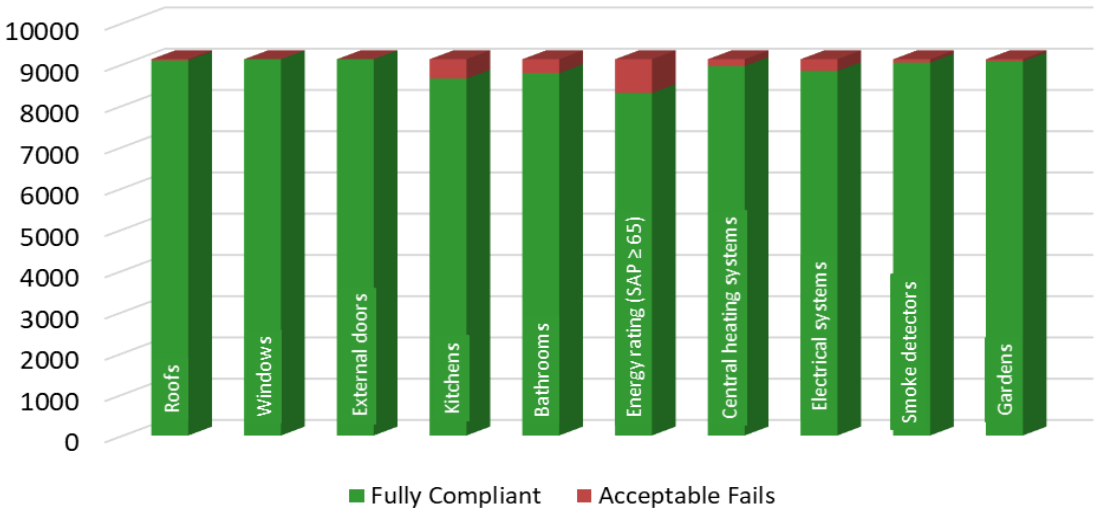
We also know that 32% of the residents who chose not to have the CHS+ works completed are aged 80 or over and a further 34% are between the age of 65 and 79.



Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) compliance

The following table set out our achievement of meeting the WHQS in 2015 by components, together with the annual programme to maintain compliance of the WHQS.

WHQS Compliance by Component



Appendix E: Decarbonisation and Affordability

Understanding our housing stock

Over 80% of the housing stocks archetype is post-war construction, built between 1945-1990. 26% of those homes are semi-detached houses. We can use this data to inform our decarbonisation programmes and target the housing that represents the majority of our tenants' homes. The homes that have been retrofitted through ORP 1 and ORP 2.1 were selected using this data and will continue to be used for future decarbonisation programmes.

	End terrace	Mid terrace	Semi-detached	Detached	Flat	Total
Pre 1919	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
1919-1944	2%	3%	7%	0%	1%	13%
1945-1964	3%	3%	26%	0%	6%	38%
1965-1990	8%	8%	14%	0%	13%	43%
Post 1990	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	5%
Total	14%	15%	49%	0%	22%	100%

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Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26

Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme

Appendix F – Compliance Policy



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1. The purpose....

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to confirm our approach to achieving and maintaining (and further improving) the Carmarthenshire's housing stock. It takes account of the guidance produced by the Welsh Government in 2015 in terms of compliance and verification.

2. The context....

- 2.1. Carmarthenshire has been committed to providing homes for council tenants that are modern, safe, fuel efficient, situated in well maintained neighbourhoods and are well managed.
- 2.2. In 2006, the Council started its ambitious programme to achieve the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) by the end of 2015. We are pleased to say that we have delivered this programme, on time, to homes where tenants have agreed to have the work carried out. Even though these programmes have been delivered, this does not mean the end to us investing in our housing stock. There remains much more to do.
- 2.5 We have acknowledged the importance of strategic asset management in providing the foundation for our investment plans, as well as the central role of supporting tenants and residents in everything we do, is critical to the delivery of the plan. The 2023/26 business plan covers five key themes that have been identified in terms of future investment. These are:

THEME 1 - Supporting Tenants and Residents

THEME 2 - Investing in Homes and our Estates

THEME 3 - Providing More Homes

THEME 4 – Promoting Affordable Warmth and Decarbonising our Housing Stock

THEME 5 - Local Economy, Community Benefits and Procurement

3. Policy statement....

- 3.1. In 2015 we achieved the CHS+ to homes where tenants have agreed to have work completed - well before WG's target of December 2020. This is in line with our agreed assumptions that the standard of our homes will be to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS); and replacement programmes will be based on condition, not time.
- 3.2. Tenants tell us that getting repairs done on time and maintaining homes to a good standard is important to them. Maintaining the standard is a statutory duty, and the Council has made a commitment to this by ensuring that all homes will be:
 - in a good state of repair;

- free from damp;
- free from significant condensation;
- structurally stable;
- in safe and attractive environments; and
- suitable for the household.

4. Tenants views...

- 4.1. The commitment and support of our tenants' and Members' continues to be important to us to ensure that we maintain and improve the standards in the future
- 4.2. Tenant and community engagement have always underpinned the delivery of the housing investment programme, but we want to do more. We want to get better by engaging as widely as possible and maximising opportunities to help build stronger communities.
- 4.3. We also believe we should give our tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area they live and ensure the services they receive achieve value for money. A recent tenant satisfaction survey showed the following:

Tenant Satisfaction across the housing sector in Wales ¹						
1,938 tenants took part in the survey- 26% response rate overall. A quarter of the total number of responses was collected online (660), and 47 surveys were completed in Welsh (2%)						
	Housing Assoc.		Voluntary Transfer	Retained Councils		CCC
service	Not available	yet	Not yet available	Not available	yet	77%
repairs and maintenance	Not available	yet	Not yet available	Not available	yet	71%
listening and acting on tenants' views	Not available	yet	Not yet available	Not available	yet	60%
						77%
						66%
						63%

- 4.4. We will evaluate our approach to the way we listen and act on tenant's views. We want to get better by:
 - engaging as widely as possible with tenants, and including those who don't usually take part;
 - keeping in touch with tenants about the repairs that are due to be carried out on their homes. This includes when we will carry out the backlog of repairs that have built up, contractor capacity and market failure;
 - developing our in house team and developing skills and capacity to carryout housing repairs ourselves; and
 - ensuring our tenants have an opportunity to influence decisions about their homes and the area where they live.

This process will be repeated time and time again, so that we continue to improve the service in line with tenants' expectations.

5. Progress and reporting...

- 5.1. As of 31st March 2020, the Council was fully WHQS Compliant having met the standard during 2015 utilising a whole house delivery approach. Some of our housing stock does not meet the standard and are considered acceptable failures. The main reason was due to resident's choice (95%). A small number of properties (5%) were not improved because of physical constraints or the cost of remedy.
- 5.2. The following table sets out our achievement of meeting the WHQS in 2015 by components, together with the annual programme to maintain compliance.

WHQS Compliance by Component



- 5.3. Tenant refusals will be improved by having a rescheduling programme which targets properties when they either become void or whereby an existing tenant who previously refused the works decides to have the work completed.
- 5.4. A small number of properties have fallen out of compliance due to the 'Cost of Remedy' of repairs. An options appraisal will be done on these properties and the Most Satisfactory Course of Action (MSCA) and Net Present Value (NPV) considered.
- 5.5. Future work programmes will be considered in line with the life cycles of components previously upgraded. However, we will be developing a further programme for the following:
- continuing with our roofing & rendering programme;
 - boiler replacements and servicing;
 - maintaining the housing investment programme and standard;
 - retrofitting our homes and making them more energy efficient;
 - improving 'our offer' to older people; and

- building more homes following our commitment set out in the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.
- 5.6. We have a robust Governance structure in place which can be found in the Business Plan (Appendix A-E). We report regularly to local members, scrutiny committees, full Council and the Housing Services Advisory Panel (made up of tenants, local members and Council Officers). Progress, good news stories and information is provided to tenants in a quarterly 'Tenant 2 Tenant' newsletter/ magazine and we often engage with TPAS Cymru.

6. Data collection, storage and updating ...

- 6.1. Prior to the CHS an internal asset management database was developed to produce the programme of works. This was populated through an 80% stock condition survey and information received from major works programmes at the time. The remaining property data was modelled giving a high level of accuracy to achieve the WHQS.
- 6.2. We believe that managing housing assets goes beyond just investing in good repair and improvements. Asset management is also about reviewing and potentially changing the asset base to end up with the right accommodation in the right location, supported by excellent, flexible services for our tenants. It must consider quality and value for money, particularly the whole life of a home and how running costs will affect tenants.
- 6.3. By applying an effective asset management strategy to our 9,000 plus homes, it will also enable us to meet our legal requirement of maintaining the housing stock in the future.
- 6.4. We fully recognise that in order to achieve the above we must ensure that:
- the right structures, skills, resources, and capacity are in place and are regularly reviewed;
 - robust stock condition information, data and analysis is in place to drive investment;
 - our data is further enhanced and regularly validated by feedback from all programmed and cyclical repairs, and maintenance activities; and
 - we complete our cost certainty exercise for our overarching 30-year financial plan.
- 6.5. We use two software systems for data collection and modelling. TOTALMobile, is used for job ordering of programmed works, contractor payment and store completion dates. We use the data to forecast future investment requirements as well as our overall 30-year business plan. Also, we use our Housing Management System (OHMS) to collate and store stock compliancy and other asset data such as adaptations. Both systems are legacy systems and we have purchased two new systems which are currently being implemented to manage stock investment. CIVICA CX Assets will replace OHMS functionality and Total Connect will replace TOTALMobile. Both systems will complement each other. This will improve functionality and facilitate more efficient analysis and scenario modelling to inform future investment programmes.

7. Current compliance position...

- 7.1. Annually, Carmarthenshire County Council completes a WHQS return for the Welsh Government which indicates the condition status of the stock at the end of each financial year. Subject to acceptable fails, Carmarthenshire is 100% WHQS compliant. The table below indicates the most up to date stock compliance status:

CCC CHS+ Status	Total Stock (March 2022)	Total Stock %
Assets	9,267	-
Total Fully Compliant	8,320	89.6
Total Acceptable Fails	947	10.4

8. Interpretation and current recording of 'Acceptable Fails'...

- 8.1. We will assess elements of the standard as pass, fail or not applicable. The Council accepts four main reasons for an acceptable fail and follows Welsh Government guidance:

In Line with Welsh Government Guidance, certain aspects for categorising an 'acceptable fail' are open to officer interpretation and therefore each case is reviewed by the responsible officer who will then decide if a property fails to meet the criteria		
Tenants' refusal	choice or	Where a tenant chooses or refuses works that prevents the council from maintaining or improving the house and is recorded as an acceptable fail. All such acceptable fails are reviewed and/ or rescheduled. The asset will be fully refurbished to the appropriate standard at the next available opportunity (void works or through tenants' change of mind). Tenants <u>do not</u> have a choice whether to have smoke or carbon monoxide detectors installed in their homes or to have their boilers serviced.
Physical Constraint		Physical constraint only accounts for a small percentage (2%) of our acceptable fails whilst this doesn't present a significant problem at this stage it could prevent us from maintaining the standard in future. These properties are clearly identified and measures have been put in place to mitigate this at the earliest possible opportunity.
Timing of Remedy		Although this currently does not present a problem for the council, we may in the future defer works to ensure our investment programmes remain efficient, we may also consider combining works to reduce disruption levels for our tenants.
Cost of Remedy		Future investment to support the standard will be based on an assessment of the building(s) and whether it is lettable. Consideration will be given to future lifecycle costs to maintain

compliance. Where it is uneconomical to repair, we will carry out an MSCA assessment to determine its long-term viability.

9. Risk reduction measures

9.1. We will continue to respond to changes in legislation, regulations or other statutory guidance that will make our tenants homes safer. Ensuring that our tenants are safe and healthy within their homes and the environments that they live in is an utmost priority for the Council and we will adopt new, better standards in timely manner. Risk reduction measures that we have recently put in place are:

- approach to fire safety management;
- radon testing programme; and
- serge protection upgrade.

10. Independent verification....

10.1. We believe that we report compliance accurately in achieving and maintaining the WHQS, and we will continue to do so.

10.2. We will also back this up with further verification by:

- demonstrate a clear separation of duties between those reporting compliances and those delivering and enhanced standard of work;
- using internal staff in conjunction with external support to undertake desktop reviews;
- commencing a sample programme of stock condition visits every year;
- asking tenants how they would like to be part of the process of verification;
- use a range of methods to assess compliance including independent collection of data; and
- complying with internal and external audit requirements.

11. Annual financial statement....

11.1. Annually the Council reviews the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan which sets out the investment needed to maintain the housing stock investment programmes. The Council has a robust 30-year business plan in place and since April 2015 has become self-financing having exited the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System (HRAS).

11.2. Our capital investment programme is supported by funding from the Welsh Governments Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), contributions from revenue, capital receipts as well as prudential borrowing. All of these income streams are used to facilitate the capital investment required to sustain our stock as part of our 30-year business plan.

11.3. We will also pursue, where possible, other funding streams and grants to maximise our income that will support and complement the work programmes and/ or services outlined in the Business Plan.

12. Recording community benefits....

12.1. The Council is committed to stimulating the local economy through our housing investment programme.

12.2. Where possible, we will use local contractors from the Minor Works Framework and South West Wales Regional Contract Framework (SWWRF). Not only will this provide value for money, as part of the framework agreement our contractors will provide:

- employment including apprenticeship schemes;
- training;
- working with local school and colleges; and
- non-core community benefits including regeneration schemes.

12.3. We are also committed to developing the skills, training and job opportunities within the Council Services. This includes providing apprenticeships and graduate trainee programmes through Coleg Sir Gar and University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

12.4. We will measure all contracts awarded through the capital investment programme against the Value Wales Measurement Toolkit (or similar).

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COUNCIL

25TH JANUARY 2023

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/22

Cabinet Recommendations:

'UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report for 2021/22 be received.'

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.

Cabinet Decision Required	YES
Council Decision Required	YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Cabinet Member for Organisation and Workforce - Cllr Philip Hughes

Directorate Chief Executive's Noelwyn Daniel	Designations: Head of ICT & Corporate Policy	Tel Nos./ E Mail Addresses: NDaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Report Author Gwyneth Ayers & Robert James	Corporate Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager Strategic Performance Manager	GAyers@carmarthenshire.gov.uk RNJames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COUNCIL
25TH JANUARY 2023

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/22

- The Annual Report starts with an overview of our COVID-19 response and outlines some key impacts, challenges and learning.
- The Annual Report then looks in turn at each of our 13 Well-being Objectives and assesses the progress and adaptations that have been made during this difficult year.
- 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:

- *we are exercising our functions effectively.*
- *we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively.*
- *our governance is effective for securing the above.*
- We also have a duty to consult on our Performance Assessment (See Appendix 5C)
- This report aims to meet both these requirements in one document.

The self-assessment report must be published within four weeks of it being finalised and approved in accordance with the council's agreed processes.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes

1. Council Annual Report
2. Commitment Updates

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: Noelwyn Daniel, Interim Director of Environment & Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

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

1. 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 	Corporate Strategy update published – June 2019, and further updated in May 2021.
<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.

2. Legal

The requirement to publish a forward-looking Improvement Plan by the end of June and an Annual Report by the end of October no longer applies.

- *The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“the Act”) replaces the current improvement duty for councils set out in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009* para 1.2

Statutory guidance on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) act 2021

The new Act sets a duty to report on performance through self-assessment. It provides that a council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report should be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the financial year to which it relates. However, it is for the council to determine when exactly to do this to best align with its own corporate arrangements. Para 2.28.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires that Annual Reports must be published as soon as possible, but no later than March 31st

It is up to Carmarthenshire County Council when it publishes its Annual Report on 2021/22 so long as it is before 31 March 2023. Though it should be as soon as reasonably practicable.

The requirement to produce a self-assessment report is one for the full council or its executive (as a council may determine). Councils will be required to involve a wide range of stakeholders and local people in its self-assessment. In addition, involving members from controlling and opposition groups.

Scrutiny committees are a key part of offering constructive challenge to how a council is performing and how it organises itself in the delivery of sustainable services.

‘Scrutiny committees, as well as internal audit, will be a key part of a council’s self-assessment, and the council should determine and agree how best to involve their scrutiny committees in the self-assessment process itself, not just in considering the outcomes of any self-assessment’.

This is the first 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.

Note: Governance and Audit Committee must receive the Annual Report and its feedback considered. It must also receive a copy of the final published report.

3. Finance

Well-being Objective 13b Making Better use of Resources covers financial matters.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination

YES

If yes include the following information: -

Scrutiny Committee

See note below

Date the report was considered:-

Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-

Committee	Date	Agreed Action	Action	Recommendation that Cabinet endorses the report
Corporate, Performance & Resources Scrutiny	19th Oct	N/A	N/A	✓
Governance & Audit Cttee <small>As required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021</small>	21st Oct	Clarity sought on the role of the Committee to fulfil its legislative obligations. To review other Authorities approaches and seek advice with the WLGA. A development session be incorporated in the FWP to enable the Committee to add value.	Official guidance is open ended ' <i>it must review the draft report</i> ' Other Councils have been approached and all are finding their own way. Ourselves and other Councils to raise with the WLGA. Has been included in the FWP for Spring 2023	✓
Place, Sustainability & Climate Change Scrutiny	24th Nov	N/A	N/A	✓
Education Young People & Welsh Language	1st Dec	Wording revision agreed regarding the % of children in care who had to move three times	Change made	✓

Communities, Homes & Regeneration Scrutiny	19th Dec	N/A	N/A	✓
Health & Social Services Scrutiny	21st Dec Meeting Cancelled	N/A	N/A	Cancelled

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 5c). 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.

- Residents Survey results – 2,195 responses
- Staff Survey results – 1,733 responses
- Business Survey results – 36 responses
- Trade Union consultation – 5 responses

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
Yes

Annual Report considered.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	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

Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire

ANNUAL REPORT for 2021/2022

on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2023

'Life is for living, let's start, live and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment'

October 2022



Welcome from the Leader of the Council to our Annual Report for 2021-2022

In writing this introduction I have taken the opportunity to review our year and to look back over our performance and achievements over the last few years. As the new Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council, I appreciate that I have solid foundations to continue to build on, but these past few years have been very challenging, and at the time of writing there are significant challenges ahead. For me, 2021/2022 is the year that marks the tail end of the pandemic and the beginning of the cost-of-living crisis. Despite the challenges, we made great strides in many areas including recovery and regeneration, we made plans for our children's future education, built more homes, and continued to work towards becoming a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.

Early in the pandemic we understood that alongside facing the day-to-day challenges, we needed to put in place a recovery plan. We saw opportunities and found new ambitions that could secure our future development and growth. We presented a comprehensive recovery plan to get Carmarthenshire back on its journey of growth, and set out priorities for supporting businesses, people, and communities. We have continued to work on that plan and during the year we have seen other opportunities for growth. Key to the plan is supporting 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. Going forward it is more important than ever that we are able to help ourselves and support local businesses.

We have continued to look at town centre recovery plans for Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen as well as our ten towns initiative, continuing to drive forward an agenda for change for each of the identified towns and their wider communities.

This year, we launched an ambitious ten-year strategy outlining our future vision for education. The plan sets out the council's aspirations for learners and staff for the next 10 years. The strategy aims to build on the good work that has been carried out to date to deliver consistently excellent outcomes for all learners.

We found out in Autumn 2021 that the Tywi Valley Cycle Path project had been awarded £16.7million as part of the UK Government's new Levelling Up fund. We have been campaigning to get the path underway for quite a few years and it is great to see another ambition being developed. The Tywi Valley Path project will create a 20km off-road walking and cycling route linking Carmarthen to Llandeilo, running alongside the River Tywi through stunning scenery which takes in castles, country parks and historical estates as well as attractions including the National Botanic Gardens of Wales and Aberglasney Gardens.

Another of our projects which received funding through the levelling up fund was the creation of Carmarthen Hwb. This project brings the former Debenhams store back to life as a central hub that will pull together a range of key public services under one roof, providing convenient access and a space for people to relax and enjoy. Still in the early stages of development, the exciting venture could feature a state-of-the-art leisure, culture and exhibition space alongside health and educational facilities, tourist information, customer services and more.

As I mentioned earlier, we have been able to grow despite the challenges of the pandemic but now we face the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis. We are facing uncertain times and I am not in any doubt that the next few years will be difficult, but we have built strong foundations and as always, we will look to pull together and find a way forward.



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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COVID-19 AND RECOVERY

*Life is for living, let's start, live and age well
in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment*

START WELL



CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

The last twelve months, due to COVID-19, have continued to be challenging for all services. However, we continued working through the recovery phase as one Education and Children's Services team, to ensure that our children and young people were successfully supported to access their education and all the services they required.

The Department coordinated plans to sustain schools and learners through lockdowns via an amended national curriculum. The programme emanated early on, following vital multi-disciplinary input from across departmental teams, focussing on the wellbeing of learners and re-engagement in learning.

All schools have utilised their delegated Recruit, Recover and Raise standards grant funding to support learners. School leaders have discussed the focus and impact of this funding with their Educational Support Adviser, focussing on the additional support and provision they are able to provide for learners and their families, including those who are most vulnerable, utilising this grant.

We have continued to ensure that schools are COVID-19 safe environments including supporting School Leaders with updating Risk Assessments, ensuring adherence to changing Health and Safety guidance. We have also continued to provide enhanced cleaning and provided additional resource such as air filters as required.

Whilst children's services continued throughout lockdown to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people, the work adapted in accordance with social distancing arrangements. This year has been even more challenging due to COVID-19, placing significant pressures on families and leading to an increase in demand for our services. The number of Contacts to the department has increased to 11,379 as compared to 9,498 last year. This increase coupled with staff absence due to COVID-19 and sickness, COVID-19 restrictions and recruitment difficulties have all been additional challenges placing increased pressures on childcare teams. However, despite this, workers have been inventive in finding meaningful and innovative ways of carrying out direct work with children and families and services have continued to perform well. 90.2% of all new assessments have been completed within statutory timescales.

The Inclusion Team has continued to deliver all service areas throughout the COVID-19 period. Methods of delivery have been modified following consultation with families, schools, Education and Child Psychologist Service and Health ensuring all best endeavours are undertaken to continue to deliver statutory processes and support services.

New on-line application processes have been introduced for both Free School Meals and Pupil Development Grant Access which provides a far better service to our residents. The continuation of Free School Meal payments has been challenging.

LIVE WELL



ECONOMY

Carmarthenshire's economy has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. To gain an informed understanding of the position in Carmarthenshire, we engaged with over 1,000 businesses to gather evidence on the impact of the pandemic on our businesses, unemployment and our rural and primary town economies. This assisted us to put in place a clear [Economic Recovery Plan](#) (we were first in Wales to do so) with an immediate priority focus on protecting jobs and supporting our small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to upscale.

Businesses have done well to 'bounce back' – restrictions imposed on businesses created a range of operational challenges which hampered income generation and productivity. Consumer demand and changing consumer spending practices were a significant concern but financial interventions and support provided by the Council have assisted businesses to operate and diversify in a post-lockdown economy which was

complemented by a campaign to think and buy local through the '100% Sir Gâr' initiative.

What have we delivered?

More than 1,100 jobs have already been created and over 700 jobs safeguarded.

We have delivered over £66 million COVID-19 Business Recovery Funds on behalf of the Welsh Government

We have awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs.

We have successfully delivered six jobs' fairs in each of the primary towns, to support sectors experiencing acute recruitment challenges.

We have engaged with well over 3,200 local businesses and provided just under 900 people with training support.

We will also continue to address the longer-term challenges that constrain growth in Carmarthenshire including low productivity and wages, skills deficits, too few businesses scaling up and the need for investment in modern business infrastructure and premises. *We will support Carmarthenshire's economy to recover as quickly as possible to become one that is more productive than before, more equal, greener and with more sustainable communities.*

AGE WELL



SOCIAL CARE

From a social care perspective, managing the challenges that the pandemic has created has become very much business as usual over the last year. The success of the vaccination programme and the associated very high level of take up by vulnerable adults and social care staff has meant that the impact of community transmission has been very different. With the exception of one isolated incident in the summer, clusters of cases in care homes have become more routine to manage and whilst COVID-19 has still contributed to staff absence, they have returned to work much quicker on the basis that more often than not they are well enough to return to the work at the end of the isolation period. COVID-19 has therefore become something for us to manage on a proactive basis, rather than constantly needing to respond to emergency and different issues on a reactive basis. As a consequence of the above, we have had the opportunity to focus more on our core business and look at how

we develop and shape our services so that they are fit for the future.

Our biggest challenge however has come from the significant recruitment and retention issues we are experiencing both in terms of a qualified social work and non-qualified social care workforce. There are insufficient qualified social workers and non-qualified care staff in the job market to fill all of the vacancies in the county, and we are competing with neighbouring public sector agencies and independent sector

providers in the same limited workforce pool. This position is echoed nationally, and as a consequence, we have had insufficient social workers available to assess all those who need assessments as quickly as we might like as well as support vulnerable people. In addition, we have had insufficient workforce available to provide all of the care that is needed. People are therefore having to wait longer for assessment than we would like, and we are having to prioritise those most in need of support. This means that there is a significant risk that people are not getting the help they need as quickly as they need it, and we are having to effectively manage that risk to keep people safe.

HEALTHY, SAFE AND PROSPEROUS ENVIRONMENT



During lockdown people rediscovered the environment. More than ever before we have realised that our natural environment is vital for our well-being. More people used footpaths and cycleways.

As a consequence of lockdown there was an improvement in Air Quality during the year because of the reduction of road vehicle movements. The main pollutant of concern for Carmarthenshire is Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). Waste and recycling collections were crucial to public and environmental health during the COVID-19 crisis, and waste workers were deemed 'key workers' by the Government and continued to carry out essential services during the epidemic. The full range of waste collection services at the kerbside continued throughout the pandemic, despite some of the logistical and resource challenges brought about by COVID-19 at times; this was testimony to the commitment and determination of all the teams involved in

ensuring these important services continued. This was clearly appreciated by our residents.

We have seen an increased challenge with retaining and recruiting staff in several service areas across the department especially where certain expertise is required and this reflects the position Nationally. There are clearly opportunities arising from lessons learnt during the pandemic for us to look at re-shaping our service delivery models and ensure we continue to drive forward digital transformation to meet the increasing demands of the public.

GOVERNANCE



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and new rules relaxing the requirements around the way meetings are held, Carmarthenshire's Democratic Process has changed significantly since June 2020 with all meetings currently being held virtually. This is the same for officers who are office based. As we move into 2022/23, and as COVID-19 rules allow, we anticipate moving to hybrid meetings, whereby some members will attend meetings physically and others remotely, with the public also being able to attend physically or remotely. We already have the systems in place ready for that move.

Information Technology

The Council's decision, before the pandemic, to spend £1.9m of investment in agile working initiatives, including providing staff with the right equipment to allow them to work in a more agile and flexible way, together with improvements to the resilience of the IT network, has helped support an almost seamless move to homeworking. Having the right equipment in place meant that staff could be operational from home immediately with no disruption to customers.

The use of technology, and especially the use of Microsoft Teams, has been a vital component of the Council's response to the pandemic, and is helping to support the adoption of a far more dynamic and productive way of working. It has facilitated improved communication and team working at a local, regional, and national level. It has increased productivity, reduced the amount of travel and therefore carbon emissions and increased flexibility access to information and learning.

Agile and Hybrid working, is more productive and will reduce our accommodation costs and the amount of time we spend travelling and commuting and this will go a long way in supporting our aim in becoming carbon neutral. To support our high streets and help increase footfall we are reviewing how we use our town centre buildings and plan to create spaces that our staff can use to do their work and meet with colleagues. All public sector organisations are facing similar challenges. We want to work with our public sector partners to share the facilities we all have. This approach will allow us to increase the accommodation options available to our staff whilst reducing the buildings we run ourselves. This will provide us with an opportunity to achieve better value for money from our existing or new town centre facilities. Welsh Government is encouraging an increase in multi-located working and has set a long-term ambition for 30% of the Welsh workforce to work at or closer to home. This ambition is intended to help reduce congestion and cut carbon emission.

We currently have over 40 transactional services available to the public online developed over the past 5 years and over the previous Digital Transformation Strategy 2018-2021. Over the past two years in particular, we have had to rapidly and quickly implement and develop solutions in response to the pandemic, cost of living and Ukraine. We have an ongoing programme to introduce more on-line services.

Workforce

COVID-19 continued to present challenges for our workforce during 2021. However, our employees continued to step up to deliver the best possible services, with almost a thousand employees prepared to retrain and step in and help their colleagues, doing very different jobs in a positive and highly supportive manner. Feedback from Carmarthenshire's residents has been extremely positive.

2022 will see the lifting of all restrictions and our workforce will start to see a return to a "new" normal way of working having learnt much from the pandemic. Our Transformation programme will support our workforce and continue to look at ways to improve services by reducing waste, saving money whilst at the same time helping our staff to work in smarter ways.

Staff saw changes in their personal and working lives during the pandemic and we want to use that learning to make sure we build on what has worked well, and address any challenges they might have faced, to improve their working lives.



We also want to make sure that all staff have the skills and support needed to do their jobs. This is about all our staff, whether working out of an office or working in our communities, the aim is to make working lives better.

The health and well-being of our staff continues to be a key priority for us. To support the financial well-being of our workforce, particularly as the cost-of-living crisis hit, we launched a new Staff Rewards scheme during 2021 that gives all our staff access to hundreds of offers and discounts with national and local retailers. We will continue to develop initiatives that prioritise the health and well-being of our workforce. We will also need to develop a new workforce strategy that addresses the recruitment and retention of staff in key areas as well as support the development of skills required to work in a post covid world.

INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

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 1*).

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 Appendix 1b	Addressed in the enclosed progress report for each Well-being Objective. Starting with an assessment judgement and backed by success measure evidence and progress made, triangulating evidence to support the assessment.	<p>The Act requires each council in Wales to keep under review, through self-assessment, the extent to which it is meeting the 3 <i>'performance requirements'</i>, 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
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	Identifying in case studies 'Is anyone better off'	
Demonstrate well-being objectives are consistent with the sustainable development principle	We include a Case Study within each Well-being Objective	Our Annual Governance Statement will support this	
		See summary judgements for each Well-being objective	
	Each Well-being Objective concludes with an Action Plan		Conclusions as to the extent to which the performance requirements were met during that financial year
			Any actions to be taken, or that have already been taken, to increase the extent to which performance requirements will be met

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 wellbeing objective.
- We continue to manage individual service performance via Divisional and Departmental Business 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 and will develop it further to reflect the expectations of the Act and statutory guidance.

Our Performance Management Framework - 'Wedding Cake'



Improvements made during 2021/22

See *Appendix 1b* to see how our Well-being Objectives are contributing to the National Goals

We strengthened our quarterly monitoring of our Corporate Strategy with dedicated senior officer performance meetings and more integrated performance information on resources and performance

[*i*](#) See Well-being Objective 13 on *Better Governance and Use of Resources*.

We have also set up a *Data Insight* team to strengthen informed decision making.

To ensure our functions are effective we introduced new Engagement and Assurance Peer sessions to ensure effective support, challenge and assessment of business plans to help provide corporate oversight were introduced.

Recognise/Grow/Together

Individual officers identify how they contribute to the above and have a voice.

Governance

We have also revamped our approach to the Annual Governance Statement. In previous years we outlined what arrangements were in place but for 2021/22 we considered how well are these arrangements doing, how do we know and how can we improve?

① Annual Governance Statement

GOVERNANCE ISSUES ACTION PLAN			
ISSUE REF	NEW GOVERNANCE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT		
	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TARGET DATE
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
AGS 2021/22 No.2	Set up governance group to oversee development of Reward and Benefit hub	People Services Manager	May/June 2022
AGS 2021/22 No. 3	Review employment safeguarding framework and develop training programme for recruiting managers	People Services Manager	March 2023

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 delivering a total of 35 individual projects 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, the financial year began with five of the nine business cases being approved by the Welsh Government and the UK Government - Yr Egin, Swansea City & Waterfront Digital District, Pembroke Dock Marine, Pentre Awel and Digital Infrastructure. Within nine months, the remaining four business cases were all approved – Homes as Power Stations, Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth, Skills & Talent and Campuses. This represented a significant milestone for the City Deal in December 2021, with the entire portfolio reaching delivery stage, the First of the Welsh City and Growth Deals to achieve this milestone.

Progress has also been made in other areas over the year. Work has commenced on five projects and a further three have completed contractual engagements. The three regional programmes are also gathering pace with pilot schemes and funding opportunities being announced.

With the portfolio in full delivery, this has put the City Deal in a very strong position to be able to deliver the estimated £1.3 billion of investment by 2033 and create over 9000 jobs. This will provide opportunities for many existing and new regional businesses, as well as residents across the region

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 Executive leaders of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils, along with a member of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and a member of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. The CJC will lead on 'Place' based policy interventions covering the South West Wales spatial region in the areas of the Strategic Development Plan, Regional Transport Plan and Economic well-being.

Carmarthenshire Public Services Board's (PSB)

The Carmarthenshire Public Services Board's (PSB) Well-being Assessment for Carmarthenshire was completed during the year. Collaboration took place with regional colleagues in Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire and the Regional Partnership Board throughout the year, particularly in the engagement and data analysis stages. A regional survey was developed which was live from early August to early October. The survey was available online with printed forms also available and an easy read version. It was available in other languages such as Polish, Romanian, and Arabic. [The Carmarthenshire We Want](#)

Several engagement events took place during the consultation period. A Regional Data Group was established to take a collaborative approach to the collection and analysis of local, regional, and national data to share expertise and avoid duplication. Following the engagement and data analysis stages, the draft Well-being Assessment was developed, and approved at the PSB meeting in November. The draft Assessment went out to public consultation from early December to mid-January. All feedback was considered and the PSB approved a final amended version and supporting documentation including community profiles, a Consultation and Involvement report, Data Source document and Environment and Climate Change analysis on 8 March. The final Well-being Assessment and supporting documentation will be published in May/June 2022. The PSB will now work towards publishing it's refreshed Well-being Plan by May 2023.

Consultation undertaken by the Council

The Council has a well-established method of consulting and engaging with citizens and service users. There are numerous network groups representing a range of interests from the youth forum to the ageing well network as well as fora that we engage to seek the views of those with specified protected characteristics as recognised by The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Welsh in Education Strategic plan (WESP): The WESP consultation received over 854 responses which is a considerable increase in comparison to the last time WESP was consulted on in 2017.

A484 Sandy Road Corridor Improvements: We have consulted on a series of improvement options for the A484 Sandy Road Corridor which had been identified and assessed in line with Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG). In total, 334 local residents and key stakeholders participated in the consultation.

Carmarthenshire's Future Waste Collection Strategy: We consulted with residents of Carmarthenshire to gather views on proposals for the future of household recycling collections. In total, 4,034 residents participated in the engagement which will guide our recycling strategy in future.

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Housing and Regeneration Masterplan: The purpose of this consultation was to ensure that we understand the needs, views and priorities of the public and our key stakeholders and reflect these requirements in the new Housing and Regeneration Masterplan. In total, 2,522 residents completed the consultation.

Carmarthenshire Equestrian Strategy Questionnaire: We made a commitment in the Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan to develop an Equestrian Strategy for the County. To inform and shape the strategy we consulted with the public, groups, clubs, organisations, local businesses and elected members on current equestrian provision in the County. The consultation generated a lot of interest from both equestrians and non-equestrians which resulted in 502 participants taking part. The information collected has helped us build a picture of equestrian demand and need in the County and to seize opportunities for equestrian development according to that need.

Carmarthenshire Assessment of Well-being: Working with the Public Services Board, we conducted an Assessment of Local Well-being. We wanted to find out about the well-being of local people and communities, at present and for the future. In total, 609 residents participated in the consultation.

Gambling Policy Review 2021: This consultation provided an opportunity for residents and key stakeholders to contribute to the review of Carmarthenshire's Gambling policy. In total, 72 responses were received which will now be utilised to maintain an effective licensing system for Carmarthenshire.

Evidence suggests that there has been an increase in participation of online consultations. Specifically, when evaluating comparable consultations. For example, the Welsh in Education strategic plan consultation in 2017 received 21 completes whilst in 2021 the consultation received 854. Additionally, a recent Housing and regeneration masterplan received 2522 completed surveys in comparison to 189 in a similar survey run in 2018. 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.

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 continued to develop our Integrated Impact Assessment process, which ensures due regard and diligence when the Authority makes key decisions. This process includes our responsibilities in terms of the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Socio-economic Duty**, which came into force on 31 March 2021. The key aim of the Socio-Economic Duty is to encourage better decision making and ultimately deliver better outcomes for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

The duty should be used to ensure that reducing inequalities of outcome now and for future generations is a central factor in decision-making. Organisations should consider current inequalities and future trends when deciding how they can have the most impact. And organisations must be guided by the voices of socio-economically disadvantaged people in doing this.

Welsh Language (also, please see *Well-being Objective 12*)

We are continuing to implement the **Welsh Language Standards** across the Council with regular dialogue with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Officer. 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, through the communication streams maintained by Marketing and Media and through the Departmental Language Leaders.

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 with language officers, 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 standards. The forum met four times and specific attention was given to apprenticeships and post-16 education, the Language in our communities, priority areas and the Local Development Plan.

How we measure the success of our Well-being Objectives

Success Measures

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. We have a suite of indicators we use to measure the success of our Well-being Objectives; a list of these measures can be seen in *Appendix 2*.

Other Assessment Information

Citizen Satisfaction

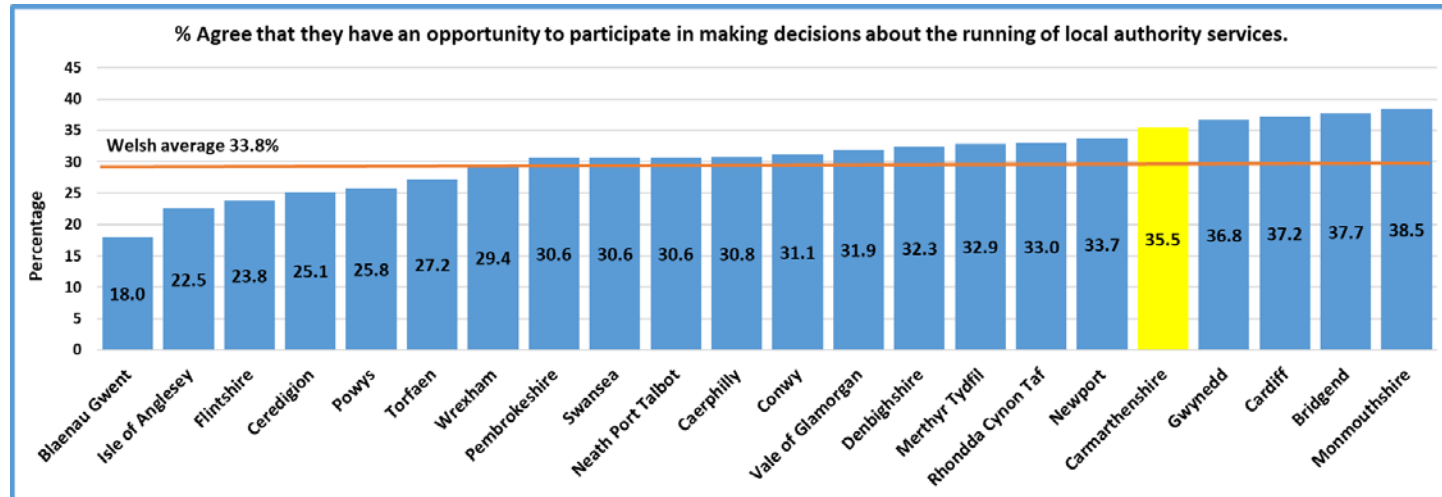


National Survey for Wales

The results of the National Survey for Wales provide a useful benchmark in terms of a sample of residents' views which can be compared across Wales. The 2021/22 headline results were published on 14th July 2022 with additional information being published by Welsh Government as and when available. This survey is based on around 12,000 telephone surveys carried out across Wales with over 500 interviewed in Carmarthenshire.

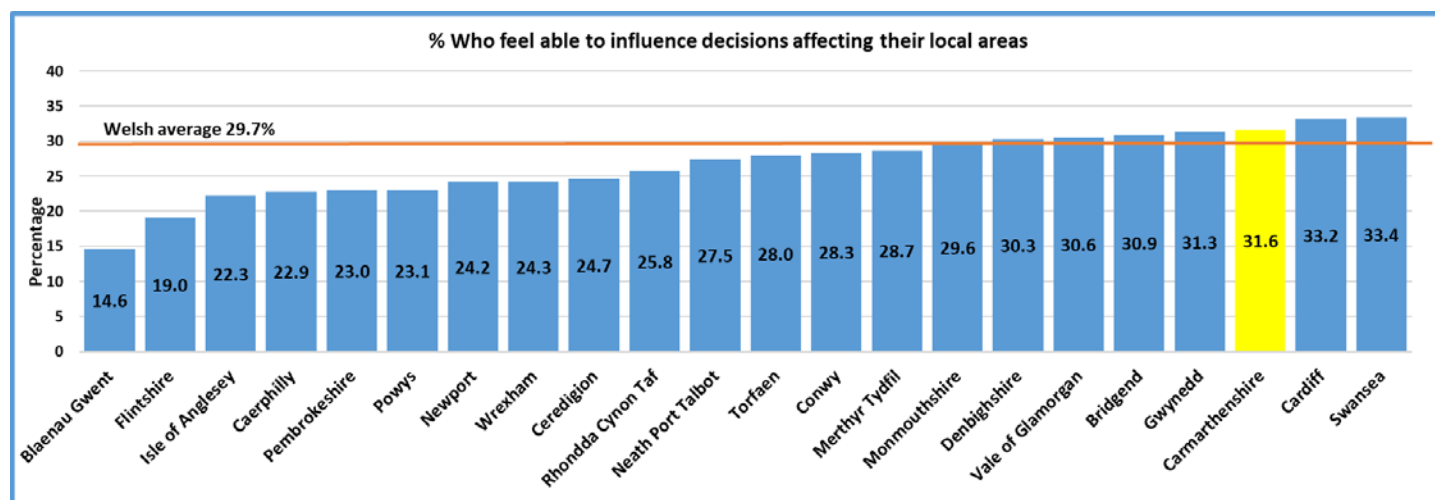
Since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020, the National Survey has taken place over the phone instead of face-to-face as previously. Some results from previous years are included to provide context, therefore care should be taken when making direct comparisons.

Local Authority Services



Source: National Survey for Wales 2021/22 – Sample size 12,050

When participants were asked about their opportunities to participate in making decisions about the running of their local services, more people gave a positive response than before the pandemic. **35.5% agreed in 2021/22, compared with just 9% in 2019/20**, this also increased across Wales with the Welsh average going from 17% to 33.8%



Source: National Survey for Wales 2021/22 – Sample size 12,100

When participants were asked *whether they felt able to influence decisions affecting their local areas*, more people gave a positive response than before the pandemic, with **31.6% agreeing in 2021/22, compared with just 18.8% in 2019/20**, this also increased across Wales with the Welsh average going from 18.8% to 29.7%

We have extracted the results currently available at Local Authority level and ranked the results for all 22 authorities from worst position (22nd) to best (1st) - See **Appendix 3**.

Please note that not all of these results are attributable to the Councils performance



[Link to Welsh Government's National Survey for Wales](#)

Regulatory Verdict

During the year our Regulators issued a number of reports and these are listed in **Appendix 4**



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



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



<https://careinspectorate.wales/>

This Annual Report looks at a wide range of evidence to make a self- assessment of how we are performing, and this is also an expectation of *The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021*.

Life is for living, let's start, live and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment



Well-being Objectives

1. Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.

2. Help children live healthy lifestyles.

3. Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners.

4. Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work & improving the lives of those living in poverty.

5. Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county.

6. Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes.

7. Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour & obesity).

8. Support community cohesion, resilience, and safety.

9. Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later.

10. Looking after the environment now and for the future.

11. Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity.

12. Promoting Welsh language and culture.

13. Better Governance and use of Resources

Cabinet Members and the Well-being Objectives

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



Cllr. Darren Price
LEADER

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES



Cllr. Linda Evans
DEPUTY LEADER

WBO4 - Tackling poverty

WBO6 - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & WELSH LANGUAGE



Cllr. Glynog Davies

WBO1 - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences

WBO2 – Help children live healthy lifestyles (Childhood Obesity)

WBO3 – Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners

WBO12 - Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



Cllr. Jane Tremlett

WBO1 - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences

WBO7 - Help people live healthy lives (Tackling risky behaviour and adult obesity)

WBO9 - Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years

CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, LEISURE, CULTURE & TOURISM



Cllr. Gareth John

WBO2 – Help children live healthy lifestyles (Childhood Obesity)

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO7 - Help people live healthy lives (Tackling risky behaviour and adult obesity)

WBO12 - Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES



Cllr. Alun Lenny

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS & PLANNING POLICY



Cllr. Ann Davies

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION & SUSTAINABILITY



Cllr. Aled Vaughan Owen

WBO7 - Help people live healthy lives (Tackling risky behaviour and adult obesity)

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATION & WORKFORCE



Cllr. Philip Hughes

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES



Cllr. Edward Thomas

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

WBO11 - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

Start Well





Well-being Objective 1

Start Well - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences

At 167, the number of children looked after remains one of the lowest in Wales

The impact of COVID-19 has placed significant pressures on families and as a result the demand for our services has risen. This coupled with the effects of staff absence and recruitment difficulties has created increased challenges. However, despite this the pandemic has also created opportunities and more innovative ways of working in order to increase engagement with those who were previously harder to reach. The number of children looked after remains one of the lowest in Wales, and outcomes achieved by looked after children and care leavers overall has remained positive.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Because giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing inequalities across the life course
- Early intervention is key to long term health and well-being. What happens during these early years has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status
- Because Looked After Children (LAC) are more likely to have been exposed to multiple risks associated with poor long-term outcomes before entering care.



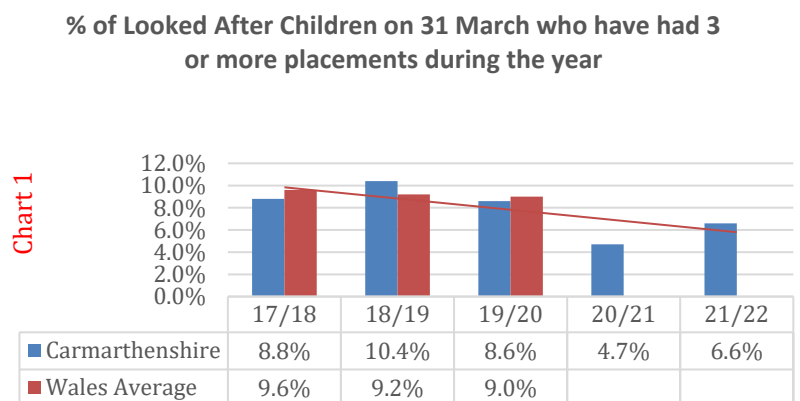
How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

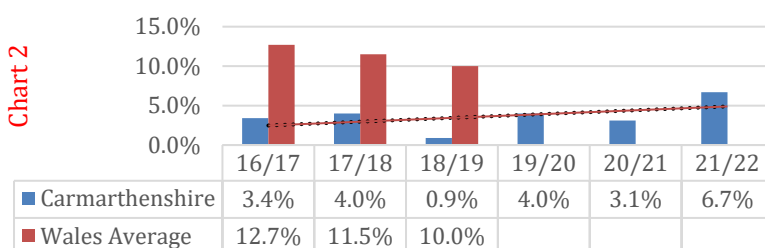
The % of children in care who had to move 3 or more times has reduced to **6.6%**



Of the 167 children looked after up to 31 March 2022, 11 children experienced 3 or more placement moves. This is a slightly higher result than last year of 4.7% with 7 of the 148 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. *(See Chart 1)*



% of Looked After Children on 31 March who have experienced 1 or more changes of school during the year




We have continued to work hard across teams to maintain placement stability, which remains excellent despite the added effects of COVID-19. We have successfully managed to maintain the majority of looked after children within county and in the same school which is important in helping improve outcomes. Seven children (out of 105) experienced a change of school during 2021/22. The increase in number compared to last year (which was 3 out of 96) can be partly attributed to sibling groups requiring a change of school. Stability is maintained wherever possible however this is not always in the best interest of a child e.g. distance to travel or child's academic needs not being met. *(See Chart 2).*

Our long-term aim is preventing the need for children needing to become looked after. There are robust systems in place to help achieve this including Accommodation Panel and provision of preventative services, focusing on good quality family network meetings. Early intervention working in partnership with families through care and support plans is key to achieving this.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Supporting Families

INTERNAL AUDIT	SAFEGUARDING - CHILDREN	ASSURANCE RATING						
	<p>During the year Internal Audit looked at Safeguarding referrals, to ensure that relevant policies and procedures have been established and relevant legislation is complied with.</p> <p>COMMENT</p> <p>An action plan to address identified issues was agreed and these are monitored on PIMS. a follow up review will take place in the next audit plan year.</p>	<table><tr><td>HIGH</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>ACCEPTABLE</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>LOW</td><td></td></tr></table>	HIGH		ACCEPTABLE	✓	LOW	
HIGH								
ACCEPTABLE	✓							
LOW								

- Children's services have seen significant increase in demand for services and support with the **number of contacts** to the department continuing to rise. However, it continues to perform well despite these added pressures.

Demand	2020-21	2021-22	Comment
Contacts	7644	9625	Increasing
Referrals	1854	1754	Decreasing
Total	9,498	11,379	Overall increase

- 90.2% of new assessments were completed within statutory timescales.
 - There continues to be **good evidence in assessments of the views of children and what life is like for them.**
 - As part of the assessment process social workers are speaking to both parents whether they are involved or not on a daily basis.
 - Increasingly assessments refer to the contribution that a family network meeting has made to the assessment in terms of identifying sources of support and has helped in devising a safety plan.
- The relationship-based approach to delivery of social work services to children and families incorporating systemic thinking and the principles of Signs of Safety is embedded in all childcare teams including the 0-25 disability team. Contributions from Adult Services has incorporated different perspectives about a family into pod discussions and consequent actions and plans.
- We continue to ensure regional thresholds are working effectively in respect of multi-agency child protection arrangements and in line with agreed policies and procedures that are designed to keep children safe and at the heart of practice and decision-making.
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic all vulnerable children have continued to receive support via the childcare teams and Corporate Parenting team to ensure they are safeguarded and able to reach their potential. Outcomes for looked after children and care leavers is also regularly monitored.
- The Flying Start App has continued to be integral in reaching families, providing key messages and links to support services, supporting engagement with families, especially those harder to reach. We have met with Welsh Government to evaluate the success of the App, especially during COVID-19, with the aim of it being rolled out to other local authorities as a tool to communicate and engage with families.
- !** The number of children on the **child protection** register increased last year – 102 (as at 31/3/22) compared to 78.
- !** The number of **children looked after** has also seen an increase this year, 167 (as at 31/3/22) compared with 148 at the same time last year. However, Carmarthenshire remains proportionately, amongst the lowest LAC population in Wales.

- Choice of available **foster carers** is something we continue to make steady progress on. We have recruited 12 new foster carers during 2021/22 which is an improvement as previously the pandemic had impacted on recruitment.
- We have continued to develop our services for **disabled children aged 0-25** since implementing the new structure during 2020/21 bringing together our statutory and non-statutory teams for children and young people.

External Regulatory Findings

REGULATORY REPORT



In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) published its [Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council](#)

In summary:

Children's Social Care Assurances

- *Approachable and supportive leaders*
- *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*

Additional Learning Needs

- The Council continues to support Welsh Government's (WG) Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation programme by supporting schools and a diverse range of stakeholders to implement all transformation plans with an ongoing schedule of work that is reviewed and updated regularly to capture updates from WG.

THE NEW ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS SYSTEM

The system for supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disability in Wales is changing.

From September 2021, Welsh Government has brought in a more flexible and responsive system of meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities to deliver a fully inclusive education system for the learners of Wales.

Key changes include:

- The term Additional Learning Needs (ALN) will replace the terms Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD).
- The current graduated system of Early Years/School Action, Early Years/School Action Plus and Statements is being replaced. All children and young people with an identified additional learning need (ALN) that requires additional learning provision (ALP) will have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) which will replace all other individual plans.
- There will be increased opportunities for children, young people, parents and carers to contribute to the creation and maintenance of IDPs through Person-centred Planning.

CASE STUDY

Process of admission to school:

Learner A is currently a foundation phase aged pupil attending a Carmarthenshire mainstream primary school. Prior to commencement at school, there was the need for a carefully planned transition package due to significant and severe physical and mobility needs.

Learner A was previously attending the local Ysgol Feithrin. It was apparent that Learner A was settled, progressing and thoroughly enjoying their time there. Learner A became known to the Inclusion Department via the Entry to Education system where the need for a carefully planned transition was identified. A person-centred planning meeting was arranged, where services known to the family worked in partnership with the family to plan for transition including representation from the Ysgol Feithrin, primary school, specialised health colleagues and the local authority's inclusion team. Key information was shared with all participants and the case was discussed using a clearly defined decision-making process, with Learner A being central to all discussions and decisions. It became apparent that Learner A was a sociable, confident and determined young child who would thrive within a mainstream primary setting, albeit with the correct level of support to ensure her safety and successful transition due to her complex additional needs. Following the person-centred planning meeting, the views of all attendees were captured in an Individual Development Plan (IDP) which contained the specific and achievable outcomes for Learner A along with the proposed level of provision. Carmarthenshire's Inclusion Panel then considered the IDP and agreed to issue and secure the proposed provision. Building adaptations soon followed in readiness for transition.

Progress in school? What have they achieved?

Learner A transitioned well into school. Progress is evident as Learner A feels included, all barriers have been removed and they can access all learning. Independence is encouraged whenever possible and specific support utilised, as necessary. Despite complex physical and mobility needs, Learner A has transitioned into a busy mainstream environment with her peers where she is happy, settled and progressing. Not feeling any different to all those around her thanks to a carefully planned transition and implementation of suitable inclusive provision - developed and agreed in partnership with all who know the learner best.

How did all participants, family and professionals, feel about the process?

All were extremely positive about the process. A new process to all with many commenting on the benefit of less bureaucracy. All being empowered to have an equal voice in the purposeful discussions and action planning around the learner. They felt that time was well spent and there were less barriers and 'loopholes' to overcome. Purposeful, efficient and effective.

⦿ Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Provision

The Department for Education and Children currently (21/22 academic year) has the following places across the county to facilitate specialist provision for pupils with Autism:

- Primary – 64
- Secondary - 84

! Since September 2021, there has been a significant increase in the demand for ASD provision and in the 2021/22 academic year there was a shortfall of 30 places which is an over capacity of 20%.

In recent months a significant increase in the demand for specialist ASD places for the 2022/23 academic year has been experienced by the department and the projected position for September 2022 is as follows:

- Primary – Required number of places / available - 20
- Secondary – Required number of places / available -10

There will also be a projected continued shortfall for the academic year of 23/24 of a minimum of 26 places as it currently stands which does not take into account incoming pupils and mainstream school pupils with identified needs over the 22-23 academic year.

The significant increase in demand experienced as a result of:

- Inward migration – families relocating to Carmarthenshire
- A significant increase in the number of pupils being diagnosed with the additional needs/ASD medical diagnosis which is recognised as a national trend. Health Board has increased the capacity of the neurodevelopmental team to process the backlog of ASD referrals resulting in an increase of ASD diagnosis. Across the last 3 years this has seen over a 100 children in Carmarthenshire with ASD diagnosis in our schools.
- School capacity - growth in local school population/building suitability
- Covid related disruption of well-established early identification processes
- Early identification processes re-established

The Local Authority has a legal obligation to make provision for these pupils by September 2022 and could face costly legal challenge that has the potential to cost up to £30,000 in legal fees per case. If need is not met locally this could result in the legal obligation to secure expensive out of county independent placements costing upwards of £150,000 for a given year.

Parents have already advised the Department that if specialist provision is not provided they will be taking legal action via SEN appeals processes.

- ⦿ Going forward we have been chosen as a “*pathfinder*” by Welsh Government for developing closer integration across childcare, health and early years education.

Childcare Provision

- ⦿ The 5th [Carmarthenshire Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27](#) has recently been drafted and has been forwarded to Welsh Government. It gives an overview of the childcare market and the impact of COVID-19. We consulted extensively and response rates were exceptional. Some key conclusions are:-
 - Since our last full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2017-2022) the number of childcare places and providers has increased and remained fairly stable despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - A number of childminders have de-registered since our last Assessment and we will need to recruit, train and support prospective childminders to fill these gaps.
 - Affordability of childcare for those families that cannot access funded childcare continues to be a significant issue.
 - Childcare is acting as a barrier to certain parents’ employability and is not sufficient for some of these parents’ needs
 - The extension of the Childcare Offer for 3 and 4 year-olds (the 30 hour free childcare offer) suggests an increased demand is expected for part time registered childcare.
- ⦿ Almost a third of children are living in poverty. See **Well-being Objective 4**

Is anyone better off?



JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021



OCTOBER '21 TO MARCH '22

The Welsh Government provided Carmarthenshire with £270,00 towards the Summer of Fun and £434,689 towards the Winter of Well-being to support children and families as part of their recovery from the pandemic and its restrictions and ensure that no family or child was left behind because of the pandemic. Approximately 15,000 children and young people have benefitted from these activities across the county from 0-25 years old. A significant package of support was provided to fund initiatives designed to help children, young people, families, and the services they use to recover and move forwards. Several organisations and services within Carmarthenshire received funding. These included Family Centres, Children's Centres, the Youth Service, Menter, Urdd, Actif, Pembrey Country Park and theatres where children and young people were able to access free activities that were designed to have a positive impact on their well-being. Some of the activities included holiday clubs, swimming sessions, mountain biking, horse riding lessons, soft play sessions, cookery classes, baby massage groups and outdoor play activities in rural areas. Workshops included music, writing and podcast development, along with trips to Folly Farm, soft play, trampoline park, botanical garden, and visits to see Father Christmas and Christmas shows.

Well-being and activity boxes were created and a range of state of the art sensory and IT equipment were purchased that continue to have a positive impact on children and young people.

Some of the parents and children who benefitted from the programme said:

"Just seeing my child enjoy himself, and I enjoyed being with other parents"

"It was amazing -Thank you. Just to see other parents and socialise was so good for my mental health"

"It's so cool to just play what I want"

"Can we come here every day?"



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Supporting Families		
1	We will continue to transform children's social work practice through a Relationship based approach that incorporates systemic thinking and the principles of Signs of Safety. <i>(PIMS ref. 15351)</i>	March 2023	John Fleming
2	We will continue effective management oversight & challenge of Assessments & Care & Support plans to ensure they are outcome focused, evidencing the voice of the child, & reflect the underpinning principles of the Social Services & Well-being Act (SSWBA). <i>(15352)</i>	March 2023	John Fleming
3	We will review and monitor the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy ensuring the council fulfils its Corporate Parenting role and that our looked after children and care leavers have the opportunity to reach their full potential. <i>(15368)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Robertshaw
4	We will continue to develop and deliver the 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 integrating services across the Children and Communities Grant and flexible funding opportunities with the Housing Support Grant. <i>(15356)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas
5	We will maintain the focus on increasing the range of placements to ensure placement stability and stability in education in respect of looked after children, including accommodation through the implementation of an in-house supported lodgings service. <i>(15375)</i>	March 2023	Jayne Meredith
6	We will continue to aim to reduce the number of children becoming Looked After and number of care proceedings in accordance with our LAC reduction target as agreed with Welsh Government, utilising appropriately Edge of Care (EOC), Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and Family Intervention Team (FIT). <i>(15364)</i>	March 2023	Jayne Meredith
B	Additional Learning Needs		
1	We will continue to ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs transformation programme. <i>(15453)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Williams
2	We will continue to support schools to develop their person centred planning approaches to identify need, deliver personalised additional learning provision and provide holistic integrated responses through multi-agency working. <i>(16126)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Williams
C	Childcare Provision		
1	We will work towards addressing the gaps identified in our fifth Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2022-27) and accompanying Action Plan and continue to promote and further develop Welsh medium childcare within the County. We will support the childcare sector to recover from the Pandemic and remain sustainable. <i>(15357)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas
2	We will share the findings of the new Play Sufficiency Assessment (2022-27) with key stakeholders and partners and agree and implement the 2022/2023 Action Plan to address the gaps identified to ensure that local children and young people have access to wide and varied play opportunities and experiences. <i>(15359)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 2

Start Well - Help children live healthy lifestyles

Levels of childhood obesity in Carmarthenshire are amongst the worst in Wales

The 2018/19 Child Measurement Programme data published in March 2021 shows that over 30% of children aged 4 to 5 in Carmarthenshire are overweight or obese, the 5th highest figure in Wales.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has interrupted data collection across Wales for the Public Health Wales - Child Measurement Programme. Data collection is now back on track and data will be reported for the 2021/22 academic year in April or May 2023.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Obesity causes ill health including diseases of the heart and circulation as well as some cancers and causes early death. There is an increased rate of Type 2 diabetes among obese children. Evidence shows that 80% of children who are obese at age 4-5 years remain obese into adulthood.
- One of the primary methods of tackling increasing levels of obesity in children is through encouraging them to engage in physical activity.
- We need to seek to build healthy relationships, families and communities. During school years, children experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) may display a heightened emotional state of anxiety and consequently be distracted from educational pursuits.
- The parent and carer survey, undertaken in 2021, that supports the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment, found that 61% of families value play more as a result of the pandemic with discussions in focus groups highlighting the important role of play in children's physical health, mental health, and well-being. However, 64% say COVID-19 has resulted in their family playing less.
- Living healthy lives allows children to fulfil their potential and meet education aspirations.
- Habits established early in life remain with people to allow them to play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

30.4% of children are overweight or obese (2018/19)

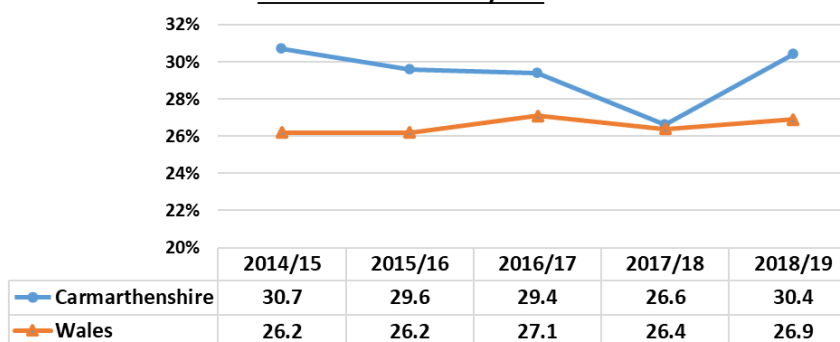
(This is an increase on the previous year of 26.6% 2017/18)



The programme of child measurements is carried out by [Public Health Wales](#) with children attending reception class in schools in Wales.

Carmarthenshire is the 5th worst county in Wales for levels of childhood obesity. The latest figures available showed a concerning spike in obesity in children, following a downward trend which had been seen since 2014/15. In 2018/19, almost a third of children aged 4 to 5 were overweight or obese. Our figure of 30.4% for this period showed a 4% rise on the previous year and was 3.5% higher than the Welsh average.

4 or 5 year olds overweight/obese trend over the last 5 years



Source: Public Health Wales

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Physical Activity

- ⦿ Leisure Services successfully secured an *All Wales Play Opportunity Grant* to re-develop and enhance a fully accessible playground offer at Pembrey Country Park.
- ⦿ We are developing a *School Sport* festival to coincide with the County hosting the start of Stage 5 of the Women's Tour of Britain Cycle race on Friday, 10 June 2022 from Pembrey Country Park to the top of the Black Mountains in Llangadog. The festival will aim to bring key partners and schools together to kick-start sport and physical activity participation.
- ⦿ In the Summer of 2021, our Actif Communities Team received £50,000 through Welsh Government's *Summer of Fun grant* to deliver a sustainable programme of free activities in the 10 most deprived areas of the county. The project was made up of 2 stages
 1. the delivery of sports activities in the communities every day throughout the summer holidays
 2. recruiting volunteers from the communities to continue these activities for future school holidays.The package of support included upskilling and mentoring, multiskill and cycling equipment and marketing support. The targeted approach saw over 2,000 children and young people take part in the activities with a legacy for the future
- ⦿ In January 2022, we received £46,000 through *Welsh Government's Winter of Well-being grant* to deliver on a range of projects sustainable including Cycling, Paddleboarding, Canoeing and Outdoor Pursuits, SENSEsport, Actif Restart and Physical Literacy.
- ⦿ The Young Ambassador Scheme continues to be a success in 96% of schools across the county developing children and young people's leadership skills, confidence and providing over 50,000 participations in sport and physical activity sessions.
- ⦿ We implemented a physical activity intervention project targeting foundation phased aged pupils within 10 primary schools who are on the highest percentage of Free School Meals. The aim of the project is to develop competency within a child's physical skill level ensuring they have the confidence and motivation from a young age, for a lifelong participation in sport and physical activity.
- ⦿ Ready Set Ride project - 9 Additional Learning Needs Units within Primary Schools have received equipment, training and ongoing support from our Actif Communities Team to provide accessible inclusive opportunities for all pupils to develop confidence when on a bike and to progress from a balance bike to a pedal bike.
- ⦿ Since September 2021 the Actif Communities Team have implemented a physical activity intervention project targeting foundation phase aged pupils within 10 primary schools who are on the highest percentage of Free School Meals. The aim of the project is to develop competency within a child's physical skill level ensuring they have the confidence and motivation from a young age, for a lifelong participation in sport and physical activity.



Mental Health

- ⦿ We have been supporting Hywel Dda University Health Board's Whole School Approach to Mental Health (WSA to MH) supporting 8 schools to complete Phase 1 of the Pilot Project.
- ⦿ A Task & Finish Group has been established in order to produce an Anti-Bullying Toolkit for local schools. The toolkit will promote and support the Mental & Emotional Health of school pupils.
- ⦿ Throughout the year the Scheme has raised awareness to a number of National Mental Health Campaigns and provided schools with a set of Educational and Generic resources to support these campaigns.
- ⦿ During the year we have arranged a series of courses for school staff to address Mental Health issues amongst our learners including; Improving the Mental Health & Well-being of LGBTQ+ Children & Young People; Positive Body Image & Self Esteem; Strategies to Support an Anxious Young Person and Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Healthy Eating

- ⦿ The Healthy Schools Scheme (HSS) is used as a platform to remind schools of the current *Healthy Eating Regulations* e.g. informing schools of obvious breaches to the Statutory Regulations such as rewarding pupils with unhealthy treats and provide schools with further statutory guidance.
- ⦿ School Catering have responded well to new ways of working because of COVID-19 and have continued to provide a hot meal service in all schools. The service continues to put food safety and allergens compliance as a high priority.
- ⦿ The School Catering and Breakfast Club Service experienced significant staffing issues at times throughout the year. School kitchens were temporarily closed if not enough staff could be deployed to ensure safe operations.

Raising Awareness

- ⦿ We raised awareness of a range of campaigns during the year including National Fitness Day; Outdoor Awareness Month; Outdoor Classroom Day; Bike to School Week; Walk to School Week and Active Million Minutes Campaign; World Mental Health Day; Children's Mental Health Week; Stress Awareness Month; Anti Bullying Week; The Big Lunch; Eat Like a Champ; BNF's Healthy Eating Week; National Obesity Awareness Week and Eating disorders week.
- ⦿ In relation to the School Health Research Network Pupil Health & Well-being Survey, 11 out of the 12 Secondary Schools in Carmarthenshire registered with the Network and completed the Surveys. All 11 of these Secondary Schools also completed the School Environment Questionnaire.

Flying Start

- ⦿ **Flying start** have continued collaborative work providing a holistic approach to support families sharing ideas and resources. The *Flying Start App* has been pivotal in delivering services, sharing key messages, and providing information to families. With covid restrictions still in place **Flying Start** went out into the local community to see families over the summer. Working in partnership with Communities for Work Plus, legacy, Fusion, Activ and Carmarthenshire Libraries outdoor play sessions took place in local parks. Being able to see families face to face was really beneficial in the promotion of all services on offer, and since restrictions have now eased FS are now able to provide more face-to-face one to one support within the home or at venues (covid compliant).

Early Years Transformation Programme

- ⦿ Working with regional partners a Maternity and Early Years Strategy is being developed. It sets out how we intend to provide better integrated, more effective, and more efficient Maternity and Early Years services for thousands of families in West Wales.
- ⦿ The Cwm Gwendraeth Integrated team is now firmly established and is identifying families in need as early as possible via the Midwifery and Health Visiting service. Families are referred to the Family Support Workers for 1:1 support and are sign-posted to the various groups that are available.

LEARNING IN THE OUTDOORS

The use of outdoor spaces to enrich curriculum delivery and support the well-being of all learners continues to be a priority across all schools in Carmarthenshire. Accessing the outdoors to gain a deeper connection and understanding of their local environment provides all learners with the opportunity to become active members within their community.



Several community garden initiatives and food schemes are underway. Two Carmarthenshire Schools, Llandeilo Primary School and Ysgol Bro Banw are currently running the Welsh Government funded 'Big Bocs Bwyd' scheme. This food share model operates a 'pay as you feel' system which is available to families within the local area. An additional two schools, Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant and Ysgol Trimsaran have also recently secured funding for this programme.



As a part of this programme each school provides nutritional guidance and recipe cards for families. The learners experience practical cooking sessions where they explore new recipes which they share with their families. This is an excellent method of promoting healthy eating and increasing understanding of the nutritional value of foods.

<https://gov.wales/welsh-government-funding-roll-out-award-winning-food-project-valleys-schools>

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Physical activity		
1	Help children live healthy lifestyles focussing on our work with schools and young people in the community	March 2023	Ian Jones
2	To develop a new model for a County-wide residential and non-residential outdoor education offer (15073)	June 2022	Ian Jones
3	We will continue to increase the level of physical activity in schools by developing schemes such as the Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools Project, our annual Pedometer Challenge and continue to embed the Food & Fitness Health topic within Schools. (15102)	March 2023	Louise Morgan
B	Mental Health		
1	We will continue to support schools in their implementation of the Mental & Emotional Health and Well-being Health topic including Anti-bullying strategies and healthy coping mechanisms such as mindfulness and Speaker. (15443)	March 2023	Louise Morgan
2	Continue to develop and use a range of Strategies, such as the Equity Strategy, to ensure the emotional wellbeing and mental health of all learners. (15427)	March 2023	Aeron Rees
C	Healthy Eating		
1	We shall continue to ensure that schools are abiding by the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards & Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013. (15419)	March 2023	Louise Morgan
2	Support with reviews relating to FSM Provision and Tackling Poverty (to include School Holiday Enrichment Programme). (15382)	March 2023	Helen Bailey
D	Raise Awareness		
1	We will continue to promote and raise awareness to campaigns specific to healthy eating, physical activity and mental health and promote the School Health Research Network. (15443)	March 2023	Louise Morgan



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 3

Start Well - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners

Despite the extreme challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic we have worked effectively as one Education and Children's Services team to ensure that our children and young people were successfully supported to access their education and all the services they required to ensure achievement and outcomes remained positive.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ We want all of our children and young people to have the best possible start in life by supporting them to gain the skills and knowledge they need to lead happy, healthy, fulfilling lives.
- ⊙ We want to improve outcomes for all ages through lifelong learning, to enable them to thrive in 21st Century living and the world of work.
- ⊙ Research by *The Institute of Education* suggests that attending a good pre-school and primary school can have more impact on children's academic progress than their gender or family background (Taggart, 2015).
- ⊙ Our service remains committed to both the principles and priorities as outlined in the Welsh Government's most recent strategic document [Education in Wales: Our National Mission](#).
- ⊙ Reducing the number of NEET young people reduces the effects of poverty and the wider cost to society of support services, reliance on benefits and offending.
- ⊙ It is essential to maximise the life opportunities of children, ensuring that as many young people as possible are able to progress to school 6th forms, Further Education Colleges, apprenticeships, training provision or work.
- ⊙ It enables young people to contribute positively to their local communities.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

367.2 is the average score (best 9 exam results) for Year 11 pupils 2019/20 (2018/19 Academic Year)



6th highest in Wales
Source: StatsWales



93.9% Attendance at Primary Schools

93.5% Attendance at Secondary Schools
Source: StatsWales

95%

are satisfied with their child's primary school

(Up on the previous year of 84%)

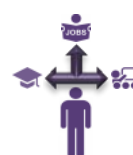
89% in Wales

Source: National Survey for Wales



1.1% year 11 pupils & **2.7%** year 13 pupils are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

(Previous year - Yr 11: **1.8%** & Yr 13: **3.5%**)



- ⊙ No results for the **Education Attainment or Attendance rates** have been published since 2019/20 (2018/19 Academic Year) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as students were unable to sit final exams. Instead, their grades reflect predicted results based on coursework and mock examination results. Results by County were not published and would not be comparable to previous years if known. Summer exams 2022 are due to go ahead as scheduled.
- ⊙ **95%** are **satisfied with their child's Primary School** according to the most recently available National Survey for Wales data (2019/20).
- ⊙ The % of Year 11 and Year 13 pupils that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) have improved in the last year. With Year 11 pupils reducing from 1.8% (32/1,181) to 1.1% (21/1,885) and Year 13 reducing from 3.5% (23/652) to 2.7% (18/678). Work continues to address leavers not in education, employment or training with a particular focus on projects previously funded by the EU. The

Youth Support Service have staff identified to support young people in all secondary schools and in Post 16 community outreach settings. Work continues to identify replacement funding for ESF projects and we are liaising closely with Welsh Government on this matter.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Improvement in pupil and young people progress, wellbeing and outcomes

- Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020-21 academic year's assessment and qualification process has been different to previous years with summer examinations cancelled. Instead, a new system was designed and delivered by schools and colleges based on a range of assessment evidence on which to determine a learner's grade. Final results show that over a quarter (28.7%) of GCSE students earned A*-A grades nationally. Almost three quarters (73.6%) received A*-C grades, and overall 98.5% of students passed their GCSEs with grades of A*-G. Welsh Government did not publish local authority level results, as these could not be compared to previous years, and instructed local authorities not to aggregate schools data to county level. Summer 2021-22 exams are due to go ahead as scheduled.
- At A Level, a total of 99.1% of A level students in Wales achieved A* - E grades and 21.3% of learners receiving an A* grade. At AS level, 37.1% of all grades awarded were A in Wales this year, with 96.7% of candidates achieving A - E grades.

Address low School Attendance

- Due to the pandemic, annual school attendance data for academic year 2020-21 was not collected or published.

An excellent school in the right place

- Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils have formed a formal partnership, 'Partneriaeth', to deliver services to schools in the new region. There is a new Legal Agreement which outlines the role of the new Consortium, how the budget and business plan are to be developed and governance arrangements. The new Staffing Structure as agreed by the Joint Committee has been completed and a Lead Officer appointed. Initially the consortium will focus on delivery of high-quality professional development to support curriculum reform and leadership. The work of the consortium is informed and monitored by regular meetings between key Local Authority and Partneriaeth (LA&P) officers. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities between LA&P and who is best placed to lead on an initiative is identified. There is a new website and regular communication with schools. Early indications are that the new provision is far more focused and responsive to local needs.
- We are currently undertaking a review of our Modernising Education Programme. However the current agreed programme continues and we have recently completed projects at [Ysgol Rhys Prichard](#), [Ysgol Pum Heol](#) and [Ysgol Llangadog](#) with on-site progress at Ysgol y Castell and Ysgol Gorslas. Work on [Ysgol Pembrey](#) has commenced in January 2022.
- Construction costs are experiencing an unprecedented spike and it is causing a significant challenge to the deliverability of the Modernising Education Programme with schemes on site and in development.
- The Environment Department have already been engaged and worked up schemes across five school sites:
 - Burry Port Community School (Primary)
 - Y Bedol CP School (Primary)
 - Ysgol Heol Goffa (Special)
 - Llangennech CP School (Primary)
 - Ysgol Glanymor (Secondary)

The total budget cost to carry out these urgent works for September 2022 is £1.76 million. Given that the budget costs are significant a virement approval is necessary.

Workforce development and succession planning

- Educational support advisers work routinely alongside our headteachers, their senior leadership teams, teaching and support staff, ensuring that they have a robust understanding of the strengths of their schools and the areas in need of further focus or development. Support provided is tailored to the needs of the school and we ensure additional capacity for all schools requiring more regular input. The team monitors progress alongside senior leaders, ensuring suitable support; this has become increasingly possible as COVID-19 restrictions have eased.

- ⦿ The department's collegiate approach to school improvement, as well as the strategic focus group approach has ensured a more efficient use of time and an improved focus on the challenges that schools are addressing, informing the services' professional learning programme. The work of the department has been updated this term, aligning to the Education and Children's Services 10-year plan and to the outcomes of the headteachers' survey and the headteacher Well-being Charter consultations. In addition, the department remains focussed on inspiring leaders for the future, succession planning and upskilling through a comprehensive professional development programme which complements nationally delivered strategies. This programme is well underway however additional marketing of this opportunity is still needed in order to attract further participants.
 - ⦿ Revised recruitment processes are robust and more accurately assess candidates' competencies, skills and experiences. These expectations are explicitly shared through our development programme and this has been valued by our participating heads of the future.
 - ⦿ Feedback from the updated approach to supporting school governors is extremely positive. Regular online meetings are valued and are enhancing leadership and governance skills across a range of strategic, operational and COVID-19 related matters.
 - ⦿ Leaders have responded robustly to requests from schools to address staff wellbeing and constructed a wellbeing charter tackling workload and work life balance of our education workforce. Related actions underpin departmental business planning.
- ! Due to the fall out of the pandemic there is a national shortage of teachers.

The development of Welsh in all our services

- ⦿ Following public consultation held in Autumn 2021 we have produced a revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). This has been submitted to Welsh Government for approval. The WESP will become operational from 1 September 2022.
- ⦿ We are increasing the number of teachers and support staff who can confidently teach through the medium of Welsh. Training courses across all linguistic levels as well as for Gloywi Iaith are offered to all schools. A language audit gives detailed information for school staff language levels and so can be targeted for specific language courses. On-line courses and language learning coupled with Pedagogy in the Foundation Phase, are proving to be a positive way of implementing Welsh language learning.

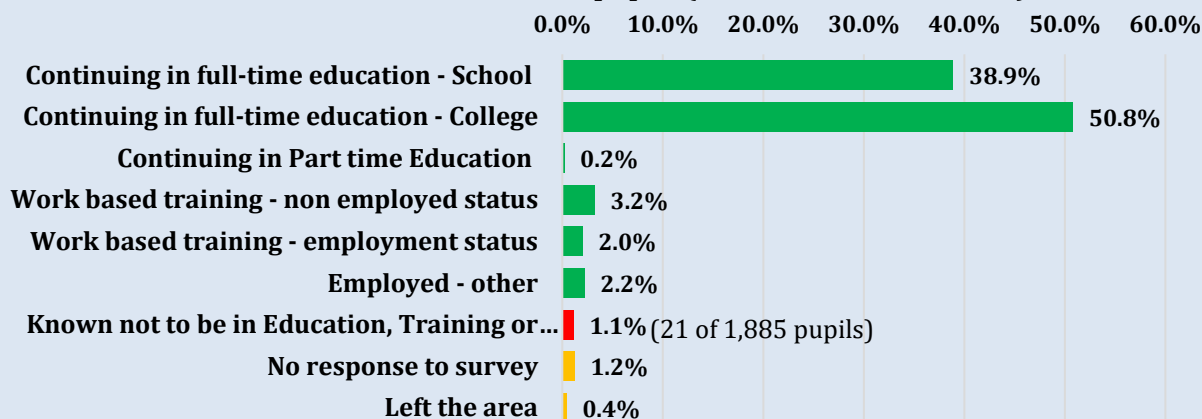
Focus on skills demands and employability to ensure that local and regional demands are met

- ⦿ We have continued engaging with partners and stakeholders over the design of the new curriculum. We are undertaking a project on the theme of 'Decolonising the Curriculum' in partnership with Swansea University's Dr Kirsti Bohata who is head of the National Centre for Writing on Wales in English (CREW). This project is focussing on different aspects of Carmarthenshire Learners' experience of and understanding of concepts including 'identity' and 'over-population' in relation to the notion of decolonisation. Schools will provide their feedback during the summer term. We liaised with the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership which are producing their skills barometer in February 2022, with a view to working with schools to identify how we can develop pathways and courses that meet the skills and competences required by the 8 Regional industry and business development areas. With the publication of the Skills Barometer we have begun our own scoping exercise of the pathways and experiences offered in our schools and supported by us through an [online survey](#) and face to face discussions. We will formulate a plan emanating from this.

Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

- ⦿ The Youth Engagement and Progressions Framework continues to be implemented in line with Welsh Government Guidance, which contributes to improved service outcomes in terms of more effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET. Of the outcomes known to us, 98.9% of pupils remained in education, employment or training.

Destination data for Carmarthenshire Y11 pupils (Academic Year 2020-21)

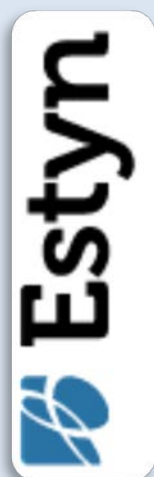


European Social Fund projects

- ⦿ We continue to explore alternative funding sources to replace European Social Funded projects, developing funding bids. The Chair of the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee wrote to Welsh Government to raise concerns about the delivery of NEET work into the future. Welsh Government responded that they are still awaiting the UK Government's plans to replace EU funding.

REGULATORY REPORT

Assurance and Risk Assessment – Emerging Risks and Next Steps (3 February 2022)



Assurances:

- Leaders have a good understanding of issues in the authority including around schools causing concern.
- Leaders maintained the good communication between departments throughout the pandemic to ensure that support for schools and other providers was available quickly.
- A substantial number of primary schools have been removed from Estyn Review.
- Pre-inspection reports show that the authority generally knows its schools well.
- Local Authority is proactive in increasing Welsh medium provision in the primary sector.
- Local Authority officers appear to have suitable plans in place to deal with the issues regarding leadership of smaller schools, for example by federating or merging them.
- The authority has supported schools and providers to understand and embed the new Additional Learning Needs Act.
- Effective scrutiny arrangements.

Concerns:

- There are a very few primary schools in a statutory category.
- With the local authority leaving ERW, there is uncertainty over some arrangements with Partneriaeth.
- Recruiting headteachers to lead a few primary schools is causing concern.
- Although overall, the number of pupils who did not progress from year 10 to 11 in Carmarthenshire is slightly below the national average for the last two years, the rates of pupils who cannot be matched to a destination are high in a minority of schools over the last two years.
- Budget balances in schools

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT



A review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities. The report outlines 20 recommendations. At Cabinet on the 31 January 2022 the recommendations of the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group to review Carmarthenshire's Education Admissions Policy was approved.

Sustainable School Gardens

School gardens and community connections are also gaining momentum across Carmarthenshire. An excellent example of working with the wider community and connecting with organisations such as Incredible Edibles has been witnessed at Ysgol Pembrey. The school has developed a productive and sustainable garden which includes numerous raised beds and a well-stocked polytunnel. The success of the garden is a result of all learners taking part in the planting, watering and weeding. A whole school programme of maintenance and management with delicious produce made available for the local community.



Ysgol Bro Dinefwr has established an impressive outdoor learning space. The school has a multi-purpose outdoor learning area to facilitate hands-on learning and enable delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. They have worked closely with organisations, local businesses and charities on a number of projects including a large outdoor learning area, an outdoor performance area and a peace garden.

Angharad, Year 13 pupil, *"I think, especially in light of the growing environmental movement that our age group has been so involved in, it's really nice to have something where we have a real sense of urgency, and we can be involved on lots of different levels."*

Cerys, Year 12, *"It's a matter of our lives now. I think it should be important to everyone, and this is why we've started the outdoor learning area, so that we can protect the environment and try and combat climate change."*

Chloe, Year 9, *"This whole garden, it's supposed to focus on the environment and appreciating the world around us and I think it brings that back home to pupils in the school - because to have this area where it's full of natural beauty, it makes us appreciate what we've got here."*





Ysgolion Awyr Agored
Sir Gaerfyrddin
Carmarthenshire
Outdoor Schools

[Climate change: Carmarthenshire school's zero-carbon secondary bid - BBC News](#)



Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools

The Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools Network (CODS) launched its programme for 2022-23 in late March as a part of Outdoor Learning Week, Wales. The CODS programme offers all Carmarthenshire schools the opportunity to share good practice, resources and work collaboratively. A professional dialogue to ensure all schools are supported and confident to develop purposeful learning in the outdoors. The aim of the network is to offer opportunities for all learners to appreciate and connect with nature and become ethical and informed citizens of today and the future. A group of six Carmarthenshire schools are currently working in strong partnership with Natural Resources Wales and the Brechfa Windfarm Company. All six schools visit the Brechfa Forest site each term. As a result of this project the schools are currently developing a range of curriculum resources which will be available in September 2022.

Climate Action Consultation Group

The Climate Action Consultation Group was launched in November 2021 during the week of COP26. The group was formed to action an eight-point Climate Action Manifesto which was developed as part of the global citizenship programme, Walk the Global Walk. The Climate Action Manifesto was approved unanimously by the full Executive Board in October 2021. A formal consultation meeting takes place each term which offers an opportunity for the group, invited guests, local councillors and council officers to discuss issues relating to climate change and implement their manifesto's recommendations. The consultation group meetings are chaired by the students and ensures their thoughts and concerns on climate issues are shared across a broad platform. At the last meeting students met with Deputy Minister for Climate Change Lee Waters to highlight how we can reduce the use of single use plastics. Future discussions will include reducing food waste in schools, climate change gardening and sustainable school transport initiatives. [News Article](#)

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Improvement in pupil and young people progress, wellbeing and outcomes (Abbrev.)		
1	Considering the impact of COVID 19, we will support our schools to ensure the wellbeing and progress of all learners, including those who are vulnerable, eligible for free school meals or looked after. (15459)	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
2	We will base a new suite of measures based on the on the new WG measures when published. (15415)	March 2023	tbc
B	Address low School Attendance		
1	Improve attendance reporting systems to enable challenge to schools. (16127)	March 2023	Allan Carter
C	An excellent school in the right place		
1	We will review the MEP, bearing in mind COVID-19 implications, and initiate a new programme. (14998)	March 2023	Sara Griffiths
D	Workforce development and succession planning		
1	We will ensure greater headteacher engagement in collaborating on our strategic development and review of progress. (16128)	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
2	Further strengthen our approach to developing the 'self-improving' school, facilitating collaboration and sharing effective practice, basing our approach on the principles of a school as a learning organisation. (16129)	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
3	Develop a new recruitment drive with assistance from HR and Communications colleagues in order to attract more applicants for the current vacancies, this will form a key part of the new Workforce Strategy being developed for the Council. (16130)	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
E	The development of Welsh in all our services		
1	Endeavour to implement a purposeful and robust 10 year WESP for all stakeholders. (15434)	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
2	We will work with the County's schools to move them along the Welsh language continuum and also ensure that individual pupils within relevant schools are provided with opportunities to continue with their Welsh medium education throughout all key stages. (15433)	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
3	We will increase the number of teachers and support staff who can confidently teach through the medium of Welsh. (15032)	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
F	Focus on skills demands and employability to ensure that local and regional demands are met		
1	We will continue with the design of the Carmarthenshire Curriculum in partnership with schools and other providers, framed within the national context. We will pursue opportunities to link corporate and economic strategy with the design of the new curriculum (15424)	March 2023	Aeron Rees
2	We will dovetail local opportunities for curriculum enrichment and extension with the national architecture with a view towards developing a Carmarthenshire Learner Offer. (15425)	March 2023	Aeron Rees
G	Youth Engagement and Progression Framework		
1	We will continue to use the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and the Vulnerability Assessment Profile as a means of effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET/at risk of NEET. (15408)	March 2023	Gill Adams
H	European Social Fund projects		
1	We will ensure continuation of planning and delivery of the local elements of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects. (15441)	March 2023	Gill Adams



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective

Live Well



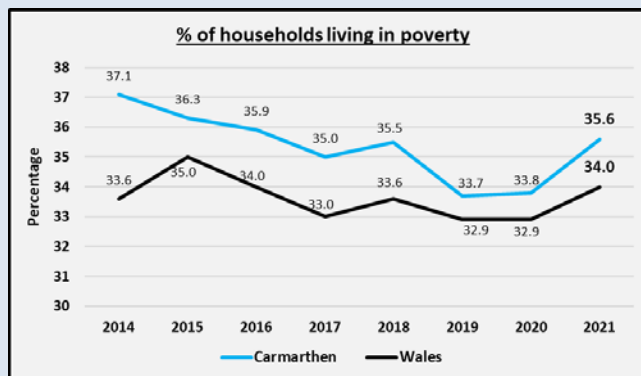


Well-being Objective 4

Live Well - Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work and improving the lives of those living in poverty

The number of households in Carmarthenshire living in poverty has increased

During 2021, **29,444** households in Carmarthenshire were classed as living in poverty, this is an increase on the previous year of 27,691.
In work poverty is an increasingly common problem.



Poverty is defined as when a "household income is less than 60% of the GB median income" (in 2021 less than £19,642)

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⦿ Poverty and deprivation have serious detrimental effects, impacting across all aspects of well-being.
- ⦿ It limits the opportunities and prospects for children and young people and damages the quality of life for all. The UN report [Leaving no one behind](#) outlines the imperative of inclusive development.
- ⦿ Poverty is too often an intergenerational experience which poses a significant threat to experiencing positive well-being both now, and in the future.
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire has 5 areas within the most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Wales (there are 191 in this category - that is within the 10% most deprived). [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation \(WIMD 2019\) - Stats Wales](#)
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire is now seeing its highest levels of child poverty in recent years (31.3%), which is a similar pattern across Wales. [UK Government Children in low income families \(March 2021\)](#)



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

35.6% of households are living in poverty



Previously 34% (2020)
Source: CACI Paycheck

50.5% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented from becoming homeless
Previous year 46.4%



17.9% gap in the results of pupils receiving Free School Meals and those who don't (2019/20)
(19.7% gap in the previous year – 2018/19)

Source: Stats Wales



12% of households are living in material deprivation (2021/22)
Reduced from previous year 11.3% (2019/20)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Households Living in Poverty

- ⦿ Well over a third (35.6% or 29,444) of our households are living in poverty which is a concern and has increased in the last year, this is the 8th highest % in Wales and above the Welsh average of 34%. 24 wards exhibit rates higher than the Carmarthenshire average, suggesting that the effects of poverty are not felt equally across the county. As food prices, energy bills and general costs continue to rise across the UK it is becoming harder for households to stay above the poverty line. Wages are not rising to meet the extra costs. This means that more working households are experiencing poverty. This has been compounded by the impact of Covid on job losses particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector. The effects of the pandemic were not felt equally by all, evidence suggested that the effects are felt disproportionately by the younger generation and those from low-income households.

Child Poverty

- 30.6% of children in Wales are living in poverty, an increase of 1.6% over the last five years. The figures for Carmarthenshire show a 2% increase over the same time period, with 31.3% of children living in poverty.
- This is the 10th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint fifth highest rate of change over the last five years.
- At a Wales level, 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 17% of children in poverty live in households where all adults are in work, an increase of 5% from 12% over the last ten years.

Homelessness Prevention

- As a result of reviewing operational practices (listed below), we have adopted a new approach to withdrawn cases, better reflecting the positive outcomes for applicants. We have ensured that staff are reminded of the appropriate sections to end our duties, so we can better capture this successful preventative work we are achieving. Development of a Power Business Intelligence (BI) Dashboard will allow us to better manage and analyse cases within each duty. The impact of applying our new way of working during the year shows an improvement from stand-alone Quarter 1 performance of 43.16% to 52.73% in the last quarter of the year, this giving a cumulative annual result of 50.5%. Steps we have taken include:
 - Reviewing our first point of contact service and developing a Housing Hwb to provide early homelessness prevention advice and assistance.
 - Analysing who presents to us, from where and why, in order to identify what support we need to provide and what training staff may need to be competent and comfortable with responding to challenging people and cases.
 - Reviewing our practices to ensure resources are in the right place to respond to the increased casework.
 - Reviewing how we utilise the existing legislation and allocations policy to help prevent homelessness as quickly as we can, looking to other councils for best practice.
 - Further develop and automate the Power Business Intelligence Dashboard to enable to team leaders to regularly monitor performance.
 - Continue to monitor and ensure staff utilise the appropriate duty for prevention.

Gap in exam results for pupils receiving Free School Meals and those who do not

- The gap between exam results for pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM) and those who don't (Non-FSM) has reduced by 1.8 percentage points but remains the 7th smallest gap in Wales.
The most recent data available for this measure is 2019/20 (2018/2019 Academic Year)
- Free school meal eligibility has increased markedly in Carmarthenshire over the last five years from 16% in academic years 2016/17 to 20% in academic years 2020/21. The largest increase of 3% was seen between 2019/20 and 2020/21. This is 1% above the average for South West and Mid Wales and 1% lower than the Welsh average.

Living in material deprivation

- The 2021/22 National Survey for Wales showed that **12%** of participating households in Carmarthenshire were classed as **living in material deprivation***, this is above the Welsh average of 11.3% and an increase on the previous result of 11.3%.
**Material deprivation refers to the inability for individuals or households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time, irrespective of people's preferences with respect to these items.*
- Five of Carmarthenshire's 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](#).

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Review of our approach to Tackling Poverty

- ⦿ Work on developing the Council's *tackling poverty plan* has progressed with a number of cross-service sessions held to improve alignment and understanding of support services the Council currently provides. This has led to greater cross-service understanding and collaboration and identification of areas for further development in terms of a holistic Council response whilst also working with a range of external partners.
- ⦿ This will be a key priority for the Council moving forward with further development of cross-service working in order to streamline access to support services and targeting of specific interventions and campaigns based on identified need within the county.

Preventing poverty

- ⦿ We have continued to develop and deliver early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people and families. Families First (FF) projects have been providing a broad range of support to families/young people in a variety of locations including schools, office/community basis and families' homes as well as continuing to provide support virtually:
 - 6792 individuals supported from the FF programme, of which 4876 (72%) were new individuals.
 - 3569 families supported from the FF programme, of which 2683 (75%) were new families (as a result of working with people on a one-to-one basis)
- ⦿ During the year we have trialled the development of a Hwb Advisor model working through the Council's Customer Service and Contact Centres. We will be looking to further develop and enhance this provision as we aim to work towards providing a holistic support service across all Council services. The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. For tackling poverty since May 2021 when the staff were appointed, we have helped and advised a total of 528 cases.
- ⦿ 'The Council's website has been updated to provide a range of information and advice to residents as part of the national [Claim What's Yours](#) campaign. The content aims to make it easier for residents to know what support is available with an option to self-refer for further advice. This will form part of future campaigns to raise awareness of support and advice available.



The Ombudsman published his first ever own initiative investigation into homelessness review processes in Wales [Homelessness Reviewed: An Open door to positive change](#). We were one of three councils in the sample report. The review identified some concerns and examples of good practice.

- ⦿ An action plan response to the Ombudsman's recommendations for improvement has been prepared and will be implemented as part of further development within the service.
- ⦿ The Front of House '*Housing Hwb*' has been implemented and new priorities have been identified around Homeless Prevention as part of the Housing Support Programme Strategy which replaces the Homelessness Strategy.
- ⦿ As an employer we are committed to guaranteeing the equivalent of the 'real living wage' and our lowest paid employees continue to receive the equivalent of the Real Living Wage which is currently £9.90 per hour. We have achieved this via the payment of a supplement – the Real Living Wage Supplement. This means that all employees, regardless of whether they are over the statutory age of 25, are paid at a minimum of the voluntary Real Living wage rate. We also pay supplements for weekend working (8%) and term only working (4%) which increase the pay of mainly lower paid employees. This means that, with the above-mentioned supplements, many of our lower graded posts now attract a total remuneration higher than the Real Living Wage of £9.90 per hour.

Helping people into work

- ⦿ The number of adults receiving support through Communities 4 Work Programmes during 2021/22 is back to pre-COVID figures with over 1,000 adults receiving either employability or digital inclusion support. All (100%) of the participating adults felt more positive with improved confidence about seeking work or more confident in using a computer and gained IT skills.
- ⦿ 271 accredited qualifications were achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Communities 4 Work programmes during 2021/22.

Improving the lives of those living in poverty

PRE-TENANCY SUPPORT

- ⦿ For the financial year April 2021/2022, we have **supported 438 new tenants** (helping with **£200k+ supported savings**). This is higher than the previous year due to the Covid restrictions that were in place for 2020/21.
 - Pre-Tenancy Team Staff helped with income maximisation and completing several different benefit applications that financially impacted the tenants.
 - We are trusted partners to apply for grants for white goods, off grid fuel and Emergency Assistance Payments.
 - We issue Foodbank vouchers and make referrals as required for more complex cases.
- ⦿ Pre-Tenancy support has been expanded into the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and we have also supported 103 new tenancies in the PRS, through Housing Support Grant funding. Our PRS Pre-Tenancy Officer now sits 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 are also in the process of re-starting our Pre-Tenancy training courses now that COVID-19 restrictions are being relaxed. As well as this, we are working in partnership with other teams such as Pre-Tenancy training for foster cares and their placements.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO CLAIM ALL THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO

- ⦿ Since November 2021 we have administered the winter fuel support scheme and processed 9,480 cases and paid out £3,409,200.
- ⦿ We have paid out £397,584 of discretionary housing payments and up to mid-March received 10,754 self-isolation support payments applications and paid out over £4 million.
- ⦿ We are processing the cost-of-living payments to approximately 63,000 Carmarthenshire households with the value of around £9.5 million to support residents of Carmarthenshire during these challenging times.
- ⦿ Whilst processing claims and dealing with customer enquires housing benefit staff are often able to identify if people need to be referred for more detailed benefit maximisation advice, personal budgeting or debt advice. They will refer individuals for support or signpost to grants and benefits.
- ⦿ We have established a dedicated Transforming Tyisha Team to lead on specific activity to support community and physical development in Tyisha, which is the most deprived Ward in the County.
 - An ambitious masterplan to transform the area will deliver new mixed-use housing developments, develop more community facilities, and bring vacant business premises back into use; improve the environment and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; and provide opportunities for education, training, and employment.
 - Four flats have been demolished to clear a site for development; expressions of interest have been submitted by prospective development partners; and a feasibility study is being prepared on a potential community hub.



Audit Wales are currently conducting a National Review on 'Are local authorities doing all they can to help tackle and alleviate poverty?'. The report is due to be published in July 2022. We will take stock of the findings and ensure we embed any relevant recommendation into our tackling poverty plan.

Pre-Tenancy Support to JG

- JG was presented to us in March 2021. He had been kicked out by his family due to his antisocial behaviour and his family no longer felt able to cope. JG was subsequently placed into the care of the local authority and at the time of the referral he was neither in Education or Training, therefore being classed as NEET.
- Within three months of presenting as homeless, JG had been referred to Pre-tenancy with the intention of being placed in a training house. The Pre-Tenancy officer accommodated JG's wish not to complete the course as part of a larger group due to his anxiety and it was completed on a one-to-one basis.
- Before allocating JG a place in the training flat, we took the necessary steps to ensure that the current resident met JG prior to moving in. JG then became a resident at the property in August 2021. During his time at the property, JG completed several models of training undertaken with his Youth Support Worker. This training is aimed at providing the necessary skills required to sustain a successful tenancy.
- As a result of early intervention and by providing the right support at the right time, JG has now not only secured employment but is currently successfully maintaining a tenancy out of county. As well as success on a housing level, he also now has a long term and supportive partner.
- The training that was provided by Youth Support Services and support from the Housing Officers has allowed JG to flourish into an amazing young man who is working and living independently

Hwb advisor help to Mrs H

- Mrs H called into a Hwb as she had received a summons for her council tax, as I was talking to her, I could see that there were other financial difficulties there, I offered my service as a Hwb advisor and she agreed.
- She was a single parent of 3 and a homeowner. Her only income was ESA, Industrial injuries, PIP (lower rate) and child benefit, struggling with day-to-day bills and school dinners. She had applied for Free School meals but had been turned down.
- We helped-
 1. Issued with a council tax reduction form and to apply for back dating
 2. Checked council tax and could see there was no SPD in place, husband had left 2 years previous, Issued SPD form
 3. Advised to apply for UC
 4. Advised to appeal PIP and apply for enhanced rate
 5. Advised to apply for a blue badge due to health condition
 6. Phoned FSM who advised to apply again if UC awarded and

Outcome

1. Council tax reduction awarded and backdated 3 months
2. SPD awarded and backdated – refunded £1200
3. Awarded UC
4. Awarded the enhanced PIP
5. Awarded a blue badge
6. FSM awarded

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

Governance Arrangements

To make sure that we are maximising our efforts to tackle poverty we have a cross departmental officer working group and an elected member Advisory Panel.

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date / Target	Owner / Resp. Officer
A	Reviewing our approach to tackling Poverty		
1	We will implement and update the Tackling Poverty Plan to respond to the current challenges faced by residents and communities (15490)	June 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
B	Preventing Poverty		
1	Review of homelessness and temporary accommodation services (15334)	Sept 2022	Jonathan Morgan
2	Improve the % of household successfully prevented/relieved from becoming homeless (baseline 50.5% in 2021/22)	60%	Angela Bowen
3	Develop Carmarthen Hwb to include partnership working with employability projects and other agencies (15597)	30/06/2023	Eifion Davies
4	Develop and promote the Claim <i>What's yours</i> initiative to support the Council's tackling poverty initiative which is responding to the current challenges faced by residents and communities (15598)	31/03/2023	Deina Hockenhull
C	Helping People into work - Also see Well-being Objective 5		
1	% of adults that feel more positive with improved confidence about seeking work after receiving employability support through Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/020) – 2021/22 Target: 100	100%	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
2	% of residents that feel more confident in using a computer and gaining IT skills after receiving digital inclusion support through Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/021) – 2021/22 Target: 100	100%	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
3	The number of accredited qualifications achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/022) – 2021/22 Target: 200	200	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
D	Improving the lives of those living in poverty		
1	We will work with partners to deliver a range of support services to support the development and growth of the third sector within the County (15518)	March 2023	Helen Morgan
2	We will continue to maximise the draw-down of funding from external sources via the new funding programmes and support/undertake their delivery, e.g. the £2.9m award from UK Government's Community Renewal Fund (15521)	March 2023	Helen Morgan
3	That the Council works with partners to develop a co-ordinated approach to identifying, supporting and developing volunteering across the County (15522)	March 2023	Helen Morgan



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 5

Live Well - Create more jobs and growth throughout the county

Economically things haven't been as bad as we first feared, our interventions have helped but challenges remain

Towards the start of the pandemic, the intelligence gathered at that time clearly demonstrated that we faced an extremely difficult time over the next 24 months as the effects of the COVID-19 crisis put huge pressure on jobs and demand.

As a response to the pandemic and Brexit, in consultation with business, we introduced an [Economic Recovery Plan](#) (ERP) that identified our priority intervention actions for supporting *Business, People and Place* to strengthen the recovery of the Carmarthenshire economy from the social and economic impacts. With this support intervention now in place, Carmarthenshire's economy has generally improved from where we were and can recover as quickly as possible to become one which is more productive than before, more equal, greener, healthier, and with more sustainable communities.

However, some challenges, remain:

! Despite employment rates improving slightly, we still have the third lowest rate of employment compared to the rest of Wales *Stats Wales - several industries (most notably the Health & Social Care, Tourism & Hospitality and Haulage sectors) face acute recruitment challenges.*

! Still have a large and persistent productivity gap with the rest of the UK *South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan*

! Demand for our business funds has far outstripped the budgets available to support the private sector *ERP*

! Supply chain issues are a severe concern for several sectors, made worse by increasing costs and increased bureaucracy with regards to importing and exporting because of Brexit *ERP*

! Evidence suggested that COVID-19 effects were not felt equally by all, with a disproportionate effect by the younger generation & those from low-income households (Kickstart scheme introduced for support) *ERP*

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ Providing secure and well-paid jobs for local people is central to everything we are seeking to achieve.
- ⊙ Increasing employability is fundamental to tackling poverty, 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 on-going skilled and competent workforce to face the future



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



Employment figure

is **69.5%**

(April 21 – March 22)

3rd lowest rate in Wales

(Previously 68.1%)

Source: Stats Wales

According to the annual population survey, as of March 2022 Carmarthenshire continues to have the third lowest rate in respect of employment compared to the rest of Wales. Despite this, employment rates have increased from 68.1% in March 2021 to 69.5% (year ending March 2022). This is again amongst the lowest in Wales and below the national average of 73.6%.



37.7% Qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above

@ December 2021

(previously 39.9% December 2020)

Source: Stats Wales

For those reaching NVQ Level 4 or above in Carmarthenshire, figures have reduced for the second year running from 41.4% in 2019 to 39.9% in 2020, and 37.7% in 2021. This is below the Welsh average of 41.6% which continues to increase. The number with no qualifications has also increased slightly in 2021 to 7.8% from 6.7% in the previous year.

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78.9% Satisfied with their jobs

during 2019/20
(previously 82.5%)

17th highest in Wales (was 11th)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Being happy in work is important for well-being and the latest figures in April 2019 showed that the percentage of people moderately or very satisfied with their jobs was 79% - but this was over 3% lower than both the figure two years previously and the Welsh average. This ranked Carmarthenshire the 17th highest in Wales. A number of factors can affect job satisfaction therefore it is difficult to determine the exact cause of falling rates in the county.



Median Gross Weekly Pay is £566.9 (2021)

(Down from £574.5 in 2020, from 4th
highest in Wales to 11th position)

Source: Annual survey of hrs & earnings

The median gross weekly pay of £566.90 for Carmarthenshire is below that of the Wales figure of £570.6. Figures in Carmarthenshire are 11th highest in the whole of Wales, compared to being the 4th highest in 2020.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

In January 2022 we formally adopted the [South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan](#) as the Council's over-arching economic regeneration policy, that replaced the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy (2013). It builds on our distinctive strengths and opportunities to develop a more prosperous and resilient South-West Wales economy (Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot & Swansea). Together with our local Recovery Plan we aim to achieve the vision and objectives contained in the policy.

Our Economic Recovery Plan

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.

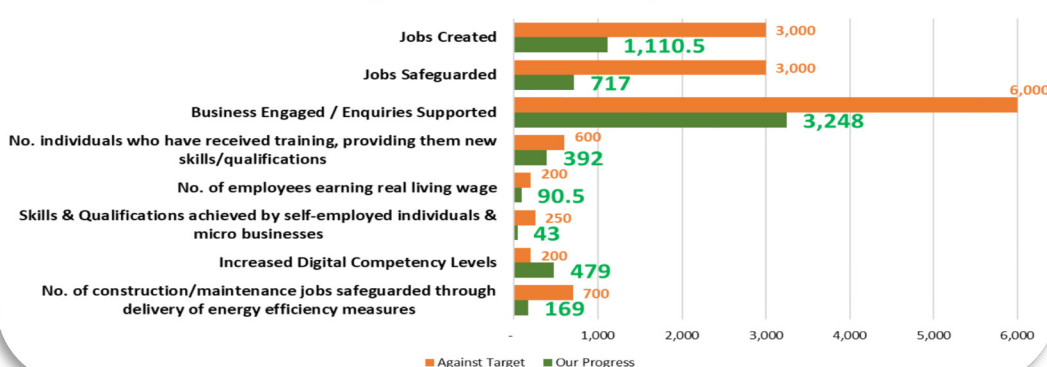
Key to the plan is ultra-reliable digital connectivity, actions that support the County's foundational economy and supporting local people to grow skills and talent in targeted areas so that there is a strong and resilient local workforce.

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.

OUR ERP OUTCOMES

Against our 2 Year Targets



Note: Our Economic Recovery Plan has been in place since July 2021, therefore our progress against our targets are over a 9 month period not 12. Our outcomes are attributed to all our service areas across the Authority that contribute towards our economic recovery.

BUSINESS:

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.

- 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. The £66 million was broken down to:

<i>Business Recovery Grants</i>	<i>£586k</i>	<i>Discretionary Grants</i>	<i>£265k</i>	<i>Non-Domestic Rates Business Grants</i>	<i>£65.1m</i>
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- We also supported businesses to *safeguard 717 jobs* via the Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund and the emergency flood grants (that were set up in response to the adverse weather conditions we experienced in County that directly impacted businesses).

! Demand for our business funds has far outstripped the budgets available to support the private sector across Carmarthenshire. Following a new round of business grant funding totalling £500K for business start-up and growth grants being launched in January 2022 we had to close the opportunity due to the volume of interest, hence there will be a number of applications that will not be able to be funded.

- To help the UK prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) (EU replacement funding programme), the UK Government announced a new funding programme, the UK **Community Renewal Fund**. Carmarthenshire was awarded 12 of the 13 shortlisted Community Renewal Fund bids in November 2021 totalling £2.97M.

! Conversely, EU funded services we currently provide will end next year (e.g. Workways+; Community for Work, Short Term Unemployed, Cynnydd, LEADER, etc.), but we have been awarded nearly £37m through the SPF successor funding for activities running up to March 2025.

- 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.

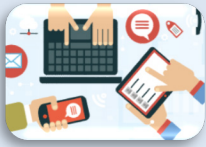
- Six new industrial units in Glanamman were completed by March 2022 as part of a £2.5 million investment. The former empty workshops were transformed and brought back into use in Phase 2, having set aside money from our Five-Year Capital Works Programme in 2017. The new steel workshops are expected to accommodate six small businesses with an additional 15-20 jobs.

- Progressive Procurement: We made significant steps in understanding community wealth building through localising spend to raise awareness of tender opportunities to support local businesses. We launched a business survey to gain an in-depth understanding of the support local businesses require to become 'tender ready' – we will use this information to engage with businesses on a one-to-one basis and provide the support needed.

! *Increasing Capital Costs:* There has been a marked increase in the cost of delivering capital regeneration schemes over the past year. These increases are industry wide and are believed to have been triggered through a number of factors including Brexit, COVID-19 and more recently the conflict in Ukraine. These increases are putting pressure on what is achievable with budgets that were set at project outset. As such, projects are having to be amended where possible to meet these increasing pressures.

- 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 £55 million SBCD Digital Infrastructure programme will benefit residents and businesses in all parts of the Swansea Bay City 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.

- ⦿ **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, and Carmarthen; 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.

PEOPLE:



Regional Learning & Skills Partnership (RLSP) Carmarthenshire is the Lead Body for the Regional Learning & Skill Partnership (RLSP). The RLSP is leading on the delivery of the Swansea Bay City Deal (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.

- ⦿ The [Regional Learning and Skills Partnership](#) has worked with employers and training providers to measure and understand the economic and skills impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, culminating in a 'wrap up' report being submitted to Welsh Government.



David TC Davies MP meeting students

- ⦿ The **Skills and Talent Programme** for the Swansea Bay City Deal Programme was officially launched in March 2022 when the UK Government Minister for Wales - David TC Davies (MP) met students at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Gower College Swansea to hear how it will benefit young people across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

- ⦿ We took the lead on the Young Person's Guarantee for the region - a Welsh Government initiative to support young people between 16–24 to gain the right skills and experience and support to get into work - working with Careers Wales, Working Wales, Communities for Work and other stakeholders in identifying their needs and delivering the support needed.
- ⦿ 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.



Supporting People at a job's fair

PLACE:

Urban, coastal and rural Carmarthenshire 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.



Audit Wales undertook a national review on [Regenerating Town Centres in Wales](#) (September 2021) and concluded that **town centres are at the heart of Welsh life** and can be vibrant and sustainable places, but addressing the many challenges they face requires brave decisions and ambitious leadership. In a digitally dominated world, investing in digital infrastructure and basic skills can play a vital role in revitalising high streets.

We recognised that our Restart, Revive, Renew recovery strategy, developed in response to the economic impact of COVID-19, provides a good summary of the ‘live’ challenges facing towns in the county. Our action plan response to the review and existing changes occurring within town centres had already been acknowledged through our recovery plans for our town centres, which have been accelerated by the pandemic, Brexit and other market forces.

- 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 towns stakeholders. The Plans highlighted key issues and opportunities and provided a delivery framework of interventions specific to the individual town centres. It is envisaged moving forward these Plans will be owned and delivered by the stakeholders in the respective towns, supported by ourselves by helping to secure funding opportunities and contributing capital funding.
- 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. The development of the growth plans are part funded via the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the Welsh Government and the EU.
- In 2021/22 we submitted 2 grant applications under the UK Government’s Levelling Up Fund Programme and were successful in securing funding for the Tywi Valley Path (nearly £17m), and a collaborative bid for the Carmarthen Hwb (nearly £16m) and the Pembroke Hwb (over £4m). The Tywi Valley Path project will provide a continuous shared use path between Llandeilo and Carmarthen.

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.



Browsing at a 100% Sir Gâr Pop Up Shops

- Following the success of our 100% Sir Gâr virtual shop window website platform that promotes over 300 independent businesses from Carmarthenshire, highlighting their products, we launched in August 2021 our 100% Sir Gâr Pop up Shops initiative. This ran for two weeks out of the old Topshop in Carmarthen, followed by a further week in Pembrey Country Park. It was relaunched in December 2021, with a Pop-up Shop in Llanelli and in the old Debenhams, Carmarthen - which generated just under 22,500 visitors to the store, benefiting the wider town centre economy. Most businesses (83%) exceeded their anticipated income targets.

- The establishment of a dedicated Development Management team to focus on ‘Major Projects’ has been instrumental in driving forward the priority focus that deliver jobs and growth in support of the Economic Recovery Plan. Continued progress has been made in addressing the backlog of Planning Applications and moving forward Major Planning Applications. Un-determined Applications (major planning applications & others with job creation) reduced from 133 (July 2021) to 42 at end of year.



Pentre Awel 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 & healthy lives.

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.

- Site works underway:** During 2021, Pentre Awel went from strategic planning to implementation and delivery. Site clearance and ground investigation works started on the Delta Lakes site to help progress detailed design and to allow main building works to start on Zone One later this year, with construction scheduled for completion by early 2024.

The project is being developed in phases across Four Zones and we appointed Bouygues UK to design and build Zone One following an extensive tendering process via the South West Wales Regional Contractors Framework - one of the largest ever published by the Authority. The contract has a key focus on social value to ensure that local people and businesses reap the benefits of the ambitious scheme. Work also commenced on procurement of consultants for design of Zone Three.

Rural Economy / Foundational Economy and Community Resilience

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.

- ⦿ The economic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for more affordable homes. As more people work from home and look to leave busy urban areas, the demand for homes in rural and coastal areas has inflated property prices, widening the affordability gap for many local people. Therefore, in support of this demand we published the [Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan \(December 2021\)](#) that set out our plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes across the County over the next five years. It also supports economic growth by investing over £300m into our communities and directly supports the actions in our Economic Recovery Plan - supporting businesses, people and places.



The findings of the Rural Affairs Task and Finish Group and the Ten Towns Growth Plans clearly support the need for more housing in rural areas. These plans highlight that affordable homes in rural areas are crucial to help younger and working aged people stay in our rural communities. By helping local people stay, we help preserve the culture of rural towns and villages and protect the Welsh language.

There has been significant improvement on the determination of planning applications and the determination of major projects that has led to several hundred full and part time posts being created over the last 12 months.

Is anyone better off?



Steven Avery is the owner of Craizie Crepes who previously traded from a van on Burry Port Harbour, selling crepes, waffles, milkshakes, hot and cold drinks and much more. As their reputation grew, so did their customer base and as such they wanted a new, larger and more permanent premises from which to operate.

Seeking to maintain their ideal location at Burry Port Harbour, Steven acquired the lease for the former toilet block and after receiving approval for planning, refurbished the building. In 2019 the business was awarded a £10,000 business grant from Carmarthenshire County Council, which supported the business to purchase a number of items such as fridges, freezers, tables, chairs, crepe machines and kitchen equipment to ensure the business operated at maximum efficiency and to maintain the quality of their product range.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic their plans to open were delayed but they continued to trade from their mobile unit in between the Government restrictions. During the challenges of the pandemic Steven received support from our COVID-19 helpline where support and advice was offered to the business, and as a result Steven was successful in receiving the Welsh Government Discretionary grants in the various tranches of funding during 2020 - 2022.

Craizie Crepes has since opened the new café and take away facility in their new premises, and the business is going from strength to strength and is a facility that complements Burry Port Harbour as a destination for visitors.

Steven said 'Crazie Crepes Cafe is extremely grateful for the grant received. It enabled us to fulfil our vision for the harbour. Without the grant we would have been struggling to complete the project. It enabled us to buy quality equipment that enables us to do the job to the best of our ability. The Council officer that guided us through the process did an amazing job throughout the process. We are very, very grateful for the time she spent making sure all the paperwork was correct and that all procedures were followed correctly. We currently employ double what we expected to. We now have a thriving business on the harbour with a top reputation for quality food at reasonable prices, exceptional cleanliness and amazing customer service. We are currently busier than we could have imagined and are looking into the possibility of extending the building to cater for the demands. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.'



Governance

A business, economy and community recovery group was established 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, was also established.

Challenges Ahead: Welsh Government have set 50 National Well-being Indicators (NWBI) to measure progress towards the achievement of Well-being goals. These are population based indicators. In December 2021, Ministers agreed to set Milestones on 8 of these indicators, some of which are relevant to this Well-being Objective:

National Well-being Indicator	National Milestone	Current result - Wales	Current result - Carmarthenshire
NWBI-17 - Pay difference for gender, disability and ethnicity	An elimination of the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050	<u>2021</u> Gender Pay Gap - £0.72 <u>2018</u> Disability pay difference - £1.10 Ethnicity pay difference - £0.16	<u>2021</u> Gender Pay Gap - £0.96 Neither Disability or Ethnicity pay difference is currently available at LA level
NWBI-21 - Percentage of people in employment	Eradicate the gap between the employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, with a focus on fair work & raising labour market participation of under-represented groups	<u>March 2021</u> Wales - 72.2% UK - 74.7%	<u>March 2021</u> Carms - 68.6% UK - 74.7%

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective is everything we are doing in our **Economic Recovery Plan (ERP)**

- ⦿ We will continue to focus on supporting 3,000 people into work, providing 2,000 additional homes, maximising the community benefit of development schemes and supporting businesses to take advantage of key grants
- ⦿ We will for each of the individual town centres, manage the overseeing of the recovery plans passing responsibility to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres
- ⦿ Moving forward the 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 allocated in order to fulfil the skills demands identified by employers



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 6

Live Well - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

We have delivered over 1,400 additional affordable homes

Good quality affordable homes are the bedrock of healthy and sustainable communities. We have delivered 1,437 additional affordable homes since 2016 as part of the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan and the new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Good quality affordable homes promote health and well-being, meeting the individual needs of the residents, building strong sustainable communities and places where people want to live.
- Good quality energy efficient affordable homes are good for the People and the Environment – our homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies (solar panels and batteries to store energy) that do not only significantly reduce our carbon emissions, they promote affordable warmth for our tenants. The average savings to fuel bills can be as much as 60% per year.
- It is good for the Social Structure - well-placed affordable housing developments allow communities to welcome a wide range of families and to create a vibrant, diverse, group of residents, in both rural and urban areas.
- It is good for the Economy - in order to thrive, new businesses need easy access to its workforce. Affordable housing developments ensure that working families will remain in their community.
- It is good for the Economy – our plans to increase affordable housing will see an investment of over £300m over the next five years in the County. This will help stimulate the local economy, grow the construction industry, the local supply chain and the green economy. This will also create jobs for local people as well as providing more homes to help local people remain in their communities.



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

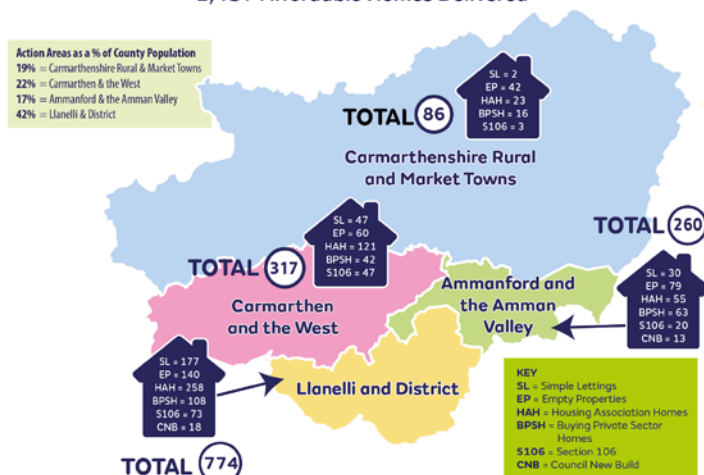
Success Measures / Explaining the Results



308 Additional Affordable Homes during 2021/22



Affordable Homes Performance - Overall Performance from April 2016
1,437 Affordable Homes Delivered



Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

- Through our Affordable Homes Delivery Plan we aimed to deliver over 1,000 additional affordable homes between 2016 and 2021. We exceeded this target and continue to be committed to delivering more affordable homes through our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan. So far, we have delivered **1,437** additional affordable homes through the following solutions:

31: Council New Build Homes

(31: 21/22)

256: Simple lettings agency

(32: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 61: 18/19; 61: 19/20; 30 20/21; 9: 21/22)

321: Empty homes brought back into use

(28: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 67: 18/19; 64: 19/20; 34 20/21; 65: 21/22)

253: Buying private sector homes

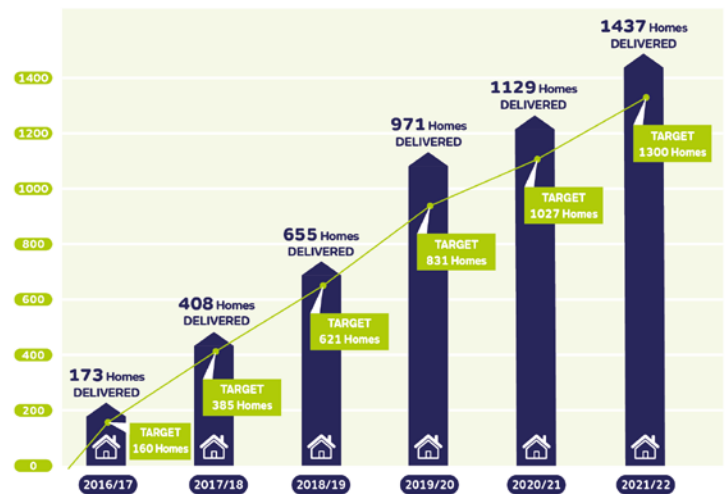
(45: 16/17; 69: 17/18; 81: 18/19; 43: 19/20; 7: 20/21; 8: 21/22)

433: Housing Association new build development

(45: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 17: 18/19; 107: 19/20; 51: 20/21, 193: 21/22)

143: Section 106 Contribution by Developers

(23: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 21: 18/19; 41: 19/20; 36 20/21; 2: 21/22)



- In July 2021 we asked the public and our key stakeholders for their views and priorities on how we should deliver more affordable homes in the future. Over **2,500 consultation responses were received** and the key messages from the consultation are summarised below and have shaped our new five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan which was approved in March 2022.



This plan will build on the success of the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan and aims to support the delivery of 2,000 additional homes throughout the County. This plan will also support economic growth by investing over £300million into our communities directly supporting the action in our Economic Delivery Plan supporting businesses, people and places.

Our new energy efficient affordable homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies and support the Council's Net Zero Carbon principles. They will reduce our carbon emissions by on average 70% and reduce fuel bills for tenants by up to 60% promoting affordable warmth, growing the green economy and creating sustainable communities.

- Our first 3 council new build developments have been completed and let these include: Garreglwyd, Maespiode and Glanamman. We have also completed the first 4 homes on the Dylan Development. These developments have provided 31 new affordable homes for local people. A further 24 sites are either on site, being prepared for planning or tender. This includes 6 sites in rural areas that will be developed on a mixed tenure basis and will provide homes for low-cost home ownership.

- ⦿ We maximise all external funding opportunities that help us deliver more homes in our communities including Social Housing Grant, Integrated Care Fund, Land Release Fund and the Land for Buildings Fund. In 2022 we secured over £19m of external funding to support our development programmes
- ⦿ We have robust governance process in place to ensure we maximise the delivery of affordable homes across the County. This is made up of a number of working groups and sub working groups that report directly to the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team, CMT Cabinet and Council.

Supporting the delivery of over 2,000 affordable homes in our communities



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Step....		
1	Delivery of first year of the five-year housing regeneration and development delivery programme (15332)	March 2023	Rachel Davies



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 7

Live Well - Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)

Excellent progress has been made in enhancing our health and well-being offer for the residents of Carmarthenshire by developing opportunities to engage online whilst investing in our physical infrastructure to encourage and support people to stay healthy.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Our way of life is changing, people are living longer with a higher quality of life.
- The challenge is to prevent ill health.
- Living healthy lives allows people to fulfil their potential, meet educational aspirations and play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.
- Many of the preventive services and interventions required to maintain health, independence and well-being lie outside health and social care.
- Mental ill health is something that one in four adults will experience in the course of their lifetime.
- Playing a part in providing accessible, inclusive, exciting, sustainable services, which promote and facilitate learning, culture, heritage, information, well-being and leisure.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



68.6% of
Adults who
say their
general health

is Good or Very Good
(2021/22)

Previously 69.7% (2020/21)
Source: National Survey for Wales



40.1%
of Adults
who say
they have a

long-term illness (2021/22)
Previously 51.2% (2020/21)
Source: National Survey for Wales



Adult Mental
Health
score of
48.8

(Out of a maximum of 70
Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-
being Scale)
Previously 51.1
Source: National Survey for Wales

92.4%

of Adults who
have **two or
more** healthy
lifestyle
behaviours
(2021/22)

Previously 87.6%
(2018/19 & 2019/20)
Source: National Survey for Wales



The following [National Survey for Wales](#) shows:

General Health Good or Very Good

- 68.6% of Carmarthenshire participants said their general health is Good or Very Good, this has reduced slightly from 69.7% in the previous year, but comparatively we have remained in 18th position in Wales. We continue to work with partners such as Public Health via the Public Services Board to promote a healthy environment for Carmarthenshire residents, including exercise, nutrition and cleaner air.

Long-term Illness

- 40.1% of Carmarthenshire participants said they had a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity, this has reduced considerably from the previous survey results which has been around 50%. The Welsh average has also reduced from 45.7% to 33.4%, but comparatively we have moved from 17th to 20th position in Wales. The lower number with a longstanding illness or disability or infirmity the better.

Adult Mental Health

- Our mental health affects how we think, feel and act. Looking after our mental health is as important as our physical health, the link between the two factors of health is becoming increasingly better understood. Poor psychological and emotional well-being can act as a barrier to full participation in society. Issues such as confidence, anxiety, fatigue and stigma can limit an individual's capacity to interact with others or to find work for example.

Data from Public Health Wales is gathered from the National Survey for Wales and analysed according to the [Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale](#). It shows that Mental Well-being in Carmarthenshire has declined from a score of 51.1 (out of a possible score of 60) in 2018/19 to a score of 48.8 in 2021/22. The decline is in line with the rest of the country and is representative of the Welsh average of 48.9.

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. It is based on statements about feelings and thoughts, whereby individuals would indicate which best describes their experience of each over the last 2 weeks. Some of the statements include: *I've been feeling useful; I've had energy to spare; I've been thinking clearly; I've been feeling loved etc.*

Two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours

- Based on questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales, participants were asked if they have **two or more** healthy lifestyle behaviours which include:
 - not smoking
 - not drinking above weekly guidelines
 - eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day
 - being physically active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week
 - maintaining a healthy weight/body mass index

Lifestyle choices impact on our future health and well-being. Carmarthenshire residents compare well to the rest of Wales in some areas such as physical activity, not drinking too much and eating healthily, however, there are a number of lifestyle choices where we compare poorly such as overweight or obese and smoking. 92.4% of participants in Carmarthenshire have two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours this has increase on the previous result of 87.6%, we continue to be below the Welsh average of 92.9%, but we have moved up from 18th to 13th best in Wales.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Eat and breathe healthily

- An Air Quality Delivery Plan has been developed and adopted by the AQ Action Steering Group. Local authorities are responsible to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if national air quality objectives are not likely to be met. In Carmarthenshire there are three active AQMAs

AQMA Name <small>Source: Defra, UK</small>	Pollutants
Llandeilo AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂
Llanelli AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂
Carmarthen AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂

- Investment at Pembrey Country Park includes a new playground, an expansion of the cycling pump track, new mobile catering units, glamping pods, and enhancements to paths and eating areas at our camping and caravan site.

- ⦿ Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park has also recently secured close to £86k of external funding investment to enhance walkways, and bio-diversity at that site.
- ⦿ We have invested over £200k of internal and external funding at Llyn Llech Owain Country Park including a new toddlers play area, improved walks, and interpretation.



Physical Activity

- ⦿ We successfully hosted the 2021 Men's Tour of Britain professional cycle race in September 2021, as part of our wider commitment to developing sporting events and activities across the County to inspire future generations to lead healthy, active lifestyles
- ⦿ Llandovery Leisure Centre site masterplan completed, with creation of new fitness and multi-purpose rooms to complement the existing 20m pool. Outdoor multi-use courts also being incorporated into the community offer, working closely with Ysgol Gynradd Rhys Pritchard.
- ⦿ We have secured £2m of internal and external funding, £1.7m CCC capital funding /£300k external grant funding to develop the next phase of the Amman Valley Leisure Centre site masterplan. This will provide a state of the art full size, floodlit school and community use 3rd Generation all-weather artificial turf pitch and enhanced athletics facilities for school, public and club users.
- ⦿ Work is ongoing with the development of our Actif Anywhere online platform to stream classes and activities to people's homes; community halls; care homes; surgeries; hospital physio support (linking with the National Exercise Referral Scheme); and schools (pilot of 18 schools completed with potential to roll this out across Wales as a paid for extra-curricular service, with our USP being bi-lingual delivery).
- ⦿ We have appointed a main contractor to develop the new Leisure Centre in Llanelli as part of the Pentre Awel development.

Mental Health

- ⦿ Carmarthenshire Libraries have introduced new digital, technological and creative "Maker" services at key Library points, where users and communities are encouraged and supported to participate in an increasingly digital world. As part of our libraries core offer, maker services promote hands-on learning, creativity and collaboration, where people of all backgrounds and abilities can come together to share ideas and equipment that inspires confidence and helps users acquire new skills, building and igniting individual ambitions and encouraging learning for life.
- ⦿ The council has invested significant growth resource to address this which will be used to recruit more social work and social care staff to focus on two specific areas: early intervention and prevention, and a more robust and timely crisis response.
- ⦿ We have been collaborating with the Health Board and the third sector to develop initiatives in this regard developing a Single Point of Access and a 24/7 crisis response service.
- ⦿ The Twilight sanctuary crisis response in Llanelli, which was council led, goes from strength to strength and the model is now being rolled out across the region.
- ⦿ We are embarking on an ambitious programme of change in relation to accommodation. Our vision is to reduce the reliance on residential care and develop more community options accommodation, which promote choice and independence



Substance Misuse

- ⦿ We have been working with colleagues in the health board ,and third sector to improve access and intervention for those who have substance misuse and mental health issues ,and also for those who have alcohol related brain damage .
- ⦿ The Fulfilled Lives Scheme has been a successful pilot which supports people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage to remain living independently within the community

Is anyone better off?

ACTIF RESTART – WINTER OF WELL-BEING GRANT



The aim of the Actif Restart project was to improve the overall health and well-being of identified NEET (not in education, employment or training) population as they are supported through a journey to prepare for integration into their community through sport either as participants or voluntary/paid roles.

Throughout the project opportunities were provided to the participants to further enhance transferable job-based skills and qualities such as confidence, communication and leadership which can be taken forward with them in their futures.

Project Participants benefited from the following:

Actif Adult workshops	Tag leaders award
Coaching experience at rugby festivals	Coaching development opportunities
Club integrations	CV and interview preparation
Paid employment opportunities within Actif	Links to apprenticeships and further education
Opportunities to reflect on the project both individually and as a group	

The need for the project was identified after consulting with local organisations with a heavy focus to prepare young people for future careers or further education that were currently not in Education or Employment. Further discussions then took place with Dyfed Powys Intact project and CCC departments such as Youth Services and Employment Support. The data below highlights how important links with the listed partners are to provide young people with positive role models and support groups to help reduce the risk of crime in the local area. By introducing participants into social and safe environments within sports teams and encouraging ongoing involvement with clubs after the project the aim is to help reduce the risk of the individuals becoming involved with any criminal activity.

Through individual consultations with participants, it was possible to identify suitable sports clubs to signpost them to as a player or volunteer. Introductions into sports teams created a sense of affiliation and belonging for the Actif Restart participants within their chosen teams, providing them with a positive surrounding and reinforcing rules and disciplines to follow whilst at training and playing games. For this target group, embracing principles of sportsmanship, teamwork, and interactions with peers were all incredibly valuable aspects of the project for the participants to develop important life skills and help strengthen self-belief. Having positive experiences within these sports clubs has now allowed participants to increase their physical activity levels and encouraged them to restart or continue their physical literacy journey.

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/ Target	Owner/ Resp. Officer
#			
1	We will work to reduce waste and our carbon footprint across our Leisure and Cultural services, whilst increasing opportunities to lead healthy, fulfilled lives (16119)	31/3/23	Ian Jones
2	Development of a 10-year future direction document for discussion, input, and endorsement by the new political administration for the County in early 2022/23 (16120)	1/9/23	Ian Jones
A	Eat and breathe healthily		
1	Air Quality action plan progress and matters arising will be reported through the Net Zero Carbon plan report (16131)	31/3/23	Rhodri Griffiths
B	Physical Activity		
1	We will implement a Cycling Strategy for Carmarthenshire that will focus on 5 key strategic themes: Education, Development and Training; Infrastructure and Facilities; Marketing & Branding; Tourism Events (13195)	31/03/23	Carl Daniels
2	We will develop Ammanford Leisure Centre facilities with upgrades to internal wet-side changing facilities (phase 1 - completed); and improvements to parking infrastructure and external sports facilities linked to wider school site masterplan (phase 2) (14705)	30/03/23	Carl Daniels
3	We will need to work towards regaining and exceeding membership and income to pre-covid levels - with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic changing lifestyles and habits, this will be the services' greatest challenge (16121)	31/3/23	Ian Jones
C	Mental Health		
1	Implement Service delivery changes in Mental Health as part of the transforming Mental Health Agenda (16122)	March 22	Avril Bracey
D	Substance Misuse		
1	See Mental Health action	March 22	Avril Bracey



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective

Age Well



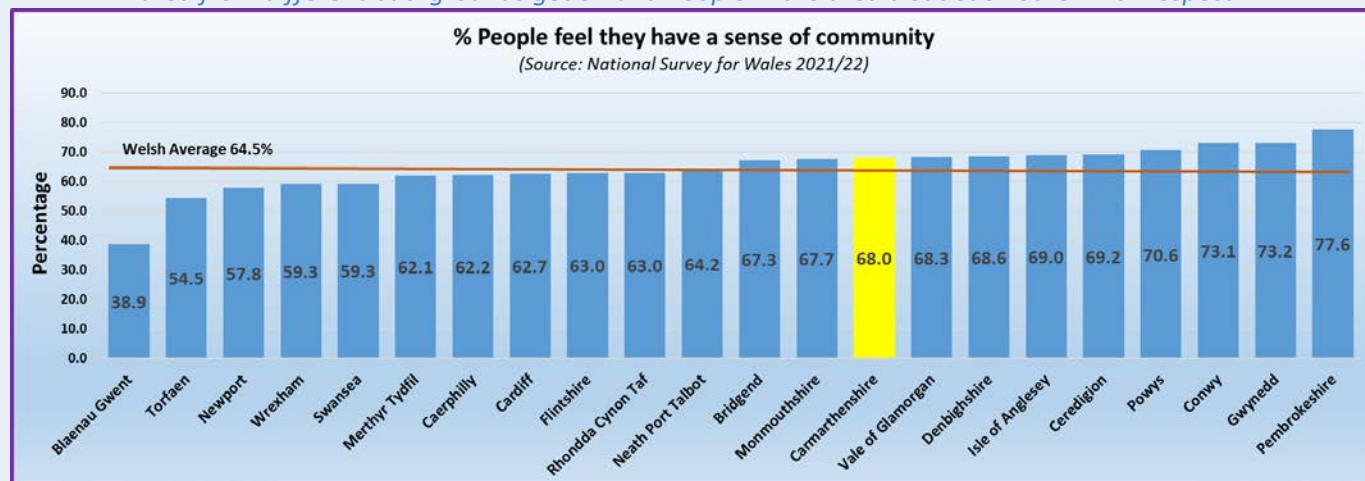


Well-being Objective 8

Live Well/Age Well - Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities

Sense of Community survey results have reduced slightly in Carmarthenshire from 68.6% to 68.0%

The 'Sense of Community' is derived from three questions; *People feel they belong to their local area; People in the area from different backgrounds get on and People in the area treat each other with respect*.



Despite a reduced result we move up from 13th to 9th position in Wales.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⦿ Safety and a feeling of belonging are important to personal well-being and more people now appreciate the value of kindness and being part of a community.
- ⦿ A cohesive community is an area where those from different backgrounds share positive relationships, feel safe in their neighbourhood, and have a sense of mutual respect and shared values.
- ⦿ [Community Resilience](#) is also essential to enable communities to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. The COVID-19 crisis has shown what can be achieved when communities work together.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

68.0% People who feel they have a sense of community
(9th Highest in Wales)
Previously 68.6% (13th)
Source: National Survey for Wales



66.7% People feel safe
Previously 74.6%
11th Highest in Wales



Source: National Survey for Wales

A sense of community

- ⦿ According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), 68.0% of participants felt they had a 'Sense of Community', this is a slight reduction on previous result of 68.6%. This result was derived from three questions: People feel they belong to their local area; People in the area from different backgrounds get on and People in the area treat each other with respect. Despite the slight decline, when compared with other results in Wales, we have moved up from 13th to 9th position.
- ⦿ Recent consultation in 2020 (as part of Carmarthenshire's [Well-being Assessment](#)) with representatives from a number of sectors of the community showed overall positive opinions towards current

community cohesion in Mid and South-West Wales. Focus groups were held with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities; EU (non-Welsh) citizens, rural and isolated communities, first language Welsh speakers, Gypsy / Traveller Communities, Syrian Refugees, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people and/or people with health conditions and young people. **77% of the interviewees referred to community cohesion as good.** It was recognised that there was potential for improvement and perceived “tensions” or “problems”.

Feeling Safe

- ⦿ According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), the number of **participants feeling safe has reduced from 74.6% to 66.7%**, but keeping just above the Welsh average of 66%. Comparatively, we have moved from 6th to 11th place. This result was derived from three questions: *people feeling safe at home; walking in the local area; and when travelling in the dark.*
- ⦿ As part of Carmarthenshire’s Well-being Assessment consultation work, our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic residents were equally concerned with threats of extremism, prejudice and hate crime. **In terms of community cohesion, our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community noted concern regarding community resources being closed, prejudice and lack of investment in their local community.** Raising concern about unfair treatment and reporting a hate crime were the top two things that Carmarthenshire residents would consider doing to help make things fairer for everyone in their community when asked as part of the 2021 Well-being Survey.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Develop and implement how we provide information, advice, and assistance.

- ⦿ We continue to work in partnership with Delta Well-being as our Single Point of Access into community health and social care. Through the expertise of the Information, Advice and Assistance team, wherever possible, we support people with information and advice without the need for referral to formal ongoing assessment. In 2021/22, on average 25% of contacts were resolved at information and advice without the need for further statutory support.
- ⦿ We have strengthened the role of Delta Well-being in our hospitals, and now have Well-being Officers working on the wards who act as the link between health and social care to aid timely discharge from hospital.

Greater community cohesion

- ! In 2019, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee undertook a **Task and Finish Review of Loneliness**, which put forward recommendations for the Council to consider. In light of these recommendations, plans are in progress to appoint a Senior Manager for Prevention and also a cross population Prevention Strategy and Action Plan. A key pillar of this plan will be Loneliness and addressing any gaps that are identified to help the wider population feel more socially included.
- ⦿ The regional dementia strategy is now in its final draft and waiting official sign off from the regional partners. The regional Dementia Steering Group is meeting regularly and progressing all aspects of the dementia funding workstreams. A regional Dementia Strategy Coordinator is currently being recruited to and will be in post shortly. We are working towards the re-opening of day services to include dementia clients.
- ⦿ The relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions has led to a surge in enquiries from a wide range of event organisers – community organisations seeking to re-establish annual events cancelled due to the Pandemic as well as more commercial ones seeking to create new brands or those seeking to start the building up again of former events.

Impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and well-being of our population and community resilience

- ⦿ A feasibility study is being undertaken within Tyisha for the establishment of a Community Hub. Based on the feasibility study a business plan will be developed. Asset Based Community Development Training has been planned for residents, officers, and local groups. A great deal of community based activities have taken place throughout the year to develop positive community relationships such as litter picking, play events and sessions, creative play sessions for parents and gardening projects.

- ⦿ Summer of Fun and Winter of Well-being initiatives have been successfully delivered via funding from Welsh Government to key wards across the County. Targeted initiatives were delivered in partnership with agencies like the Police and Crime Commissioner, CYCA, Inspire Recruitment and the Scarlets to re-engage Children and Young People back into physical activity. The funding was a catalyst to create new initiatives and partnerships which will form part of our service moving forward.
- ⦿ Over 60s in Carmarthenshire were given more options to enjoy exercise as the country recovers from the pandemic, as part of a £1m investment by Welsh Government. In a drive to reduce health inequalities and social isolation as part of Welsh Government's Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales Action Plan 2020-22, the funding allocated to Sport Wales was shared among all 22 local authorities for use on projects. Adults aged 60+ were able to access free and discounted sport and physical activity sessions in facilities and the community
- ⦿ As part of a Sport Wales Rescue Package numerous workshops and webinars were held with community clubs across the County to support club recovery and development plans, linked to Covid recovery. Actif Communities Officers supported clubs with recruiting and training volunteers, expanding their age groups, risk assessments and return to play protocols as well as supported funding bids.
- ⦿ Actif Carmarthenshire's Sports Awards Sports are one of the most prestigious Awards ceremonies in the county, recognising and celebrating sports successes and contributions throughout the year. In the absence of a ceremony in 2021 because of the Pandemic, January 2022 was an opportunity to reflect on the last 2 years and despite the pandemic, celebrate huge achievements from individual athletes to teams. Nominations were received from Sports Clubs, individuals and local Councillors, for awards for participation such as Sportsman of the Year and Young Sports Woman, as well as awards for those that the sport cannot function without such as Volunteer of the Year and Coach of the Year.

Support Safer Communities

- ⦿ The pandemic has provided opportunities for criminals to exploit persons who may be more exposed to fraudulent approaches due to lockdown/shielding and isolation from support networks. There has again been an overall rise in the numbers of frauds reported nationally with the Office of National Statistics reporting that there were 5 million fraud offences in the year ending June 2021, a 32% increase compared with the year ending June 2019. trueCall© Nuisance Call Blocking Devices, which have been installed in elderly and vulnerable residents' homes in the county have for the year 2021/22 blocked 15,831 nuisance calls. Based on national intelligence 4,340 of those calls were identified as being from numbers used by known criminals.
- ⦿ The innovative alert system Seraphimbeta© developed in the wake of the pandemic to notify authority officers when a trueCall user was experiencing high volume of calls from suspected fraudsters has for the year 2021/22 generated 94 high level alerts (an increase of 28 from the previous year). These alerts have led to welfare calls and officer intervention to prevent vulnerable residents engaging in telephone fraud approaches. Funding secured to increase the existing fleet of 220 call blockers has been used to purchase a further 500 call blockers and these are currently being deployed with authority partners Delta Well-being. Based on current average nuisance call volumes, we predict our combined fleet of call blockers has the potential to block in the region of 83,000 nuisance calls in Carmarthenshire annually. This work is being led by Trading Standards.
- ⦿ During Hate Crime Awareness Week, the Community Cohesion team helped coordinate a regional calendar of events, capturing content from partners who include Victim Support, Dyfed Powys Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Race Council Cymru. The cohesion team led on a number of projects during that week and throughout the year including:
 - A project in collaboration with Victim Support and youth clubs for young people to design a T-shirt, focusing on diversity and inclusion.
 - An Online Hate Crime Workshop tackling the issues around hate crime and social media.
 - A series of online Hate Crime Awareness events, in collaboration with Victim Support
 - Promoting the Community Cohesion Hate Crime Awareness film

The team led on a number of training opportunities for professionals including a series of sessions focusing on Awareness and Counter Narrative on Right Wing activity and Incel.

- ⦿ The Community Cohesion 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:
 - *Queering Wales. Representation as a means to inclusion - On your face collective:* On your face is a LGBTQ+ platform aiming to bring the queer creatives of Wales to the forefront. The Cohesion team funded an event at The Nurture Centre in Carmarthen and will include an exhibition by various artists from the collective, live music, workshops, talks, open mic and a food stall. The exhibition would last up to 3 weeks but the event would be from 10 to 8 on the opening day.
 - *Future Proof, the Well Together Community - Create Me Happy / Rivki Rose Training:* The project combines two online workshops for Carers, to improve individual and community resilience through Self-advocacy Community Champions / Active Citizenship. The workshops were delivered to commemorate Carers Rights Day and International Day of Disabled people.
 - *Spoken Word Saturday, Community Connectivity Events - People Speak Up:* The project consisted of 5 bilingual spoken word face-to-face/digital community connectivity events at Y Ffwrnes Fach (Old Zion Chapel) in Llanelli. Events were an opportunity for the community to share their own stories and personal experiences of oppression, disconnection, loneliness, and post COVID-19 reactions. The events also had open community conversation times which will be an opportunity for individuals to chat, share, listen over cake and tea. The first event saw storyteller Phil Okwedy share his story of Nigerian descent, being brought up in a children's home, and how it feels to be a black man living in Wales.

Is anyone better off?

WINNER OF THE YOUNG SPORTS VOLUNTEER

Keeping team training together again safely

Joshua Edwards won the Young Sports Volunteer award for his role within Carmarthen Town AFC. Joshua has been a key part of the club for many years. When Josh was 16 years of age, he started a walking football group for over 50s in the area creating more opportunity for people to get involved.

Throughout the pandemic Josh has ensured all risk assessments and procedures were in place for the team to continue training with confidence and become socially active again, safely. Josh has also taken the role of Wales development squad manager and coach for age group males.'



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/ Target	Owner/ Resp. Officer
A	Develop and implement how we provide information, advice, and assistance		
1	Implement the requirements of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards in line with legislation (16124)	March 2022	Avril Bracey
2	We will ensure we respond to adult safeguarding concerns in accordance with the SSWBA (Part 7) and evolving statutory guidance (16125)	March 2023	Avril Bracey
3	We will develop a formal agreement between the Local Authority and Health Board, outlining collective responsibilities whilst agreeing a new staffing structure in Integrated Services to support our approach to develop strong communities, help people help themselves and provide support when is needed. (15101)	Dec 2022	Alex Williams
B	Greater Community Cohesion		
1	Publish a cross population Prevention Strategy and Action Plan, a key pillar of which will address loneliness (15342)	March 2023	Alex Williams
2	We shall continue to develop a more strategic approach to strengthen and develop the preventative network of services & build community resilience, especially in relation to the third sector, housing related support and the wider community, including carers. (15083)	March 2023	Alison Watkins
C	Mental Health and Resilience		
1	See Well Being Objective 7 Action C1	NA	NA
D	Safer Communities		
1	To ensure the Council fully considers and responds to the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Protect Duty once published (expected in 2022-23) (15495)	March 2023	Kate Harrop
2	We will ensure the Council fulfils its duties relating to the current Contest Strategy (counter terrorism) and respond to any duties as they arise (15494)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 9

Age Well - Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years

We have continued to keep older people safe in our communities in the most challenging of times, during which, as experienced nationally, demand for social care by far outweighs the limited care and support available in our communities. Ensuring that we target support where it is most needed has allowed us to help people to age well whilst maintaining their dignity and independence. As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the key challenge has been how to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of skilled and experienced social care workers to provide the support that our communities need. Efforts to do this has become our primary focus and top priority for our integrated health and social organisations.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⦿ Carmarthenshire has a high proportion of residents over 65 years old who are a vital and vibrant part of the community. We want the county to be a place to age well.
- ⦿ Consultations have demonstrated that 'what matters' to older people is to be able to be as independent and as well as possible for as long as possible.
'Being respected as an older person and not being seen as a burden on the local health and social care system'
- ⦿ Research shows that a vital factor of healthy ageing for older people is social participation, respect and inclusion.
- ⦿ Older people contribute to the economy in Carmarthenshire by caring for their grandchildren or other family members.
- ⦿ Wider services can make an important contribution in supporting and sustaining the independence of older people and reducing the demand on Social Services and Health Care.
- ⦿ The Council has determined to make Carmarthenshire a dementia friendly County along the lines of the [Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Community Programme](#).
- ⦿ The impact of COVID-19 on our care homes.



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



It takes us an average of

259

calendar days to deliver a

Disabled Facilities Grant

(Previously 347 days)

15.4% of people feel lonely in Carmarthenshire



(Previously 17.3%)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Good Social Care Service available in the area

- ⦿ 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%.

Disabled Facilities Grant

- ⦿ Delivering Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations during the last couple of years has been challenging due to COVID-19 restrictions with delays and the ability to complete ongoing site work. Our average number of days to complete these adaptations pre COVID-19 was 176 days, and well below the Welsh average

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of 204 days. This greatly increased during 2020/21 to 347 days and above the Welsh average of 261 days. This disruption created a backlog with a continued high number of days during 2021/22, but as the backlog is being addressed during the year, the average number of days has improved significantly to 259 days.

Feeling Lonely

- According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), **15.4%** of participating adults in Carmarthenshire **classed themselves as lonely**, this has reduced from the previous result of 17.3% but continues to be above the Welsh average of 12.8%, and comparatively we have moved from 19th to 18th position in Wales.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective


Improved population health and well-being

- Our Theatrau Sir Gâr service delivered a live stream of a Christmas Show to 6 care homes
- Actif received £46k from Welsh Government to promote and deliver free and discounted physical activities to the 60+ population. These included a range of Walking Sports (rugby, football and netball), Nordic Walking, Paddleboarding, Curling, fitness classes, gym activities and racket sports.
- Actif Adult Officers in the Actif Communities team have worked in partnership with clubs and organisations to facilitate and establish a number of walking sport sessions and clubs across the County.
- Our Delta Connect service has gone from strength to strength over the last 12 months. Over 3,000 individuals have now registered for the service in Carmarthenshire, and the rapid response element of the service where a registered team of carers can provide emergency support has proved vital to keeping people safe and well at home. The service has responded to individuals almost 6,000 times and has often negated the need for a hospital admission or an emergency placement in a care home. The reassurance that Delta Connect is available at the end of a phone provides for Carmarthenshire residents and their families makes a huge contribution to improved population health and wellbeing.
- Thankfully, the impact on Older People of the pandemic has started to lessen over the last 12 months. The success of the vaccination programme has meant that COVID-19 is now more routine to manage in care settings, and risk of serious illness or death has decreased to levels comparable with other more routine seasonal illnesses such as flu. The impact psychologically cannot however be underestimated, and many older people have become increasingly isolated and are still living in fear of the risk of COVID-19. Initiatives such as Delta Connect are therefore vital to help support emotional health and well-being.



Better quality and more accessible health and social care services

- There is a national shortage of both qualified social workers and skilled and experienced care staff. At the same time, we have seen the impact that lockdowns linked to the pandemic and difficulties in accessing routine services have had on increasing the health and social care needs of our older population. The combination of these two factors has created a perfect storm. There are consequently an increased number of older people requiring social work assessment and consequently care at home, whilst there are less social workers available to carry out those assessments and less care hours available to support people in the community.

 <p>Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru Care Inspectorate Wales</p>	<p>Summary</p> <p>‘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</p>
<p>May 2022</p>	

Carmarthenshire County Council In-house domiciliary care service Inspection Report	to support this. The leadership team have good working relationships and a clear vision about the service'
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- ⊙ We are doing all we can to prioritise those in most need of assessment and those that are waiting for care. However, it does mean that we have waiting lists for both assessments and care and consequently people are having to wait longer than we would like to get the support that we need.
- ⊙ In light of the above, we have had to be as creative as we can in finding alternative ways to support people. This has led to us rethinking the way in which we work and the success of one such initiative, the Intermediate Care Multi-Disciplinary Team (IC MDT), has been recognised as a finalist in the IESE Public Sector Transformation Awards 2022. The team adopts a 'Home First' principle to support people to leave hospital sooner or help keep people at home, by providing short-term support health to help people return or remain at home as independently as possible.



Higher value health and social care

	In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales published its Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council.	
	<u>Adult Social Care Assurances</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working • Good communication and support across organisation • Shared vision of addressing the needs of people • People (including carers) given the opportunity to tailor and manage their own support • A positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention • Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period 	
	<u>Adult Social Care Risks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider Market • The demand pressure in the system is greater than the capacity available • Fragile position for in-house service • Delivery of care and support in some geographical areas 	

- ⊙ In context of the workforce challenges, making best use of our resources has never been more critical. This year we have gone out to tender for our new Care and Support at Home Framework which, notwithstanding the recruitment and retention challenges, will allow us to provide a more equitable service across the County.

Internal Audit 	Internal Audit has undertaken a recent review of the grant: ENABLE – Support for Independent Living	Internal Audit concluded that the project's aims and objectives had been met and that grant expenditure had been properly incurred in accordance with the grant offer.
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- ⊙ In addition, we have used creative means such as the Well-being Support Grant, to financially recompense carers and families to support their loved ones whilst they are waiting for long-term care arrangements to be put in place.

A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce

- ⊙ The growing number of qualified social work and care worker vacancies, combined with increase in demand and people presenting with much more complex issues to resolve has seen waiting lists growing to much higher levels than we would like. Our primary focus has therefore been to develop

and implement our Social Care Recruitment and Retention Plan to give us every chance possible to recruit and retain staff to the level that we need.

- Over the course of the last 12 months, we have carried out comprehensive recruitment campaigns both internally and in support of the wider sector.
- We have also offered our social care staff a variety of retention payments to encourage them to continue to work for Carmarthenshire.
- We are developing career progression routes for staff so that they can develop their careers with us enabling us to succession plan for the future.
- We are in the process of launching our Care Academi which will provide career opportunities for those wishing to go into care to pursue professional routes such as social work.
- There is still much work to do, but we were starting to see a slightly improved position particularly in relation to social work vacancies.



Carmarthenshire's Delta CONNECT offers "a lifeline" to Edward during pandemic lockdown

When 82-year-old widower *Edward returned to his Llandovery home from a long spell in hospital at the end of 2019, his son, daughter in law and daughter would visit several times a day to help support him in his everyday life and keep an eye on him.

However, everything changed when the lockdown started. Edward began shielding and frequent visits were no longer as easy.

Edward began using the Delta CONNECT service in March 2020 and it has meant the world to him. His mood was extremely low after his lengthy stay in hospital and he had lost a lot of weight, which left him feeling frail and vulnerable.

As part of the CONNECT service, his assigned Community Wellbeing Officer (CWO) Louise called him weekly to check how he was and whether he needed any help. He also had a Lifeline home unit with pendant to call for help in an emergency.

"I'd been in hospital for four months and was really down in the dumps." Edward said, "It really helped when I spoke to Louise. She brought me back from the depths of despair."

For many clients, the service includes food or medical supplies, but Edward was lucky enough to have his family living locally to help with this.

"I'm so lucky to have a fantastic family nearby and they really look after me, but sometimes it's easier to talk to someone outside of your family because you don't want them to worry any more that they already are."

"I can't speak highly enough of CONNECT. Knowing that there was someone at the end of the phone for me was a lifeline and so reassuring for my family as well."

The CWOs are trained to identify clients who may need additional support, even when the client hasn't recognised that need themselves - this has helped Edward's family know that he is safe and supported at home even when they can't be there

Edward's son *Jonathan said: "The Delta service means a lot to my dad and he feels genuinely privileged to be able to access it. The Lifeline system is invaluable for him and although we're close by, it's reassuring for the family to know that help is on hand should he need it.

"The wellbeing calls have been fantastic - he enjoys having someone different to talk to and really looks forward to the calls every week. In a few years I'll probably be signing myself up."

***Names have been anonymised**

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Improved population health and well-being		
1	We will provide proactive and planned care to people in the community with chronic long-term health conditions/ increased frailty and those that require support at the end of their life (16132)	March 2023	Alex Williams
2	We will develop and implement a Prevention Strategy for Carmarthenshire which will include continuing to work in partnership with Delta Wellbeing in support of our residents (15342?)	March 2023	Rhian Dawson
3	We will continue to reshape our approach to support patient flow and home first by developing the discharge to assess pathways and ensure that monitoring and escalation processes are maintained to ensure effective flow across the Carmarthenshire system (15348)	March 2023	Alex Williams/ Rhian Dawson
B	A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce		
1	We will grow the professional Social Work and Occupational Therapy workforce by ensuring that Carmarthenshire is an attractive place to work, there are opportunities for career progression and development of career pathways for non-qualified staff to become qualified (16133)	March 2023	Alex Williams



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective

Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment

A large, diverse crowd of people is gathered outdoors, likely at a festival or public event. The image is taken from a low angle, looking through the crowd. In the foreground, the back of a woman's head with long dark hair and a black top is visible. Next to her is a man with short brown hair wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The crowd extends far into the background, with many people wearing hats and sunglasses, suggesting a sunny day. The overall atmosphere is one of a busy, public gathering.



Well-being Objective 10

Healthy & Safe Environment - Look after the environment now and in the future

We have significant Environmental challenges to address

- ! A big challenge will be delivering against the decarbonisation priorities. We'll need to significantly increase future carbon savings to meet the Council's commitment to become a Net Zero Carbon (NZC) local authority by 2030.
- Our Planning Service had significant and long-standing performance issues and an external audit brought this to the fore and in year the Council has intervened and made significant progress.
- ! Maximising recycling has been difficult following a fire at our main materials recovery facility and with COVID-19 relaxation of black bag rules. We have a new recycling contamination action plan and a new waste strategy which will help us deliver improved performance.
- Compared to previous years, 2021/22 has not seen as many significant flooding events resulting in high numbers of Carmarthenshire businesses and residents affected by internal flooding.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ A biodiverse natural environment is good for well-being, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience.
- ⊙ A good planning service is essential to deliver the Council's ambitions.
- ⊙ We have declared a climate emergency as a Council and were the first in Wales to have published our [Route Towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030](#).



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



We generated
1,059,364 kWh of
renewable energy
during 2020/21
(increased from 997,480 kWh in
the previous year)



The Council's Energy
Consumption
(kWh) decreased
by **9.5%**
from 70,332,391 kWh in 2019/20
to 63,684,340 kWh in 2020/21



Our recycle rate is
61.68 %
(This is a decrease
on the previous
year's figure of 62.20%.)

- ⊙ In 2020/21, our overall Energy Consumption reduced by 9.5% compared to 2019/20, with all four areas showing a reduction in both consumption and carbon emissions i.e., Non-Domestic Buildings; Street Lighting; Fleet Mileage; and Business Mileage.

Whilst these reductions are in part attributable to the impact of COVID-19, the continuation of staff home working, together with changes in working practices such as an increased use of video conference facilities and online communication, should see a lasting reduction in carbon emissions in the longer term.

- ⊙ A fire at the Nantycaws Materials Recycling Facility this has meant that achieving the 64% recycling rate target for the 2021/22 financial year has not been possible. This is due to the restrictions and difficult market position facing CWM Environmental and the Council following the fire and continuing to have to rely on third party facilities throughout the year. This remains the case going into 2022/23, however we do have specific plans for improving recycling capture and quality going forward.

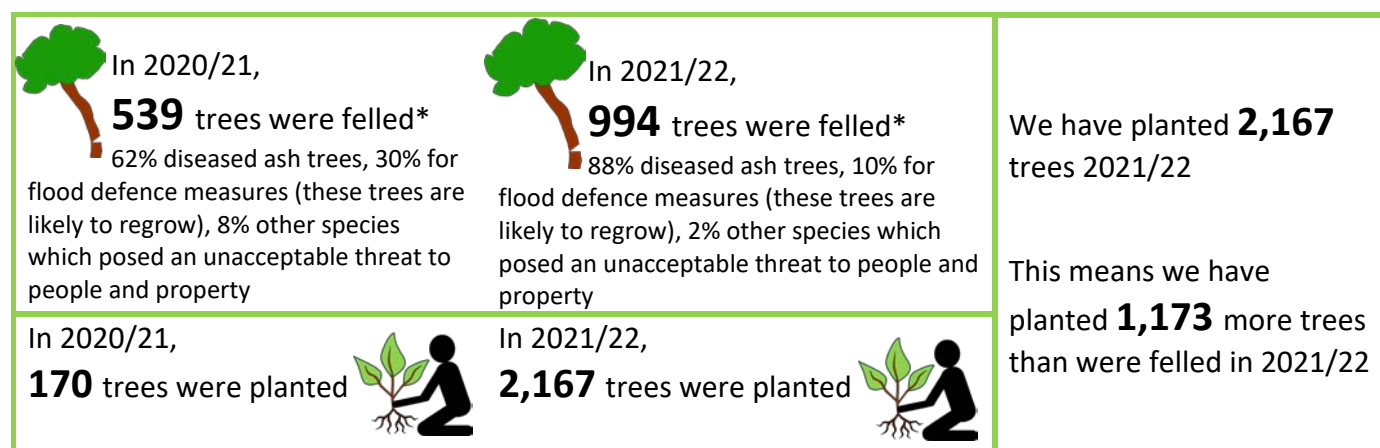
Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

⦿ Declaration of Nature Emergency:

! A nature emergency has been declared by Welsh Government and we are setting up a Climate Change and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel to address this issue. We are delivering several projects to ensure nature recovery:

- We have improved heath and bog habitats at Figyn, Mynydd Figyn and Mynydd Staffalu Carn.
- Restored a pond at Llyn Llech Owain Country Park that can now be used for pond dipping.
- Enabled the Wildlife Trust to train staff and use tracking tunnels for monitoring dormice.
- Purchased grass cutting equipment to experiment with pollinator friendly practices.




*Trees are being felled due to ash die back, storm damage, safety, and some development requirements

⦿ Phosphate in Rivers

! New evidence about the damaging effects of phosphates to water ecosystems and species has resulted in the publishing of new targets by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to reduce river phosphate levels in special areas of conservation (SAC) across Wales. We have implemented several positive interventions, some of which are noted below:

- Developing and implementing the first and only Nutrient Calculator in Wales.
- Published a [phosphate webpage](#) which has been replicated by other authorities.

Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015

	Audit Wales published the ' Planning Service Review ' report in July 2021 that contained 17 recommendations and stated that: <i>"Significant and long-standing performance issues in the planning service need to be urgently addressed to help support delivery of the Council's ambitions".</i> A range of interventions were implemented to focus on delivering the recommendations and a turnaround in performance has been achieved.
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⦿ There has been significant improvement on the determination of planning applications during the year. This is demonstrated by the following End of Year 2021/22 results:

	2020/21	2021/22	Improved by
% applications determined in time (PAM/018)	60.3% (735 of 1,219)	80.8% (1,536 of 1,900)	20.5%
% of planning appeals dismissed (PAM/019)	53.8% (7 of 13)	76.5% (13 of 17)	22.7%

The approval of major planning applications has a significant impact on job creation and the improvements made in planning during 2021/22 has resulted in the creation of 539 full-time and 52 part-time jobs (including 300 locating with the County) from the 95 applications approved. (See more WBO5 – Create More Jobs and Growth).

Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Local Authority by 2030

There have been 2 Internal Audits completed on NZC arrangements and their audit ratings were High.


Internal Audit	Rating	Good Systems in Place	Good Governance
	High	✓	✓
	Acceptable		
	Low		

- Our Re:Fit Cymru Phase 1 project has now been completed. This comprised various energy conservation measures, including solar PV installations, at 29 of our non-domestic buildings including schools. Phase 1 is projected to save £315,726 | 675 tCO2e each year.

Working towards Net Zero Carbon we are trying to reduce energy consumption and emissions:

① Annual Report Link	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21 vs 2021/22 % change
Non-Domestic Buildings				
Consumption (kWh)	66,407,242	59,808,497	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	14,443	12,581		
Street Lighting				
Consumption (kWh)	3,925,149	3,875,843	3,599,124	7%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,088	981	832	15%
Continued reduction in annual electricity consumption (kWh) in 2021/22. Virtually 100% of all CCC managed street lighting has now been converted to LED. Future savings will plateau until more energy efficient technologies become available and installed.				
Fleet Mileage				
Mileage (Miles)	5,154,668	4,427,070	4,262,681	3.7%
Diesel Used (Litres)	1,419,336	1,267,437	1,320,551	4.2%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	3,814	3,407	3,573	4.9%
Whilst total mileage has marginally reduced, there was a marginal increase in the total diesel consumed which resulted in higher emissions in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21. [Note: The BEIS calculation is a very blunt instrument that defaults to a national average for fleet vehicles. This could be refined by calculating actual carbon emissions for each individual CCC vehicle. I understand that a Fleet Review is to be completed by September 2022 – this which inevitably result in the procurement of more electric / ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV) which will significantly reduce carbon emissions]				
Business Mileage				
Mileage (Miles)	3,971,513	2,251,986	2,511,091	11.5%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,132	621	693	11.6%
There was a very significant reduction in emissions in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 (-45%). This was largely attributable to the impact of COVID-19 resulting in far greater homeworking and the use of ICT technology which reduced the need for travel. Whilst there has been a marginal increase in mileage and associated carbon emissions in 2021/22, emissions have not returned to the pre COVID-19 levels. [Note: The BEIS calculation is a very blunt instrument that defaults to a national average for fleet vehicles. This could be refined by calculating actual carbon emissions for each individual vehicle].				
Total				
Consumption (kWh)	70,332,391	63,684,340	Data not available at time of publication	
Mileage (Miles)	9,126,181	6,679,056		
Carbon Footprint (tCO2e)	20,477	17,590		

- As well as procuring all its electricity from renewable energy sources, the Council has made other efforts to reduce carbon emissions including converting street lights to low energy LED and upgrading its fleet to include electric cars and more energy efficient refuse and gritting vehicles.


	<p><u>Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030</u>: July 2022</p> <p>In the report, the Auditor General makes the following five calls for action from public bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Strengthen your leadership and demonstrate your collective responsibility through effective collaboration;</i> <i>Clarify your strategic direction and increase your pace of implementation;</i> <i>Get to grips with the finances you need;</i> <i>Know your skills gaps and increase your capacity; and</i> <i>Improve data quality and monitoring to support your decision making</i>
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NB: Early feedback shows that we are one of only a few authorities in Wales to have Net Zero Carbon plans in place

Prosiect Zero Sir Gâr 2030: Carmarthenshire County Council has engaged thousands of children through this initiative - a targeted effort to bring people together to support the Council's journey towards becoming net carbon zero by 2030. Primary school children across the county have been challenged to become '[Prosiect Zero Super Heroes](#)', sharing their super powers and ideas to help Carmarthenshire tackle climate change.




Flood & Water Management Act & Shoreline Management Plan

Internal Audit	Flood Defence (May 2021)	Assurance Rating:			
	<p>The review sought to provide assurance that the Authority is managing flood risk in accordance with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Flood Risk Management Plan.</p>	<table><tr><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr><tr><td>Low</td></tr></table> <p>Actions being tracked to improve rating</p>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

- Compared to previous years, 2021/22 has not seen as many significant flooding events resulting in high numbers of Carmarthenshire businesses and residents affected by internal flooding. That said, the winter of 2021/22 did result in significant flooding in places in October; which was followed up with Storms Arwen and Barra in late November and early December. The Council does not have responsibility for main river flooding, that rests with Natural Resources Wales.
 - Our flood incident management work has developed in 2021 and we are utilising more technology to advise on flood risk and prioritise resources.
 - Following the flooding events in Kidwelly in October 2021, we undertook a formal investigation and have successfully applied for Welsh Government grant funding to make improvements.
 - We have met with community leaders regarding current flood risk and future capital schemes. We continue to work collaboratively with partners, including Natural Resources Wales on the evolution of flood risk management interventions where appropriate.
 - The move from traditional sea defence to coastal adaption will be key in the future. In addition, all our coastal assets were inspected, and defects actioned accordingly.

- In 2021/22, following the development of business cases, we received £650,000 in revenue and capital grants from Welsh Government. Furthermore, we have received grants for developing feasibility work and business cases for various specific flood mitigation works worth circa £245,000.
- This year we have managed a £2.5 million works programme across 15 mitigation projects.

Towards Zero Waste strategy

	<p>During the last year Audit Wales undertook a review of the Waste Services, it's principal finding was that: "The Council has met its statutory recycling targets and has recently drafted a strategy to make its waste service more sustainable, but it has not finalised the strategy or got a clear plan for dealing with the large number of fly-tipping incidents in the county"</p> <p>An action plan to fully address the report's recommendations has been implemented.</p>
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- We have finalised our [Waste Strategy](#). This strategy sets out the considerations and measures proposed for future improvement of the waste service to achieve 70% recycling by 2024/25 and the expected 80% target by 2030.
- Our consultation and engagement on the Future Waste Strategy had over 4,000 responses and directly shaped our future service design. We have listened to that feedback, and from next year we will be carrying out separate collections of nappies and glass so that there is less waste to put in black bags.

Local Environment Quality (LEQ)

- We have published a [LEQ Management Plan 2022-2026](#) which details the direction of the Council's litter management within the county for the next 4 years.
- We have responded to 5,026 fly tipping requests with an average response for clearance within 2.4 days. This response rate has returned to pre pandemic rates.
- We have worked with our volunteers from communities throughout Carmarthenshire to tackle Local Environment Quality (LEQ) issues. In the past twelve months, the Council, community groups, schools and partners have collected over 2,000 bags of littered and fly-tipped waste from throughout the County. This fantastic result has been achieved with help from almost 1,400 volunteers working hard to help keep Carmarthenshire clean, with almost 350 litter picks organised in partnership with us.



Cleanliness Performance Data	2020/21	2021/22	Comment
Keep Wales Tidy Cleanliness Index for Highways <i>(STS/005a)</i>	80.7% (740.5/918)	76.8% (903.5/1,176)	! These measures are on target but <u>have declined on the previous year</u> . The number of inspections undertaken this year are back to pre-COVID numbers and we have exceeded the number of inspections and plot hotspot areas.
We will maintain a high level of streets that are clean <i>(PAM/010)</i>	98.1% (177/181)	94.1% (369/392) This result exceeds the National Target of 92%	

SIOP ETO

The Eto shop opened in February 2022 and has a real buzz about it. Popular with locals and visitors alike it is an Aladdin's cave of all sorts of affordable domestic goods ranging from, sports equipment, pictures, ornaments and much, much more. These are all items that would have otherwise been thrown away. Now though they are brought back to life and benefiting others.



This project is the start of a long-term ambition for the Council to ensure that as much of these items can be reused to benefit the environment and reduce the need to create further products. Preventing the waste entering the waste stream through repair and reuse is the overall goal so that local people can benefit from the project.

Since opening in late February over 750 items have found new homes, this equates to just under six tonnes of waste items being reused rather than being landfilled. Staff at the shop are continuously helping shoppers to look for what they need and note down items of interest or would like to see stocked in the shop.

Working in partnership with CWM Environmental on this project has allowed for a collaborative approach with residents to provide goods which they will benefit from buying. The shop has a community feel and our aim is to connect with the people of Llanelli town and the County to make this project meet their needs and ensure they are able to benefit from it.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016		
1	To advise and shape our response to the Nature Emergency declaration by Welsh Government in June 2021 Action ID 15665	March 2023	Rosie Carmichael
2	Three new areas of woodland are being established for the creation of new wildlife habitat that will contribute towards nature recovery, sequestration of carbon, creating areas for nature close to where people live and work. Action ID 15711	March 2023	Rosie Carmichael
3	To continue to work with partners to meet the damaging challenge of Phosphate in Rivers. Action ID 15681	March 2023	Ian Llewellyn
B	Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015		
1	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. Action ID 15674	March 2023	Ian Llewellyn
2	Ensure determination of all Planning Applications within agreed Welsh Government timescales. Measure PAM018	March 2023	Hugh Towns
3	To learn the lessons from the Planning Audit Wales report and the successful intervention approach taken and use as a blueprint if needed in future. Action ID 15682 (relates to audit report only)	March 2023	Rhodri Griffiths

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/ Target	Owner/ Resp. Officer
C	Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030		
1	The development of a strategic regional Eco- Park. Action ID 15662	March 2023	Dan John
2	To produce and manage the implementation of the Authorities Net Zero Carbon Plan to achieve the Council's commitment to become a Net Zero Carbon Plan local authority by 2030. Action ID 15699 + 15705	March 2023	Kendal Davies
D	Flood & Water Management Act & Shoreline Management Plan		
1	Manage and mitigate flood risk within our communities. Action ID 15993	Oct 2024	Ben Kathrens
E	Towards Zero Waste strategy		
1	Maintain, enhance, and improve the quality of the built and natural environment through the reduction of litter pollution, thereby creating a healthy and safe environment. Action ID 15689	Sep 2022	Geinor Lewis
2	Improve the way we manage waste in Carmarthenshire, increasing the waste reused, recycled or composted. Delivering against national beyond recycling strategy. Measure PAM030	March 2024	Dan John



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 11

Healthy & Safe Environment - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

Continued deterioration of highways infrastructure

We have adopted a risk-based approach which has focused investment in road surfaces predominantly on the higher-class roads.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

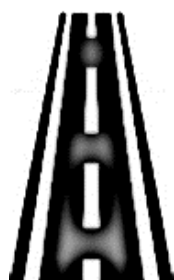
- Transportation & highways play a key role in supporting and sustaining our communities, it provides the vital infrastructure which connects people to one another, binds communities and enables businesses to grow and expand. A modern, successful economy is reliant upon the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and providing opportunities for people to gain access to employment, education, health, leisure and shopping.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

Roads that are in poor condition:



3.6% of our **A Class**

(An improvement on 4.1% in 2020/21)

2.8% of our **B Class**

(An improvement on 3.4% in 2020/21)

11.8% of our **C Class**

(An improvement on 12% in 2020/21)

The number of people being killed or seriously injured on the roads during 2021 to **81**
(2nd highest in Wales)

(55 in 2020)

Source: Stats Wales

- The condition of our main roads in Carmarthenshire has improved during 2021/22.**

Carmarthenshire has the second largest highway network in Wales, more than double the Welsh average, and although we are a predominantly rural County, we have the third highest traffic volumes. Through additional investment and in line with our risk-based approach we have improved the condition of our main roads, and this benefits a large number of road users. Compared to other local authorities we are still within the lower quartile for road condition, so more investment is required to maintain this key infrastructure than is available.

- Carmarthenshire has the second largest road network in Wales and the third highest traffic levels which has an influence on road collision statistics. In 2020 the covid pandemic suppressed travel levels in Wales generally which then rose in 2021 towards pre-pandemic levels. This has unfortunately led to an associated increase in the number of casualties killed or seriously injured on our roads, from 55 in 2020 to 81 in 2021 (111 in 2019). The overall trends remain downwards, and our Traffic & Road Safety Team continue to work in partnership with emergency services to promote improved road safety through education, enforcement and engineering. Specific initiatives focused on motorcyclists such as Dragon Rider provides training sessions to enhance riding skills and the Bike Down training sessions for motorcyclists to provide first aid skills in emergency situations to enable those first on scene to preserve life. The number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on our roads increased to 16 in 2021 from 10 in 2020 but remains lower than pre-pandemic figures of 25 in 2019. The number of 16-24 year olds killed or seriously injured reduced to 5 in 2021 (from 8 in 2020 and 17 in 2019). Our work with partner agencies to influence further reductions continue with a range of measures and engagement events, such as our Pass Plus Cymru initiative, where we work with driving instructors to give our young drivers enhanced skills as they take to our roads and our Mega Drive initiative focuses on 16-18 year olds to enhance road safety awareness and is delivered in partnership with Go Safe and our emergency services.

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Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Developing highway infrastructure

Key projects:

- **Cross Hands Economic Link Road** - this will be completed in the Summer of 2022. This represents the culmination of many years of planning and construction to deliver a key project which opens access to strategic employment and economic areas in Cross Hands and the wider area and will significantly improve traffic flows in the area. A shared use path is also being created along the link to encourage and support more walking and cycling in the area.
 - **M4 Junction 48 Improvements** - working in partnership with Welsh Government this major highway improvement scheme was completed in the winter of 2021. The project has significantly improved traffic flows at this crucial artery serving the Llanelli area and eased traffic congestion.
 - **Tywi Valley Path** - this ambitious project will create a 20Km off-road walking and cycling route linking Carmarthen to Llandeilo running alongside the River Tywi. **We have secured £16.7m of Levelling Up funding to enable the development and delivery of this key project.**
- For Active Travel, we have installed bike hire stations at key travel nodes such as Carmarthen Bus and Llanelli Railway Stations.
- Internally, there is a need to align and adapt our services to ensure we can meet the major challenges ahead. Several of our IT and information systems need to be developed and modernised, our workforce has adapted and will need to adapt further for the future, to enable us to digitally transform our operational processes to improve customer experience and efficiencies.
- Public Rights of Way service which manages an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways.

Route Type	Number of Routes	Length (KM)
Footpath	2956	2282.0
Bridleway	138	166.06
Byway Open to All Traffic	88	81.3
Restricted Byway	1	1.6
Totals	3183	2530.96

*September 2022

We are improving Electric Charging Infrastructure. We now have 41 fast charging points across the county. We have launched our ten-year Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. The superfast charging hub, pictured, is located off the A48 in Cross Hands and will provide four 50KW rapid chargers and one 150KW super rapid charger. The chargers draw power from 100% renewable energy sources and the photovoltaic cells on the canopy roof linked to battery backup storage on site will help reduce draw from the national grid. The project is funded through the Welsh Government's Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle Fund.



Our new, first of its kind in Wales, electric vehicle charging hub in Cross Hands

Integrated Public Transport Network

- We are working with our regional partners and Welsh Government to develop a strategic passenger transport project, referred to as the Metro for South West Wales. This will provide sustainable travel with rail and bus corridors through the region along key corridors routes which integrate with local connections.
- We are currently actively progressing the introduction of electric buses on the well-established T1 bus service between Carmarthen and Aberystwyth (see case study) and to explore the potential role and feasibility of piloting hydrogen powered buses in the region. This exciting project may represent a key alternative fuel source for the future with significant transport implications.

- ! The passenger transport industry has experienced very turbulent times and there are continuing factors impacting the industry. COVID-19 has had a fundamental impact on passenger numbers and hence revenues for operators. We have worked with Welsh Government to support the bus industry through this very difficult time and further global influences such as high fuel prices, driver shortages and staff sickness continue to create challenges within the industry. Our Passenger Transport Team have worked with operators to support them through this difficult time to continue providing essential services for customers. People in Carmarthenshire feel the pressures of the loss of public transport.
- ⦿ To improve the customer experience, we have utilised Welsh Government funding to install 42 Real Time Information displays, high quality bus shelters, wayfinding signage, significant infrastructure enhancements at Carmarthen and Llanelli Bus stations. These improvements are designed to encourage modal shift away from the private car thereby contributing to carbon reduction, social inclusion and economic activity, as well as improving the attractiveness, accessibility and vitality of our economic centres.

Support Community and Rural Transport

- ⦿ We successfully manage and provide a lead role in the LINC project on behalf of Welsh Government which includes the Fflecsi, Bwcabus and Trawscymru networks. These initiatives provided essential transport services throughout COVID-19, enabling key workers to continue to access employment. The service continued to be available 6 days a week 7am-7pm throughout the pandemic. Bwcabus has formed a new partnership with Viavan and Transport for Wales in May 2021, utilising Transport for Wales' new booking system and launching the rebranded service Fflecsi Bwcabus in October 2021. Fflecsi Bwcabus now enables passengers to book and manage journeys via an App as well as via a new call centre.

Road Safety Strategy

- ⦿ A new 20mph speed limit has been introduced in large areas of North and South Llanelli. These two large scale Welsh Government funded projects have involved working in partnership with local communities, elected representatives and schools.

Modernising our vehicle Fleet

- ! Our vehicle fleet are an essential supporting part of the services provided across the Council. Continuing to support our fleet and bringing in additional vehicles to maintain services through the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly challenging but nevertheless achieved. Whilst the pandemic is now receding, new challenges are emerging such as high fuel prices, driver shortages across the logistics industry and a shortage of vehicle fitters which continue to provide a stern test.
- ⦿ We are currently reviewing our Fleet Replacement Strategy which will include a transition to vehicles with sustainable fuel sources. This must carefully align with market supply as it continues to develop to ensure that the technological risks and financial risks to the Council are minimised and will need to ensure supporting infrastructure for fuelling and maintenance are in place.
- ⦿ The market supply for electric vehicles, and particularly for cars and small vans has developed quickly and is now providing reliable electric vehicle options for our Council Fleet. To support this transition Welsh Government funding has been secured to introduced 2 additional electric pool cars in 21/22. We also have the following programme to install 6 rapid and 13 fast chargers at our depots:
 - Trostre Depot (Llanelli) – 3 Rapid chargers (50kW) and 6 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - Cillefwr Depot (Carmarthen) – 2 Rapid Chargers (50kW) and 4 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - Cwmamman Depot (Glanaman) – 2 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - County Hall (Carmarthen) – 1 Rapid Charger (50kW) and 1 fast charger (7-22kW)

The market supply for larger and heavy goods is less developed and operational challenges exist. Alternative fuel sources such as hydrogen are likely to be part of a future solution, but this area requires further development.

Electric Buses for the TrawsCymru T1 Service: Carmarthen to Aberystwyth

We are bringing forward an exciting project in partnership with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales to replace the current bus fleet operating the T1 Carmarthen to Aberystwyth service with a brand new electric bus fleet. This £5m+ project is being funded by Welsh Government and will include the construction of a new bespoke bus depot located adjacent to the Nant y Ci Park and Ride site in Carmarthen just off the A40.

The service will operate with a fleet of 8 new electric buses which are currently being built. The new fleet of electric buses are expected to come into service in September 2022. Thousands of customers every year will benefit from an improved ride quality on high specification vehicles with wi-fi facilities and know that the journey is being made on a zero-emission vehicle.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Highway Infrastructure		
1	Deliver key infrastructure schemes Action ID 15713/15714	Sep 2022	Adrian Harries
B	Integrated Public Transport Network		
1	We will continue to work with national and regional bodies to develop the Southwest Wales Metro to support carbon reduction and the local economy Action ID 15759	March 2025	Stephen Pilliner
2	Monitor supply market for passenger transport to adapt services where required to changing supply conditions Action ID 15764	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
C	School Transport network		
1	We will continue to support the delivery of the Modernising Education Programme – redesigning networks to facilitate the movement of pupils as set out in our home to school transport policy Action ID 15767	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
D	Support Community and rural Transport		
1	Develop Community Transport Strategy to enable access to essential services from rural communities Action ID 15773	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
E	Integrated Public Transport Network		
1	We will support the development and delivery of a new railway station at St Clears Action ID 15787/15788/15789	Nov 2023	Simon Charles
F	Modernising our vehicle Fleet		
1	Update Fleet Replacement Programme & Strategy to transition towards Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and Depot Infrastructure Action ID 15716/15717/15718/15719/15720/15721/15722/15723	March 2023	Antonia Jones



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective



Well-being Objective 12 Healthy & Safe Environment - Promote Welsh Language & Culture

Following a challenging COVID-19 impacted 2 years for our Cultural services, we have made significant progress in protecting and enhancing our Cultural offer across the County with investment in key strategic facilities and services.

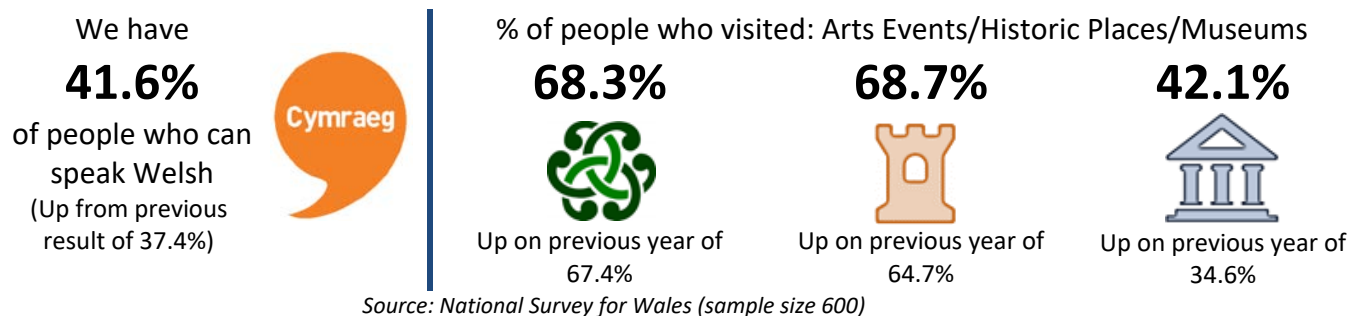
Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⦿ We have the highest number of Welsh speakers in our county compared to the rest of Wales, which makes Carmarthenshire a key strategic stronghold for the future of the Welsh language; however, we are also the county with the greatest reduction in the percentage of Welsh speakers according to the 2011 Census figures, which makes taking positive action crucial. The social and economic benefits of bilingualism are widely recognised, and research shows that 86% of individuals in Wales feel that the Language is beneficial to both the economy and individuals through cognitive and social benefits.
- ⦿ It is a unique selling point. Tourist and hospitality industries throughout Europe are now realising the importance of offering unique experiences. Having two languages and a sense of Welsh history and culture places Carmarthenshire in a strong position.
- ⦿ The pandemic has had a significant impact on opportunities to use Welsh socially and consistent action needs to be taken to safeguard its use as a living language.
- ⦿ The proportion of children acquiring the Welsh language in the home has decreased significantly over the last half century. Positive action needs to be taken to ensure all children can become bilingual.
- ⦿ Research has shown that, in general, people in Wales who regularly attend or participate in cultural activities are more likely to report higher subjective well-being and potential mental health benefits are seen.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



People who can Speak Welsh

- ⦿ 2021/22 National Survey for Wales data published in July 2022 showed that **41.6%** of participants said they could **speak Welsh** (based on a sample of 600 residents), this is the 3rd highest in Wales moving above Ceredigion for the first time in this survey. Our result also shows an improvement on the previous survey result of 37.4%. The National Survey for Wales gives a good annual indication of the number of Welsh speakers; however, the Census is the only source that gives a whole population figure, with 43.9% (78,000 speakers) noted in 2011, the highest number of Welsh speakers in any county. The initial Census 2021 findings were published in the July 2022 and the main releases two years after the Census (Spring 2023). This will provide the firmest evidence base for Welsh language skills in the County.

People who visited Arts Events, Historic Places and Museums

- ⦿ The most recent data published in June 2020 for participants from Carmarthenshire **attending an arts event, visiting historical places or visiting a museum** had increased. Both visits to Arts events and Museums were below the Welsh average of 70.4% and 42.5% respectively but the % visiting historic places are above the Welsh average of 62.5. *Please note that the questions asked whether they attended or visited these places in Wales and not specifically in Carmarthenshire.* Updated National Survey for Wales data may be published June/July 2022

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Implement and monitor the Welsh Language Standards

- ⦿ 30 members of staff from various departments have received training and enabled us to further strengthen our network of Welsh Language leaders who have an extended knowledge of the Welsh Language Standards within the Council's departments.
- ⦿ We provided a continuous flow of internal communication to ensure staff awareness of their responsibility under the Standards and published new and revised guidelines and flowcharts to promote appropriate working practices.
- ⦿ We established a new, monthly on-line opportunity (Y Clwb Clebran) for staff to use their Welsh language to mitigate the potential detrimental effect of the new ways of working on staff Welsh language skills and their ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

The development of Welsh in all our Education services

- ⓘ Please see WBO3 - The development of Welsh in all our (Education) services

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

- ⦿ Extensive work was done to gather information and establish a set of measures from partner organisations to compile a report on the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2016-21.
- ⦿ Preparatory work was done, including consultation with partner organisations, to form the new direction and content of the Welsh language Promotion Strategy for 2022-27.
- ⦿ We have facilitated the multi-agency Fforwm Iaith Sirol / County Welsh Language Strategic Forum, organising quarterly meetings to drive the work of the Promotion Strategy forward.
- ⦿ Extensive inter-departmental work was done to establish the Welsh language at the core of the Council's economic development work, to ensure that our regeneration programme is carried out in a way that will have a positive impact on the Welsh language.

Promoting our Welsh Culture & Heritage

- ⦿ Our investment into an exhibitions gallery on the first floor of Carmarthen Museum has enabled us to establish a partnership with the National Gallery London, to showcase world renowned artwork and collections here in Carmarthenshire, raising the profile of our Cultural offer and engagement with our local and visiting population.
- ⦿ £500k has been invested at Parc Howard Museum to replace the roof and to create a new café space for community use over the coming months and years. Working closely with the Friends of Parc Howard, Parc Howard Association and Llanelli Town Council, plans are being realised to relocate an accessible museum reception and retail area, as well as enhance interpretation and exhibition.
- ⦿ The new Museum of Land Speed, part of the Pendine Attractor project which also includes a new 44 bed hotel is due for completion in late Summer 2022. Working in partnership with Pendine Community Council over the past 2 years, this project will further enhance our Cultural and Tourism offer within the County, whilst regenerating this key coastal destination, a few miles down the coast from our iconic Dylan Thomas Boathouse in Laugharne.
- ⦿ A brand new £2m Archive has been completed and is scheduled for opening in July 2022 as our invaluable collections return to the new depository, situated at Carmarthen Library.
- ⦿ Our Theatrau Sir Gâr service undertook a research and development project for a new Welsh language comedy

- Libraries 24/7 - Remote Locker solutions are being installed at Whitland, Brynaman and Newcastle Emlyn Libraries to allow for greater access and flexibility for users to book, deposit and collect books at rural locations. Self-check in/out Beacons are now established at all Libraries with the All-Wales Library app now operational across the County network of libraries.



Support our Annual Cultural awards and promoting Annual Village and Town of Culture

- Our Town and Village of Culture programme is re-starting, following a difficult COVID-19 impacted 2 years, whilst our annual Cultural awards evening re-established itself in early Spring 2022 with a fantastic evening at our flagship Ffwrnes Theatre in Llanelli, celebrating our fantastic cultural offer and the work of our partners and volunteers across the County.

Is anyone better off?

We have worked in collaboration with the Tywi Gateway Trust to secure external funding and invest over £2m into the redevelopment and long-term sustainability of the Bishop's Park, the grounds of the Old Bishop's Palace and home to Carmarthenshire Museum in Abergwili, Carmarthen. A new Visitor Centre for the park with its glass-roofed Café is completed, bringing the old palace outbuildings into public use. Landscaping to improve access, habitat management and biodiversity conservation, with interpretive signage throughout the park help people enjoy and connect with their heritage and environment.

The Trust involves volunteers and the local community as part of the long-term investment into the site, which has also seen the local authority and external funders investing over £1m into its County Museum building. The museum is managed by CofGâr, Carmarthenshire County Council's Museum service. Restoring the historic museum, creating an accessible entrance, and refurbishing galleries preserves and promotes our County's unique cultural heritage collections. And special exhibitions and programmes explore themes connected with the environment, wellbeing, and current issues, helping people to learn from the past to improve today and plan for tomorrow.

The holistic development of the site now known as **Carmarthenshire Museum and the Bishops Park** is a collaboration unique in Wales between a local authority and charity. Connectivity is a shared value, helping build more cohesive, resilient communities, whilst creating opportunities for people to live healthier, more connected lives.

The project is live and new elements continue to be added. An accessible ramp into the Great Meadow will be installed, creating access into a unique habitat previously in private ownership. A grant has been awarded to the Trust to develop detailed plans and costs for the Walled Garden, a project focussing on social impact, sustainable food production, and skills development. And as Carmarthenshire Museum and the Bishops Park becomes a major hub at the start of the Tywi Valley Path, the benefits of walking and cycling for local communities, businesses and tourism will be realised.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Implement and monitor the Welsh Language Standards		
1	We will publish an annual report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards for the period 2022/23 (13280)	June 2023	Llinos Evans
2	We will review the current Internal Use of the Welsh language Policy and prepare a framework to support departments to increase the use of the Language in administration (15486)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
3	We will publish and adopt a policy on Awarding Grants and the Welsh language (16112)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
4	The % of staff at Level 3 of the Welsh language skills framework (Cym/001) (Baseline 2021/22= ? %)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
5	The % of posts recruited at the required level of the advertised post (Cym/002) (Baseline 2021/22=? %)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
6	The number of staff following Welsh language skills learning and improvement courses (Cym/003) (Baseline 2021/22=?)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
B	The development of Welsh in all our Education services		
1	See Well-being Objective 3		
C	The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy		
1	We will review and refresh the County's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan considering the progress to date and the Census 2021 results, which are expected during the year (14896)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
2	We will publish a report on the current Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (16113)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
3	We will work with partnership organisations on the promotion of the Welsh language in Llanelli (16115)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
4	We will lead and administer the County Welsh Language Strategic Forum and instigate the delivery of the revised action plan (16116)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
5	We will continue to work in partnership to ensure the delivery of the county's regeneration work has a positive impact on the Welsh language (16117)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
D	Promoting our Welsh Culture & Heritage		
1	We will work with the Marketing & Media Team and other key services to lay the foundations for, and welcome, the Urdd Eisteddfod to Llandovery in 2023 (16118)	June 2023	Llinos Evans
2	We will deliver a transformation plan for the existing Museums provision at the County Museum Abergwili, Parc Howard, Kidwelly Industrial Museum and Museum of Speed Pendine to improve the provision for residents and visitors (13289)	April 2023	Ian Jones



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective

Better Governance and Use of Resources





Well-being Objective 13 Better Governance and use of Resources

Better Governance

We have improved performance management arrangements

We have:

- ♦ produced a Performance Management Framework
- ♦ improved engagement and assurance on business planning to improve self-assessment
- ♦ introduced more integrated quarterly performance management monitoring and assessment

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, 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. To make this work there are key areas of corporate change that are required by the Act.
- ⊙ There are increasing demands and expectations yet less resources are available. Under these conditions we need to work even more efficiently and effectively to maintain services and improve where we can, delivering 'more (or even the same) for less'.
- ⊙ The way we work needs to focus on the long term, working in partnership and collaboration, involving people more, preventing problems before they materialise and ensuring we work in an integrated way to maximise our resources and reduce duplication; one of the ways we do this is through the Public Services Board (PSB).

1 Corporate Planning	Covered by Better Governance
2 Performance Management	
3 Workforce Planning	
4 Financial Planning	Covered by Better Use of Resources
5 Assets	
6 Procurement	
7 Risk	



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



71.2% of people agree that they can access information about us in the way they would like to
(previously 72.4%)
(Welsh average 74.9%)

74.6% of people know how to find what services we provide



Source: National Survey for Wales

35.5% of people agree that they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of our services
(previously 9%)
(Welsh average 33.8%)



Staff sickness
11.4 days per year
(previously 7.7 days)



According to the 2019/20 National Survey for Wales:

- ⊙ **71.2%** of participants agreed that they **could access information about us in the way they preferred**, below the Welsh average of 74.9%, and in 17th position.
- ⊙ **74.6%** agreed that **they knew how to find what services we provide**; below the Welsh average of 75.8% and in 13th position in Wales.
- ⊙ 2021/22 National survey for Wales results published in July 2022 shows that **35.5% agreed that they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of our services**, this is a vast improvement on the 2019/20 result of only 9% and is above the Welsh average of 33.8%. There has been a general increase across all authorities and comparatively, we have moved up to 5th position from 21st previously.

Staff Sickness

- ⊙ **Sickness figures** at the end of 2021/22 of **11.4 FTE days** is 3.7 days higher than last year and above the 2019/20 Welsh average of 11.2 FTE days (Authority 2019/20 performance was 10.74 FTE days). This is our highest sickness figure since 2008/09 (11.7 days) **However, it is important to note that this has been impacted by COVID-19 related sickness absence, which accounted for 2 FTE days per employee during 2021/22.** National benchmarking data indicates this increase is evidenced across all industries particularly sectors delivering frontline/operational services where working from home was limited.
- ⊙ The service areas with the highest sickness absence figures are Waste & Environment, Adult Social Care, Access to Education and Housing Property & Special Projects and Special Schools which are mainly front-line operational services which have been at the forefront of supporting our communities during the pandemic. The causes of absence are monitored and the impact and legacy of COVID-19 continues. People Management division provides advice and support for managers, who have the responsibility to manage attendance, they are provided with sickness data and analysis to plan appropriate action to ensure cases are managed and employees supported, in line with our sickness policies and guidelines.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Corporate Planning

- ⊙ To judge the progress of the Corporate Strategy we set out a table of 44 success measures. Despite being blindsided by the COVID-19 Pandemic, over the last 5 years 60% of these measures have improved since the start of the Strategy. **See Appendix 2.**
- ⊙ The Corporate Strategy was updated twice during its course to make sure that our Well-being Objectives were still relevant and we consulted on them each year to ensure continued support. For each of our 13 Well-being Objectives we identified the key steps we were taking to achieve them and then via business plans identified key actions and measures for each step.
- ⊙ During 2021/22 it was evident that Scrutiny Committees wanted to see an improvement in the measurements and actions set out in business plans so that they could hold the Services to account and see what success looked like. As a result of this feedback, and in response to new Local Government & Elections Act requirements relating to performance and governance, Business Plan measurement and SMART Action planning has been improved.
- ⊙ To further strengthen the development of departmental business plans an officer **Engagement and Assurance process** was set up during 2021/22 to discuss departmental business plans with each Departmental Management Team.

Performance Management

- ⊙ During 2021/22 a **new Performance Management Framework was introduced.** This framework sets out the Council's approach to monitoring and managing the performance of the Council's services.
- ⊙ Actions and targets to deliver the Corporate Strategy are monitored on a quarterly basis. The Corporate Management Team, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny committees receive quarterly Performance Management reports as well as the end of year report.
- ⊙ During 2021/22 **we developed a more integrated quarterly performance monitoring approach.** These more analytical reports added Member Task and Finish Scrutiny investigation findings, customer feedback (complaints and compliments) financial, internal and external audit findings, risk, people, asset management and other relevant data to build up a more rounded picture of progress.

INTERNAL AUDIT



REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The overall objective of the review was to assess the adequacy of the performance and reporting arrangements in place.

ACTION

An action plan has been drafted to improve this rating.

ASSURANCE RATING

HIGH	
ACCEPTABLE	✓
LOW	



As part of our response to the new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 we requested support from the Welsh Local Government Association to assess and challenge the adequacy of the Council's self-assessment arrangements and to provide advice on what further developments would encourage a culture of continuous improvement.

- ⦿ As a Council we already have a lot of data that we report and this needs to be better harnessed and consolidated. We want to make better use of data and in February 2022 we have set up a 'Data Insight' unit to corporately ensure that we become a data driven authority.
- ! We are taking a more critical assessment approach to producing the Annual Governance Statement so that it does not just set out what arrangements we have in place but how well they are working, how we know and what can we do better. We will also improve the timescales for its production.

Workforce Planning (People Management)

Carmarthenshire County Council has some 8,000 employees who each contribute to the achievement of our Corporate Priorities. We ensure that all staff are managed and developed in a fair and consistent way.



- ⦿ Our staff are encouraged to develop, and we are accredited with Investors in People.
- ⦿ Following Local Government Elections, we will **ensure learning & development is fully aligned with corporate priorities**, with needs and transformation plans integrated into our new Corporate Strategy.
- ⦿ The management of attendance and supporting **the well-being of staff** is a high priority for the Council. A robust attendance management framework and policy is in place and the Occupational Health function offers well-being support and advice with the aim of keeping people in work, providing advice and guidance on healthy living, stress management and mental health in the workplace. This has been particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic where support to staff has been stepped up via well-being initiatives and COVID-19 specific policies.
- ⦿ During 2021, a revised attendance management policy was introduced and associated e-learning to further support managers to manage attendance effectively. This is a priority for the Council, and management information is regularly provided to the Corporate Management Team and service managers for monitoring purposes.
- ⦿ Using existing governance arrangements (People Strategy Group) we will need to review our workforce strategy in light of the pandemic to support the organisation to recover.
- ⦿ During 2021 we held dedicated Local Government Association (LGA) facilitated workforce planning sessions with Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service; and developed an online workforce data dashboard for Heads of Service / Service Managers. We now need to build on this learning and consider the impact of COVID-19 on our workforce and develop a Strategic Workforce Plan.
- ⦿ Our annual **equal pay** audit does not suggest any evidence of discrimination within the pay structures, nor the allowances paid. The pay gaps are generally because of segregation of the sexes between job types rather than application of the allowances. As required, the Council publishes a Pay Policy each year to provide transparency on setting the pay of its employees. The Pay Policy is agreed by Full Council and is published on the Council's website.
- ⦿ The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a move to **agile working** and it is intended that this will inform how the Council manages its workforce in the future through smarter and better ways of working. This will impact on accommodation requirements and contribute to our ambition to become net zero carbon by 2030 by reducing the need to travel. The Staff Travel Policy will be reviewed to reflect the move to new ways of working.
- ⦿ Our Whistleblowing Policy is being used by employees to report serious concerns which may be in the public interest. Online learning, promotion of the policy and monitoring of whistleblowing complaints continues to ensure that employees are aware of it.

Springing Forward - Strategic management of its workforce



Audit Wales undertook an all-Wales project to examine the local government overall arrangements and approach to transforming, adapting, and maintaining the delivery of services. For Carmarthenshire it found that - *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.*

Ensuring Effective External Communication

Since the introduction of *My Hwb* account (for online services and payments), 78,163 residents have signed up for the service. We're adding more services online and reviewing our existing e-forms to ensure that they are easy to use.

- ⦿ The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. This had to be taken forward in a different way during 2020/21 due to COVID19 restrictions and the establishments having to be closed. Customers have been able to contact online and telephone and virtual meetings have been held. The increasing use of Social Media has allowed open engagement and conversations with members of the public. In addition to this Social Media is an excellent tool for promoting council services.
- ⦿ Throughout 2021/22 we have seen an increase in residents and businesses accessing information, support and council services online, the number of visits to our website has increased yet again this year by a further 7%.
- ⦿ The pandemic without a doubt has supported this increase to the website and how we present information bilingually, often at very short notice has been welcomed and complimented by the public.
- ⦿ Accessibility of information is key and we are proud to have this year passed the accessibility standard. It is so important to remember that residents, visitors and businesses are now accessing the website in various ways and interestingly 58.9% access using their mobile device. This is key when considering how to present information to ensure we engage to as a wider audience as possible.
- ⦿ Key stats CCC website 2021/2022
 - Pageviews: 6,144,228
 - Sessions: 3017983
- ⦿ Key stats for social media, email marketing and video
 - 19.3m Twitter reach
 - 8.82m Facebook reach
 - Published 3259 posts
 - Dealt with 4055 'inbound' posts, enquiries via comments, written on our wall or sent as a direct message
 - 53.3k link clicks
 - Facebook – New followers – 1,201. Total followers: 20,451
 - Twitter – New followers – 372. Total followers 11,151
 - 443,141 emails sent to MyAccount, businesses and 3rd sector. 267,018 unique opens.
 - Video – 115,800 views

Is anyone better off?

Tackling Employee Poverty

The Council continues to support its lowest paid employees and workers by **continuing to pay the Real Living Wage supplement** to ensure that our lowest paid receive the equivalent of £9.90 per hour (including fixed allowances).

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/ Target	Owner/ Resp. Officer
A	Corporate Planning		
1	Following Local Government Elections in May 2022 and the publication of the new administrations manifesto we will reset the Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives (15488)	July 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
2	We will further develop business planning processes and engagement and assurance approaches (15496)	July 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
B	Performance Management		
1	We will continue to develop the Performance Management Framework and our self-assessment processes (15496 & 15487)	March 2023	Rob James
2	We will continue to develop our Integrated Quarterly Performance Management Observations reporting (15496)	March 2023	Rob James
3	We will improve on the timescale for producing the Annual Governance Statement (16134)	March 2023	Helen Pugh
4	Develop an engagement and consultation plan for the authority (15580)	March 2023	Deina Hockenhill
C	Workforce Planning (People Management)		
1	We will develop a new Transformation Strategy; ensuring that Learning & Development priorities and programmes are fully aligned with corporate priorities and needs; further developing the Council's Leadership and Management Programme to support key corporate priorities (15516)	September 2022	Jon Owen
2	Further improve our recruitment processes via the introduction of new integrated recruitment IT system. (IIP) (15512 & 15507)	March 2023	Alison Wood / Jon Owen
3	We will evaluate the employee experience and undertake research to develop a Workforce Engagement Strategy that will underpin the new workforce strategy (15499 & 15500 & 15501)	June 2022	Cheryl Reynolds
4	We will develop more proactive preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices (15502)	March 2023	Heidi Font
5	Developing a set of performance and outcome measures that reflect the Council's ambitions for its workforce (16135)	March 2023	Cheryl Reynolds
D	Ensuring Effective External Communication		
1	Deliver the council's corporate communications strategy following the key principle of <i>One Council, One Vision, One Voice</i> . As part of the launch of this strategy, communicate and embed a corporate communications standard across all departments to ensure the basic principles of communication are understood and utilised by all - for example, communications are always accessible, bilingual, friendly and with a clear call to action (15569)	August 2023	Deina Hockenhill

Making Better Use of Resources

Through careful financial planning we have been able to set a balanced budget that will support the Council to continue delivering vital services and will allow us to continue to provide first class services to the residents and businesses of Carmarthenshire.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- There are increasing demands and expectations yet less resources are available. Under these conditions we need to work even more efficiently and effectively to maintain services and improve where we can, delivering 'more (or even the same) for less'.

The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, 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. To make this work there are **7 key areas** of corporate change that are required by the Act.

- 4 Financial Planning
- 5 Assets
- 6 Procurement
- 7 Risk

**Better Use
of Resources**



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



5.85% increase of
online payments
(From 53,454 to 56,582
transactions)

Financial Impact:

We have
administered
and have paid:
£78m of grants to support
local business
£3.4m of Winter Fuel
Support Scheme payments.
£397.6k of Discretionary
Housing Payments.
Over £4m of Self Isolation
Support Payments and
10,754 applications received.



Through
our
delivery of
Community Benefits
548 person
weeks of targeted
recruitment & training
was delivered

9.9% of people agree
that we ask for
their views
before setting
our budget
(previously 11.3%)
(Welsh average 9.2% and in 9th
place)
(Source: National Survey for Wales)



Online payments

- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and with increased access to online services, this has created a natural shift with many customers contacting us, submitting forms and documents and paying for our services electronically with a 5.85% increase in the number of online payments from 53,454 in 2020/21 to 56,582 transactions during 2021/22.

Organisational 'running costs'

- We have administered a total of £78 million from Welsh Government Grants to the Carmarthenshire Business Community to support businesses during these challenging times.
- Since November 2021, we have administered the Winter Fuel Support Scheme and processed 9,480 cases and have paid out £3,409,200 to support Carmarthenshire residents.
- We have paid out £397,584 of Discretionary Housing Payments and up to mid-March received 10,754 Self Isolation Support Payment applications and paid out over £4 million to eligible claimants.

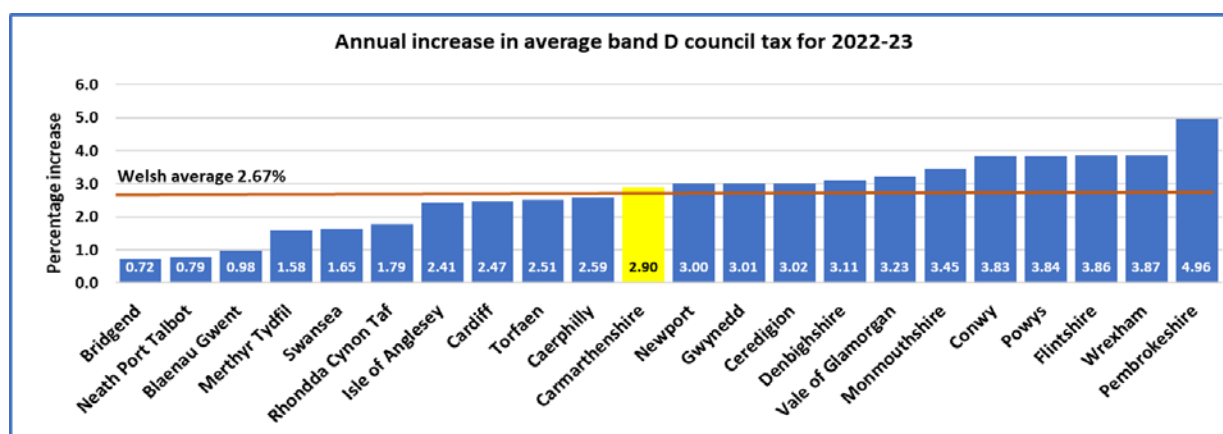
- Through our delivery of Community Benefits over 548 person weeks of targeted recruitment and training was delivered in 2021/22 through the Council's 21st Century Schools project across the County.
- We have claimed £27.4 million from Welsh Government via hardship claims to support additional COVID-19 services. We have also claimed £4.5million relating to claims for loss of income.
- Despite inflationary pressures on a truly unprecedented scale, the Council was able to set a balanced budget of £416 million which provided sufficient funding to sustain service levels, realised efficiency savings where possible and curtailed council tax as much as possible to 2.5%.

People agree that the Council asks for their views and as part of Carmarthenshire County Council budget consultation we sort views of members and public before setting the budget

- The 2019/20 National Survey for Wales showed the number of participants agreed that *we ask for their views before setting our budget* was 9% (Welsh average 9.2%), this is a decline on the previous year of 11.3% and in 9th position (previously 7th). Due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for the measure, although we continued to hold our annual budget consultation and engaged with councillors and members of the public.

Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Financial Planning



- Carmarthenshire has the 11th lowest annual % increase at 2.90% and just above the Welsh average of 2.67%. This is the lowest % increase since 2012/13 at 2.38%. The Council Tax levels in Carmarthenshire is the 9th lowest in Wales (Band D) at £1,799.92 an almost £320 less than the highest level in Wales and just above the Welsh average of £1,777.18.
- Audit of Financial Statement** – An unqualified Audit report was received from Audit Wales on all statements (financial year 2020-21) and the audit found no major issue other than generic-all Wales matters, considering we have undertaken £140 million of additional COVID-19 related funding across dozens of specific grants.
- A mixed methods approach to ascertain views on the 2022-25 budget took place and this was publicised in local and regional press, local radio advertisements and via equality groups including Equality Carmarthenshire, Ageing Well Forum, Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition of Action and via Town and Community Councils. There was a low response rate, possibly due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns. Responses were received via the Council's online consultation page on the website, emails were submitted together with social media responses via Facebook and Twitter and all comments and views were taken into consideration. [REVENUE BUDGET 2020 to 2023 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/revenue-budget-2020-to-2023)



- There have been 3 Internal Audits completed during 2021-22 looking at the following areas and their audit findings were:

INTERNAL AUDIT



RATING	COUNCIL TAX	NNDR	AGS
HIGH			
ACCEPTABLE	✓	✓	✓
LOW			

We are tracking action plans to improve these ratings

Assets

- Just under £2.9m was generated from Capital receipts during 2021/22 which exceeds our target by almost £0.75m, this covers some of the £0.4m shortfall in 2019/20 and £1.8m shortfall 2020/21.

SPRINGING FORWARD – STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS



Audit Wales undertook an all-Wales project to examine the local government overall arrangements and approach to transforming, adapting, and maintaining the delivery of services. 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 and that performance management of assets could be improved.*

Procurement

- We have addressed the key findings, highlighting good practice and recommendations from the 'Procuring well-being in Wales' report (published 25/02/2021) from the Office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales [procuring-well-being-in-wales](#).



- We have amended our Sustainable Risk Assessment (SRA) template which ensures that the sustainability issues such as environmental, social, economic & cultural issues can be factored into the specification for individual tenders to incorporate elements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. We also include service provision information relating to the 5 ways of working i.e. Long Term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration & Involvement. We have produced an Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Policy and drafted the Council's first annual written statement on the steps taking during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in our organisation and our supply chains.

Risks

- The Corporate Risk Register is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee every 6 months and is reviewed by the Corporate Management Team every quarter as part of the performance management information and in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. We use a **"Web Based Risk Register Software"**, which allows Departments to input, access, maintain and manage both Corporate, Service and Project Risks.



A TIC review that concluded in December 2021 noted that *'Although the COVID-19 pandemic initially impacted on the ability to progress the recommendations contained within the Audit Office Review and follow-up Internal Audit Review, a number of key actions have now been implemented and good progress has been made across the action plan in general.'*



Business is about people

We value our diverse range of suppliers and acknowledge the importance of having access to a quality and diverse supplier base, recognising that ***business is about people by talking to them, listening to them, and understanding them.*** To this aim we have held 7 Live Tender Webinars virtually via Teams with a total of 164 suppliers in attendance over the last financial year. The aim of these sessions was to inform prospective tenderers of the forthcoming tendering opportunities and the requirements of these service/goods.

We also understand that the prospect of tendering for business with us can sometimes appear to be a daunting task. Therefore, we have actively engaged with 63 suppliers through a series of first point of contact sessions (1-2-1 meetings) over the same period, engaging with suppliers who are interested in working with the Council.

A Meet the Buyer Event was organised by the appointed main contractor Bouygues for the Pentre Awel Zone 1 Development and was held at Parc y Scarlets, Llanelli. A total of 107 suppliers/contractors attended the event throughout the day with Procurement and Community Benefits Officers representing the Corporate Procurement Unit at the event. This Meet the Buyer event was aimed at giving opportunity to second tier, local suppliers to learn of potential sub-contracting opportunities.

We have developed a Supplier Guide for current and potential contractors, suppliers, and providers with the aim to help provide organisations who want to work with us a clear understanding of how to bid for contracts and what is required during the quotation or tendering process. This is now available electronically and appears on our website [Supplier Guide to Tendering \(gov.wales\)](#). It contains a variety of helpful information, advice, and guidance in relation to procurement and “How to Tender” with Carmarthenshire County Council.

Supplier Guide to Tendering

In this section

- | | |
|---|--|
| → 1. Introduction | → 8. What is included in a Tender document/package |
| → 2. What do we spend our money on? | → 9. The Dos and Don'ts of Tendering |
| → 3. Where and with whom is our money spent? | → 10. Supplier Engagement Events |
| → 4. How We Buy | → 11. Getting Ready to Tender |
| → 5. What rules, regulations & procurement procedures do we follow? | → 12. Procurement Glossary |
| → 6. How does the tendering process work? | → 13. Advice and Support |
| → 7. Where do we advertise our contract opportunities | |

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Financial Planning		
1	Use of the Council's reserves to invest in the County and support future development (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire) 16063	March 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
2	Ensure the Council manages its budgets effectively and prudently (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire) 16064	March 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
3	We will undertake the closure and Audit of the Accounts within the appropriate timescales 16061	June 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
B	Assets		
1	We will commence work on the transformation of the former Debenhams Store to provide a multi service hub covering health, education and leisure	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stuart Walters
2	Delivery of Phase 1 Pentre Awel providing business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities 15155+12985	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Steffan HG Jenkins
3	We will apply and embed the sustainable development principle in the way it plans, delivers and monitors the management of its assets # Audit Wales Recommendation -Springing Forward 16136	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
4	<i>We will improve the performance management of our assets.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 benchmarking performance on asset management with other organisations # Audit Wales Recommendation-Springing Forward 16137	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
5	We will review and formally adopt the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan by March 2023 15541	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
C	Procurement		
1	We will work with departments to deliver compliant tender exercises through the implementation of a category management approach. 15286	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Clare Jones & Gemma Clutterbuck
2	We will continue to develop our approach to early engagement of Local Businesses. 15288	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Clare Jones & Gemma Clutterbuck
D	Risks		
1	Continue to implement the action plans developed in response to the WAO/Internal Audit Review, with priority to be given to ensuring that the Risk Toolkit is formally adopted and used to inform development sessions for managers at a divisional level and dedicated development sessions for Departmental Risk Champions. 15292 (Sub Actions: 14302, 14303 & 16040)	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Julie Standeven



View our [detailed progress commitments and targets here](#) for 2021/22 against this objective

APPENDICES



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.
- our governance is effective for securing the above.

How our Well-being Objectives contribute to National Well-being Goals

Carmarthenshire's 2021/22 Well-being Objectives			7 National Well-being Goals						
			Prosperity	Resilience	Healthier	More equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant culture & Welsh Language	Global responsibility
Start Well	1	Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	2	Help children live healthy lifestyles	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3	Support and improve progress, achievement and outcomes for all learners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Live Well	4	Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work and improve the lives of those living in poverty	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	5	Create more jobs and growth throughout the county	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	6	Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour & obesity)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Age Well	8	Support community cohesion, resilience and safety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	9	Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	10	Look after the environment now and for the future	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
In a Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment	11	Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	12	Promoting Welsh Language and Culture	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	13	Better Governance and Use of Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Success measures for our Well-being Objectives

Details and explanation of performance for each of these success measures can be found under the relevant Well-being Objective in this report.

The Result column is based on the two most recent years results.

Wellbeing Objectives and Success Measures	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Result
WBO1 - Best Start in Life							
Children in care who had to move 3 or more times <i>(PAM/029)</i>	9.2%	8.8%	10.4%	8.6%	4.7%	6.6%	Declined
WBO2 - Children - Healthy Lifestyles							
Childhood obesity <i>(Child Measurement Programme NHS)</i>	29.4%	26.6%	30.4%				Declined
WBO3 - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners							
Educational attainment - Average Capped 9 points score <i>(Year 11 pupils) (PAM/032)</i>			363.1	367.2			Improved
School attendance rates (Primary) <i>(PAM/007)</i>	94.8%	94.4%	93.9%	93.9%			Same
School attendance rates (Secondary) <i>(PAM/008)</i>	94.5%	94.3%	93.8%	93.5%			Declined
Satisfaction with child's primary school <i>(NSW)</i>	93%	90%	84%	95%			Improved
Number of leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training <i>(NEETs)</i>	Year 11 <i>(PAM/009)</i>	2.1%	1.4%	1.8%	1.5%	1.8%	Improved
	Year 13 <i>(5.1.0.2)</i>	2.0%	3.0%	4.9%		3.5%	Improved
WBO4- Tackle Poverty							
Gap in the Average Capped 9 points score (Year 11 pupils) for those eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not eligible <i>(NWBI)</i>			19.7%	17.9%			Improved
Households successfully prevented from becoming homeless <i>(PAM/012)</i>	64%	65.1%	59.4%	46.4%	46.4%	50.5%	Improved
Households in material deprivation <i>(NWBI)</i>	15.3%	15.8%	13.5%	11.3%		12.0%	Declined
Households Living in Poverty <i>(CACI's 'PayCheck' Data)</i>			35.5%	33.7%	33.8%	35.6%	Declined
WBO5 - Creating Jobs and Growth							
Employment figures <i>(ONS – Annual Population Survey) (NWBI)</i>	75.2%	73.7%	71.6%	71.7%	68.1%	69.6%	Improved
Average Gross weekly pay <i>(ONS – Annual Survey of hours and earnings)</i>	£494.5	£517.8	£511.3	£536.2	£574.5	£566.9	Declined
Number qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above <i>(Stats Wales) (NWBI)</i>	37.4%	37.8%	38.0%	41.4%	39.9%	37.7%	Declined
People moderately or very satisfied with their jobs <i>(NSW) (NWBI)</i>	80.0%	82.5%		78.9%			Declined
WBO6 - Affordable Homes							
Number of affordable homes in the County <i>(7.3.2.24)</i>	173	235	247	315	158	308	Improved
WBO7 - Healthy Lives							
Adults who say their general health is Good or Very Good <i>(NSW)</i>		69.0%	66.0%	69.6%	69.7%	68.6%	Declined
Adults who say they have a longstanding illness <i>(NSW)</i>		50.0%	53.0%	50.5%	51.2%	40.1%	Improved
Adult mental well-being score <i>(NSW) (NWBI) (score out of 70)</i>	50.2		51.1			48.8	Declined
Adults who have two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours <i>(NSW) (NWBI) (Not smoking, drinking < 14 units or lower, eating 5 portions fruit & veg the previous day, having a healthy body mass index, being physically active at least 150 minutes the previous week).</i>		91.8%	91.2%	87.6%		92.4%	Improved

Details and explanation of performance for each of these success measures can be found under the relevant Well-being Objective in this report.

The Result column is based on the two most recent years results

Wellbeing Objectives and Success Measures	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Result
WBO8 - Community cohesion, resilience & safety							
% Say they have a sense of community (NSW)(NWBI) (Derived from feeling of belonging; different backgrounds get on, treat with respect')	47.7%		51.6%		68.6%	68.0%	Declined
People feeling safe (NSW)(NWBI) (At home, walking in the local area, and travelling)	76.9%		76.1%		74.6%	66.7%	Declined
WBO9 - Older people to age well							
Agree there's a good Social Care Service available in the area (NSW)	56.2%		47.5%		66.0%		Improved
Number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (PAM/015)	167 days	161 days	157 days	176 days	347days	259 days	Improved
People who are lonely (NSW)(NWBI)	17.1%	16.6%		17.3%		15.4%	Improved
WBO10 - Look after the environment							
Renewable energy generated (kWh)	670,400 kWh	937,330 kWh	979,071 kWh	997,480 kWh	1,059,364 kWh	Not available at time of publication	
Council's Energy Consumption (kWh)			69,059,743 kWh	70,332,391 kWh	63,684,340 kWh		Improved
Rates of recycling (PAM/030)	66.23%	63.64%	58.95%	64.66%	66.08%	61.68%	Declined
WBO11 - Highways & Transport							
Road conditions (PAM/020) A Roads	4.3%	4.1%	5.2%	5.4%	4.1%	3.6%	Improved
(PAM/021) B Roads	3.5%	3.1%	4.2%	4.7%	3.4%	2.8%	Improved
(PAM/022) C Roads	11.6%	11.9%	12.5%	12.5%	12.0%	11.7%	Improved
Road casualties (5.5.2.21)	102	83	97	111	55	81	Declined
WBO12 - Promote Welsh Language & Culture							
Can speak Welsh (NSW)(NWBI)	40.1%	43.6%	37.8%	37.4%		41.6%	Improved
People attended arts events in Wales in last year (NSW)	69.3%	67.4%		68.3%			Improved
People visited historic places in Wales in last year (NSW)	63.8%	64.7%		68.7%			Improved
People visited museums in Wales in last year (NSW)	36.0%	34.6%		42.1%			Improved
WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources							
'Do it online' payments	29,020	34,494	39,321	46,044	53,454	56,582	Improved
People agree that they can access information about the Authority in the way they would like to. (NSW)		70.8%	72.4%	71.2%			Declined
People know how to find what services the Council provides (NSW)		71.9%	72.1%	74.6%			Improved
People agree they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of local authority services. (NSW)		11.4%		9.0%		35.5%	Improved
Staff sickness absence levels (PAM/001)	10.8 days	10.1 days	9.8 days	10.7 days	7.7 days	11.4 days	Declined
People agree that the Council asks for their views before setting its budget. (NSW)		8.0%	11.3%	9.9%			Declined

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			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 available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results												Best Results											
					Arrows start from our previous position												to our 2021/22 position											
14	% that accomplished 5 digital skills in past 3 months**	73.1	72.0	↓	67.0																						83.7	
15	% of people participating in any sport or physical activity	62.6	56.7	↓	43.4																						66.3	
16	% of people participating in sporting activities three or more times a week (NWBI/38)	35.1	35.2	↑	22.3																						42.6	
17	% of people feeling safe at home, walking in the local area, and when travelling (NWBI/25)	74.6	66.7	↓	46.6																						85.0	
18	% of people feeling safe at home after dark	96.8	95.3	↓	90.5																						99.0	
19	% of people feeling safe in local area after dark	84.4	80.7	↓	58.7																						89.9	
20	% of people feeling safe on public transport after dark	82.5	76.2	↓	59.7																						89.9	
21	% of people feeling safe travelling by car after dark	96.6	97.3	↑	95.1																						99.4	
22	% of people who agree that there is good community cohesion in their local area (NWBI/27)	68.6	68.0	↓	38.9																						77.6	
23	% of people felt that they belonged to their local area	84.6	81.5	↓	70.6																						89.4	
24	% of people who are lonely (NWBI/30)	17.3	15.4	↑	17.8																						7.0	
25	Average satisfaction score for the education system in Wales (scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'extremely bad' and 10 is 'extremely good')	6.0	6.9	↑	6.0																						7.2	
26	% of people that have any plans to start an education or training course in the next three years	23.1	23.2	↑	16.9																						33.8	
27	% of people that contacted their local councillor in the past 12 months. (i.e. with an enquiry, complaint or problem)	12.9	15.7	↑	10.0																						24.2	

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			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 available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results											
					Arrows start from our previous position											to our 2021/22 position											
28	% of people agreed their local councillor worked closely with their community.	new question	38.8	new question	25.3																						58.1
29	% of people with a good understanding of what their local councillor does for their local community.	new question	40.3	new question	32.6																						59.0
30	✓ % of people who say their general health was Good or Very Good	69.7	68.6	↓	64.1				Same																		79.3
31	✓ % of adults who say they have a longterm illness	51.2	40.1	↑	41.1																						26.9
32	✓ % of adults who have 2 or more healthy behaviours not smoking / not drinking above weekly guidelines / eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day / physically active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week /maintaining a healthy weight/body mass index	87.6	92.4	↑	83.1																						97.5
33	% of adults who smoke	16.2	15.7	↑	19.8																						6.3
34	% of adults who are a E-Cigarette user	6.7	6.4	↑	10.3						Same																0.9
35	% of adults who drink more than 14 units	21.5	15.1	↑	23.3																						8.9
36	% of adults who eat more than 5 portions of fruit and vegetable	21.7	33.5	↑	14.3																						42.4
37	% of adults who are active for more than 150 minutes a week	55.6	64.8	↑	38.3																						69.5
38	% of adults who are active for less than 30 minutes a week	27.6	21.7	↑	50.1																						17.3
39	% of adults who are overweight or obese (BMI 25+)	63.6	68.2	↓	79.9																						50.0
40	% of adults who are obese (BMI 30+)	28.2	28.4	↓	36.5																						17.9
41	✓ Adult Mental Well-being score (NWBI/29) (Out of a maximum score of 70)	51.1	48.8	↓	46.1																						51.6

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			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 available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results											
					Arrows start from our previous position											to our 2021/22 position											
42	✓	% of Households in material deprivation (NWBI/19)	11.3	12.0	↓	14.1																					7.1
<p>* Households with internet access - NOTE - The 2021/22 survey was based on a sample of 12,500 in Wales compared to a far smaller sample in 2020/21 of just 3,500, which may well have affected the result.</p> <p>** 5 digital skills are 1. Being safe and legal online; 2. Problem solving; 3. Transacting; 4. Communicating; 5. Handling information and content)</p>																											

Regulatory Reports 2021/22

Several regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months.

- There are some local reports that are specific to Carmarthenshire, these are noted in **bold** 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:



August 2021	<u>Review of Planning Services Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
September 2021	<u>Review of Waste Services Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
September 2021	<u>Regenerating Town Centres</u>
September 2021	<u>A Picture of Public Services</u>
September 2021	<u>A picture of local government</u>
October 2021	<u>A Picture of Higher and Further Education</u>
October 2021	<u>A Picture of Schools</u>
September 2021	<u>Financial Sustainability of Local Government – COVID Impact, Recovery & Future Challenges</u>
November 2021	<u>Carmarthenshire County Council – Financial Sustainability Assessment</u>
November 2021	<u>WG Cosy homes programme</u>
December 2021	<u>Commissioning Care Homes for Older People</u>
January 2022	<u>Emergency Services in Wales Collaboration</u>
January 2022	<u>Annual Audit Summary</u>
April 2022	<u>Direct Payments</u>



November 2021	<u>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
April 2022	<u>Direct Payments for Adult Social Care</u>
May 2022	<u>Carmarthenshire County Council In-house domiciliary care service</u> <u>Inspection Report</u>

May 2021	<u>Turning learners into users of the Welsh Language – Effective Practice</u>
May 2021	<u>Creating a digital platform for the Welsh for Adults sector</u>
June 2021	<u>How schools and colleges used RRRS and catch-up grants for post 16 learners</u>
July 2021	<u>Summary of findings from our national thematic reviews 2020/21-Thematic Report</u>
July 2021	<u>The teaching of Welsh history including, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history, identity and culture</u>
Oct 2021	<u>Developing pupils social and emotional skills</u>
December 2021	<u>Supporting Resources</u> <u>We don't tell our teachers-Experiences of peer-on-peer sexual harassment among secondary school pupils</u>
January 2022	<u>All-age schools in Wales - A report on the challenges and successes of establishing all-age schools</u>
February 2022	<u>Summary of engagement calls and visits to schools and PRUs-autumn 2021</u>
February 2022	<u>Welsh Immersion Education - Strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners</u>
March 2022	<u>The curriculum for Wales-How are regional consortia and local authorities supporting schools?</u>
April 2022	<u>We don't tell teachers, but schools need to know – a report for learners</u>
May 2022	<u>Effective practice- Placing children at the centre of learning</u>

Performance Assessment on the extent to which we are:

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

Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 we have a duty keep under review the extent to which we are fulfilling the above 'performance requirements'

Our self-assessment uses the Well-being Objectives set out in the body of this report to give a more holistic view of Council performance.

However, we have also examined performance in a departmental manner to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

Chief Executive's Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	How well are we doing and how do we know?
Performance Requirements	How can we do better? (see bullet points)
1. <i>exercising functions effectively</i>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>The service has performed well during this period despite significant challenges. Officers have continued to work closely with and support their client departments and elected members</p> <p>The level of complaints received about the service continues to be very low.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity for S106 agreements. Additional staff resources have been secured to address this. • Develop participation and petition scheme for Democratic Services <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>Our first Digital Transformation Strategy 2017-2020 set out the Council's strategic digital priorities and aspirations and ensured that when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, we as an authority and our service were in a very strong position to respond and recover. Annual Reporting of the Digital Transformation Strategy shows good progress.</p> <p>Our work with the PSB has progressed well and a Well-being Assessment has been produced. Key Council Annual Reports in Equalities, Welsh Language and the overall Council's progress on Corporate Strategy show good progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT resource and capacity is limited to meet increasing demand for transformation. • More can be done with improving our Security (Cyber) and Disaster Recovery. • Continue to improve the approach to embedding integrated quarterly performance monitoring.

exercising
functions
effectively
(continued)

People Management

COVID-19 continued to present challenges for our workforce during 2021. However, our employees continued to step up to deliver the best possible services, with almost a thousand employees prepared to retrain and step in and help their colleagues, doing very different jobs in a positive and highly supportive manner

Our staff are encouraged to develop, and we are accredited with Investors in People.



One of the post-pandemic legacies, and a significant risk for the service, has been the Division's capacity to manage increased vacancy volumes and demand for our services, which has been compounded by Brexit.

There have been significant Social Care and Teaching recruitment problems.

Platinum Corporate Health accreditation and accredited to Occupational Health and Standards SEQHS.

A June 2022 Audit Wales report found that:

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.

Springing Forward Workforce Management- Carmarthenshire County Council

- Develop a new People Strategy; ensuring that Learning & Development priorities and programmes are fully aligned with corporate priorities and needs.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a move to agile working and it is intended that this will inform how the Council manages its workforce in the future
- Agree a suite of People Management Performance Measures and strengthen the sustainability principle.

Regeneration Division

Carmarthenshire's economy has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. To gain an informed understanding of the position in Carmarthenshire, we engaged with over 1,000 businesses to gather evidence on the impact of the pandemic on our businesses, unemployment and our rural and primary town economies. This assisted us to put in place a clear [Economic Recovery Plan](#) (we were first in Wales to do so) with an immediate priority focus on protecting jobs and supporting our small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to upscale. We are monitoring the action plan quarterly and it is on track.

- In each of the individual town centres, we will pass on the overseeing of the recovery to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres.

Business and Cabinet Support

The Business Unit continued to respond and contribute to the Authority's response to the pandemic in a pragmatic manner, ensuring all essential services to staff and Members were prioritised and provided, to ensure continuation of core services. The Unit supported *all Gold Command meetings* for COVID-19 and major floodings. We have also supported the *Planning Assurance Board and Planning Intervention Board* who met weekly.

- As part of better ways of working, we will continue to work with business unit managers to further develop paperless processes and systems.
- Following the elections in May 2022, the Service is working with the incoming administration to develop a cabinet Vision Statement and agree member portfolios.

Electoral and Registrars

Both Electoral Services and Civil Registration are statutory services. The Registration Service includes the registration of births, deaths, stillbirths, marriages and civil partnerships, the provision of a certificate service and the provision of Citizenship Ceremonies. Electoral Services is responsible for the update and maintenance of the Register of Electors and the conduct of all elections relevant to Carmarthenshire. The work of the *Registration Service* has been under such continuous spotlight during the last year as we moved through the global pandemic. We successfully run elections.

- To determine if our opening times still meet customer trends and business needs by participating in relevant consultation with our customers, staff and key stakeholders to seek views that will help make a decision on service improvement.
- We will analyse our performance indicators, both internal and external.

Media and Marketing

The Media and Marketing service have again this year played a key role in supporting all divisions across the authority to effectively communicate in both Welsh and English relevant information to residents, businesses and stakeholders throughout the county ensuring consistency and relevancy across all communications

As well as additional external communications that has been required for us to publish, the team has delivered a wide range of additional internal communications to support staff who have had to change the way they work including a growing demand on simultaneous translation of all democratic virtual meetings.

The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. This had to be taken forward in a different way during 2020/21 due to COVID19 restrictions and the establishments having to be closed. Customers have been able to contact online and telephone and virtual meetings have been held. The increasing use of Social Media has allowed open engagement and conversations with members of the public. In addition to this social media is an excellent tool for promoting council services.

We passed *the accessibility standard* for our website.

Key statistics for Council website 2021 / 2022:

- Pageviews: 6,144,228
- Sessions: 3,017,983

Key statistics for social media, email marketing and video:

- 19.3m Twitter reach
- 8.82m Facebook reach
- Published 3,259 posts
- Dealt with 4,055 'inbound' posts, enquiries via comments, written on our wall or sent as a direct message

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 53.3k link clicks - Facebook: New followers – 1,201. Total followers: 20,451 - Twitter: New followers – 372. Total followers 11,151 - 443,141 emails sent to MyAccount, businesses and 3rd sector. 267,018 unique opens. - Video – 115,800 views <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the Council's key principle of One Council, One Vision, One Voice. Moving forward the service will be driven by the priorities, services and activity outlined in the corporate plans and we will use our resources and focus our energy to meet these priorities. • Identify other services where the first of point of contact enquiries could be dealt with by Contact Centre/ adopt a Hwb approach
<p>2</p> <p><i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>Legal Services use management data to identify where the service has a lack of capacity and if necessary, work is outsourced.</p> <p>The service ensures decisions are taken through the democratic process in a timely manner. A new integrated impact assessment and committee report template is being development and will be rolled out in 2022.</p> <p>Regulatory reports on Scrutiny and Audit Committee effectiveness have been addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a set of key performance indicators for the Legal Services and Land Charges service <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>We produce an Annual Report on our Digital Transformation Strategy to ensure resources are being used effectively. ICT will underpin Better Ways of Working initiatives.</p> <p>Our Annual Reports on Equalities and Welsh Language Standards demonstrate good progress in these areas.</p> <p>Our Annual Report on our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives had a certificate of compliance from our regulators Audit Wales.</p> <p>A Performance Management Framework was introduced, and we commissioned the WLGA to undertake a review of our Performance Requirements preparedness which identified areas for improvement.</p> <p>We developed a more integrated performance monitoring report adding a wider range of evidence to the process.</p> <p>We also improved engagement and assurance arrangements for Departmental and Divisional Business Plans.</p> <p>Internal Audit found our Performance arrangements Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny feedback requested more measures and SMARTER action planning • We want to make better use of data and information, and as a result we have set up a <i>Data Insight Team</i> to become a more data driven organisation. • We will address the recommendations of the WLGA review of our self-assessment arrangements. • We will improve engagement and consultation on our self- assessment arrangements.

- We will further develop our quarterly integrated performance monitoring arrangements and our engagement and assurance arrangements for business planning.

People Management

96 members of staff provide people management support to the entire organisation (in the region of 8,500 employees)

The Council Sickness figure at the end of 2021/22 of 11.4 FTE days is 3.7 days higher than last year and above the 2019/20 Welsh average of 11.2 FTE days (Authority 2019/20 performance was 10.74 FTE days). This is our highest sickness figure since 2008/09 (11.7 days) However, it is important to note that this has been impacted by COVID-19 related sickness absence, which accounted for 2 FTE days per employee during 2021/22

The causes of absence are monitored, and the impact and legacy of COVID-19 continues.

The Council continues to support its lowest paid employees and workers by continuing to pay the Real Living Wage supplement this supports our Tackling Poverty Well-being Objective.

- Develop a Transformation Strategy building on the Better Ways of Working Project to improve economic use of resources, Value for Money, productivity, working lives and customer focus.
- Further improve our recruitment processes via new integrated recruitment IT system. (IIP)
- We will evaluate the employee experience and undertake research to develop a Workforce Engagement Strategy that will underpin the new workforce strategy
- We will developing proactive more preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices.
- Further support and encourage Workforce Planning in Departments
- Develop performance measures

Regeneration Division

More than 1,100 jobs have already been created and over 700 jobs safeguarded We have awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs

We have engaged with well-over 3,200 local businesses and provided 900 people with training support.

We have delivered over £66 million COVID-19 Business Recovery Funds on behalf of the Welsh Government

We have successfully delivered six jobs' fairs in each of the primary towns, to support sectors experiencing acute recruitment challenges.

% of people in employment -	UK:	Wales:	Carmarthenshire:
	74.7%	72.2%	68.6%

Pentre Awel 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. As well as improving health and well-being, the project will create almost 2,000 jobs.

- We will continue to focus on supporting 3,000 people into work, providing 2,000 additional homes, maximising the community benefit of development schemes and supporting businesses to take advantage of key grants
- Moving forward the 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 allocated in order to fulfil the skills demands identified by employers

Business and Cabinet Support

Working on the forward work programme for Corporate Management Team ensuring reports are tabled at the appropriate timings and in line with the democratic committee cycle.

The Unit proactively supports managers within a number of functions, such as HR processes, financial regulations, procurement

- Produce a forward work programme for Corporate Management Team (CMT).

Electoral and Registration

Under the governance arrangements, Carmarthenshire Registration Service is committed to the service delivery standards developed by the General Register Office (GRO) and adheres to good practice guidance and the codes of practice. GRO guidance provides information on specific national standards the Local Authority must meet together with aspirational standards

Follow up discussions with the General Register Office Compliance Officers have confirmed that Carmarthenshire Registration Service continues to deliver services to an excellent level.

- To take all opportunities to engage, contribute and support the retention of the current easements continuing with regards death registration being enabled by telephone and electronic transmission of documents.
- To build upon and strengthen the partnerships established during the pandemic i.e. hospitals, Medical Examiners, Funeral Directors, Coroner, health board and our mass fatalities project group to ensure we meet our statutory duty and to support bereaved families through their registration journey.

Media and Marketing

The additional demand on customer services during the past 12months has been dramatic. It has been challenging to deliver a service due to the increase in service demand. It has been inevitable that there has been an increase in waiting times and number of abandoned calls.

New processes and further discussions with specific services are taking place to reduce this as best we can. Recruitment has proved to be difficult, and we continue to look for additional staff to join the team to build resilience into the staffing structure.

The team also successfully trialled standby arrangement to assist with communication outside of normal working hours. This has been critical during recent events

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media and Marketing team will restructure to ensure the service can deliver and achieve the communication and marketing needs of the Authority and build on the high-class service to its internal and external customers. • Pushout and enhance the ‘<i>claim what’s your service</i>’ and develop a consistent approach within the Council to ensure all services manage customers with financial and well-being concerns in the same manner to avoid confusion and to build confidence and clarity. • Develop New Social Media performance indicator
<p>3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>The Corporate Governance Group ensures the Code of Governance is adhered to and produces an Annual Governance Statement as part of the Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>The Constitutional Review Working Group ensures the Constitution and its development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously the AGS outline the governance arrangements in place. This year we have questioned how good these arrangements are, how we know and how we can do better. We will review how this process has gone <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>We have begun enhanced business plan challenge through Engagement and Assurance Process.</p> <p>A significant part our Annual Governance Statement (AGS) evaluates our Corporate Policy and Performance Management Arrangements</p> <p>Steering Groups for both Poverty and Rural Carmarthenshire give direction and oversight to key priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance business plan format and engagement and assurance. • Strengthen links between AGS and performance reporting - approach and content. • As the Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives are identified we will ensure the creation of appropriate steering groups/advisory panels to ensure direction and progress • Address Internal Audit findings on Performance Management. <p><u>People Management</u></p> <p>Our People Strategy Steering Group provides oversight of People Management Strategy.</p> <p>The Transformation Strategy will provide the key driver to ensure arrangements are delivered.</p> <p>The TIC programme Board Terms of Reference will be reviewed, and governance arrangements strengthened.</p> <p>A significant part our Annual Governance Statement (AGS) evaluates our People Management Function.</p> <p>The IIP accreditation provides Quality Assurance on our processes.</p> <p>Our annual equal pay audit does not suggest any evidence of discrimination within</p>

the pay structures

Frequent Internal Audit reviews

Significant role in supporting Corporate Safeguarding

Employee Well-being Annual Report to CMT every year

- Using existing governance arrangements (People Strategy Steering Group) we will need to review our workforce strategy in light of the pandemic to support the organisation to recover.
- We are starting to see a significant increase in the number of occupational health referrals, in particular referrals to our Well-being Support Services. To stem this increase we need to invest more time in developing proactive preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices.

Regeneration Division

A business, economy and community recovery group was established 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, was also established.

A dashboard was set up to monitor the delivery of our 'Economic Recovery Plan'

- For each of the individual town centres, we will manage the overseeing of the recovery plans passing responsibility to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres.

Business and Cabinet Support

CMT & Cabinet support feedback

Electoral and Registrars

The Council is committed to delivering the service in accordance with the Good Practice Guide with achievement to National Standard as a minimum. All Key Performance Indicators for both Statutory Standards and Operational Delivery Standards within the guide are measured. Achievement is reported to General Register Office (GRO) in the Annual Performance Report.

Electoral Services are required to comply with the National electoral register data matching test then analyse results and act upon those results. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 gave the Electoral Commission powers to set and monitor performance standards for electoral services.

- To discharge the Council's increasing statutory responsibilities, required by Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and future proposed electoral reform, within the context of extraordinary financial constraints.

Media and Marketing

Profiled within AGS Para 2.3.2.4 *Ensuring External Communications* (under the principle of

Openness and engagement - *Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement*).

Duty to Consult	
<p><i>Consultation on assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>Consultation as part of well-being assessment.</p> <p>Residents Survey undertaken.</p> <p>Complaint's feedback</p> <p>When available the Authority makes extensive use of the annual <i>National Survey for Wales</i> commissioned by Welsh Government. The results are used to help the Authority in its self-assessment of services and are included in our Annual Report. However, parts of this survey has been accepted by COVID-19 Pandemic and the same level of detail is not as available as in previous years</p> <p><u>People Management</u></p> <p>Corporate Employee Relations Forum - last year, we doubled the amount of paid facilities time we offered to our recognised Trade Unions and have continued to consult regularly with Union colleagues on a range of policies and other areas</p> <p>Staff survey undertaken June-August 2022 with a section on performance.</p> <p><u>Regeneration Division</u></p> <p>We engaged with over 1,000 businesses to gather evidence on the impact of the pandemic on our businesses</p> <p><u>Electoral and Registrars</u></p> <p>The Registration Service regularly asks customers to complete satisfaction surveys so that we can understand what is working well and meeting expectation and what isn't working well and could be improved upon</p> <p>Elections worked collectively with the Association of Electoral Administrators, Electoral Commission, Cabinet Office and Welsh Government to deliver a safe and fair election in May 2021. An elections project group was established that ensured all elements of the election planning was controlled and shared by key players.</p> <p><u>Media and Marketing</u></p> <p>Evidence suggests that there has been an increase in participation of online consultations. Specifically, when evaluating comparable consultations. For example, the Welsh in Education strategic plan consultation in 2017 received 21 completes whilst in 2021 the consultation received 854. Additionally, a recent Housing and regeneration masterplan received 2,522 completed surveys in comparison to 189 in a similar survey run in 2018. 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. But we plan to resume full analysis when available</p>

Corporate Services Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>How can we do better?</p>
Performance Requirements	
<p><i>1. exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>The review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control and Governance arrangements is informed by the work of the Internal Auditors on which the Authority gains assurance. Internal Audit is required to undertake its work in accordance with the standards as set out in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) established in 2013 are the agreed professional standards for Internal Audit in Local Government.</p> <p>The overall opinion is that the Authority has an 'Acceptable' control environment in operation. There are clear Governance arrangements with defined Management responsibilities and Committee Structures in place, Risk Management and the control framework is generally sound and operated reasonably consistently. The Authority has an established Constitution, has developed Policies and approved Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules that provide advice and guidance to all staff and members. Sufficient assurance work has been carried out to form a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control environment. Where weaknesses have been identified through reviews, Internal Audit have worked with management to agree appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement.</p> <p>Strategic and Annual Audit Plans were presented to Governance and Audit Committee in the March meetings. Quarterly updates are provided on the work carried out and the Annual Report is presented every July. Actions to deliver recommendations made in 2018 Quality Assessment are complete.</p> <p>We could consider any improvements identified through the external assessment of Internal Audits arrangements. We are introducing new performance indicators for 2022/23 with the aim to assisting the service in becoming more efficient.</p>
<p><i>2. using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p>The 2020/21 budget monitoring has probably been the most complicated ever due to value and all-pervasive impact of COVID-19 on services. We have claimed over £27 million from Welsh Government via hardship claims to support additional COVID-19 services and have also claimed £4.5 million relation to claims for loss of income. Corporate Services has risen to the challenge to support departmental spending decisions, the claims through the Welsh Government hardship scheme, as well as the identification of possible ineligible expenditure - this picture has evolved through the year with both changing nature of the pandemic as well as greater clarity over hardship scheme rules.</p> <p>We have continued to investigate and develop new ways of working which will result in delivering an even more efficient and effective service. We have been working closely with the Transform, Innovate and Change (TIC) team in their agreed 6 strategic areas of work (Income, Expenditure, Digital Transformation, Demands and waste, Service improvement, Supporting transformation & change in Schools and Supporting Better Ways of Working). As part of the Income strategic area our</p>

	Debtors team have been working both with TIC and Legal looking at how well we recover debt. We are working closely with the Better ways of Working strategic area, for example on the E-Signatures project evaluating the potential of using Adobe and DocuSign to avoid the need for staff to travel into offices to add wet signatures into documents and the Invoices Project investigating the reduction of hard copy invoices with the Purchase Order Compliance Pilot which has commenced.								
3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i>	<p>The Corporate Governance arrangements of the Council are acceptable. 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 our Internal Audit service conducted a review of our arrangements against the adopted standards.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th colspan="2">Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance</th></tr> <tr> <th>Post Review Assurance Level</th><th>Description for Assurance Level</th></tr> <tr> <td>Acceptable</td><td> 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 </td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.</td></tr> </table> <p>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.</p> <p>The Authority has a Risk Management Steering Group which reports directly to Cabinet, Governance and Audit Committee and Chief Officers Team (CMT). The Risk Management Steering Group examines how Risk Management can be developed and ensures that Risk Management is embedded in decision making throughout the organisation. The Group meet quarterly and is supported by the work of its Subgroups i.e. Property & Liability Risks, Motor Fleet Risks and Contingency Planning Subgroups. TIC's December 2021 review concluded that <i>'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.'</i></p> <p>The Steering Group's role in allocating the £250k of risk management funding could be strengthened by introducing clearer criteria for how this funding is prioritised and spent on annual basis.</p>	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.	
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Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.									
Duty to Consult									
<i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i>	A mixed approach to ascertaining views on the 2022-25 budget took place. We invited residents, businesses and community and voluntary organisations to have a say on the draft budget so the Councillors can consider feedback before making a final decision. A series of departmental seminars for all County Councillors took place over a five-day period: 17 th to 21 st January 2022. All efficiencies across each department were considered in detail and feedback sought. Alongside councillor engagement public consultation took place via an online survey. The survey was								

	administered electronically via the Council's online consultation page on our website. Emails were also submitted, and social media was utilised to encourage residents to complete the online survey and some provided comments on Facebook and Twitter. The results of the consultations were considered and presented to Cabinet and County Council as part of the Budget Strategy Report.
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Communities Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	How well are we doing and how do we know?
Performance Requirements	How can we do better? (see bullet points)
1 <i>exercising functions effectively</i>	<p>Adult Social Care & Commissioning</p> <p>Within Adult Social Care and Commissioning Services challenges have been significant with many care homes experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks with multiple homes experiencing acute workforce pressures. Additional resources have been provided by in-house services, via mutual aid and health. Enormous collective efforts together with our partner organisations who have worked extremely well together have focused on resident safety and the prevention of care home collapse.</p> <p>Feedback from the sector has been positive and relationships have improved with the sector as a result. This has been evidenced by an independent review carried out regarding maintaining dignity and respect in the care homes during the pandemic.</p> <p>The impact from the pandemic and the on-going demands are significant but there are some notable areas of progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In relation to Safeguarding of Adults, Multi-agency forums have continued to meet virtually, and an additional regional forum was set up to have assurance that safeguarding processes were being followed during the pandemic. 2. The service received a positive report from CIW following an assurance visit in February 2021, which is quite remarkable during a pandemic. 3. The Director of Social Services Statutory report concludes that these functions are operating effectively. <p>Within Homes and Safer Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We responded to the COVID-19 crisis through our TTP (Test, Trace, Protect) team which has given confidence that we have up to date intelligence on what is happening in the County and that we can react quickly when circumstances change such as the emergence of new COVID-19 clusters or an outbreak in a Care Home etc. This is from an infection control as well as advice and enforcement perspective. • Our in-house care continues to receive really positive feedback from our regulator CIW as well as from the residents, family and professional surveys. We have also started to look at a significant care home investment

programme to ensure that the facilities and environment match the standard of care provided.

- Our Development and Investment team have continued to deliver, despite COVID-19, and we are continuing to deliver additional affordable homes and have a clear three-year delivery plan moving forward. This will link with wider corporate and departmental priorities such as Town Centres, Rural Ten Towns and key regeneration projects e.g. Pentre Awel, Tyisha, Brynmefys (Llanelli) and Wauniago House (Carmarthen). We have responded positively and proactively to UK and WG initiatives around resettlement programmes and were the first in Wales to house Afghan families in May 2021.
- Environmental Protection and Business and Consumer Affairs services have continued to deliver in what was a particularly challenging year for public protection. We have had to balance our response to COVID-19 whilst still maintaining core services as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted during the year. This was particularly challenging as expectations and demands increased. We are in a relatively strong position in terms of Food Standards and Hygiene, Animal Health and Proceeds of Crime (POCA). We have also been commended for our work around Financial Exploitation and have had notable successes around illegal dog breeding.
- Our housing management service continues to perform reasonably well (evidenced by the Tenant Survey carried out in the Autumn 2021). We are performing on a par with other housing organisations. We are also reasonably well placed in terms of our approach to the collection of current tenant income and have developed a strong pre-accommodation that helps to sustain tenancies. The team have currently been shortlisted for a national award, in conjunction with the Youth Service, as a result of the innovative approach being taken.
- Whilst we have done really well to respond quickly to the change in homelessness legislation as the result of COVID-19, we need to make sure we make this response sustainable for the long term. Processes and working practices, and performance itself (e.g. Homelessness Prevention PI bottom quartile), need to be reviewed in order that we can fully support those in most need, and staff themselves. The Public Services Own Initiative Report (September 2021) begins to outline some current issues that clearly need addressing. Our new approach and the creation of the Housing “Hwb” is already beginning to see positives.
- Internal Audit reports around procurement of repair works to temporary accommodation/social lettings agency.

Housing Property & Strategic Projects

Within Housing Property & Strategic Projects, COVID-19 significantly impacted on our services as non-essential maintenance was suspended. As a result, there is significant latent maintenance work and a backlog of enquiries which we are currently working through. Response times for essential maintenance that we have been able to undertake has continued to improve, although the average time to respond to non-essential work has worsened. The 4 Tys have also been demolished as a first phase of the physical regeneration of the area. We have now completed an early market engagement process which will input into our selection process for a partner developer and to prepare key sites for development. An Internal Audit report around procurement of repair works

contract management and Welsh Government Enable Funding for Independent Living improvements has been conducted.

Leisure

Many areas within Leisure continue to operate with restrictions including our Outdoor Education offer, Theatres, and Leisure classes in terms of occupancy levels. With many posts kept vacant and numerous staff re-deployed, it has been challenging to re-engineer our services through the multiple phases of lock-down, and as various restrictions were applied and lifted. The operating procedures, safe working practices and risk assessments around every location, activity and customer engagement has had to be re-written multiple times throughout the year, with our focus always being on maintaining public safety and confidence to ensure people return in the long term, and clubs and partner organisations survive and prosper into the future.

We have a very high accreditation for our Library service meeting all targets set by Welsh Government through the 'Welsh Public Library Standards'. Also establishing stronger links across the Communities Department, developing a greater focus on the prevention of ill-health, whilst collectively promoting general well-being and long-term sustainability for the Leisure, Housing, Health and Social Care teams.

From a public health perspective, despite Leisure being a very significant positive contributor to this agenda, we must influence and work in partnership to drive this issue forward with health sector partners. Despite it only being one national metric, around a third of our children and young people are classified as overweight or obese in the County, with the figure being one of the highest in Wales. This area must continue to be a focus for our work to change life-long habits and to intervene as early as we can.

Departmental Actions Moving Forward

Adult Social Care & Commissioning

Operational challenges have made it difficult to find the space and time to strategically plan for the future. Programme of works have been suspended and need to be resurrected.

There has been an increase in complexity and demand and in order to manage demand going forward, we have to ensure that we have a robust prevention strategy to provide advice, information, assistance, early intervention and timely 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. Getting this right must be our key focus for the next financial year. We will:

- develop a 10 Year Strategy for Social Care incorporating Children and Adult Services.
- develop and implement a Digital Transformation Strategy for the department.
- develop and deliver a Workforce Plan to recruit, retain and develop staff to ensure a sustainable workforce for the future.

- ensure we implement the new Domiciliary Framework which effectively addresses the lack of availability of domiciliary/home care to support vulnerable adults.
- re-model and grow a quality, sustainable and efficient in-house Home Care service alongside an effective private and micro enterprise sector.
- develop and implement a Prevention Strategy for Carmarthenshire which will include continuing to work in partnership with Delta Wellbeing in support of our residents.

Homes and Safer Communities

Within Homes and Safer Communities and Housing Property and Strategic Projects we will work to:

- Review of our prevention of homeless, homelessness case work and temporary accommodation services. This needs specific focus as a result of evidence from the re-structuring process, the Ombudsman Own Initiative report and Internal Audit report on procurement of some services. This review will focus on:
 - Working practices and processes; and
 - Improving performance
- Increase focus on Council House Void numbers and turnaround times
- Improve performance around Adaptations and DFG turnaround times
- Review of the New Homes Team to be undertaken February – April 2022
- Achieve the Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire Key Actions for the Division:
 - Review social housing arrangements in Station Road, Llanelli
 - Maintain the Carmarthenshire Home Standard for all Council owned properties
- Develop a pilot project in the Tyisha ward

Leisure Services

Within Leisure Services the following are the priorities:

- 10 Year Leisure Strategy: The development of a 10-year future direction document for discussion, input, and endorsement by the new political administration for the County in early 2022/23
- Income and membership/activity recovery: With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic changing lifestyles and habits, the service's greatest challenge will be to regain and exceed membership and income to pre-COVID-19 levels. Whilst government hardship funding has helped during periods of restricted opening, our 2022/23 business plan will be fully focussed on this income and engagement recovery process.
- Capital Projects: Completion/further development of ongoing capital projects at: Oriel Myrddin; Amman Valley; Abergwili Museum; Parc Howard; Pembrey Country Park; Llyn Llech Owain Country Park; Carmarthen Archives; Pentre Awel; Pendine Attractor and Museum of Land Speed; the National Museum store and 24/7 fitness suite elements of the successful Carmarthen Town Centre Levelling up bid;
- A new Outdoor Education offer for the County: Presenting a new model for a County-wide residential and non-residential Outdoor Education offer for comment and endorsement on the back of an asset appraisal of existing

	<p>infrastructure and ongoing COVID-19 related challenges for schools, whilst aligning with the new Donaldson curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing our Social Value: Further developing our work and influence on the health prevention agenda, demonstrating the impact and value of integrated and collaborative working as exemplified by schemes such as the National Exercise Referral scheme (NERS), and Mental Health exercise referral, and how these can mainstream leisure activity whilst reducing costs for core health services. • The following will also underpin all of our work going forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Workforce development plan: re-visiting the draft Communities department workforce plan to create specific actions for the division, focussing on recruitment, retention, training, competencies, and coaching, with the aim of growing our own workforce and creating an attractive offer for young people. - Reducing waste and our Carbon Footprint: As part of the County Council's aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, we recognise the significant energy usage footprint that many of our large buildings carry and will continue to work to reduce and offset this footprint. • Developing our online offer: Our ability to broadcast products digitally and to connect sites and services with end users is also becoming more important than ever, including our links into the education and health sectors. This development allows more choice for users on how and where they can engage with our services and improve their well-being.
<p>2 <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p>We ensure we are using Resources economically by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budget monitoring • undertaking cost modelling within Commissioning services • monitoring recruitment and retention, fortnightly. • Sickness monitoring, vacancies and waiting lists for assessments and care as part of the recruitment and retention meeting. • holding a robust recruitment marketing campaign for social care is underway to mitigate the short falls within the Department. • investing in new digital IT systems along with Wifi in Care Homes and frontline staff have been provided with electronic devices. <p>We ensure that we are using Resources efficiently by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having robust Performance Management Framework meetings to measure activity and budgets effectively, held on a monthly basis. • Risk management and business plan actions are monitored as part of this process. • produce a Director's Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions. • have forward work programmes and action plans. • Regular communication within the Department working with our Marketing and Media Colleagues. <p>We ensure that we are using Resources effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We undertake a consultation for the Welsh Government on Social Services functions and survey residents and service users in Care Homes and Home

	<p>Care under the CIW Regulation and Inspection Act. The residents within the Care Homes rated the overall quality of the service received within care homes as Great (this is calculated through a NPS metric)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Leisure services we undertake a NPS Customer Satisfaction survey. • We survey 6,000 housing tenants as part of our grant conditions in respect of the Welsh Government MRA application and Grant which has shown that 77% of respondents were satisfied with the Service overall. • We undertake an annual staff survey within the department calculated through a NPS metric and this showed our overall score as Good. • We hold an Improvement Board regarding Housing Needs on a weekly basis. • We have CIW feedback and Wales Audit feedback and locally commissioned audit feedback.
<p>3 <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>The following ensure that we govern our services appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We produce a Director's Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions which is audited by the Care Inspectorate Wales • We have a Corporate Safeguarding Board regulated by Wales Audit Office and Regional Safeguarding Board is regulated by CIW and Welsh Government where by a governance structure has oversight of policies and procedures. During 2021/22 Internal Audit reviewed Safeguarding in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children's Services – arrangements were found to be acceptable ○ and Adult Services – findings to be concluded • Performance Management Framework and scheduled dedicated Performance focused meetings • Integrated Executive Group along with the Health Board • Trade Union Meetings • Commissioning and Programme Group • Recruitment and Retention • SMT/DMT/CMT/Scrutiny/Full Cabinet/Website • Cabinet Member – Outstanding Team Award – • Supervision/Appraisals / 1 to 1s • Welsh Language Board • Llesiant Delta Wellbeing Board • National Meetings – ADSS Cymru/AWASH/Public Service Board • Regular meeting with Welsh Government, Hywel Dda Health Board and various bodies for relevant services such as Sport Wales for Leisure Services. • Corporate Governance Group • Business Planning and Risk Management • Provide regular reports to Scrutiny and Audit Committee.
Duty to Consult	
<p><i>Consultation on assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p>Regular consultation is undertaken with staff, service users and tenants. We undertake a consultation for the Welsh Government on Social Services functions and survey residents and service users in Care Homes and Home Care under the CIW Regulation and Inspection Act. Within Leisure services they undertake a NPS Customer Satisfaction survey. We regularly survey our tenants within our Housing Division. We monitor compliments and complaints within the department. Monthly meeting with CIW on our statutory function as well as Estyn linked with Children Services.</p>

Department of Education and Children's Services

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
Performance Requirements	
<p>1. <i>exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>The Department's vision, priorities and Business Plan is co-constructed by a purposeful coalition of officers and headteachers and is usefully shared and debated with stakeholders e.g. Scrutiny Committee, Headteacher Groups, through staff and Governor briefings. We strive to ensure a golden thread through our business planning processes at all levels of our corporate 'wedding cake'.</p> <p>CCC has a well-established annual business cycle. Initiated every Autumn, it is drafted in deference to corporate priorities and departmental self-evaluation, ensuring a bottom up and top-down dynamic. Links to the budgetary process are made early on and the finalised version is subject to elected member scrutiny. Longer term planning is conditioned by the departmental plan to 2032 and is helpfully arranged under 20 specific 'purpose pieces'.</p> <p>The Department's Performance and Information Officer provides valuable assistance in ensuring that the Business Plan is aligned with corporate priorities and service level performance metrics. Quarterly reporting (PIMS system) ensures that officers are held to account in terms of progress and quality of service delivery with respect to priorities.</p> <p>Scrutiny reports are insightful and comprehensive and are effectively challenged, promoting active debate.</p> <p>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 Head Teacher fora, unions, and officer staff groups. A notable feature of departmental structure are the eight Strategic Focus Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning; • Leadership; • Sustainable Communities for Learning; • Cymraeg; • Well-being; • Digital Learning; • Supporting Vulnerable Learners Group; • Children and Families; <p>which provide important opportunities to implement key issues for schools. These groups are making a sound and evolving impact in terms of delivering on important issues identified at school level by Heads and the school improvement team, whilst</p>

also keeping an eye out for strategic developments at county, regional, national, and international levels.

Improvement planning is developing well and is currently focussed on arriving at a smaller number of key priorities. The Departmental data unit is being bolstered with a couple of important new posts to enhance our analysis and interpretation of data trends over time.

The Performance Information Management System (PIMS) is well established. SMART targets are monitored quarterly and require both qualitative and quantitative updates.

The Department's COVID-19 response is considered very laudable and has been praised by regulators. A Continuity of Learning plan was quickly put in place and enacted. Resources to support care hubs and well-being in schools was supplemented by external input from Prof. Barry Carpenter. In addition, the recovery curriculum, and the imperative to support vulnerable pupils' teaching and learning was assisted by Prof. Lee Elliot Major. Weekly (and sometimes daily) Health & Safety briefings provided vital support, which was augmented by weekly drop-in sessions on various topics pertaining to emergency response.

Each member of staff is afforded an annual Appraisal. These are structured opportunities to consider what is going well and whether there are any constraints or blockages with aspects of service delivery. The 'Recognise, Grow, Together' approach focusses on strengths and helps service areas to grow by exploring what has been done well and how people can work together to achieve our ideas.

Scrutiny is well-established in CCC and has been referenced above. There are opportunities for Heads of Service to meet our Portfolio holder. All main policy directives enter the corporate process and are discussed at DMT, CMT, Pre-Cabinet and cabinet with a number progressing to Scrutiny and full Council.

2012 inspection areas for development

Estyn thematic reports are tallied on a spreadsheet and are all assigned to the relevant strategic Group for implementation. Other regulators influence business planning in a very positive manner such as aspects of Children's Services and the Youth Justice Board.

There are demonstrable improvements to service delivery. The YSS has developed very well over the last five years as testified by now achieving a range of external rewards and earning national recognition. Similarly, the behaviour and engagement service has developed well.

Complaints and compliments are considered at DMT on a quarterly basis and the annual report is acted upon promptly. These reports are often insightful and prompt definitive action.

Service reviews have been completed for DMT with 3rd tier managers invited in to discuss performance.

There is a comprehensive Self Evaluation Report process which included 2 away days during summer 2022 and an on-going review and evaluation process.

Pupil Admissions – all statutory targets met and currently facilitating applications for

	<p>refugees along with all other admission applications to schools.</p> <p>School Organisation Code – All changes to schools that require a statutory consultation process under the School Organisation Code have been completed in line with the Code’s requirements.</p> <p>School Catering have adapted well to new ways of working and have continued to provide a hot meal service in all schools. The service continues to put food safety and allergens compliance as a high priority.</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently undertaking a review of department Business Planning and Monitoring processes, one recommendation being to produce Business Plans in line with our Strategic Focus Groups rather than Divisional Business Plans. • Our Service Reviews state how each service can improve (too many examples to list) and we are using this list to inform our next round of Business Plans.
<p>2. using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;.</p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>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 increased and protected schools’ budgets against a backdrop of financial pressures across the council. The local authority also has a significant capital programme in relation to schools both in terms of new school builds and investment in its existing schools’ estate. In 2021/22 Carmarthenshire delegated 87.9% of the education budget (excluding school transport) to schools which was above the Welsh average of 87.3%.</p> <p>The authority has a comprehensive range of service level agreements in place with nearly all schools buying in to all the SLAs.</p> <p>For the last 5 years the County Council has protected schools’ budgets and have not required schools to make efficiency savings.</p> <p>Over the last few years growth funding has been allocated to address pressures within schools. The local authority has established task and finish groups involving schools’ representatives to consider key pressures and how the formula can be adapted and growth funding utilised. For example, in 2022/23, following consultation with our Headteachers, supplementary funding in addition to honouring pay awards and inflation, £500k was allocated to support well-being and behaviour in our Secondary Schools, £500k to support ALN in primary schools, and £1 million into primary school formula funding to support the cost of maintaining current provision.</p> <p>The review of our investment programme in schools is expected to provide cabinet with advice and recommendations to address the budget pressures and challenges of provision in primary schools.</p> <p>The authority is aware of current financial risks and those on the horizon. They 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. Additional funding has been provided to schools on a regular basis to reflect demands. The Schools’ Formula Funding is regularly reviewed to ensure that the formula remains appropriate, given the changes in the provision of education services and the contextual challenges of individual schools. Adaptations have been made to address emerging pressures and new priorities e.g. review of ALN funding.</p>

The School Budget Forum, which is representative of the different sectors, has constructive discussions and helps inform decisions in regard to allocating resources. The local authority has arrangements in place to work with the schools in deficit and has intervened appropriately. Over the last few years, the number of schools in a deficit position has reduced from 47 in 2019 to 20 in 2022. Reserves have moved from a deficit £1.9m position in 2019 to £15.2m surplus in 2022. This is due to a robust process of holding schools to account, additional funding awarded to schools from the corporate budget and additional WG funding.

A significant amount of work has gone into understanding the current and projected financial position of Carmarthenshire schools.

During 2021/22:

- aggregate primary school balances increased by £3.2m (approximately 5% of formula funding),
- 19 primary schools had 'in-year' deficit of which 13 of these had 80 or fewer pupils, with an average overspend of 13% in year.

2022/23:

- 13 of the 20 schools (65%) which require a licenced deficit have below 80 pupils.
- The average licenced deficit forecast for these schools is 32% of their formula funding.

Schools have taken advantage of significant additional grant funding released during the pandemic. This has impacted positively on many school budgets this year and into next year:

- Additional Grant funding from Welsh Government, both during the year (e.g. Additional Learning, RRRS) as well as specific grants late in the financial year (e.g. ALN COVID-19 received in February, Caretaking & Cleaning grant funding)
- Reduced activities normally funding from non-capitation budgets e.g. school trips
- COVID-19 related absence cover have been claimable from Welsh Government hardship fund.

The authority has received appropriate plans from schools indicating how they will address deficits and use the additional balances.

The substantial grant funding received from Welsh Government and additional COVID-19 related funding has been welcomed and has been delegated to schools whilst also funding some core school improvement support services. Funding allocated to Partneriaeth, the regional consortium, is allocated to whomever is best placed to meet the grant conditions i.e. Partneriaeth or Local Authority. There are robust monitoring systems in place and regular internal audit of systems, processes and expenditure to ensure that the funding is used effectively to support learners. The Local Authority supports schools in securing external funding e.g. Taith and have taken advantage of European funding to provide support for vulnerable learners. The Youth Support Services have accessed substantial ESF funding to provide bespoke solutions to support young people and reduce NEETS.

The County Council secured substantial Welsh Government funding to support schools to address COVID-19 challenges. To enable schools to focus on teaching and learning key grants such as RRRS were delegated to schools whilst the County Council took the strategic decision to manage centrally key provisions such as additional cleaning, PPE and TTP.

	<p>Schools are well supported to maximise income generation and the Schools' TIC Officer has helped reduce costs and share best practice. The School Development Fund was introduced in 2018 and has provided seed funding for schools to implement value for money proposals.</p> <p>The local authority compares its costs and outcomes with those of other similar authorities, however comparisons are difficult due to issues such as number of schools, rurality, language and pupil numbers.</p> <p><u>We provide the Lead Officer role for the delivery of the procured Independent School and Community-Based Counselling Service to ensure service delivery maximises access and outcomes for children and young people experiencing emotional distress who want to seek support from an independent counsellor.</u></p> <p>Efficiency</p> <p>Realising the benefits of collaborative and partnership working, Carmarthenshire was instrumental in establishing Partneriaeth to provide services to schools across the new region. During Summer 2022 Estyn undertook a focus piece of work on the new regional arrangement noting</p> <p>Partneriaeth has a robust, transparent governance structure led by a Joint Committee consisting of the Leader of each County Council and Cabinet Members for Education. There are SLAs with councils to provide key services e.g. Finance, HR, Legal. The Strategic Boards support the JC to ensure that the regional service meets Local Authority requirements. A regular LA/Partneriaeth Quality Assurance Meeting allows Carmarthenshire officers to discuss local issues and challenges and address any concerns. Partneriaeth is audited via an SLA with Pembrokeshire County Council. Carmarthenshire work with a range of other local authorities/partners on a range of initiatives. Carmarthenshire, along with Swansea and Pembrokeshire established Partneriaeth, a new regional school improvement consortium to provide professional development opportunities for our schools.</p> <p>Across other service areas we work with partners in the South West and Mid Wales region ensuring best value for money and sharing effective practice e.g. CYSUR-Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Board Safeguarding children and ALN Transformation work.</p>
3 <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee Safeguarding Board Admissions Forum – meets on a regular basis to oversee school admissions process to scrutinise admissions arrangements Corporate Programme and Project Governance Boards (e.g. .MECP)</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger communications with schools so that they understand their role in the admissions process.
Duty to Consult	
<i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i>	<p>The department endeavours to consult with stakeholders through a variety of consultations. Some of these processes were disrupted during the period of the pandemic but as schools and Departmental services returned to a more normal way of working these processes have returned.</p> <p>As the end of summer term approached, we conducted separate surveys with Headteachers, pupils and parents to ascertain their views on the services we offer</p>

through schools and other departmental services, which in turn are reflected in our Service Evaluation Report.

Estyn carried out a number of school inspections throughout the academic year and their recommendations are taken on by the schools governing body and the School Improvement Team as part of their workplan.

Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) virtual visits are conducted throughout the year, which gives Inspectors an opportunity to focus on current priorities, for example Self-evaluation and future priorities for improvement. There's also an opportunity for the LA to share any current issues. Likewise, Estyn can discuss inspection developments with school leaders. The link inspector can help us reflect on and refine their strengths and areas for improvement.

The Department has a rolling Programme of Internal Audit Reports, whereby Service Managers produce a report on their areas of responsibility and are invited to attend a DMT meeting which reviews and challenges the report. If deemed necessary the reports are forwarded to corporate committees, CMT, Pre-Cabinet, Scrutiny, etc, for further examination.



In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales published its Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council

[211104-carmarthenshire-en.pdf \(careinspectorate.wales\)](#)

This was a very positive report

Children's Social Care Assurances

- *Approachable and supportive leaders*
- *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 CLA population*
- *Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period*

Children's Social Care Risks - CIW identified no significant areas of risk:

The Assurance Check identified inconsistency for some care leavers in relation to their PAs

Next Steps *CIW identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and will review the progress of these areas through performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director. CIW expect the areas of improvement identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans.*

Children's Education Assurances

- Leaders have a good understanding of issues in the authority including around schools causing concern
- Leaders maintained the good communication between departments throughout the pandemic to ensure that support for schools and other providers was available quickly
- A substantial number of primary schools have been removed from Estyn Review.
- Pre-inspection reports show that the authority generally knows its schools well
- LA is proactive in increasing Welsh medium provision in the primary sector

- LA officers appear to have suitable plans in place to deal with the issues regarding leadership of smaller schools, for example by federating or merging them
- The authority has supported schools and providers to understand and embed the new ALN act
- Effective scrutiny arrangements

Concerns

- There are a very few primary schools in a statutory category.
- With the local authority leaving ERW, there is uncertainty over some arrangements with Partneriaeth
- Recruiting headteachers to lead a few primary schools is causing concern
- Although the overall, the number of pupils who did not progress from year 10 to 11 in Carmarthenshire is slightly below the national average for the last two years, the rates of pupils who cannot be matched to a destination are high in a minority of schools over the last two years.
- Budget balances in schools

Environment Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
Performance Requirements	
<p><i>1 exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>Place and Sustainability</p> <p>The Planning service was subject of an Audit Wales review in 2021/22 that found significant and long-standing performance issues in the planning service that needed to be urgently addressed to help support delivery of the Council's ambitions.</p> <p><i>The Council considered the findings and recommendations and prepared a detailed response and action plan which looks to address the issues identified.</i> There has been a turnaround in % planning applications determined in time.</p> <p>Net Zero Carbon - the Council declare a climate emergency and was the first in Wales to publish an Action Plan. Internal Audit reviews of Net Zero Carbon found High level systems and controls in place.</p> <p>Waste</p> <p>Waste was subject of an Audit Wales review in 2021/22</p> <p><i>It found that the Council has met its statutory recycling targets and has recently drafted a strategy to make its waste service more sustainable, but it has not finalised the strategy or got a clear plan for dealing with the large number of fly-tipping incidents in the county.</i></p> <p>8 recommendations have been addressed. <i>The Waste Strategy has now been approved. There needs to be a clear action focused plan on the agreed steps to recover county rates to 65% and then the steps to get to 70%.</i> Fly-tipping clearing performance is back to pre-COVID-19 levels despite a 33% increase in the number of incidents cleared.</p> <p>Highways and Transportation</p> <p>The Division produces an Annual Highways Asset Management Plan that</p>

	<p>is reported to Scrutiny. There is not a lot of Performance information available.</p> <p>Service Improvement</p> <p>We have successfully implemented a hub within Place & Sustainability to support the Development Management and Enforcement Officers. The collaboration between Cleaning Services and Education has been pivotal for Cleaning Service and Property Services in relation to COVID-19, PPE and Maintenance.</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Business Planning • Improve SMART action planning and Performance Indicator suites • Introduce better data driven decision making • Improve access and use of performance dashboards • Prioritise improvement areas based on evidence • Ensure more integrating reporting of performance at department and corporate levels.
<p>2. <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively.</i></p>	<p><u>Economically</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department has adapted to many years of budget reductions whilst maintaining services. • The Revenue Budget strategy is consulted on every year with Scrutiny. <p><u>Efficiency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department has strengthened its business planning and extending its PI suites. • The department is monitoring both departmental and divisional business plan content • The Director has increased the service challenge processes within the department. • Revenue and Capital Budgets are monitored by Scrutiny every quarter of the year. <p><u>Effectively</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,034 residents participated in engagement on the new waste strategy • Consultation on various schemes e.g. Sandy Road corridor 334 participants • Internal Audit of Ash Dieback, Departmental Expenditure, Flood Defence & Coastal Protection were found to be acceptable. <p>How can we do better?</p> <p><u>Economically</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to make better use of data and intelligence to help inform future workforce development requirements. Ensure that the service is able to further respond to the on-going recruitment and retention challenges especially within some of areas that compete with the private sector such as Planning, Property Design. <p><u>Efficiently</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of identified capacity within the Department to support change and transformation objectives has been highlighted as a

	<p>significant area for us to focus upon, and this has the potential to impact on its ability to progress a number of key priorities such as service improvements that are critical moving forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department will be reviewing its Performance Monitoring arrangements to ensure they align with the new Corporate Performance Monitoring Framework to establish a full picture of both Strategic and Operational performance. • We will develop and establish Outcome focused measures and Performance Indicators to support service improvement and identify gaps in our monitoring arrangements. <p><u>Effectively</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of our web content is key for our department moving forward. Our aim is improving the information available and to develop further web forms which integrate with back-office systems to eradicate the need for manual input and paper applications. We aim to add electronic payments to as many of our application processes and an end-to-end process where the customer receives updates on their enquiry/order/report as it progresses. We have identified some areas of web development that will be key to improving customer satisfaction and reducing failure demand such as planning applications.
<p>3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • All outcomes are monitored through quarterly reports to DMT and Scrutiny committee. <p>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.</p> <p>The Authority has a Risk Management Steering Group which reports directly to Cabinet, Governance and Audit Committee and Chief Officers Team (CMT). The Risk Management Steering Group examines how Risk Management can be developed and ensures that Risk Management is embedded in decision making throughout the organisation. The Group meet quarterly and is supported by the work of its Subgroups i.e. Property & Liability Risks, Motor Fleet Risks and Contingency Planning Subgroups. TIC's December 2021 review concluded that <i>'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.'</i> The Steering Group's role in allocating the £250k of risk management funding could be strengthened by introducing clearer criteria for how this funding</p>

	<p>is prioritised and spent on annual basis</p> <p><u>Cabinet Advisory Panels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Local Development Plan –To take political ownership of the LDP and ensure that the LDP process is managed in accordance with the Development Agreement. • Cross Party Advisory Panel on Climate Change – to be established. <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure to improve governance and compliance
Duty to Consult	
<i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our design teams work with a range of key clients and ensuring their designs meet the needs of clients and service users is a fundamental requirement. • Public engagement is a cornerstone of the development of our engineering projects. Developing schemes for highway improvements and traffic management changes involve public consultation. • Involving local communities and engaging with members of the public for Traffic Regulation Orders which change speed limits, alter parking provision or traffic management is a statutory duty which we undertake and manage on a significant scale. • The Division works closely with Town and Community Councils on a range of issues including the management of public lighting, the recent introduction of LED lighting, key consultation of traffic and highway improvements, development of PROW maintenance and management, and Traffic Regulation Orders for speed limit, parking and other traffic management improvements. • The Division actively support the promotion of events our partner organisations bring forward to promote places, activities and events in the County such as the Tour of Britain, Llanelli Pride, Christmas Markets and this also includes free parking offers. • The County Council is a partner in both the Llanelli and Carmarthen BID providing financial support and partnership working with a range of stakeholders and businesses. • The Division works with volunteer groups on issues such as the maintenance of Public Rights of Way in conjunction with Ramblers 'Paths to Well-being' officers were initiated • Our Passenger Transport Team continues to consult with service users and stakeholders and work regionally with Welsh Government/TfW and neighbouring Authorities to understand demand for public transport services in a changing post COVID-19 environment.

- Our Transport Planning Team also promote School Travel Plans in our schools to involve pupils in participating and encouraging health travel patterns and our Road Safety Teams reinforce this with kerbcraft and cycle training.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic the Highways & Transport Division introduced public realm changes to support the town centre recovery and undertook a widespread consultation exercise which had comments from 52 businesses and 286 members of the public which were incorporated within a review of measures

Place and Sustainability

- Facilitation of Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership
- Intelligence gathered by planning hwb can identify service improvements.
- Full public and focused consultation undertaken during the preparation of the LDP and other policy documents and planning interventions such as LDOs.
- Key stakeholder and other forums (including viability/developer forum).
- Facilitate, participate and lead on local, regional and national thematic groups.
- Establishment of schools climate action consultation group and implementation of the manifesto for NZC.
- Opportunities provided for the residents to engage with us during the process of a planning application.

Waste

- Our budget consultation work has been identified as best practice in Wales and we are building on this. We will be further developing the Council's consultation and engagement approaches during 2021.
- Our Consultation and Engagement on the Future Waste Strategy had over 4,000 responses and directly shaped our future service design.
- Recycling Participation Surveys (door to door) to recommence by Community Recycling Team once Covid- 19 restrictions allow with a view to increasing participation in the various recycling schemes. Outcomes to be incorporated into future waste services delivery.

Property Maintenance

- We consult on a regular basis with our internal customers. Consultation can include building maintenance, compliance and condition of buildings, and property design.

Service Development

- We are the lead support for Integrated Impact Assessments within our department, however we have limited resources.

The Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic – unplanned transformation

In March 2020, Carmarthenshire County Council was about to enter one of the most challenging periods ever faced by local government. The impact of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique set of challenges for the whole country, and there was an acceptance that Councils would need to be at the heart of the local response to the crisis.

When in July 2020, the Council began to emerge from the immediate period of the crisis, there was a recognition that 'things would never quite be the same' and that we were already not the same organisation that we had been only five months earlier.

The Council was keen therefore to capture the learning from its response to the pandemic; what worked well/didn't work so well, and how this could potentially change 'what we do' and 'how we do', it in the future.

The emergence of the COVID-19 crisis meant that services had to adapt quickly to put in place alternative delivery arrangements for users and staff to ensure continuity of provision. This often required innovative and creative thinking and a multi-team approach to be adopted between services within the Council and with other public sector partners, and this experience can only benefit the way that we shape and deliver our services moving forward. Services have also demonstrated themselves to be extremely resilient and are now armed with more robust service continuity plans and a more mature approach to risk - this means that they can move with greater confidence and ambition in seeking ways of developing more purposeful services.

The move to more remote working and less reliance on face-to-face meetings and paper-based processes, alongside changing customer expectations and demands, will provide an opportunity for the Council to consider the type of services that it provides in future and how it delivers them. The pandemic may also have changed customer expectations of 'how' and 'when' they access services, and therefore the Council may need to consider adopting more flexible service delivery models e.g., 7 day/ 24 hr working.

However, there will also be a need to ensure that services continue to respond to customer needs and expectations. Alternative delivery models put in place as part of a response to a pandemic may not be what the customer wants during more normal circumstances. Co-production therefore should be a central feature of the Council's approach to reviewing and re-designing its services moving forward.

This is also now an opportunity to re-set or go back to basics in using some core principles that underpin service delivery. We do not always have to have extensive service remodelling or to spend significant amounts of money to deliver better services. Simple behavioural and process changes around the way we treat customers can result in dramatic improvements in service provision – it doesn't always require a big investment in staff and systems to achieve this.

The benefits of having a more flexible, dynamic, empowered workforce will now be equally as important to support our transformation programme, and to help the Council achieve its wider aims and objectives. The likelihood is that our staff recruitment challenges are likely to be with us for at least the medium term, and therefore there will need to be a greater focus on the development and retention of staff, which will be a priority of our Workforce Strategy moving forward. The Council is seeking to develop a more sustainable approach to meet its future workforce needs by adopting a 'grow your own' strategy. The Council is currently about to launch its 'Future Workforce' programme which will seek to increase graduate, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities.

There also needs to a considerable focus on the well-being agenda moving forward, including developing a sustainable approach to remote working and re-connecting the organisation to a whole generation of new starters who will have not met their colleagues at all on a face-to-face basis.

The following emerging priorities have been identified for the next phase of the Council's transformational journey

Emerging Priority	Transformation Aims
People	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'.
Service Design & Improvement	To provide for a more sustainable and creative approach to the review, remodelling and improvement of Council services
Efficiencies and Value for Money	To continue to deliver financial savings through efficiencies or cost reductions and smarter ways of working.
Income & Commercialisation	To develop a more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services with a view to increasing the level of income generated.
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
Buildings	To exploit the opportunities presented by a move to hybrid working to further rationalise the Council's accommodation portfolio and to modernise and improve the working environment within the remaining core buildings.
Net Zero Carbon	To support the Council in delivering transformational change in support of key NZC targets
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.

Consultation on Performance Requirements

We consulted on our performance as a Council with residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions. 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 consultation responses have been analysed and will be reported in due course with proposals for improvement from the findings in order to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Residents Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 23rd June 2022 to 5th August 2022 and a total of 2,195 responses were received. In undertaking this survey residents were asked a series of 5 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance.

Overall, there was agreement from residents that the Council provides good services. However, it is apparent that more needs to be done to ensure that residents understand how they can participate in decision making. This extends to ensuring that residents have access to up-to-date information on the Council's performance and are made aware of how to access this information.

It is evident that it would be to the benefit of both the Council and residents that more information was provided with regards to how the Council utilises its financial resources and why investment has been focussed in certain areas.

Proposals for improvement in this regard will be agreed upon and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Business Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 26th August to 30th September and a total of 36 responses were received. In undertaking this business owners were asked a series of 8 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance.

It is apparent that more needs to be done to ensure that businesses understand how they are able to participate in decision making. This extends to ensuring that easily accessible and timely information on the Council's performance is made available and businesses are made aware of how to access this information.

It is evident that it would be to the benefit of both the Council and businesses that more information was provided with regards to how the Council utilises its financial resources and why investment has been focussed in certain areas. This would serve to develop the knowledge and understanding of business owners with regards to how resources are utilised and what that means for the private sector in the county.

Proposals for improvement in this regard have been prepared and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Staff Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 27th June 2022 to 5th August 2022 and a total of 1,733 responses were received which equates to 22% of Carmarthenshire County Council staff.

In undertaking this survey staff were asked a series of 11 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance. These were worded in a way in which the respondent answered these questions from the perspective of their service area rather than the organisation as a whole.

Overall, staff were positive with regards to their service's performance. However, it would be fair to say that it would be beneficial to increase the degree to which performance information is shared across the organisation. This would serve to increase the knowledge and understanding that staff possess in relation to the corporate processes in place to ensure that performance measurement is fair and balanced.

Proposals for improvement in this regard have been prepared and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Trade Unions

The survey took place during the period from 12th August to 23rd September and a total of 5 responses were received.

A series of five statements were posed with a focus on the way that the Council uses its resources, its services and governance. Overall, respondents disagreed with the statements, which indicates that more needs to be done to indicate how the Council uses its resources in an economic, efficient and effective way. This extends to increasing transparency with regards to the Council's governance arrangements.

Proposals for improvement in this regard will be agreed upon and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.



We would welcome your feedback,
please send your thoughts, views and opinions to:



Performance Management
ICT and Corporate Policy
Chief Executive's Department
County Hall
Carmarthen
Carmarthenshire SA31 1JP



Tel: **01267 234567**
Email: **performance@carmarthenshire.gov.uk**



Follow us and add your comments on the **[Council's Facebook](#)** page



Follow this plan and add your Tweets on our **[Twitter](#)** page - **#CarmsReport**

DETAILED PROGRESS COMMITMENTS AND TARGETS



Well-being Objective 1

Start Well - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Supporting families			
We will implement & monitor the Corporate Parenting Strategy via Corporate Parenting Panel, ensuring the council fulfils its Corporate Parenting role & that our looked after children & care leavers have the opportunity to reach their full potential. (Ref 15001) MF5-40	✓	Corporate Parenting Panel has resumed meeting virtually since Nov 21. All Looked After children and care leavers have continued to be supported via the childcare teams and corporate parenting service. A number of care leavers are studying in colleges and universities and others participating in training. Outcomes are also monitored via the Multi-Agency Care Management Meetings (MALAC) and CYSUR Audit and Evaluation meetings that have continued to take place regularly to ensure the council fulfils its corporate parenting role and progress monitored as part of the corporate parenting strategy. Whilst the pandemic created challenges for children's services during 2021/22 outcomes being achieved for LAC and care leavers has remained very positive.	E&C
We will ensure the Council fully responds and delivers the Childcare Offer of 30 hours of free education and care for working parents in line with Welsh Government guidance. (Ref 15002) MF5-41	✓	Promotion of the Childcare Offer has continued with vigorous and multi-media advertising. During 2021/22 the number of enquiries to the webpage was 463, with 12,168 hits to the webpage. On average 500-600 children accessed the childcare offer each month during 2021/22. The new national digital service is planned to be rolled-out nationally in January 2023. Carmarthenshire is participating in a small pilot working with Ceredigion commencing September 2022.	E&C
We will continue to develop the Flying Start programme, reflecting the impact of COVID-19, promoting early intervention for disadvantaged families with children (0-3) living in specific deprived communities, ensuring good multi agency support to families. (Ref 15003) MF5-82	✓	Collaborative work has continued within Flying Start providing a holistic approach to communicate and engage with families, sharing ideas and resources. The Flying Start App has been integral in engaging families, keeping them informed and providing vital information. We have used mobile data devices to help families unable to download the app. The FS team met with WG to evaluate the success of the App, especially during COVID, with an aim of it being rolled out to other LA's. Challenges have continued due to ongoing Covid restrictions and lack of access to suitable venues for face-to-face delivery. Staffing issues due to covid and vacancies have also made it difficult to run full services. Language and Play (LAP) services have worked closely with the advisory teacher and educational psychologist has enabled them to offer bespoke support to individual childcare settings to support children's developing communication skills.	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will continue to transform children's social work practice through a Relationship Based approach that incorporates systemic thinking and the principles of Signs of Safety. (Ref 15004)	✓	This approach is embedded in all childcare teams. Contributions from adult services has also offered a different perspective and contribution to action plans. Pod discussions are now taking place face-to-face again and staff value this peer support. Mandatory sessions for adult and children's social workers in their first year of practice will include systemic practice enabling workers the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in this area. Over 20 managers and senior social workers have also undertaken Foundation level training during 2021/22. In collaboration with 'Collective Space' practitioners have developed a training package which will be delivered on a regular basis in future in addition to more specialist risk assessment training.	E&C
We will continue effective management oversight and challenge of Assessments and Care and Support plans to ensure they are outcome focused, evidencing the voice of the child, and reflect the underpinning principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act (SSWBA) (Ref 15005)	✓	Assessments are audited monthly by senior managers and there continues to be good evidence of collaborative work with children, parents, and extended family via Family network meetings to develop care and support and safety plans. Feedback is given to practitioners on examples of good practice and areas for improvement. Covid restrictions, staff absence/sickness, recruitment difficulties as well as an increase in referrals to the department have all been additional challenges this year.	E&C
We will ensure the regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements are working effectively. (Ref 15006)	✓	We have continued to follow regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements 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 where staff had the opportunity to consider guidance and share good practice across the region to ensure consistency. It enabled reflection and provided assurance that arrangements are working effectively across the region.	E&C
We continue to work towards addressing the childcare gaps identified in our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2017-22) whilst taking into account the impact of Covid-19 in order to ensure that the LA fulfils its statutory childcare sufficiency duty, and local parents/carers are supported to balance their working and caring responsibilities. (Ref 15009)	✓	Despite continued difficulties due to Covid-19 on-going support for prospective and existing childminders has been provided on an individual basis and via smaller groups. Eight childminder briefings have been delivered with 10 attendees to date. There have been six new registrations this year and another two imminent. There have been 10 de-registrations. Currently we have 101 registered childminders with a total of 779 childcare places. Significant grants from WG went towards the 'Summer of Fun' and 'Winter of Wellbeing' to support children and families as part of the covid recovery. Approx. 15,000 children and young people have benefitted from these free activities across the county from 0-25 year olds.	E&C
We will continue to extend and refine the Team Around the Family (TAF) approach across the county for 0-25 year olds, and will improve the interface between TAF, School Attendance and Safeguarding and focus on Elected Home Educated (EHE) children. (Ref 15013)	✓	Team Around the Family (TAF) are continuing to re-shape their service to meet future need. The TAF-in-Schools team has been amalgamated with the TAF Central team as part of the reshaping TAF to be a more efficient, place based, and community focused organisation. TAF are continuing developing links with the third sector, and work closely with	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		schools, Safeguarding and Attendance and Early Help team as part of the behaviour support agenda. The team have operated at a much reduced capacity (less than 50%) to meet the needs of families primarily through digital means. The first peer parent support group is in the early stages of development going forward into 2022/23.	
We will work in partnership with the Inclusion Service to develop the 'local offer' of support for disabled/autistic children and young people and their families. This will include the piloting of a proactive provision of information, advice and assistance to families. (Ref 15014)	✓	Work has been undertaken within our Early help team to develop a web based local offer of support. Joint discussions and decisions with Inclusion and web designers has taken place and work is near completion. It can be built upon and amended over time, working together to ensure important information, advice and guidance is included, plus sign-posting for specific services.	E&C
% of child assessments completed within statutory timescales (PAM/028 - CH/006a/012) 2020/21 Result - 93.6% (3,591÷3,835) 2021/22 Target - 93.9%	x	Off Target and declined 2021/22 Result - 90.2% (3,876/4,298). The increase in referrals coupled with staff absence and COVID restrictions have increased pressures on the assessment teams that carry out the majority of the Assessments of Care and Support, undertaken through a combination of face to face and remote visits. A monthly sample audit of assessments has continued with feedback to practitioners on examples of good practice and areas for improvement. There continues to be good evidence in assessments of the views of children. As part of the assessment process social workers are speaking to both parents whether they are involved or not daily with the care of their child. Increasingly, assessments refer to the contribution that a family network meeting has made to the assessment in terms of identifying sources of support or family/friends who have devised a safety plan with the parent. Timescales are calculated at Authorised Date by senior managers; therefore, it is imperative that assessments are approved as soon as possible.	E&C
The average number of days a child is on the Child Protection Register. (CH/035/036) 2020/21 Result - 221.0 days (23,427÷106) 2021/22 Target – 237.7days	x	Off Target and declined 2021/22 Result – 280.3 days (34,198/122). Recent times have proved very challenging due to the COVID pandemic. Families have faced difficulties in relation to safeguarding issues when under lockdown and having to adhere to restrictions. As a result, some children may have remained on the Child Protection Register for a longer period of time to ensure their safety under demanding circumstances. De-registrations are subject to multi-disciplinary case conferences. Limitations on staff undertaking direct visits during the year have also existed. Increased use of IT equipment and PPE have assisted staff to manage and undertake work to the best of their ability in line with Welsh Government guidance. We continue to use preventative services to reduce the number of children being subject to child protection plans. Prevention is key to practice. The childcare teams are supported in this work by the	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		Family Intervention Service, Integrated Family Support and Edge of Care Teams with intensive packages of support implemented in a variety of ways to keep children safe. Support services are offered to maintain safe care for children at home together with the emotional health and well-being team who provide psychological support to children working with childcare teams across Carmarthenshire. Systemic and Signs of Safety practices are in place.	
% of children in care with 3 or more placements in the year. (PAM/029 - CH/043) 2020/21 Result - 4.7% (7÷148 × 100) 2021/22 Target - 7.9%	✓	On Target and Declined 2020/21 Result - 6.6% (11/ 167). Of the 167 children looked as 31st March 2022, 11 children experienced 3 or more placement moves. This is a slightly higher result than last year of 4.7% with 7 of the 148 looked after children experiencing 3 or more placements. We continued to focus on maintaining placement stability with good placement support being offered across the service to achieve this.	E&C
The number of children re-registered on the Child Protection Register within 12 months. (CH/024) 2020/21 Result - 11.4% (12÷105 × 100) 2021/22 Target - 10.5%	✓	On Target and Improved 2020/21 Result - 4.4%% (6/136) Six of the 136 children on the Child Protection Register have been on the register before in the previous 12 months. This is half the number of the previous year. We continually use preventative services to reduce the need for children being subject to child protection plans.	E&C
The % of looked after children who experience a change of school during the year. This excludes transitional arrangements and moves associated with adoption or moves home. (CH/044) 2020/21 Result - 3.1% (3/96 x 100) 2021/22 Target - 4%	x	Off Target and declined 2021/22 Result - 6.7% (7/105). Despite not meeting the target, education stability of Looked After Children remains excellent, with figures historically being very low. The increase in numbers for this year can partly be attributed to sibling groups requiring a change of school. Stability is maintained wherever possible by ensuring a child remains in the same school, however, this is not always in the best interest of a child e.g., distance to travel or child's academic needs not being met. We continue to use preventive services and teams such as Integrated Family Support and Edge of Care to keep children at home with much success in many cases. The work of the Family Intervention and childcare teams is progressive in keeping children with their families. Support services are offered to maintain safe care for children at home together with the emotional health and well-being team who provide psychological support to children working with childcare teams across Carmarthenshire. We work and develop good family network meetings to ensure all options of care are considered within friends and family instead of foster care so that children can remain in their own school and environment.	E&C
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) 2020/21 Result - 38.9% (24,535/63,010)	x	Off Target and improved 2021/22 Result – 72.6% (49,498 / 68,189). Disappointed to have not reached this target We continue to work with families, but it has been	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
2021/22 Target - 80%		difficult with positive COVID cases, this includes families and staff.	
<p>The % of unauthorised absence at an allocated Flying Start free childcare placement for eligible 2–3-year-olds to prepare for school readiness. (9.1.8.8)</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 1.58% (995/63,010)</p> <p>2021/22 Target - 2.75%</p>	✓	<p>On Target and improved</p> <p>2021/22 Result - 2.33% (1,591 / 68,189).</p> <p>Disappointed to have not reached this target We continue to work with families, but it has been difficult with positive COVID cases, this includes families and staff.</p>	E&C
B – Additional Learning Needs			
<p>We will ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs transformation programme which aims to transform expectations, experiences and outcomes for children and young people by developing a unified system for supporting learners with additional needs from 0 to 25 years of age. (Ref 15035) MF5-39</p>	✓	<p>We continue to support Welsh Government's Additional Learning Needs Transformation programme by supporting schools and a diverse range of stakeholders to implement all transformation plans with an ongoing schedule of work that is reviewed and updated regularly to capture updates from Welsh Government.</p>	E&C



Well-being Objective 2

Start Well - Help children live healthy lifestyles

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Increase physical activities for children			
We will continue to work towards addressing the gaps identified in our most recent Play Sufficiency Assessment whilst taking into account the impact of Covid-19 in order to ensure that local children and young people have access to wide and varied play opportunities and experiences (Ref 15010)	✓	The Welsh Government provided Carmarthenshire with £270,00 towards the Summer of Fun and £434,689 towards the Winter of Wellbeing to support children and families as part of their recovery from the pandemic and its restrictions. A significant package of support was provided to fund initiatives designed to help children, young people, families, and the services they use. Approximately 15,000 children and young people have benefitted from these activities across the county from 0-25 years old. The Play Streets Project funded via the WG Playworks Holiday Grant has also been utilised with 53 sessions delivered, plus 7 pop-up events (324 children benefitted; 62 adults engaging with support). We commissioned Pleydell Smithyman to complete the Play Sufficiency Assessment, Action Plan, and summary document to be submitted to WG by 30/6/22.	C&R
Pendine Outdoor Education centre – new service delivery model to be developed to include review of existing site, plus options for additional or alternative onsite and offsite provision, both residential and non-residential. (Ref 15073)	✓	Future options report in place. Interim arrangements looking at basic staffing provision and reduced capacity residential offer at Pendine from Easter 2022. Alternative non-residential and off-site (at school) offers developed as options too. Condition survey and site options paper being developed with property services to inform long term service offer later in 2022.	C&R
We shall increase the range of physical activity opportunities available for children and adults to increase ongoing participation rates. (Ref 15076)		Following the introduction of the Actif Strategy, existing programmes and activities have been mapped against its objectives and areas where additional need and opportunity were identified are continuously being addressed. This has resulted in an increase in the range, as per target. This includes growth of walking sports for adults and older adults countywide, expanding the cycle opportunities (e.g. 'Back on your bike'), converting and upgrading spaces in leisure centres to offer a wider and enhanced programme, increasing partnerships to result in activities (including in community halls/hubs), etc.	C&R
Through the Healthy Schools Scheme we will continue to increase the level of physical activity by developing the Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools Project, continue to hold our annual Pedometer Challenge and continue to embed the Food & Fitness Health topic within Schools. (Ref 15102)		As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, school closures, and having to re-direct our work as instructed by the National Lead of the Healthy Schools Scheme, as Officers we have been unable to develop CODS to its full potential. The scheme no longer have the capacity to Lead on the Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools Scheme. As a result Louise Morgan who has recently been appointed as an Associate Education Support Advisor will take on the lead of CODS going forward with a focus on the links with the Health & Well-being AOLE (Areas of learning and experience). She has now produced a plan in relation to moving the scheme forward.	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		The scheme continues to work in partnership with the Active Young People (AYP) Team in promoting the projects that they are delivering in terms of increasing Physical Activity levels within the school. We'll continue to deliver Termly Cluster meetings in partnership with the AYP team.	
The % of children who can swim 25m aged 11 (3.4.2.1) 2020/21 Result - 58.3% (74/127) 2020/21 - Target - 65%	✗	2021/22 Result not available This is based on the 2020/21 academic year when no school swimming took place due to Covid-19 lockdown and subsequent facility closure, therefore there is no result available. School swimming resumed in September 2021 which will be included in 2022/23 financial year result.	C&R
The number of young people (0-16) accessing free swim sessions (3.4.2.2) 2020/21 - Result 0 2021/22 - Target 1,200	✗	2021/22 Result - 697 This is an improvement on last year's figures but unfortunately, we have not met the target because of limited numbers allowed in pool due to covid-related restrictions. Also U8's needed an adult accompanying them further reducing the number of spaces available. Going forward, we now have increased capacity in free swimming sessions since covid restrictions have eased.	C&R
The number of attendances at Sporting Opportunities facilitated by Sport & Leisure Officers (3.4.2.8) 2020/21 Result - 56,791 2021/22 Target - 157,834	✗	2021/22 Result – 106,888 This result is off target but is showing an improvement on last year. The main reason is that schools did not engage in our programmes as they have done previously. This is largely due to a lack of extra-curricular activity. Schools are slowly re-engaging with our programmes through their COVID-19 recovery and as weather improves, they are able to utilise outdoor spaces more.	C&R
B – Address mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences			
Through the Healthy School Scheme, we will continue to support schools in their implementation of the Mental & Emotional Health and Well-being Health topic including Anti-bullying strategies and healthy coping mechanisms such as mindfulness and Speakr. (Ref 15105)	✓	Since Autumn 2021, the Lead Healthy Schools Officer has been supporting Hywel Dda's Implementation Lead for the Whole School Approach to Mental Health (WSA to MH) in relation to supporting the 8 Pilot schools who are completing Phase 1 of the Pilot Project. The Lead Officer has supported the Implementation Lead in setting up workshops and attended most of them in order to share good practice. The Lead Healthy Schools Officer is also an active member of the Task & Finish Group that has been established in order to produce an Anti-Bullying Toolkit for local schools. The toolkit will promote and support the Mental & Emotional Health of school pupils. Throughout the year the Scheme has raised awareness to a number of National Mental Health Campaigns via the Healthy Schools Network on HWB, the Healthy Schools Twitter Page, Termly Cluster meetings and Training events. The Scheme updated the National Health Campaigns calendar as it usually does on an annual basis, which was shared with schools via the Network and cluster meetings. The scheme also provided schools with a set of Educational and Generic resources that will have supported them in raising awareness to the campaigns. All resources shared are available on the Network for future use. In addition, the scheme signposted schools to useful websites such as Mentally Healthy Schools, Anna Freud National Centre	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		for Children and Families and the Charlie Waller Memorial website where further reputable resources could be accessed in relation to Mental & Emotional Health promotion. The scheme also used the Mental Health Campaigns as an opportunity to remind schools of the age-appropriate Directory of Support Lines and Self-Care apps that the scheme has produced. The Directories have been categorised into specific areas such as Anxiety, Bereavement and LGBTQ+ related issues providing a source of support to pupils.	
C – Promote healthy eating			
We shall continue to ensure that schools are abiding by the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards & Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013. (Ref 15103)	✓	The Healthy Schools Scheme (HSS) is used as a platform to remind schools of the current Healthy Eating Regulations e.g. informing schools of obvious breaches to the Statutory Regulations such as rewarding pupils with unhealthy treats and provide schools with further statutory guidance. A Range of guidance documents have been shared with schools and all Schools which are focussing on Food & Fitness as a health topic in preparation for a Healthy Schools Award or schools working towards the National Quality Award are provided with support directly from officers.	E&C
We will increase the % of schools achieving phase 5 of the Healthy Schools Initiative (8.3.1.6) 2020/21 Result - 36% (40/111) 2021/22 Target - 37%	✗	2021/22 Result - 35% (39/110) 39 out of 110 schools have achieved Phase 5 of the Healthy Schools scheme. The scheme now runs in 110 schools (previously 111). One special school is not included in the calculation which affects the result and therefore the result is now below the previous year. Progress in the scheme has slowed during the pandemic, with schools having prioritised learning and delays in Healthy Schools Officers being able to undertake on-site inspections during restrictions.	E&C
D – Increase awareness of healthy lifestyles			
We will continue to promote and raise awareness to campaigns specific to healthy eating, physical activity and mental health and promote the School Health Research Network. (Ref 15104)	✓	In relation to the School Health Research Network Pupil Health & Well-being Survey, 11 out of the 12 Secondary Schools in Carmarthenshire registered with the Network and completed the Surveys. All 11 of these Secondary Schools also completed the School Environment Questionnaire. We raised awareness of a range of campaigns during the year including National Fitness Day; Outdoor Awareness Month; Outdoor Classroom Day; Bike to School Week; Walk to School Week and Active Million Minutes Campaign; World Mental Health Day; Children's Mental Health Week; Stress Awareness Month; Anti Bullying Week; The Big Lunch; Eat Like a Champ; BNF's Healthy Eating Week; National Obesity Awareness Week and Eating disorders week.	E&C
E – Flying Start programme			
Please see Step A of Well-being Objective one for actions and measures on Flying Start			
F – Early Years Transformation Programme			
We will continue to work in partnership with Health Board & other partners on WG 'Early Years Integration Pathfinder Programme' from segmented to integrated model, across boundaries. Undertake pilot in Cwm Gwendraeth,	✓	The Regional Maternity and Early Years Steering Group has met on a termly basis throughout the year and is chaired by Head of Children Services. The Steering Group discusses progress, challenges and barriers to integration and draws upon the experience of group	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
based on Flying Start model of multi-agency delivery in accordance with the plan submitted to WG. (Ref 15042)		<p>members to advise on solutions. The Carmarthenshire Maternity and Early Years Operational Group has been established and meets on a regular basis throughout the year. Members of the Operational group filter into the CCG subgroups whereby actions specific to Early Years Transformation are worked towards. Following strict LA procurement regulations the company Panda were commissioned to work with the region to develop a Maternity and Early Years Strategy and their contract commenced in December 2022. Panda have been working with regional partners in developing a web based Regional Maternity and Early Years Strategy. The strategy is now in the final stages of development and the next steps will be consultation with key stakeholders and launching the Strategy. The Regional Maternity and Early Years Outcomes Framework continues to be developed. A set of population indicators have been agreed across the region and the data leads from each Local Authority are working in partnership in utilising the Gorwel data dashboard for storing both Qualitative and Quantitative data relevant for maternity and early Years.</p> <p>The Cwm Gwendraeth Integrated team is now firmly established within the area and systems have been developed to identify families in need as early as possible via the Midwifery and Health Visiting service. Families are referred to the Family Support Workers for 1:1 support and are sign-posted to the various groups that are available. Families are offered home safety sessions at 25 weeks of the pregnancy. Good working relationships have developed with third sector partners operating within the Cwm Gwendraeth area and beyond and some co-delivering of projects has occurred with Tumble Family Centre, Cymraeg I Blant and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The Cwm Gwendraeth Early Years webpage continues to be updated and is an information source for both families and professionals to find out the various services available along with advice and support.</p>	
G – Impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people			
We will ensure that we have a through age approach to community support ensuring equal access to education, training, employment and community inclusion. This will include new models of service delivery to respond to Covid - 19 and the opportunities this presents to escalate our Learning Disability Transformation plan. (Ref 12540) (MF-37)	x	<p>The proposal for our Supported employment project has been submitted to the new Regional Integration Fund and an expression of interest made to the DWP to be part of the Local Supported Employment initiative. This additional funding will provide capacity to re-establish this programme of work and a link to best practice in this area of work. To compliment the supported employment programme, we continue working with colleagues in education to develop enhanced options for school leavers and initial discussions have taken place with adult learning Wales to explore inclusive education and training for employability, enterprise and skills development as well as further development of our sensory curriculum. The supported employment project plan is yet to be finalised however the memorandum of understanding between ourselves, environment and CWM has been drafted and circulated for agreement. This will then</p>	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		allow us to progress the circular economy opportunities. Links have been made with Parc Yr Esgob with a view to establish work prep activities around grounds maintenance and increasing the number of volunteering opportunities. Discussions have taken place regarding the building requirements for a new enterprise hub to allow us to merge these activities across the county and we are now part of a developing regional initiative on micro enterprises.	



Well-being Objective 3

Start Well - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A – Improvement in pupil progress, wellbeing and outcomes			
We will continue to take forward the Equity Strategy to ensure that every child and young person is valued and valued equally. (Ref 15030)	✓	<p>All strategic focus groups include a focus on ensuring that learning provision across our schools meets the varying needs of all of our learners.</p> <p>The Equity and Wellbeing Pilot project is ongoing, having been disrupted by the impact of COVID. Our next step is to capture the learning from this project and to disseminate wider to other schools through the Curriculum clusters.</p> <p>In brief, Ysgol Burry Port, who has successfully embedded person-centred practices has focussed on the recovery curriculum and on the losses encountered by pupils and their families during the pandemic. The needs of individual pupils are addressed through a progressive curriculum as part of the school's universal provision; more targeted support is delivered in line with need.</p> <p>Family engagement remains a key focus for the Tymbi / Llechyfedach federation who highly value parental voice ensuring that views influence strategic policy. Laugharne schools continues to promote equity through the expressive arts, engaging with parents through projects such as the 'Lightbringers'; 'Creative habits of mind', Expressive arts skills and digital skills continue to develop positively as a result.</p>	E&C
We will continue to research and develop a set of meaningful measures for pupil wellbeing. (Ref 15031)	✓	The wellbeing curriculum has been published and any assessment measures will now be published by Welsh Government following their accountability and assessment consultation. We will base a new suite of measures on these new WG measures when published.	E&C
Considering the impact of COVID 19, we will support our schools to ensure the wellbeing and progress of all learners, including those who are vulnerable, eligible for free school meals or looked after. (Ref 15033) MF5-28	✓	<p>Officers from the Education and Children's services department continue to provide support to schools in line with local and national priorities, ensuring the wellbeing and progress of all learners, including those who are vulnerable, eligible for free school meals or looked after. Support and training provided continues to be extensive and variable depending on the needs of the learners and their schools, for example, the ELSA training, ensuring that staff are well equipped to address the emotional needs of pupils; Relationships and Sexual Education, delivered through our 'Healthy Schools Scheme' supporting school-based practitioners to effectively support and LGBTQ+ or transgender challenges that arise. A stakeholder groups has been arranged to ensure effective progress towards the recommendations outlined in the Estyn report 'I don't tell My Teacher', which addresses sexual harassment / bullying.</p>	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>The Partneriaeth learning offer provides an additional range of support and training, complementing the CCC offer. A challenge remains, ensuring that schools have the capacity to attend our professional development sessions. This is being addressed through ensuring repeat sessions at different times of the day and through recording the sessions.</p> <p>The ECS departmental Strategic Focus groups continue to address the needs of all pupils, including those who are most vulnerable, with officers from across the department collectively planning relevant support for schools. All support is informed by the intelligence gathered from our schools. Increasingly, dialogue with the 'Partneriaeth' is ensuring that we are more effectively aligned in relation to providing support for our schools, avoiding duplication and addressing 'gaps'. A link officer has been assigned to Carmarthen shire and this is ensuring more efficient transfer of key messages etc.</p> <p>The Headteacher survey, issued in December 2021, notes that our schools feel that we know them and their priority areas for improvement well.</p>	
<p>We will access available funding from Welsh Government to implement the Recruit, recover, raise standards: the accelerating learning programme to ensure all learners affected by the pandemic and particularly the most vulnerable, who have been affected the most, catch up in their learning. (Ref 15036)</p>	✓	<p>All schools have accessed their delegated Recruit, Recover and Raise standards grant funding, including additional funding. School leaders have discussed the focus and impact of this funding with their Educational Support Adviser, focussing on the additional support and provision they are able to provide for our learners and their families, including those who are most vulnerable, utilising this grant.</p> <p>The focus of the grant remains firmly on addressing the key challenges ascertained through self-evaluation processes, responding to the voice of the learner and the input of staff. The additional funding provides greater flexibility supporting schools to address the needs of the most vulnerable learners, those who require additional support with English, Maths and digital skills and those who are in examination years. Schools remain frustrated that the grant monies are received separately, often with very little time to plan expenditure as effectively as possible due to the time available up to the end of the financial year. Receiving 1 substantial grant with clear terms and conditions would allow for more efficient and effective ways of working by all, schools and finance officers within the LA.</p> <p>Schools wishing to recruit additional staffing to support learners have found this challenging due to the COVID pandemic and the subsequent availability suitable personnel. However, school leaders continue to work innovatively, targeting this funding towards those learners requiring additional support due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.</p>	E&C
<p>We will work with other Local Authorities on developing a new school improvement partnership to meet our needs. (Ref 15039)</p>	✓	<p>Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils have formed a formal partnership, 'Partneriaeth', to deliver services to schools in the new region. There is a new Legal Agreement which outlines the role of the new Consortium, how the budget and</p>	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		business plan are to be developed and governance arrangements. The new Staffing Structure as agreed by the Joint Committee has been completed and a Lead Officer appointed. Initially the consortium will focus on delivery of high quality professional development to support curriculum reform and leadership. The work of the consortium is informed and monitored by regular meetings between key Local Authority and Partneriaeth officers. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities between Local Authorities and Partneriaeth and who is best placed to lead on an initiative is identified. There is anew website and regular communication with schools. Early indications are that the new provision is far more focused and responsive to local needs.	
We will improve the Average Capped 9 score (best 9 exam results) for pupils in Year 11 (PAM/032) 2020/21-Result not available-19/20 AcademicYr 2021/22 No Target set - 19/20 Academic Yr	!	No results published for 2021/22 (2020/21 Academic Year) Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students were unable to sit final exams in summer 2021 and instead their grades reflect predicted results based on coursework and mock examination results. Results by County were not published and would not be comparable to previous years if known. Summer exams 2022 are due to go ahead as scheduled. Results will be published later in the year. Comparison to previous years may not be applicable as some courses were truncated due to the pandemic.	E&C
We will increase the % of pupils achieving the Level 3 threshold (2 A Levels grade A-E) (5.0.2.3) 2020/21-Result not available-19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 No Target set - 19/20 Academic Yr	!		E&C
B - Improving School Attendance - Making every day count			
The % of pupil attendance in primary schools (PAM/007) 2020/21 No result available-19/20Academic Yr 2021/22 - No Target set - 20/21 Academic Yr	!	No results published for 2021/22 (2020/21 Academic Year) These 2021/22 measures covers the Academic Year 2020/21. This includes a period that schools were closed due to the COVID pandemic (Oct - Dec 2020). Schools would also have had incidences when individuals or 'bubble groups' would have been sent home to self-isolate, which would have included distance learning. Welsh government have stated that they will not be undertaking the Pupil level attendance data collection or publishing a Statistical Release on school attendance data for this Academic Year. Any data produced from local systems would not be comparable to previous years.	E&C
The % of authorised absence in primary schools (4.1.2.3) 2020/21 No result available- 19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 - No Target set - 20/21 Academic Yr	!		E&C
The % of pupil attendance in secondary schools (PAM/008) 2020/21 No result available- 19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 - No Target set - 20/21 Academic Yr	!		E&C
The % of authorised absence in secondary schools (4.1.2.2) 2020/21 No result available- 19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 - No Target set - 20/21 Academic Yr	!		E&C
C - An excellent school in the right place			
We will continue to improve the condition, suitability and ICT resources within schools and ensure that all newly built schools have the latest digital technologies and infrastructures in place to deliver 21st century education. (Ref 14900) MF5-89	✓	All teachers now have a modern device suitable for remote teaching. Implementation of Audio Visual equipment continues and is on-going. The annual exercise to refresh equipment and to review the pupil: device ratios has commenced. This will achieve the continuing aim of all learners having the same level of access to devices.	P&R
We will continue to design and manage projects to deliver the Authority's Modernising Education Programme. (Ref 14973)	✓	Whilst we are in constant dialogue with scheme sponsors, programmes of scheme to be developed and delivered constantly change and some at very short notice. Additional schemes, not previously programmed enter the system, some with very short timelines. Resource within the section is at a low ebb	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		at the moment band there are difficulties in recruiting suitable staff into vacant posts. to deal with the changing requirements for delivery of projects. In the meantime, we will continue to deliver on an annual basis in line with the scheme sponsors requirements although we are awaiting the outcome of the MEP's latest programme in approx. July 2022. We continue to work on numerous projects for the Education and Housing departments with a number of schemes recently committed, a number under construction, contracts let and others at various stages of design. However a delay in the completion of the MEP Review will potentially affect the delivery of the WG band B programme due to potential changes in prioritisation and lead in times to design , tender and deliver.	
We will invest on average £14 million per annum over the next 3 years in major school construction and modernisation projects. (Ref 14993) MF5-26	✓	We have recently completed projects at Ysgol Rhys Prichard, Ysgol Pum Heol and Ysgol Llangadog with on site progress at Ysgol y Castell and Ysgol Gorslas. Most recently, work on Ysgol Pembrey has commenced in January 2022.	E&C
We will consider the delivery of primary education provision in the Ammanford and Llandeilo areas. (Ref 14994) MF5-27	✓	We are currently considering options for the Ammanford and Llandeilo areas under Band B of the Modernising Education Programme.	E&C
We shall ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Code to support the attainment of better educational outcomes with specific reference to requirements for rural schools. (Ref 14996) MF5-32	✓	We have recently completed a number of school re-organisation proposals and ensured that the progress complied with the School Organisation Code. We will also consider this if any requirements of the MEP review rely on school-reorganisation.	E&C
We shall consider options to utilise the Welsh Government Mutual Investment Model (MIM) to further develop the education infrastructure through capital investment. (Ref 14997) MF5-33	✓	As part of the MEP review we are considering all options available to progress under MIM. Following conclusion of the MEP review it is hoped that a suitable project will have been identified.	E&C
We will review the MEP, bearing in mind COVID-19 implications, and initiate a new programme. (Ref 14998)	✓	We are currently in the process of reviewing the MEP and taking into account all of the implications as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and other departmental considerations.	E&C
We will reflect the impact of COVID on new school design e.g. access, materials used, creating flexible spaces, ventilation systems etc. (Ref 15000)	✓	We are currently revising the future schools brief, taking into account all the lessons learnt during the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include elements that worked well in both new and older, larger and smaller schools.	E&C
We will complete the Catchment Area Review and implement any policy changes required. (Ref 14999)	✗	To be undertaken as an integral part of the review of the Modernising Education Programme.	E&C
The % of schools graded as "Good" (Category A) or "Satisfactory" (Category B) for school building condition (4.3.1.8) 2020/21 - No result available 2020/21 - No target set	!	No results published for 2021/22 Due to the pandemic the school building survey was not carried out in 2021-22. However the Education and Childrens Services Department co-ordinated a significant Corporate response to ensure that all school buildings were COVID safe environments and suitable for pupils to continue their learning. a corporate risk bid for a dedicated team to undertake a rolling programme of condition surveys of buildings and schools has been submitted and approve. The school	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		building surveys have just restarted, and we will have a much better picture and a full set of results next year.	
D - Workforce development and succession planning			
We will implement the agreed development plan for Teacher Centre (School Management System) to introduce further Local Authority functions including Free School Meals, Additional Learning Needs, Transport, Elective Home Education, Missing from Education and the Music Service. (Ref 14843) MF5-37	✓	As planned we have implemented and rolled out the New ALN module to track and record the new stages of the ALN Reform Bill. We have also agreed a development to the admissions system whereby schools will be able to see applications when made by parents. This will rollout in September 2022. As we are undertaking a major review of systems and the role of the Schools MIS and data team, further developments will follow.	E&C
We shall review current specialist behaviour support services in the County with a view to decentralise, bringing support services into mainstream provision by 2022. (Ref 15028) MF5-42	✓	The Four Phase Model for Behaviour Support Services has progressed this year with significant investment to increase capacity of the team to be able to provide a wider remit of support in mainstream schools. Phase 1 audit provided data which will allow the Behaviour Support Community Team to develop training packages and overall support plans to provide BESD support by mainstream staff. Phase 2 with the Behaviour Support Community Team is now ready to provide a new service delivery plan for the next academic year which will provide greater access to timely support for training needs and for individual learners. The conclusion of the consultation for the closure of Rhydygors School has now been completed and the school will close at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. A new PRU will be established and the process of providing an equitable service across all Phase 3 provisions (PRUs) is now in progress. Phase 4 integrating services and providing needs led services for long term needs and complex families is projected for next stages of development.	E&C
We shall review and encourage participation in governorship of schools. (Ref 15034) MF5-35	✓	During the past year, COVID has brought numerous challenges to existing school governors. We as a LA have supported with all aspects of remote governorship and the resultant pressures from COVID. Through this support we have strived to reassure and encourage existing governors to continue in their roles. We have also highlighted this support and guidance when promoting and encouraging participation in the governorship of schools to potential new governors.	E&C
We will continue to improve leadership at all levels across our schools and specialist settings. We will ensure that effective leadership leads to engaging learning experiences, ensuring the progress and development of all children, young people and staff. (Ref 15037)	✓	Educational support advisers work routinely alongside our headteachers, their senior leadership teams, teaching and support staff, ensuring that they have a robust understanding of the strengths of their schools and the areas in need of further focus or development. Support provided is tailored to the needs of the school and we ensure additional capacity for all schools requiring more regular input. The team monitors progress alongside senior leaders, ensuring suitable support; this has become increasingly possible as COVID 19 restrictions have eased. Focus areas have been updated in line with the NR:EI (National Resource: Evaluation and Improvement) and include; Leadership; Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion; Learning and teaching and Curriculum.	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>Reflective discussion include reference also to:</p> <p>Learner outcomes achieved throughout the year, as well as during summative assessments and examinations</p> <p>Resource management</p> <p>Progress achieved by schools in relation to their developmental priorities.</p> <p>Any other matters arising</p> <p>The department's collegiate approach to school improvement, as well as the strategic focus group approach has ensured a more efficient use of time and an improved focus on the challenges that schools are addressing, informing the services' professional learning programme. The work of the department has been updated this term, aligning to the ECS 10-year plan and to the outcomes of the headteacher's survey and the headteacher Wellbeing Charter consultations.</p> <p>A team of headteachers and officers are working collaboratively to revise our evaluation support strategy for schools taking into account the NR:EI, the new Estyn framework and the WG guidance on School Improvement. A forward work programme is being devised to ensure that all officers are kept routinely up to date with Estyn expectations.</p>	
We will develop and use a more robust competency-based process to recruit school leaders. (Ref 15038)	✓	<p>On Target</p> <p>A new Assessment Centre approach has been successfully implemented to appoint Headteachers. This has led to a confidence in the recruitment process to appoint high quality school leaders.</p>	E&C
We will review all school pupil admission dates and age-ranges across the County. (Ref 13981) MF5-36	x	The working group to review Primary Schools Admissions (Rising 4s) cross service Departmentally meet monthly to progress discussions specifically with regard to understanding the demand for nursery places across the County currently and projected.	E&C
E - The development of Welsh for all Learners			
We will increase the number of teachers and support staff who can confidently teach through the medium of Welsh. (Ref 15032) MF5-37	✓	This is an ongoing task to ensure availability of language training sessions at all levels. Training courses across all linguistic levels as well as for Gloywi Iaith are offered to all schools. Language audit gives detailed information for school staff language levels and so can be targeted for specific language courses. Up take has been slow. On line courses and Language learning coupled with Pedagogy in the Foundation Phase, are proving to be a positive way of implementing Welsh language learning. This is being rolled out within Llanelli schools and is a format that we will adhere to across all schools.	E&C
F - Focus on skills demands and employability			
The Music Service will continue to develop the reach of the service and to build on new curriculum initiatives e.g. Music Therapy. (Ref 14842) MF5-37	x	<p>Progress in this area has been delayed by COVID-19 and the effects of lockdown restrictions during the last 2 years. Work on the 'new curriculum' and 'curriculum initiatives' recommenced in September 2021. INSET was delivered at the start of January on Music Therapy and Therapeutic Music by practitioner Hannah McCarthy. New initiatives are being developed and further staff training was identified for March till end of Summer term. Excellent progress has been made with work started with external organisations such as the ABC of Opera and a local Music Therapist. This work should be able to continue and thrive next year.</p>	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
<p>We will continue with the design of the Carmarthenshire Curriculum in partnership with schools and other providers, framed within the national context. We will pursue opportunities to link corporate and economic strategy with the design of the new curriculum. (Ref 15016) MF5-34</p>	✓	<p>The Decolonising the curriculum project is currently being undertaken and school will give final feedback of their experiences with learners in the summer. The schools involved have been matched with academics from Swansea University who can support co-creation of curriculum experiences.</p> <p>With the publication of the Skills Barometer we have begun our own scoping exercise of the pathways and experiences offered in our schools and supported by us through an online survey https://forms.office.com/r/eYeD3zAs0T and face to face discussions. We will formulate a plan emanating from this.</p>	E&C
<p>We will dovetail local opportunities for curriculum enrichment and extension with the national architecture with a view towards developing a Carmarthenshire Learner Offer. (Ref 15017) MF5-37</p>	✓	<p>We have collaborated with the Carmarthen Museum in Abergwili, Oriel Myrddin and The Tywi Gateway Trust to co-create a curriculum experience involving learners from Bro Dinefwr and Bro Myrddin through a successful bid for 'Winter of Wellbeing' funding intended to use creative engagement for mental well being. Year 10 and Year 12 Learners from the respective schools with teachers created prompt cards for dialogic discussion on themes emerging from engagement with museum artefacts including Cynefin, Identity, Culture and Belonging and an artist Sarah Hopkins supported ideas from creative responses. Year 7 learners then came the following week to undertake the activities their peers had created. The whole process including a follow up evaluation dialogue in schools was filmed by a professional film maker. The process effectively reflecting the holistic ethos of the 4 purposes of the Curriculum for Wales. This reflects the need to remove the barrier between schools and the community in creating meaningful experiences that foster and challenge creative and critical thinking.</p> <p>We are scoping our current offer with a view to ensuring our Carmarthenshire Learner Offer/ Entitlement fosters the holistic development of the whole learner and the pedagogies and experiences to achieve this. We are working with 2 of the RLSP sectors at Yr Egin and Pentre Awel to achieve collaboration on experiences and pathways related to local business and industry.</p>	E&C
<p>We will continue to extend and develop the Seren More able and Talented Programme to pre-16 learners. (Ref 15022) MF5-37</p>	✓	<p>Schools have identified learners for the Seren Foundation programme. Extended opportunities have included the region piloting the foundation Seren award, where learners are able to access cross curricular learning opportunities in a University style environment. Both STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and AHSS (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) subjects are offered, with critical analysis of topics including anxiety disorders in youth, and free speech in the Media. Other opportunities have considered wider curriculum learning on Philosophical content, with an evening class engaging the Disney Pixar film 'Inside Out', A face to face Chinese life, language and Culture event in conjunction with UWTSD, and the Seren 'Star' Challenge accessing a wide choice of courses with recognition from the Open university. A choices theatre performance has also been written to develop</p>	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		high aspirations in our learners, and encourage the correct academic choices to support their goals. There are around 1900 students across the 3 counties that are identified as Seren foundation learners, in year groups 8-11. This is an increase of 31% from last year.	
We will work with partners to develop further opportunities for vocational and employment learning pathways where applicable within the County. (Ref 15027) MF5-37	✓	<p>We are awaiting a Steer from the cabinet as to when the existing and new councillors will be in a position to discuss the Post 16 Review as planned and support its progress during the Summer and Autumn Terms. Everything is in place to proceed but the timeline has to be agreed with the council.</p> <p>We are scoping our curriculum and career pathways to ensure we can support schools in providing the experiences and courses to meet the needs of learners as local and global citizens, and so we can ensure the skills and competences required by the 5 business and industry projects involved in the RLSP are being developed in schools. Also in an effort to support this work we have met with business and industry involved in the two RLSP projects based specifically in Llanelli; Yr Egin and Pentre Awel, to consider what experiences and pathways we can facilitate schools to develop relationships with the businesses/ industries to foster meaningful collaboration and mutual benefit. We are in the process of drafting a bid for RLSP funding for developing the capacity to support this project and lay the foundations for more meaningful Work Related Education. 4 secondary schools and the council's internal work experience lead are currently on inset led by School 21 in London, 'Real World Learning, who have pioneered more interactive and enquiry based work education. With the intention of creating a forum in the summer term for how schools might want to see what a more meaningful and purposeful work related education might look like and require for our context.</p>	E&C
G - Youth Engagement and Progression Framework to support vulnerable learners.			
We will continue to reconfigure services in support of vulnerable learners and consider the impact of COVID-19 on them, within the remit of the designated 3rd Tier Manager as part of a more coherent structure. (Ref 14837) MF5-37	✓	<p>The Supporting Vulnerable Learners Strategic Focus Group is continuing to work to support learners and the meetings provide the opportunity for all officers and colleagues responsible for an identified vulnerable group to raise issues or concerns to work together.</p> <p>The Four Phase Model staffing structure has now been finalised and consulting with colleagues in HR and Finance to plan recruitment and discuss final budget implications to move the full model forward for the next academic and financial year. Finalising work with ALN to ensure all documentation and processes align within the structure.</p>	E&C
We will continue to develop and deliver the six elements of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework - together with the Vulnerability Assessment Profile as a means of effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET/at risk of NEET. (Ref 15018) MF5-37	✓	The Youth Engagement and Progressions Framework continues to be implemented in line with Welsh Government Guidance. The review of the framework is yet to be published- it is anticipated at any time, and of course the Youth Support Service will implement the new framework which is anticipated to include new considerations around youth homelessness prevention and mental/emotional health.	E&C
We will implement the Actions identified in the self-assessment of the Youth	✓	The self assessment against the Participation Standards has been completed. A strategy for the Youth Support	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
Support Services against the National Participation Standards to Increase participation which will contribute to improved service outcomes in terms of more effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET. (Ref 15019) MF5-37		Service in relation to participation and engagement is being finalised. The strategy will set out service wide priorities as well as team priorities.	
We will work to divert children and young people away from the criminal justice system. (Ref 15024) MF5-37	✓	Diversion of children via Bureau continues and has been re-established on a face to face basis in line with risk assessments and safer working practices. The Youth Justice Management Board received data from Bureau and oversees the delivery. Delivery requires a close working partnership between the Youth Justice Team, the Police and other youth justice agencies.	E&C
We will work to prevent offending and re-offending of children and young people. (Ref 15025) MF5-37	✓	Prevention work which is offered to children at risk of offending, is well-imbedded in the service delivery Youth Justice Team. The work is reported to Welsh Government and the Police and Crime Commissioner on a half yearly basis.	E&C
The % of Year 11 leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) (PAM/009) 2020/21 Result - 1.8% (32/1,818) - 19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 Target - 1.5% - 20/21 Academic Yr	✓	2021/22 Result 2.7% (18 / 678) (2020/21 Academic Year) The result of 1.1 (21 out of 1885 pupils) is an improvement on last years result of 1.8% (32 out of 1818). The result ranked 5th in Wales, an improvement from 15th last year, and below the Welsh average of 1.6%. Work will continue to address leavers not in education, employment or training with a particular focus on continuing the work undertaken on the projects previously funded by the EU.	E&C
The % of Year 13 leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) (5.1.0.2) 2020/21 Result - 3.5% (23/652) - 19/20 Academic Yr 2021/22 Target - 3.0 - 19/20 Academic Yr	✓	2021/22 Result 2.7% (18 / 678) (2020/21 Academic Year) The result of 2.7% (18 out of 678) is an improvement on the previous years' result of 3.5%. The result ranked 15 th in Wales, down from 9 th the previous year, and above the Welsh average of 2.3%. Partnership work by schools, Youth Support Service staff and external agencies including Careers Wales was undertaken to deliver the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework in Carmarthenshire. The Youth Support Service have staff identified to support young people in all secondary schools and in Post 16 community outreach settings. The Cynnydd project also brings an additional £2.2M of ESF funding to support young people at risk of becoming NEET in the period 2016-2020, with funding now extended to 2022. Work continues to identify replacement funding for ESF projects, and we are liaising closely with WG on this matter.	E&C
H - Plan and deliver Externally Funded projects			
We will ensure continuation of planning and delivery of the local elements of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects. (Ref 15020) MF5-37	✓	Meetings are underway to explore alternative funding sources to replace Cam Nesa and Cynnydd-style interventions as EU funding ends. The DMT report did not result in alternative funding so Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and Youth Endowment Fund are options to consider. The Corporate External Funding group is updating us on SPF developments. Timescales are unclear at the moment. Managers in the YSS are working together to develop funding bids. The Chair of the	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		Education and Children Scrutiny Committee wrote to Welsh Government to raise concerns about the delivery of NEET work into the future. WG responded that they are still awaiting the UK Government's plans to replace EU funding.	
We will continue to develop flexible learning opportunities, including on-line and blended learning, to meet the needs of learners not currently engaging Essential Skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. (Ref 15023) MF5-37	✓	<p>Many existing learners who are continuing their courses are re-enrolled, however some learners have not returned due to COVID fears and are unable to access digitally at low skill levels. Face to face ESOL classes are almost full, but small numbers allowed in classrooms mean overall learner enrolments are down. Some on-line only classes continue, but most are a blend. GCSE recruitment is down on last year. Some GCSE resits in November have seen learners improve their grades and achieve what they needed to progress. New engagement activities are running and the team are exploring new ideas to engage with learners who have not previously attended essential skills classes. A new Centre Officer has been appointed in Llanelli, where there is a need to increase learner numbers. Space continues to be an issue there and alternative venues for new classes are being explored.</p> <p>CPD in Mental Health and Wellbeing in collaboration with 5 other authorities supports the staff to recognise and support learners.</p> <p>Additional Grant funding from WG is being used to invest in additional digital equipment to enable flexible learning and broaden the digital literacy curriculum. Funds are also being invested in outdoor spaces for learning and engagement activities to bring in new learners. Further funding is available for marketing and engagement activities this academic year and the post of development worker had been approved. This post will be critical in recruiting and engaging new learners.</p>	E&C



Well-being Objective 4

Start Well/Live Well - Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work and improve the lives of those living in poverty

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Review of our approach to Tackling Poverty			
We will develop a county Tackling Poverty Plan to respond to the current challenges faced by residents and communities. (Ref 14905)	✗	A draft action plan was considered by Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel at February 2022 meeting. This was agreed in principle for final development and presentation for formal approval following local elections in May 2022. The Plan will be finalised and presented for formal approval during Q1 and 2 of 2022-23.	P&R
B - Preventing Poverty			
We will continue to implement our homelessness strategy, with increased focus on "front of house" universal preventative activities as well as more targeted approaches for those groups at higher risk of homelessness. (Ref 14699) MF5-50	✓	The Front of House 'Housing Hwb' which is the first point of contact for Homelessness Prevention has been implemented and new priorities have been identified around Homeless Prevention as part of the Housing Support Programme Strategy which replaces the Homelessness Strategy.	C&R
The percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless (PAM/012) 2020/21 Result - 46.4% (175/377) / 2021/22 Target - 50.0%	✓	<p>2021/22 result - 50.5% (219/434).</p> <p>As a result of reviewing operational practices (listed below), we have adopted a new approach to withdrawn cases, better reflecting the positive outcomes for applicants. We have ensured that staff are reminded of the appropriate sections to end our duties, so we can better capture this successful preventative work we are achieving. Development of a Power Business Intelligence (BI) Dashboard will allow us to better manage and analyse cases within each duty. The impact of applying our new way of working during the year shows an improvement from stand-alone Quarter 1 performance of 43.16% to 52.73% in the last quarter of the year, this giving a cumulative annual result of 50.5%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing our first point of contact service and developing a Housing Hwb to provide early homelessness prevention advice and assistance. • Analysing who presents to us, from where and why, in order to identify what support we need to provide and what training staff may need to be competent and comfortable with responding to challenging people and cases. • Implementing a re-structure and reviewing our practices to ensure resources are in the right place to respond to the increased casework. • Reviewing how we utilise the existing legislation and allocations policy to help prevent homelessness as quickly as we can, looking to other Councils for best practice. • Further develop and automate the Power Business Intelligence Dashboard to enable to team leaders to regularly monitor performance. • Continue to monitor and ensure staff utilise the appropriate duty for prevention 	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will continue to develop and deliver the early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people and families in line with the Family Support Strategy, utilising opportunities for integrating services across the Children and Communities Grant and flexible funding opportunities with the Housing Support Grant. (Ref 15007)	✓	Families First Projects have continued to provide a broad range of virtual and face-to-face support in a variety of locations. Projects continue to face challenges including Covid related staff sickness, families contracting Covid. As restrictions ease projects are reporting an increase in referrals. Projects have also benefitted from additional WG grants which has helped meet demand for support. CCG Early Help funding £230K; Child Development Fund (CDF) £200K; Parenting Funding £51K). In most cases support has been provided on a one-to-one basis due to covid restrictions. As projects have increased their face-to-face support, there has been an increase in the number of families stepping down from Children's Services into preventative services which will now help alleviate some pressures in statutory services.	E&C
We will improve Average Capped 9 score for pupils in year 11 of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (4.1.2.4) 2020/21 No Result available-19/20 Academic Yr/ 2021/22 No Target set - 20/21 Academic Yr	!	No results published for 2021/22 (2020/21 Academic Year) Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students were unable to sit final exams in summer 2021 and instead their grades reflect predicted results based on coursework and mock examination results. Results by County were not published and would not be comparable to previous years if known. Summer exams 2022 are due to go ahead as scheduled. Results will be published later in the year. Comparison to previous years may not be applicable as some courses were truncated due to the pandemic.	E&C
C - Helping people into work			
We will continue with recruitment programmes, together with graduate and apprentice appointments, to fill ongoing vacancies. Support construction apprentice programmes and develop further in-sourcing arrangements, subject to appropriate business cases. (Ref 14975)	✓	During 2021/22 we continued to support the training of several trades apprentices in conjunction with local construction / electrical firms to ensure they are provided a wide range of experience to ensure they can fulfil the practical requirements or their course. We are seeking to recruit a further 13 new maintenance technicians to expand our in-house team and reduce reliance on external contractors. We will be further looking at additional insourcing following a review of our New Homes Team to help in reducing turnaround times of empty homes.	P&R
We shall ensure that adults feel more positive with improved confidence about seeking work after receiving employability support through Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus programmes. (EconD/020) 2020/21 Result - 100% (381/381) 2021/22 - Target - 100%	✓	2021/22 Result - 100% (561/561). The number adults receiving employability support during 2021/22 is back to pre-COVID figures. All 561 (100%) adults felt more positive with improved confidence about seeking work.	C&R
We shall ensure that a high number of residents feel more confident in using a computer and gaining IT skills after receiving digital inclusion support through Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus programmes. (EconD/021) 2020/21 Result - 100% (304/304) 2021/22 - Target - 100%	✓	2021/22 Result - 100% (478/478). All 478 of the adults that received digital inclusion support through Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus programmes felt more confident in using a computer and gained IT skills.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
The number of accredited qualifications achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus programmes. (EconD/022) 2020/21 Result - 96 2021/22 Target - 200	✓	2021/22 Result - 271 The target has been exceeded with 271 accredited qualifications achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus programmes during 2021/22.	C&R
D - Improving the lives of those living in poverty			
We will work with the third sector and other stakeholders to develop the range of support services provided in the County across a number of service areas as well as further developing volunteering opportunities within the County. (Ref 14006) MF5-80	✓	Richard Newton Consulting was commissioned to undertake a review of Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) on behalf of the Authority to inform the future role of CAVS in supporting the sector in post COVID 19 recovery. The final report has been finalised and findings presented to the CAVS Board of Trustees at the end of April 2022. We will work closely with CAVS to jointly deliver on the findings of the review.	P&R
We will continue to maximise the draw-down of funding from external sources via the new funding programmes. (Ref 14919)	✓	The 4 ARFOR 1 local authorities, including Carmarthenshire, were successful in securing £11m for a successor ARFOR 2 Programme from Welsh Government, focusing upon the economy and the Welsh language. Following securing £37m from the Levelling Up Fund and £2.97m from the Community Renewal Fund, we are now awaiting the launch of UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPT). The pre-guidance for the SPF has already been issued.	C&R
We will continue to promote the County's tourism potential via the Celtic Routes project. (Ref 14920)	✓	During 2021/22, we have undertaken a number of promotional activities to help promote the areas' tourism offer. Our campaign has focused on capturing the attention of journalists and travel influencers via bespoke invitations and unique itineraries based on our Celtic history. We continue to promote the beauty of the region via our social media pages including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We have produced a TV advert which was aired on ITV, S4C as well as Sky Regional and ITV hub. We have further developed our website to help promote the offer that Celtic Routes has for visitors. A brand film is currently being produced which will create a compelling reason to visit the area. Our focus is also on developing the legacy of Celtic Routes by further enhancing the visitor experience working closely with the tourism sector. This will be achieved through the development of thematic networks involving tourism businesses to co-design and develop new products and experiences aligned to the Celtic Routes themes; namely: Celtic Adventure; Celtic Culture & Heritage; Celtic Land and Sea; Celtic People and Places. Events have been held with tourism businesses in early 2022 to take this aspect forward.	C&R
We will contribute to tackling poverty within Carmarthenshire by supporting families to claim all the financial support they are entitled to. (Ref 15056)	✓	We have continued to contribute to tackling poverty within Carmarthenshire by supporting families to claim all the financial support they are entitled to. The non domestic rate team have administered four grants on behalf of Welsh Government, insuring that £78 million has been distributed to the Carmarthenshire business community to support businesses during these challenging times. Since November 2021 we have administered the winter fuel support scheme and processed 9,480 cases and paid out £3,409,200. We have	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		paid out £397,584 of discretionary housing payments and up to mid-March received 10,754 self-isolation support payments applications and paid out over £4 million. We are processing the cost of living payments to approximately 63,000 Carmarthenshire households with the value of around £9.5 million to support residents of Carmarthenshire during these challenging times. Whilst processing claims and dealing with customer enquires housing benefit staff are often able to identify if people need to be referred for more detailed benefit maximisation advice, personal budgeting or debt advice. They will refer individuals for support or signpost for grants and benefits.	
<p>The average number of days taken to process new Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims. (6.6.1.2)</p> <p><i>2020/21 Result - 11.57 days</i> <i>/2021/22 Target - 17.0 days</i></p>	✓	<p>2021/22 result 16.05 days.</p> <p>On Target but has declined on the previous year</p> <p>Whilst the result at 16.05 days is below performance for 2020/21 it is above the target set at 17 days which is significantly below the DWP expected speed of processing for new housing benefit claims at 30 days. We experienced a 7% increase in caseload due to an increase in the number of Universal credit claimants because of COVID-19. We also processed over 11,000 self-isolation support payments worth £4.9million, and almost 9,500 winter fuel payments totalling £1.7m. These were in the main delivered from within existing resources and impacted on processing times with staff being deployed to process these grant payments.</p>	P&R
<p>The average number of days taken to process notifications of changes of circumstances in Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims (6.6.1.3)</p> <p><i>2020/21 Result - 2.87 days</i> <i>/2021/22 Target - 5.5 days</i></p>	✓	<p>2021/22 result 3.42 days.</p> <p>On Target but has declined on the previous year.</p> <p>Whilst the result at 3.42 days is below performance for 2020/21 it is on target of below 4 days which is significantly better than the DWP expected speed of processing changes to housing benefit claims at 17 days.</p>	P&R
<p>We will retain the high % of recently calculated Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims that have been calculated accurately based on a sample check (6.6.1.9)</p> <p><i>2020/21 Result - 96.92% (567/585)</i> <i>/2021/22 Target - 95%</i></p>	✓	<p>2021/22 result 97.55% (517/530).</p> <p>The target of 95% accuracy has been exceed and an improvement on the previous year.</p>	P&R



Well-being Objective 5

Live Well - Create more jobs and growth throughout the county

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Regionally, by coordinating and delivering the Swansea Bay City Deal – Pentre Awel			
As part of the City Deal we will deliver a whole-site project plan for Pentre Awel, to include design and build, service/business planning, public engagement and securing private sector financing to ensure benefits maximisation and ongoing sustainability. (Ref 12985) MF5-72a	✓	<p>2021/22 was a year of significant progress for Pentre Awel across each of its developable Zones. Three tender exercises, totalling over £75m, were placed via regional and national frameworks to secure key contractor and consultant appointments for Zones 1 and 3. Following a 10 week tender through the SWWRCF, Bouygues UK were appointed as the preferred contractor in October 2021 to deliver Zone 1 of the scheme. The Zone 1 tender reflected the Council's ambitions to deliver transformational social and economic change: it evaluated using a 60% quality / 40% price scoring methodology (a departure from standard practice which favours the most economically advantageous tender) and assigned community benefits criteria 35% of the quality score - which is the highest weighting the Authority has assigned to community benefits in a tender exercise. This will form a blueprint for council tendered projects moving forward.</p> <p>A number of key milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March 22, Cabinet and Full Council approval was secured to progress the project to the construction stage upon CCC's acceptance of final build costs. • Bouygues and CCC agreed a Guaranteed Maximum Price of £87m for the Zone 1 works. • The inaugural Community Benefits Stakeholder Group meeting was held in March 22, comprising representation from BYUK, further and higher education, RLSP employability programmes, Hywel Dda, corporate procurement and community groups. • A Meet the Buyer event was held at Parc Y Scarlets March 22 and attracted c. 140 suppliers. Following an extensive promotional campaign, nearly two-thirds of suppliers were from the South-West (Swansea Bay City Deal) region. Around 50 suppliers were Carmarthenshire-based businesses, with almost 30 based in Llanelli. It provided an opportunity for local businesses to learn more about the work packages available (e.g. from Carpentry to painting and decorating and steelwork) and to engage directly with Bouygues in order that they can be supported to bid for applicable packages of work • We entered into a strategic partnership with Cardiff University, with Cardiff University now the lead academic partner on research, innovation & business • The design development of Zone 3 progressed in accordance with programme and cost requirements. 	C&R
We will continue to provide significant procurement support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region Carmarthenshire led projects. (Ref 14943)	✓	<p>The Tender to appoint a Principal Contractor for Pentre Awel Zone 1 was awarded at the end of September 21, via Lot 6 of the Southwest Wales Regional Contractors Framework to Bouygues. The project is valued in the region of £66 million and is the largest construction procurement delivered in Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>A Meet the Buyer event was organised by Bouygues at the end of March 2022 in Parc Y Scarlets where they met with prospective second and third tier contractors and explained the work packages</p>	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>they would be advertising to deliver Zone 1.</p> <p>Since the evaluation for the Pentre Awel Zone 3 Lead Consultant Commission in October 2021 and the successful consultant being appointed in November 2021, the Procurement Team continues to provide support to officers in relation to any procurement or contractual enquiries.</p> <p>Discussions are on-going with the Digital Programme Manager for Swansea Bay City Deal for support on 3 procurement exercises to deliver for the City Deal Digital programme. These are: Gigabit Rural Connectivity; Gigabit Urban Connectivity and Gigabit Network</p>	
B - Locally, by delivering the Transformational Strategy Area Plans targeting urban, coastal & rural Carmarthenshire			
<p>We will deliver the Carmarthen, Ammanford & Rural transformational plan and deliver initiatives and projects via Carms Rural Enterprise Fund: property Development Funds projects including Pendine attractor; Margaret Street road widening; Carmarthen wetlands and Jacksons Lane development; Business Account Management, Start Ups and Incubation. (Ref 13162) MF5-73c</p>	✓	<p>Pendine Attractor Project - Following the main contractor going into administration a new contractor was appointed to undertake initial remedial works to the site and complete the build programme. Work progressed well on site with the securing of the Hostel roof and on the museum roof. Internal works progressed at pace with the external landscaping nearing completion. It is anticipated that project completion will be in August 2022.</p> <p>Carmarthen Wetlands / Y Morfa works commenced in January 2020 and works have been completed.</p> <p>Provided ongoing business support to area businesses with regards to post Covid 19 restart & recovery and new funding streams.</p> <p>Jackson's Lane Kiosk project – work commenced in March 2020 and are scheduled for on site commencement later in the summer 22.</p> <p>Contractor works progressed well on Llandeilo market hall project with the external shell of the building nearing completion.</p> <p>Carregamman Car Park Greening scheme with some planting and canopy replacement to be completed by end of April 2022.</p>	C&R
<p>We will deliver the Cross Hands Growth Zone and bring forward developments at Cross Hands East Phase 2; Strategic Employment Site. (Ref 13164) MF5-73d</p>	✓	<p>Infrastructure works at the Cross Hands Strategic Employment Site continued throughout the year with the creation of phase two site access and plot formation. Sectional completion of works was achieved in September 2021 with seasonal landscaping throughout the winter months. Preferred contractor Andrew Scott Ltd progressed with the design development of office, industrial and hybrid premises at Plot 3 Cross Hands. RIBA Stage 3 works were completed and a reserved matters planning application approval was secured in December 2021. Agreements were reached with the Active Building Centre ABC (providing capital funding to the project) with a view to uplifting the buildings energy performance and its carbon credentials. Design development and costing continued with a view to agreeing cost and a construction programme with an onsite commencement proposed for Spring 2022. Works to construct an office building on plot 7 with an estimated completion early 2023.</p>	C&R
<p>We will develop Local Employment Sites across the County as part Transformations: strategic regeneration plan for Carmarthenshire. (Ref 13165) MF5-73e</p>	✓	<p>We have continued to engage with colleagues in the Forward Planning department and monitored the progress of the regeneration land submissions as part of the ongoing LDP review to understand the future development opportunities available. Phase 2 infrastructure works to the Cross Hands East Strategic Employment Site were completed September 2021. Final snagging works and seasonal landscaping works during some of the winter months were undertaken. The development has created new market ready development sites with supporting infrastructure with a marketing plan now developed with Welsh Government JV partners. Further initiatives within the County have aligned with the authority's recovery plan. Capital funds were released requesting expressions of interest from applicants for the Property Development Grant. This funding has the potential to support new developments upon sites across the County</p>	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
<p>We will Deliver Transformational town centre developments in Llanelli. (Ref 13167) MF5-73a</p>	✓	<p>Strategic Targeted Regeneration Projects (TRI) in Llanelli town centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The Market Street North Project was subject to a public enquiry in October 2021. Officers from various departments within the authority together with external specialist consultants were present to represent the development. Awaited outcome from the Planning Inspectorate expected in April 2021. * Construction works at the former YMCA made good progress, exterior demolitions of the old extension and major interior adjustments including removal of the existing roof completed. Programme completion is expected early 2023. * The Llanelli Goods Shed project completed end of February 22 with occupation of the building as a community hub expected June 22. * The Y Linc project has secured initial Welsh Government (WG) grant, due to acquisition by another third party there is a requirement to adjust the project. This will be progressed with WG through a revised application. * The Crown buildings project has secured in principle approval of grant and has secured a revised approval by the Local Planning Authority. Ongoing discussions are taking place in relation to security for the project, a request has been made for loan funding to support the project. * A public consultation exercise was held December 21 for the Llanelli Town Centre Recovery Plan. The report has been through the Cabinet approval process and is being built into the delivery of the team. 	C&R
<p>We will further develop the Carmarthenshire Coastal Belt at Llanelli, Burry Port and Pembrey. (Ref 13168) MF5-73C</p>	✓	<p>Following involvement from WG Joint Venture partners there was a requirement to postpone release of the sites at Burry Port while resolving the position on the request from WG Ministers for an additional level of affordable homes on site exceeding the current LDP allocation of 20%. Design parameters and scoring criteria have been produced to channel interests to a high level of design quality. Much of the preparation works for the tender release have been put on hold temporarily. Conscious of the implications of the delay seeking to go through the S73 application process to protect the outline planning applications on the residential and commercial leisure sites, we have until November 2022 to submit reserved matters applications. Following agreement with WG the sites will be released to the market through a tender exercise with a view of selecting a preferred developer subject to the conclusion of the tender exercise. An outline planning application for residential development at North Dock has been approved and will progress through a similar tender exercise following the resolution of position at Burry Port.</p>	C&R
<p>We will deliver phase 2 of the development of Glanamman Workshops to provide improved workshop availability. (Ref 13170) MF5-10</p>	✓	<p>Work progressed really well after delays during 21/22 and the project was completed with the building handed over during March 2022, ready for letting, and entering the 12 months maintenance period. Delays that occurred related to: During the demolition phase, additional Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) was identified which was not initially picked up on Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (R&D) due to its location; Further delays were incurred during Western Power Distribution(WPD) relocating substation.</p>	P&R
<p>We will continue to deliver a Property Development Fund (new and existing) worth £11 million (£3.4 million from the Council and circa £7.5 million private sector investment). (Ref 14011) MF5-73f</p>	✓	<p>Work remains ongoing on final two projects supported under the original funding allocations. It is anticipated that the eight projects supported under the original capital funding allocations will result: in a total investment into the Carmarthenshire economy of £11.76m; the provision of 94,400sq ft of additional employment space; with the potential to accommodate 212 jobs. The fund has reopened to applications in February 22 for the new funding allocation and applications will be considered in June 22</p>	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will provide support to start up and established businesses wherever possible, with a particular focus on helping our SME's to upscale. (Ref 14894) MF5-78	✓	In September 21 the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership held Jobs Fairs at our primary town centres in Carmarthen, Ammanford and Llanelli to support businesses in the Transport and Logistics; Hospitality and Health and Social Care sectors. Detailed application documents including Terms and Conditions for both the Business Start up Grant and the Business Growth were launched early January 2022. The detail was released to the enquiry list and the launch of the funding was promoted along with the suite of funding support offered by the County Council. By EOY 230 business had engaged with the process - EOI's received for the Start-up Fund - 70. EOI's received for Growth & Recovery Fund - 160. With EOI's then being invited to full application. 10 businesses were supported through the pop-up shop in Llanelli during December 2021 and a further 30 businesses in the former Debenhams in Carmarthen. A further pop-up shop through the 100% Sir Gar initiative supported 15 businesses during February half term.	C&R
We will deliver employment support through the Workways + programme. (Ref 14918)	✓	The Workways project continued to support both long term and short term unemployed within Carmarthenshire. The following outputs were achieved: 65 people supported into work, 32 people achieved qualifications and 31 people supported into volunteering work. Jobs Fairs were held in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli during the year to support people into work, with some jobs offered to individuals attending the fairs, with a number of other jobs being followed up after the events.	C&R
We will continue to implement the Local Development Order for Llanelli Town Centre as part of a co-ordinated strategic approach to regeneration within the town centre, together with other Town Centres and appropriate regeneration opportunities. Preparing and adopting these in accordance with regulatory provisions. (Ref 15202)	✓	The Carmarthen and Ammanford Town Centre LDOs were adopted following Council and Welsh Government Approval. An LDO for the Cross Hands East Strategic Employment Site has commenced the preparation of an evidence pack and the development of pre-conditions. These will support the content of the LDO and its implementation. The Llanelli Town Centre LDO ended following the expiration of its operational period. We will continue to monitor the potential and need for any future interventions within the Llanelli town centre.	C&R
We will aim to create 648 more jobs with Regeneration Assistance. (EconD/001) 2020/21 - Result - 266 / 2021/22 - Target 648	✗	2021/22 result - 601 jobs created Off target but an improvement with 600.5 jobs created as a result of the following initiatives: Kickstart, Bureau, Business Engagement, Transformational Commercial Property Development Fund, Pendine Attractor, Business Start Up and Growth Fund, Llandeilo Market Hall, Y Morfa Wetlands, Leader and Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund. There was a delay in the launch of Grant funding due to legalities and clarification to state aid requirements following Brexit, therefore any shortfall will be realised during 2022/23.	C&R
We will aim to accommodate 86 jobs with Regeneration Assistance. (EconD/002) 2020/21 Result - 63 / 2021/22 Target - 86	✗	2021/22 result - 12 jobs accommodated This measure is off target and less than the previous year with only 12 Jobs being accommodated during 2021/22 from the development of Glanamman workshops phase 2. Third Party completion of projects supported by Property Development Fund and Ammanford Regeneration development Fund have been delayed and will now complete on site during 2022/23.	C&R
We will aim to place 418 people into jobs. (EconD/003) 2020/21 Result - 119 / 2021/22 Target - 418	✓	2021/22 result - 430 individuals placed into jobs during 2021/22 with Regeneration assistance which is an increase on the previous years and pre-COVID figures.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will aim to place 1,117 people into volunteering. (EconD/005) 2020/21 Result - 1,441 / 2021/22 Target - 1117	✗	2021/22 result – 931 people were helped into volunteering Not quite met our target and lower than last year when the number of volunteers increased dramatically during the COVID-19 lockdown via the Community Development team. This year's figure is closer to pre-COVID figures.	C&R
Level of Private Sector Investment / external funding secured £6,325,568 (EconD/008) 2020/21 Result - £6,819,854 / 2021/22 Target - £9,792,346	✓	2021/22 result - £10,428,528 of Private Sector Investment was secured This has well exceeded the target of £9.8m.	C&R
C - Developing the rural economy with a focus on the 10 Towns Initiative			
We will continue to deliver the Rural Enterprise Fund (new and existing) worth £6.3 million (£2.2 million from the Council and circa £4.1 million private sector investment). (Ref 14012) MF5-73g	✓	From original funding allocations 21 projects have fully completed and are open for business resulting in a total investment to date into the rural economy of £4.854m with a view to creating 157.5 jobs over the next three years. Work has commenced on a further 3 schemes. 5 projects have been approved at stage 1 of the application process and are working up their detailed stage 2 applications. New funding allocation opened in February 2022 with applications to be considered in June 22	C&R
We shall consider opportunities to work with other local authorities and partners to establish a Rural Deal to focus on rural regeneration and continue to deliver support through the Leader programme. (Ref 14893) MF5-77	✓	We have worked closely with the WLGA, Ynys Mon, Ceredigion and Gwynedd local authorities to secure £11m for an ARFOR 2 Programme from April 2022 to March 2025. This will allow us to undertake projects in rural areas, whilst strengthening the use of the Welsh language We worked with the WLGA to formulate and publish a Rural Action Plan, emanating from the Rural Vision. Continued to lobby Welsh Government for the continuation of the LEADER / RDP Programme and for funding for the rural areas; worked alongside WLGA on this.	C&R
We will monitor progress with the recommendations of the Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward report through the Rural Affairs Advisory Panel & consider any new issues as they arise. (Ref 14717) MF5-76	✓	Rural Affairs Advisory Panel did not re-convene until December 2021, with monitoring of progress against recommendations to be taken forward through the Panel. A full update on all 55 recommendations was prepared and actions arising will now be embedded as part of business planning arrangements for 2022-23	P&R
We will establish regeneration initiatives to focus on the development of the rural market towns in the County via the 10 Towns initiative. (Ref 13175) MF5-73b	✓	Construction has progressed well with the Llandeilo Market Hall project with a view to achieving project completion in October 2022. 'Ten Towns' Growth plans have now been completed for all the ten towns. Growth plan teams including recently appointed Officers are now focusing on the delivery phase of the plans, working on the submission of detailed project applications for the £1m capital Recovery grants pot having submitted EOI's previously.	C&R
We will consider 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. (Ref 13174) MF5-14.		Sites have been put forward for consideration for renewable energy initiatives with opportunities identified. Feasibility work being undertaken on all Farms in relation to The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021. 7 reports had been received by EOY with a further 9 in the process of being drafted. Instructions have been sent to carry out the final reports.	C&R
D - Strengthen the foundational economy and community resilience.			
We will continue to support the early engagement of Local Businesses and have due regard	✓	Supplier engagement continued throughout 2021/22 with online meetings due to the Covid-19 pandemic and suppliers being very receptive to this change. We have continued to work closely with Business Wales to adapt our processes for Tender support and	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
to the effect of our procurement on the local economy. (Ref 14947)		engagement and this has ensured a coordinated approach. In 2021/2022, 63 first point of contact (1-2-1) meetings were held with our supplier engagement officer and suppliers who made contact as they were interested in engaging and working with us. 7 Live Tender Webinars were held virtually via Teams during the year with a total of 164 suppliers in attendance. The aim of these sessions was to inform prospective tenderers of the forthcoming tendering opportunities and the requirements of these services / goods. These sessions included Domiciliary Care, Cleaning Materials and Workwear and Verge Mowing and Strimming tenders. A Meet the Buyer Event was organised by the main contractor, Bouygues for Pentre Awel Zone 1 Development & was held at Parc y Scarlets, Llanelli on March 30th 2022. A total 107 suppliers/ contractors attended the event throughout the day with Procurement & Community Benefits Officers representing CPU at the event. We developed and launched a 'Supplier Guide' for current & potential contractors, suppliers & providers. This is now available electronically & appears on the Procurement page of the Councils website. Internally, the Supplier Engagement Protocol was updated & incorporates guidance regarding various pro-active supplier engagement initiatives.	
We will ensure that a high percentage of undisputed invoices are paid within 30 days to help local businesses cash-flow (CFH/006) 2020/21 Result - 97.3% (296,465÷304,817) / 2021/22 Target - 93.5%	✓	2021/22 Result – 97.3%. (332,912/342,048) This is on target; we have retained our best ever performance of last year. Prompt payment is essential for businesses especially at a continued time of uncertainty due to the pandemic and increased costs.	C&R
The % of trading standards inspections for high risk businesses conducted. (PPN/001i) 2020/21 Result - 1% (2/180) / 2021/22 Target - 100%	✗	2021/22 Result - 99%. (172/174) Only just missed the target as the trading standards team did not start focusing on high-risk businesses until September 2021 due to the ongoing support for the Covid Enforcement Team. Despite incredible effort by officers, we were unable to complete all due inspections by 31st March 2022, however the two outstanding inspections were carried out in the first two weeks of April 2022.	E&PP
The % of animal health inspections for high risk businesses conducted (PPN/001iii) 2020/21 Result - 12% (64/546) / 2021/22 Target - 6%	✗	2021/22 Result - 94%. (151/161) During 2021/22 the team have been working to complete all high risk inspections identified at the beginning of the year. However, unfortunately, and despite officers' best efforts, due to site closures and COVID-19 the team have been unable to meet the 100% target for 21/22. The remaining 10 inspections were completed during April 2022.	E&PP
E - Developing learning, skills, employability and encouraging a spirit of entrepreneurship.			
We will deliver the £30million Skills and Talent Initiative to ensure the County fully benefits from the opportunities that will be created through the £1.3 billion investment through the Swansea Bay City Deal. (Ref 13176) MF5-72b	✓	The Skills and Talent Business Case was approved by Carmarthenshire, Neath & Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea County Councils, prior to submission to the Welsh and UK Government during 2021. During early 2022, the Skills & Talent project was approved by both UK & Welsh Governments, with a new Project Manager who commenced prior to Christmas.	C&R
F - Ensuring clear business support plans to support any implications from Brexit			
We will investigate and monitor the impact of Brexit on the economy of Carmarthenshire via the Brexit Risk and Opportunities Register. (Ref 14015) MF5-84	✓	The Brexit Task Group reviewed and assessed the level of Risk and Opportunity Registers on a regular basis, based on local intelligence (we continued to monitor the impacts of Brexit upon SMEs, communities and people), and also updates from the WFA Page 325 throughout the year. In January all risks were re-assessed and either	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		terminated or tolerated. Each department will now take on responsibility for tolerated risks which are appropriate to them.	
G - Supporting local and digital economic growth			
<p>Work with partners to address issues in terms of superfast broadband access and mobile phone signal across the County and in particular in rural areas. (Ref 14892) MF5-74</p>	✓	<p>A "Carmarthenshire Connectivity" event was held for elected members and senior officers in the last quarter, updating them on progress and ongoing work to enhance broadband and mobile connectivity across Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>90.1% of Carmarthenshire's business and residential premises now have access to Superfast Broadband (30mbps) or above.</p> <p>42.6% of premises have access to Gigabit capable Broadband.</p> <p>Significant Commercial Investment in Gigabit fibre build is ongoing at Cross Hands, Llangennech, Burry Port, Llanelli, and Carmarthen.</p> <p>Superfast Cymru 2 Investment is secured to connect 3300 of Carmarthenshire's worst served rural premises. 4 new Mobile masts currently being planned for some of Carmarthenshire's most rural areas as part of the mobile industries new Shared Rural Network Investment. These new masts will be shared by multiple operators.</p> <p>Up to 10 Gigabit Voucher Scheme Community Projects currently ongoing and at various stages across the County.</p> <p>24 Public Sector Sites being upgraded to full fibre to improve provision of and access to public services with a further 100 + planned for next year. These fibre spines being built to public sector assets will significantly enhance connectivity options for premises in and around those public sector assets.</p> <p>Web presence on Carmarthenshire's website is being continuously updated to provide clear and accessible advice, guidance and support for citizens and businesses in obtaining better connectivity. Officers playing a leading role as part of Welsh Governments Digital Infrastructure Barrier Busting Group to facilitate and encourage investment in Digital Connectivity across Wales.</p>	P&R
<p>We will develop and deliver a County wide tourism plan to focus more on the strategic objective of generating more year-round business by developing and promoting campaigns that provide a clear reason to visit Carmarthenshire. (Ref 14924)</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 has been a strange and complicated year for activities the County Council has sought to support the tourism sector as part of the economic recovery plan. A bit stop start – seeking to find a workable set of actions that would not annoy residents as lockdown restrictions were partially still in place and sensitiveness high. An important role has been the communication to the 1,300 different accommodation providers of the varying different regulations and financial support us and others were making available, providing the sector with a trusted and available local source of guidance.</p> <p>Updating our corporate website and then using the established communication systems has been highly successful.</p> <p>With Welsh Government financial support, the marketing campaign we delivered has been one of the most successful. Our sales "pitch" was to present the County as an attractive and quality rural destination over the Autumn Winter. Actions included social media (organic posts and advertising), radio advertising, public relations targeting the mass UK publications, and digital messaging on bus shelters and roadside billboard signage. The Cwtch Trail had an excellent pick up with UK media including a 2-page article in Bella Magazine and feature in the Guardian whilst we maximised our hosting of the Sky Film production Save our Cinema with social media clips and where to go trail leading to another 2-page feature in Best Magazine worth £36,000. In total, over 10million people got to know about us!</p> <p>Continued additions have been made to the official visitor website Discover Carmarthenshire including further new content on a number of the rural town locations. New content on the latter included promotional videos that were then supported by social</p>	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		media boosted posts. During March 2022 alone, there were 86,339 unique page views and 29,753 visits with the home page being the most popular as this is the landing page for most of the promotional activity. The Facebook account has risen again to over 17,227 followers as the planned weekly set of campaign actions have started to make an impact. The posts on walking {walking Wednesday} and rural towns {places to explore} are being boosted in designated target audiences as we utilise the data this platform can provide, lowering waste and improving responses (the recent post on Newcastle Emlyn gained 600 likes) and we can react quickly to national campaigns such as the Sunday Times newspaper making Llandeilo best place to live in Wales with posts of our own including images and videos.	
We shall contribute towards the Council's Economic Recovery plan: capital investment schemes (Pendine, Oriel Myrddin and Pentrawel). (Ref 15070)	✓	Pendine Attractor project has had challenges with storm damage to Museum roof, however, scheme is now progressing well with new contractor on site, and due to be completed by late Summer 2022; Oriel Myrddin project progressing with £1m external funding secured from ACW, and design and construction programme in place to hopefully start on site mid 2022. Legal work progressed well with Trust moving to CIO; Main contractor appointed for Pentre Awel works including new Leisure facility. See more detailed PIMS actions updates for each project too.	C&R
We will continue to lead the £55 million investment in Digital Infrastructure across Carmarthenshire and the wider Swansea Bay City Region. (Ref 14921)	✓	The Programme Business Case, timelines and financial spend forecast was realigned during Q4 21/22 to reflect the current situation due to post covid delays. This was conducted in collaboration with all relevant local and regional senior stakeholders via Carmarthenshire and City Deal change control processes. This has put the Programme in a strong position to continue delivering its objectives, benefits, and outcomes for the Region. Individual Project procurements are now moving to delivery as planned. Individual Project resources to be hosted within the 4 Local Authorities of the Region are currently being recruited.	C&R
H – Continuing our recruitment of graduates and apprentices			
Number of apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes per 1,000 employees. (PAM/044) 2020/21 Result - 27.0% (170/6,302) 2021/22 Target - 20%	✓	2021/22 result 20% (126/6,292) The result is on target although the number of apprentices is lower than the previous year. The number of Apprentices has been affected by a number of factors including Covid and issues around working from home. The move to delivering management qualification through Further Education funding rather than via the apprenticeship route has improved the learning experience for managers but has impacted on this measure. There are a number of initiatives in place which prioritise apprenticeships that will address this measure. A Care Academi launched in the spring 2022 with an to ongoing recruitment of apprentices through the scheme . A proposal has been developed to secure funding for Our Future Workforce (previously Work Ready), to include corporate funding to support the recruitment of apprentices as well as a support structure for departments to fund additional roles.	P&R



Well-being Objective 6

Live Well - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Affordable Homes Delivery Plan			
We shall increase the number of affordable homes in the County by delivering the affordable homes plan (7.3.2.24) 2020/21 Result - 158 / 2021/22 Target - 273	✓	2021/22 result - 308 308 additional affordable homes were delivered during 2021/22. So far, we have delivered 1,437 additional affordable homes since 2016.	C&R
The number of additional affordable housing units delivered per 10,000 households. (PAM/036) 2020/21 Result - 11 (94/82,190) / 2020/21 Target - 20	✓	2021/22 result - 37 (308 x 82,897 x 10,000) This Result reflects our Affordable homes delivery performance and includes Simple Lettings sign-ups, Empty Properties restored, New Builds both by the authority and RSL, Buying private sector homes and Contribution by developers (S.106).	C&R
The number of new additional properties managed by our internal social lettings agency. (7.3.2.25) 2020/21 Result - 30 / 2021/22 Target - 45	✗	2021/22 result - 9 The supply of affordable properties has become increasingly difficult because landlords and agents are marketing and letting their properties at rates that are considerably above the Local Housing Allowance levels. A thriving housing market is making it increasingly difficult to influence and we are therefore faced with a very difficult challenge in attracting new landlords to expand our portfolio of properties. Landlords are also selling properties in a buoyant housing market and their inability to refinance against current mortgage criteria for 'buy to let' and we are therefore reliant on accidental landlords to bring properties forward rather than investment landlords. Lastly, further regulation by way of the Renting Homes Act (due to be implemented in July 2022) has encouraged more landlords to exit the private rented market which not only lowers the supply of affordable housing but increases the pressures on homelessness services.	C&R
We will deliver our Housing & Regeneration Delivery Plan providing at least 900 additional Council and affordable homes over the next 5-10 years, assisting in regenerating our town centres and ten towns initiative in rural areas. 1st phase to March 2022. (Ref 14700) MF5-45	✓	The new housing regeneration and development delivery plan has been developed utilising the information obtained following the public consultation undertaken in the summer 2021 which received over 2500 responses. The new plan sets our vision to support the delivery of over 2000 homes for rent and sale over the next 5 years. The plan is based on meeting housing need and stimulating economic growth across the County creating jobs, building strong sustainable communities and growing the green economy. The plan was approved by Council in March 2022. The first three council new build sites were completed and let in 2021/22 creating 31 new homes for local people including individuals with complex needs. A further 96	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		homes will be completed and let in the first quarter of 2022/23.	
We will deliver the Swansea Bay City Deal programme to develop 'Homes as Power Stations' to help generate sustainable and affordable homes and address fuel poverty for our residents. (Ref 13185) MF5-46	✓	The City Deal Business case has been submitted to Welsh Government for approval by the region. In Carmarthenshire we continue to deliver programmes that meet the City Deal principles of 'Homes as Power Stations' to help generate sustainable and affordable homes and address fuel poverty for our residents. Our programmes include developing low carbon new build homes and retrofitting our existing stock. We are working closely with the Welsh School of Architecture, Active Building Centre to deliver our own retrofit pilot projects across our housing stock and monitoring the energy performance of our new build homes. The Active Building Centre is also monitoring our tenants use of the new technologies in their homes to understand how our tenants are maximising from the energy benefits promoting health and well being and mitigating fuel poverty.	C&R
We will implement a transformational master plan for the Tyisha ward which will address the concerns of residents and provide a sustainable future from a housing, environment, community safety and economic regeneration perspective. (Ref 14702) MF5 51 & 47	✓	The Transforming Tyisha Master Plan and supporting documentation has been finalised. New objectives and tasks have been set for delivery over the next 5 years+. Early Market Engagement with potential development partners concluded in December 2021 and submissions are being reviewed to inform the future selection process. Demolition of the 4 Tys has completed to provide one of the future redevelopment sites.	C&R
We will develop a decarbonisation and affordable warmth strategy which will create greener, more energy efficient homes, help grow the local green economy promote affordable warmth for our tenants and ensure we support the local and national decarbonisation agenda. (Ref 14951) MF5 48	✓	A draft decarbonisation and affordable warmth strategy has been developed supporting the Council's net zero carbon principles. The strategy is based on the evidence obtained from a series of pilot projects that we have developed in partnership with Swansea and Cardiff Universities. The strategy will require political sign off by the new administration before being fully implemented.	C&R
We will further develop relationships with internal and potential external customers to encourage collaboration and commercial opportunities to make best use of Carmarthenshire's property-related Frameworks and operational teams. (Ref 14972)	✓	We have continued to explore opportunities with both internal and external clients. One example was the establishment of the Schools Handyvan Service which was rolled out at the end of 2021 and is operating successfully. Since the disaggregation of the Housing Responsive Maintenance function to Communities we are looking to expand our in-house team in the new financial year with the recruitment of an additional 13 new maintenance technicians. We will continue to collaborate in the new financial year on a similar basis as and when opportunities arise.	P&R
We will complete the review of Maintenance Operational teams to ensure effective and prioritised in-house delivery of Housing repairs. (Ref 14976)	✓	We are continuing to review operational teams to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. The introduction of the Total Connect IT system will facilitate a more detailed resource deployment arrangement to further improve efficiency of the in-house team. Opportunities to insource further have been explored and we are actively recruiting trade operatives following approval to recruit 13 new Maintenance Technicians within the	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		Communities Department in late March 2022, following disaggregation of the functions in January 2022 . There is, however, a significant skills shortage for a range of trades which is being experienced by our Framework contractors and is evident in the low number of applications we have received for vacancies throughout the year. Wages being offered within the industry have been increasing steadily in the private sector over the last year which has also impacted on our ability to recruit.	
We shall continue the roll out the Housing Repairs Review new working model to deliver a more timely, flexible, and efficient multi-skilled repairs service and finalise an implementation plan for extending the service countywide, including appropriate multi-skilling training for all our responsive/preventative maintenance operatives. (Ref 14977)	✓	This year has seen the Property maintenance function being disaggregated between Environment and Communities which was finalised in January 2022. This has allowed the new Housing Property and Strategic Projects Division in communities to refocus on the delivery of housing repairs to our customers. Recruitment of 13 additional operatives is imminent to rebalance our trades teams throughout the county and reduce our reliance on contractors. Further major improvements in keeping with the recommendations of the original Housing Repairs Review will be achieved later in the year with the introduction of our new IT system Total Connect. This will provide a much improved service to our customers with online repairs reporting, appointment booking and email/SMS updates for jobs reported as well as improving the operational efficiency of our in house team.	C&R
We will contribute to delivering the Authority's Affordable Homes Delivery Plan and Swansea Bay City Deal 'Homes as Power Stations' programme to help generate sustainable and affordable homes and address fuel poverty for our residents by developing new homes with innovative technologies to limit energy usage. (Ref 14980)	✓	Whilst we continue to develop and deliver a number of schemes active on site and others in the course of obtaining planning and/or grant approvals, others have or are due to be handed over shortly for occupation e.g. Glanmor Terrace, Burry Port, Gwynfryn, Ammanford, Garreglwyd Pembre, whilst Maespiode in Llandybie was handed over earlier this year. In addition, the first phase of the Dylan site has been handed over and the remainder are scheduled to be handed over in August 2022. Other schemes are on site such as Wauniago, Carmarthen and others are either in the course of being tendered or will be shortly. These will be subsequently tendered to a programme to be agreed with the scheme sponsoring department. We continue to implement a number of new and refurbishment/upgrade schemes in line with the Authority's ambitions to meet its Net Zero Carbon (NZC) requirements. We are constantly looking for energy performance improvements and technologies that will not only generate affordable energy from natural sources but will also reduce the cost of energy in use for the tenants.	C&R
Through the re-structure we will ensure that we set ourselves up for the post COVID world in terms of housing services, ensuring that we maximise income in terms of rents, and that we continue to	✓	A new structure has now been implemented that will provide continued focus on maximising rental income. We have undertaken a comprehensive Tenant Survey with nearly 2,000 being received. These responses will be analysed, and an action plan being developed to build on the strengths identified as well as areas for	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
deliver high levels of tenant satisfaction. (Ref 15094)		further improvement. Headline overall satisfaction levels are 75% for quality of home and 82% for quality of the neighbourhood. This survey will now form the basis of the work for our new Community Engagement team.	
We will deliver a sustainable plan for Council House Voids that will reduce their number and quicken turnaround times when properties are vacant. (Ref 15095)	✓	Management of Voids has transferred to the Housing Property & Strategic Projects Division. A review of the Voids process is underway in the final quarter of 2021/22 and identified improvements will be developed as part of the new Division's Business Plan for 2022/23 onwards.	C&R
The % of empty private properties brought back into use (PAM/013) 2020/21 Result - 6.88% (162/2,354) /2021/22 Target - 7.80% This measure includes all previously empty properties and not only affordable homes.	✗	2021/22 result - 6.00% (132/2,200) The pandemic continued to affect and present challenges in returning empty properties to use resulting in a reduction of outturn during the financial year. Intermittent inspections and action relating to empty properties meant that there were less in the pipeline particularly for the first part of the year as well as other factors like the availability of contractors, supply of materials and inclement weather conditions influenced the work programme. We have invested a significant amount of resources into the Valleys Taskforce Empty Property Grant scheme, preparing grant schemes which is externally funded by WG, by preparing 104 applications which amount to £2.7million of improvement works (net cost), which may attract an approximate grant allowance of £2million (assuming £20,000 allocated per surveyed property) to the County. The benefit of this scheme, however, will not be realised until the next financial year with the funding being committed and rolled forward.	C&R
The number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use (PAM/045) 2020/21 Result - 0 additional dwellings / 2020/21 Target - 7	✓	2021/22 result - 12 This measure accounts for the number of additional dwellings created when an empty property is sub-divided into additional dwellings in an effort to bring a property back into use. 132 empty properties were brought back into use during 2020/21, with 12 new homes created.	C&R
We will reduce the average number of days taken to complete council house repairs. (PAM/037) 2020/21 Result - 10.5 days / 2021/22 Target - 14 days)	✗	2021/22 result - 15.1 days (377,374/24,938) Off Target and declined. During Covid there were significant periods where there was a corporate decision to only undertake urgent and Health & Safety works. Once normal service resumed, end to end times were significantly increased. Post-Covid and Post-Brexit there has also been a significant reduction in contractor capacity, which has led to difficulty procuring works via existing framework arrangements. We are working with contractors to identify ways to increase capacity and will be preparing a new minor works framework prior to expiry of the current framework in August 2023.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		We are continuing to target the backlog, which is gradually reducing, by packaging work together by work type and geographically to make delivery more efficient.	
We will continue to ensure that all council houses meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) (PAM/038) 2020/21 Result - 100% (9,162/9,162) / 2021/22 Target - 100%	✓	2021/22 result - 100% (9,148/9,148) All of our council houses meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)	COMM
The % of rent lost due to properties being empty. (PAM/039) 2020/21 Result - 4.3% £2,006,723 ÷ £46,798,181 / 2021/22 Target - 4.0%	✓	2021/22 result - 3.9% (£1,880,887 / £47,469,606) This result is on target and has improved on previous year, but we continue to suffer from a lack of contractor capacity. Recommendations and improvement areas arising from the voids review will be taken forward as part of the 2022-23 business plan with a focus on reducing turnaround times.	COMM



Well-being Objective 7

Live Well - Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Eat and breathe healthily			
We will work with community organisations to improve access to the network of footpaths and bridleways across the County. (Ref 14966) MF5-68	✓	<p>"A Rights of Way Improvement Plan has been put in place and regular liaison with the Local Access Forum is continuing to take place. Work is also ongoing with the assistance of the Ramblers Association to grow a volunteer network to assist with the inspection of PROW and potentially undertake minor works, discussions have also taken place with BHS to extend this to volunteers from the equine community. A Public facing extension of the Countryside Access Management System has now been developed and adopted within the Countryside Unit, and now is being trialled with volunteers and seems to be working well, eventually it will enable public reporting and volunteer surveys to be input. Additional liaison with the Town and Community Council forum to discuss the PROW hierarchy which has been developed is ongoing, the CAMS extensions and a landowner responsibility brochure is almost complete. This year the Countryside Maintenance Team have resolved 626 issues on the PROW network, these issues were spread throughout 64 parishes within the county, and totalling just over 316km's of the network was improved."</p>	C&R
We will continue to ensure we meet regulatory requirements to high standards in terms of environmental health functions e.g. food standards and hygiene. (Ref 15098)	✓	<p>The Food, Safety and Health team has continued to undertake duties in relation to Food and Feed Safety and whilst ensuring new food businesses are registered, the team has been proactive in surveillance of food businesses across the authority, with the objective of gaining an accurate picture of the everchanging local food business landscape. With Food activities being carried out in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's 'COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan' –2021-2022 saw the following work being completed by the team : 443 joint Food Hygiene and Standards Inspections, 201 feed inspections, over 270 new food business registrations processed, 1326 service requests dealt with and over 30 personal and premises skin piercing registrations being processed. 10 Food Hygiene notices and 4 Health and Safety notices have been issued as a result of non-conformances found during inspections and investigations. We continue to provide advice and support to food businesses in export of food, with 30 Export Health Certificates having been issued. 491 Infectious disease cases (non-Covid) have been investigated during this period, with an outbreak of Legionnella and an Incident of VTEC Ecoli also having been investigated. Officers have taken part in 2 Multi Agency raid where Smokies (illegally produced meat) were found and removed from the food chain with investigations ongoing. Official Control monitoring of shellfish harvesting areas continues on a monthly basis and the food hygiene, food standards and feed sampling programme has been delivered throughout the year with 127 samples having been undertaken during the year. This includes routine and project</p>	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		sampling having being undertaken at Carmarthenshire food businesses	
We will develop a pro-action Air Quality Delivery Plan, in conjunction with other Council Divisions and key partners. (Ref 15099)	✓	An Air Quality Delivery Plan has been developed and agreed by the AQ Action Steering Group.	E&PP
We will prepare an integrated Green Infrastructure Strategy to build on the national and local policies incl. Revised LDP and content of the Green Infrastructure Assessment. (Ref 15201)	✓	The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has been prepared with the final draft approved pending translation. Its preparation has been informed by engagement and will be published in due course.	C&R
We shall ensure that a very high percentage of food establishments meet food hygiene standards (PAM/023) 2020/21 Result - 98.02% (1,827/1,864) /2021/22 Target - 90%	✓	2021/22 Result - 99.31% (1,012/2,026) This result is on target and improved on the previous year.	E&PP
The percentage of Food Business establishments inspected that were liable to a programmed inspection as per the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan. (PPN/002) 2020/21 New Measure / 2020/21 Target - 100%	✓	2021/22 Result - 100% (407/407) All the food business establishments inspections as per the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan were completed during the year.	E&PP
B - Physical Activity			
We shall invest in the County's leisure centre provision with the development of a new facility in Llanelli as part of the Wellness Village - Pentre Awel. (Ref 12602) MF5-61	✓	A main contractor Buoygues has been appointed with detailed design conversations progressing well for Leisure aspects. Working positively with Health colleagues to finalise design of Hydrotherapy pool. Operational links with CSG and UWTSD continue to be strengthened with representation on Wellness hub sub-groups. Board and Sub groups meetings ongoing. Groups now looking at integrated use of spaces and draft operating timetables. Revenue business modelling being refined. Wider site management options being explored with corporate property. Green spaces sub group also established to fully explore options for non built areas of site.	C&R
We will implement the Cycling Strategy for Carmarthenshire that will focus on 5 key strategic themes. 1- Education, Development & Training; 2-Infrastructure and Facilities; 3-Marketing & Branding; 4-Tourism and 5 – Events. (Ref 13195). (Part of MF5-1)	✓	Highways are delivering the following schemes using TfW Active Travel Funding: Llanelli Masterplan Construction of the bridge over the A484 and adjacent shared use paths to begin in January 2022 with works estimated to last 6 months. Funding bids going in for FY 22/23 to include another active travel compliant bridge over the Railway line to replace Black Bridge. Improved access and connectivity into Trostre Retail park, upgrade of PROW link to NCN network and safe crossing point from Yspitty Road in Bynea. Other schemes progressed include A484 to Box Roundabout, Exchange Row crossing improvements and active travel enhancements in the Felinfoel area. St Clears Masterplan Currently focusing on the rerouting of the Riverside Path (under construction) to bring the NCN off road and connect upper and lower St Clears.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>Other schemes being progressed through the WelTAG process for construction in future years including connections to the proposed railway station.</p> <p>Ammanford/Cross Hands Masterplan Currently focusing on the Active Travel measures adjacent to the ELR (under construction) with other schemes being progressed through the WelTAG process for construction in future years.</p> <p>Carmarthen Masterplan A range schemes being progressed through the WelTAG process for construction in future years including proposed measures on St Clears Rd bidding for construction funding for 22/23.</p> <p>Also progressing WelTAG studies for Llandovery and Tumble Masterplans as well as routes within the Gwendraeth and Teifi Valleys and the Cardi Bach route.</p> <p>In addition, the following supporting measures have been funded by various WG funding streams:</p> <p>Brompton Bike Hire Docks at Carmarthen Bus Station, Llanelli Train Station and Burry Port Multi Model Interchange (mix of standard and electric Bromptons as part of a membership hire scheme).</p> <p>EBike Charging capacity to charge 10 bikes at: Beacon, Eastgate, St Catherine's Walk, Amman Valley LC, Carmarthen LC, Llandovery LC, Pembrey CP, Pendine. (approximately 60% sites complete). Cycle Parking – being installed at various sites across the county.</p> <p>Women's Tour of Britain professional cycle race to be hosted in County on Friday, 10th June 2022.</p>	
We will develop Ammanford Leisure Centre facilities with upgrades to internal wet-side changing facilities (phase 1 - completed); and improvements to parking infrastructure and external sports facilities linked to wider school site masterplan (phase 2). (Ref 14705) MF5-62 part	✓	<p>The next phase of the masterplan has been agreed with the school for the development of a new floodlit, 3G all weather pitch and enhanced Athletics provision.</p> <p>Funding bids submitted to FAW levelling up pot and SportWales collaboration fund with positive indications of support from latter. School also having ongoing positive dialogue with Education on access, play, parking and traffic flow improvements for site. New 3G pitch and enhanced Athletics facilities to be developed during Autumn/Winter 2022</p>	C&R
Will ensure best use is made of school facilities to support wider community activity. (Ref 14995) MF5-30	✓	<p>A number of school projects have recently been completed and will promote use of facilities to the wider community. We are also revising the future schools design brief to include a more community focussed element.</p>	E&C
We will recover of memberships and user numbers at Leisure facilities to pre-covid levels and beyond by 31/3/22. (Ref 15068)	✓	<p>Industry seeing gradual recovery on gym / leisure centre income increases. Aiming to get back to pre-pandemic levels as close as possible to 1/4/22. Some ongoing variables in above assumptions as seasonality and any further WG restrictions continue to play a big part in leisure income profiles. Gym membership current at about 75% pre-pandemic levels, with aquatics income over 80%. A number of mitigation measures are in place / planned, including Active Anywhere online platform to stream classes and activities at all sorts of locations e.g. people's homes; community halls;</p>	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		care homes; surgeries; hospital physio support (linking with excellent National exercise referral scheme); schools (pilot of 18 schools recently completed and huge potential to roll this out across Wales as a paid for extra-curricular service to generate new income and help address obesity challenges – USP being we deliver all this bi-lingually); and this will continue as part of our better value, hybrid offer moving forward.	
We shall continue with the development of site masterplans including Amman Valley Leisure Centre, and Llandovery Leisure Centre. (Ref 15075)	✓	Llandovery site masterplan works completed, with creation of new fitness and multi purpose rooms to compliment the existing 20m pool, turning the facility into a new Leisure Centre for the area. Outdoor multi-use courts also being incorporated into community offer, working closely with Ysgol Gynradd Rhys Pritchard; At Amman Valley, the internal wet-side re-furbishment works have been completed with new village change and DDA compliant toilet and shower facilities. The masterplan for outdoor sports facilities on the AV comprehensive school site, including replacement all weather pitch and upgraded running has been agreed with the school. Internal and external funding secured to deliver new 3G pitch and enhanced Athletics offer during Autumn / Winter 2022. Discussions are also ongoing with colleagues in Regeneration around potential additional leisure facilities as part of the town regeneration plans. Further detail within action WBO7/B Part MMF5-62	C&R
The number of visits to leisure centres per 1,000 population (PAM 017) 2020/21 Result - 734 /2021/22 Target - 4,489	✓	2021/22 Result - 4,598 (873,882/190,073) This result is on target and greatly improved on last year. The last quarter of the year showed continued improvement in attendances, supported in part through the increased capacity as restrictions are relaxed, and through Welsh Government funding initiatives such as 'winter of wellbeing', which provided multiple free spaces for predominantly young people in facilities. Learn to swim programmes have recovered to over 80% of pre covid levels with Memberships at 75%. Overall results are ahead of forecast, and we expected this steady recovery to continue into the next year.	C&R
The % of people referred to the National Exercise Referral scheme that attend the initial consultation of the programme (3.4.2.6) 2020/21 Result - 0% /2021/21 Target - 50%	x	2021/22 Result - 40.4% (203/503) The end of year result is off target. This is largely due to the prominence of COVID during the year. As a result, we struggled to get individuals into our leisure centres to undertake initial assessments. Towards the end of the financial year things improved and we expect this to continue going forward. Recruiting additional NERS Instructors had been an issue during the year, with only appointing three new officers at the end of the financial year after three rounds of recruiting. This will now allow us to increase the number of initial assessments we offer each week.	SC&H
The percentage of people referred to the National Exercise Referral scheme that complete the 16 week programme (PAM/041) 2020/21 Result - 0% /2021/21 Target - 55%	x	2021/22 Result - 30.2% The result is off target largely due to NERS not being operational for the first half of the year due to COVID. This improved towards the end of the financial year, and we expect this to continue going forward. A full service review has taken place, with three new officers recruited at the end of the	SC&H

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		financial year with a new computerised referral process to be adopted during 2022/23 which will ease the admin re provision.	
The percentage of National Exercise Referral clients whose health had improved on completion of the exercise programme (PAM/042) 2020/21 Result 68.4% (104/152) /2021/22 Target - 70%	x	2021/22 Result – No result available This measure is reported for the previous financial year due to the timeliness of data, therefore this would be based on clients attending the exercise programme during 2020/21 and whether their health had improved. This was a period when NERS was not operational due to COVID, as a result no data has been collected against this measure.	SC&H
C - Mental Health			
We will continue to work with partners to transform mental health and learning disability services. We will promote independence, early intervention and prevention and ensure that support and services are accessible. (Ref 14698) MF5-57	✓	The Health Board have decided to pause meetings on the single point of referral due to a recent announcement from Welsh Government about additional funding to extend 111 for mental health. Potentially this could mean our single point of contact intentions are unnecessary and could be stood down as an action at that point. A transportation scheme delivered by St John's to alleviate pressure on mainstream ambulance services and improve conveyance arrangements for people in mental distress is now fully operational and we are making use of the facility.	SC&H
We will continue to deliver the Country park site masterplans at Pembrey Country Park, Millenium Coastal Path, Llyn Llech Owain and Mynydd Mawr. (Ref 14958) MF5-67	✓	A new improved area outside yr Orsaf at Pembrey County Park has been completed by April 22. A Masterplan is being drawn up for Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park to include newly define paths network (with grant).	C&R
We will deliver a £2million programme to re-develop Burry Port Harbour. (Ref 13201) MF5-69	✓	Harbour wall repairs have been completed. Liaising with BPTC to manage issue with coastal erosion and exposure of remnants of old BP Power station East of Harbour. Mitigation measures in place with ongoing monitoring and work to develop a long term management plan for issue. Meetings held with RNLI and The Marine Group to work collaboratively.	C&R
We shall develop the digital and creative skills of local communities by appointing 2x Maker Space apprentices to further develop and promote creative and innovative workspaces at our Libraries. (Ref 15071)	✓	The Maker Space Apprentices based in Ammanford and Carmarthen are just coming up to eighteen months in post. Both have successfully completed and passed all modules of their college course to date. They continue to produce innovative Makerspace content for social media and face to face events. The Apprentices have been instrumental in delivering face to face workshops and sessions at weekends which utilise the full range of Maker equipment available in Carmarthenshire Libraries. During the last quarter they have also had more experience of customer facing activity which includes delivering public engagement events on the new self service technologies available across our libraries.	C&R
We shall develop 24/7 access concept for Libraries, including remote locker solutions at rural hubs. (Ref 15072)	✓	Remote Locker solutions are now installed and available at Whitland, Brynamman and Newcastle Emlyn Libraries. The public have been supported to use this technology via a number of drop in support sessions delivered by our Digital Officer and Apprentices. Smallest Branch book vending machines are currently being piloted at Newcastle Emlyn Library which has now launched as Carmarthenshire Libraries first fully self service Library. The Open+ system which will allow access to Carmarthen Library beyond staffed hours is installed and ready for testing.	C&R
The number of library visits per 1,000 population (LCL/001) 2020/21 Result - 1,716 (323,926/188,771/ 2021/22	x	2021/22 - 1,614 (306,826/190,073) Unfortunately, we didn't meet our target and visiting figures (physical and virtual) are lower than in 2020/21. Physical visitor figures are gradually increasing as COVID-19	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
Target - 1,716		restrictions ease. During Q4 over 1,200 school children visited our libraries as part of our Winter of Wellbeing activities. Children took part in craft sessions, poetry and drama workshops, keep fit classes, magic shows & music/ rhyme sessions. Customers also continue to utilise our free digital resources, with customers benefitting from our range of digital e-books, e-audiobooks, newspapers, magazines & training apps.	
<i>The % of Quality Indicators achieved by the library service. (PAM/040)</i> 2020/21 Result - 86.1% /2021/22 Target - 93.8%	✓	2021/22 Result - 100% All relevant quality indicator targets were achieved giving a result of 100%. This is based on actual results for 2020/21 as final confirmed results for 2021/22 will not be available until Nov/ Dec 2022.	C&R
D – Substance Misuse			
We shall draft the Mental Health/ Substance misuse pathway and seek agreement by regional partners to develop and provide training programme to reflect the new approach (Ref 15184)	x	The Area Planning Board continue to hold quarterly co-occurring meetings. The pathway work is complex as it involves many agencies. However, the work regarding Alcohol Related Brain Damage has progressed well with the successful Fulfilled Lives service supporting people with complex needs to remain living independently within the community, and avoiding residential placements. There is still some work to do regarding the ARBD pathway especially relating to identifying responsibility for cognitive assessments and this work will continue to be monitored within the ARBD working group, also chaired by the Area Planning Board. There are additional working groups relating to Harm Reduction, and Treatment and Recovery, so there is scope to develop pathways further.	E&PP



Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Develop and implement how we provide information, advice, and assistance			
We will develop the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) service by enhancing the Multi-Disciplinary Team, to ensure that as many individuals as possible are supported to achieve preventative outcomes. (Ref 14694) MF5-52a	✓	Joint working of the Information Advice and Assistance team and the professional Multi Disciplinary Team together with increasing knowledge of the community is proving to make the service to the community as robust as possible. As referral numbers to community services is rising the success of the IAA service resolving the less complex referrals with preventative interventions is maintaining the numbers of referrals directed to the assessment teams consequently preventing the demand having a negative impact on assessment waiting times. We are still working on integrating community Physiotherapy into the IAA Multi Disciplinary Team as part of the ongoing developments.	SC&H
We will continue to develop and improve how Children's Services provide information, advice and assistance (IAA) to support families and develop a smarter approach to digital communication. We will continue to develop the Family Information Service and support links to the Welsh Government Dewis website. (Ref 15011)	✓	Family Information Service (FIS) has kept families and professionals up-to-date by providing information and advice via a variety of methods. There have been 1866 enquiries to FIS website. FIS social media channels are continuing to grow and are an excellent means of communication. As well as 37,363 website hits engagement via Facebook reached 31,247 and Twitter 33.4K. This year has continued to have its challenges with covid affecting a large number of families as well as Childcare Settings and Staff. FIS have provided continuous covid guidance and information to families and childcare settings as well as providing advice and support in respect of various WG grants such as the 'child development fund' which provides additional developmental support to children and families in greatest need and disadvantage especially due to covid to ensure needs are identified early before they escalate. During the year 178 families benefited from CDF with 187 children being supported.	E&C
We shall develop online service platforms e.g. membership Apps'; Online fitness classes; broadcasting of Theatre productions to Care Homes. (Ref 15069)	✓	Active Anywhere online platform is now in place to stream classes and activities to all sorts of locations e.g. people's homes; community halls; care homes; surgeries; hospital physio support (linking with excellent National exercise referral scheme); schools (pilot of 18 schools recently completed and huge potential to roll this out across Wales as a paid for extra-curricular service to generate new income and help address obesity challenges – USP being we deliver all this bi-lingually); and this will continue as part of our better value, hybrid offer moving forward. Evaluating usage and take-up for next phase of roll-out plan. Theatre shows and productions also broadcast into Care Homes over Christmas period, with further scope to expand this streamed service to many other locations in future.	C&R
We shall establish Delta Connect as a primary prevented telecare service within the county. Develop with the health boards intervention with telecare/telehealth. (Ref 15091)	✓	The number of Carmarthenshire Connect customers has now exceeded our target with 2,781 residents having received the service. Delta Connect continues to expand its offer to Carmarthenshire residents, and the rapid response service is now well established with many of the customers now well benefitting. Delta is continuing to work with the Health Board	SC&H

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Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		to develop its overall approach to telehealth with a number of pilots ongoing to support those with chronic health conditions to better manage those conditions at home.	
We will develop a formal agreement between the Local Authority and Health Board, outlining collective responsibilities whilst agreeing a new staffing structure in Integrated Services to support our approach to develop strong communities, help people help themselves and provide support when is needed. (Ref 15101)	✓	Work is continuing to review the existing Section 33 agreement between the Health Board and the Council. The first priority is to secure the new structure, and then finalisation of the agreements will follow.	SC&H
B – Greater community cohesion			
We will continue to support people living with dementia and the development of more dementia friendly and supportive communities and provisions across the County. (Ref 14695) MF5-60	✓	The regional dementia strategy is now in its final draft and waiting official sign off from the regional partners. The regional Dementia Steering Group is meeting regularly and progressing all aspects of the dementia funding workstreams. A regional Dementia Strategy Coordinator is currently being recruited to and will be in post shortly. We are working towards the re opening of day services to include dementia clients, and it is anticipated that the Services will reopen in late April 2022.	SC&H
We will support and advise community groups and organisations to re-introduce when appropriate the organising of community events being held in Carmarthenshire from agricultural shows, festivals and carnivals to exhibitions, concerts and performances. (Ref 14895) MF5-85	✓	<p>The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions has led to a surge in enquiries from a wide range of event organisers – community ones seeking to re-establish annual events cancelled due to the Pandemic as well as more commercial ones seeking to create new brands or those seeking to start the building up again of previous ones such as the Half Marathon.</p> <p>We aim to provide specific advise and contacts to all enquiries and have continued to use our newsletters, press releases, social media posts and updates to the corporate website to inform event organisers of the current scenario as well as providing a new Event Management Plan template to organisers that will allow them to create and deliver safer and more effective events. The “what’s on” listing on the official visitor website Discover Carmarthenshire.com was made live again and immediately became a vibrant mix of internal and external events, activities and festivals with our staff ensuring the listings are of quality and then promoted to the wider audiences on a weekly basis through a planned campaign of boosted social media posts</p> <p>Our experience and knowledge were utilised through the events safety advisory group (E-SAG) that has met every 3 weeks, joining other council sections and external partners to offer guidance to those seeking to deliver quality events in the County. There are already over 40 events listed at this group for note and discussion with many already been invited to attend to outline their plans. As well as events, we have also brought some major TV/Film on-location schedule to the group, with this improved communication allowing smoother visit of the production companies – this ranges from mainstream TV production “The Light” (economic impact of £750k) to smaller regional adverts</p> <p>A debrief of the Llanelli Christmas Carnival and light switch-on outlined a very positive response to the County Council from partners and participants. Investment is being made on replacing of electrical fittings as well as the anchor bolts that hold many of the festive lighting across the streets in Cowell and Stepney Street.</p>	<p>SC&H</p> <p>C&R</p>

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
To support the Learning Disability Strategy we will continue to implement the Accommodation Plan (2019-24), to ensure people have a range of housing options to meet their needs. (Ref 15081)	✓	An accommodation plan has been developed to provide an evidence-based approach to commissioning accommodation with support for adults with a range of care and support needs. The plan sets out the accommodation needs of those individuals who have a learning disability over the next 2 years and, informs our future programme of work in relation to new developments.	SC&H
We shall continue to develop a more strategic approach to strengthen and develop the preventative network of services & build community resilience, especially in relation to the third sector, housing related support and the wider community, including carers. (Ref 15083)	✓	A Re-commissioning programme of work is ongoing. A provider event was held on 4th April 2022 to consult on the new community model, the event was well attended and well received. We will also be finalising the housing support programme strategy which will inform our strategic priorities moving forward.	SC&H
C - Impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and well-being of our population & community resilience			
We shall continued with Town & Community Councils and other community organisations to support Community Sport clubs and County-wide plans for focus sports of Athletics; Cycling; Aquatics and Triathlon. (Ref 13105) MFS-71 part	✓	Summer of fun and Winter of Well-being initiatives successfully delivered via funding from WG to key wards across the County. Numerous workshops and session held with community clubs across the County to support club recovery and development plans, linked to SportWales funding streams. Dialogue ongoing with T&C councils and local sports clubs. Sports Personality event held March 2022 to recognise achievement and in particular volunteering across the sector.	C&R
We will work as part of the multi- agency Tyisha Steering Group to develop community facilities to improve outcomes for children and families, focusing on preventative and early intervention services with a strong community focus according to the Children First principles in the Tyisha and Glanymor wards. (Ref 15012)	✓	A feasibility study is being undertaken within Tyisha for the establishment of a Community Hub this will followed with a development of a business plan. Asset Based Community Development Training has been planned for residents, officers, and local groups. A great deal of community-based activities have taken place throughout the year to develop positive community relationships such as litter picking, play events and sessions, creative play sessions for parents and gardening projects.	E&C
Development of new town centre Health and fitness facilities, linked to town centre regeneration plans. (Ref 15077)	✓	Plans for a town centre fitness facility and multi- purpose exercise space have been supported via the Regeneration division led 'Levelling up' bid, submitted on the 18th June 2021. Detailed plans are being further developed now to deliver this aspiration for Spring 2024.	C&R
We will continue to provide support for the care & support sectors to mitigate Covid risks and ensure robust contingency planning arrangements are in place. (Ref 15078)	✓	The Carers Resilience Project continues to support carers to maintain their wellbeing and to protect caring relationships. The project has offered support around contingency planning and has helped Carers to access important equipment to help manage the risks associated with COVID.	SC&H
D - Support Safer Communities			
We will ensure the Council fulfils its duties relating to the current Contest Strategy (counter terrorism) and respond to any duties as they arise. (Ref 15064)	✓	A partnership delivery plan is being developed in response to the new Contest Cymru Delivery Framework to identify local priorities and objectives to deliver on the four areas of Contest (Prevent, Protect, Prepare & Pursue). This will enable the Council to continue to fulfil its duties to counter the threat from terrorism. We have participated in a Prevent performance process to benchmark our activity against a scoring matrix to assess our delivery as a local authority against requirements of the Prevent Duty. This assessment will assist in the development of the delivery plan, as good practice and successes have been identified, and areas for improvement.	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		The Council formally responded to the Home Office consultation on the proposed Protect duty which will aim to help protect public venues and spaces from terrorist attacks. The Duty will be introduced in 2022 and will impact on the management of council-owned publicly accessible locations which meet the criteria. The Government published its response in January to the consultation which summarised the feedback received and will continue to engage key stakeholders and other government departments to further develop the legislation. A multi-agency Protective Security Preparedness Group for the county has been established to begin the initial work on the proposed Duty.	
We will work with departments to ensure compliance with the new corporate CCTV policy. (Ref 15065)	✓	A corporate CCTV Policy was approved in June 2021 to ensure effective governance arrangements were in place for the Council's use and management of its public space CCTV camera systems, in accordance with the Protection of Freedoms Act (POFA) 2012. It was also important to embed a consistent approach across the Council in relation to all aspects of its CCTV systems. Discussions have taken place with departmental CCTV leads to raise awareness of the new Council policy. A new CCTV lead officer post was recruited to, fixed term for a year, and the postholder began work on 22 November. This role aims to provide specialist advice and support to Council departments to ensure compliance with our statutory responsibilities and the implementation of the CCTV Policy.	E&PP
We will work with departments to deliver the White Ribbon campaign action plan. (Ref 15066)	✓	The Council were notified of its success in achieving White Ribbon status on 30 June 2021. The White Ribbon Campaign approved the action plan submitted which had been devised in partnership with departments. A Steering Group was established to drive forward progress on activity identified in the action plan in collaboration with all relevant departments. The Group held its inaugural meeting in October with departmental representatives and the meeting's focus was to plan arrangements to mark 'White Ribbon Day' on 25 November. This included encouraging all staff to make the White Ribbon promise - "I promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women" and raising awareness of domestic abuse including with a message in all payslips with the link to the White Ribbon website. Local services available to help victims and survivors were also promoted and the White Ribbon flag flown at County Hall and Town Halls in Llanelli and Ammanford, with County Hall lit up on the evening of 25 November. The Group will continue to meet regularly to further advance the work identified in the action plan and will provide an annual update to the White Ribbon Campaign in the summer.	E&PP
We will ensure progress against the Safer Communities Partnership Action Plan. (Ref 15067)	✓	Work is ongoing in collaboration with community safety partners to target the Safer Communities Partnership's priorities of Class A drugs and County Lines, Violent Crime including Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, Counter-Terrorism, Cyber Crime, Child Sexual Exploitation and Community Cohesion. Key work in the period has included the continuation of close partnership working to tackle the drug, alcohol and anti-social behaviour issues in Tyisha with proactive action being taken. An action plan has been developed which focuses on increasing visibility and presence locally by partners, encouraging the reporting of	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>incidents and crime, improving waste and fly tipping, targeting anti-social behaviour and giving young people more opportunities. Weekly community cohesion tension monitoring meetings continue to discuss any issues of interest from across the county. There has been targeted partnership action involving the Police, Council and other partners for County Lines Intensification Weeks during the year resulting in effective proactive work. Outcomes have included extensive awareness raising of cuckooing including targeted safeguarding support to vulnerable individuals, execution of a number of drug warrants and positive enforcement action being taken, such as a Closure Protection Notice. Funding was awarded from the Home Office Safer Streets funding for a project in Llanelli by the Llanelli Multi-Cultural Network, in partnership with St Pauls Family Centre and Llanelli Community Partnership. This successful project worked with people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to help make them feel safer including by giving a better understanding of crime prevention measures and knowing how to report crime. Work has continued with national colleagues to introduce a new process in Wales to deliver safeguarding reviews, including those which involve a domestic homicide. Guidance is being developed and a national repository and hub are to be introduced to ensure that learning is shared from these reviews.</p>	
<p>We shall implement measures to respond to operational and strategic imperatives associated with safeguarding including deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS) Liberty Protection Standards (LPS) and violence against women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (VAWDASV). (Ref 15092)</p>	✓	<p>The safeguarding team routinely review practice and procedures to ensure compliance with statutory duties and guidance. A recent team review has identified no compliance concerns. The LPS consultation has now been launched and Carmarthenshire Council will consider its content and respond within timescale. All of the DoLS assessments have been allocated resulting in a significant reduction in the accrued backlog. We are currently awaiting further funding from WG to enable us to sustain this position. The regional VAWDASV strategy is currently being refreshed to reflect current priorities and changes in legislation.</p>	SC&H
<p>We will continue to be pro-active in the trading standards field (e.g. financial exploitation, licensing, POCA, COVID enforcement) ensuring we do as much as is possible to protect the public. (Ref 15100)</p>	✓	<p>During 2021/22 we have conducted 3783 (642 Q4) Covid enforcement visits which has resulted in 9 notices being issued. Of the 9 notices, 5 were terminated prior to the expiry date as the business showed immediate remediation and compliance meant we could terminate the notice before expiry. 14 Proceeds of crime (POCA) cases are currently at various stages of the court system, a further two cases have reached financial hearings, allocation of monies awaited from home office for two cases concluded from Q3 PIMS update. We have received 2811 (650 in Q4) Trading standards consumer protection, advocacy and support enquires and referrals, 1809 (413 in Q4) of which required further investigation and 77 Financial exploitation (FESS) referrals requiring further action by the team. Due to an increase in complaints received alleging the underage sales of 'E-cigarettes' and connected products, the department embarked on a survey to visit all retailers of such premises as an initial exercise to inform and advise prior to a potential test purchasing survey. This was also a means of updating the database regarding the codes allocated to relevant premises that sell these products. There have been 153 visits carried out. In addition to this the Trading Standards Team have been</p>	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		carrying out campaign visits to all firework establishments. There have been 38 visits carried out. Licensing have processed 875 taxi and private hire applications, 72 knowledge and safeguarding tests for drivers, 258 licensed premises applications, 108 personal licence applications and 287 temporary event notices.	
<p>We shall ensure that the average number of calendar days taken to repair all street lamp failures remains below 4 days (THS/009)</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 11.37 days (7,962/700) / 2021/22 Target - 4 days</p>	x	<p>2021/22 Result - 9.22 days (12,108 / 1,313)</p> <p>Despite being off target the result has improved on the previous year, but not back to pre-Covid levels yet. High winds and repairs to one of the Mobile Elevating Work Platforms in the later part of the year impacted on repairs therefore increased the average number of days.</p>	E&PP



Well-being Objective 9

Age Well - Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Improved population health and wellbeing			
We will take account of and ensure a Carmarthenshire specific response to the pending Welsh Government Strategy for an ageing society: age friendly Wales. (Ref 14910)	✓	Welsh Government have published the Age friendly Wales: our strategy for an ageing society and have provided funding for Local Authorities in Wales to progress with the World Health Organisation, Age-friendly Communities framework. During 2022-23, this work will be progressed by undertaking detailed mapping work, engagement with our communities and by supporting older people back into their communities.	SC&H
We will continue to play an active role in the Regional Partnership Board and work with partners across the wider West Wales Care Partnership to support further integration and transformation of care and support in the County. (Ref 14952) MF5 52b&c	✓	Carmarthenshire County Council have continued to play an active role in the Regional partnership Board, working with partners across the wider West Wales Care partnership participating fully in the oversight and delivery of the regional programme. We have lead on several workstreams to transform health and care services in West Wales.	SC&H
B – Better quality and more accessible health and social care services.			
We will maintain a strong and sustainable in-house domiciliary provision for Council and support the commissioning team in developing a new framework including the redevelopment of the reablement services. (Ref 13225) MF5-55	✓	We supported the commissioning team in developing a new Commissioning framework which launched at the end of March 2022 and goes live from April 2022. Maintaining a strong and sustainable in-house domiciliary provision and recruitment and retention remains a challenge across the entire sector, but the in house service has sustained its position and market share aided by a robust recruitment and marketing drive. Redevelopment of the reablement services Reablement Team continue to work with HDUHB in the development of a new integrated Intermediate Care Multi-Disciplinary Triage Team (ICMDT). The proof of concept pilot phase is concluded, and the model has evidenced good practice, which will be rolled out in 2022/23.	SC&H
We will deliver an investment programme for Care Homes and Sheltered Housing Schemes that meets the future needs of older people in the County. (Ref 14703) MF5-54	✓	The investment programme to remodel our sheltered schemes has begun and all works are now completed on the Llys yr Ysgol Sheltered Scheme in Saron. Modelling work is ongoing, with defining our future offer for older persons accommodation in our Sheltered Schemes and Council owned Care Homes. New models of older person mixed tenure accommodation solutions are also being developed in the Council's Pentre Awel development in Llanelli. Work is currently underway to design 144 assisted living retirement units within the development. Our new investment plan includes all council care homes and sheltered schemes and aligns the programme with the new Rebalancing Care Fund and the Housing with Care Fund.	SC&H

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will develop an overall recovery model to redesign support and services during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include how we safely restart day services/develop day opportunities as well as bed-based reablement. (Ref 14953) MF5-53	✓	The reopening plan for the Day Services for Older People has been agreed and the services are on target to reopen the last week of April. This is subject to all risk assessment controls being in place and also contingent on any changing situation with Covid. Ty Pili-Pala is now operational as a 14 bedded step down unit offering bed based reablement. Funding is being secured under the Regional Integrated Fund to continue the scheme.	SC&H
We shall continue to provide support for carers, and young carers in particular, to enable them to continue providing the invaluable care they offer to family and friends in need. (Ref 14955) MF5-55	✓	Examples of the work achieved are the launch of the young carers ID card, Community Inclusion Project – supporting carers to access a range of activities. Carers Home Improvement and Wellbeing project – providing support with home improvements. Community Carers group project - which provides opportunities for carers to maintain their wellbeing and access a break from their caring role. Progress against agreed priorities will be captured in the Regional Carers annual report to Welsh Government. New Priorities have been agreed for 2022 – 2023 which will form part of the business / action plan moving forward.	SC&H
We will work with partners to ensure that people remain socially connected, particularly through the use of virtual support such as the Connect project, in order to reduce loneliness, tackle inequalities and poverty. (Ref 14956) MF5-59	✓	CONNECT participants have exceeded our target of 2585, actual number of connections to date are 3037(cumulative) exceeded by 17%.	SC&H
We shall review and update our Public Convenience Strategy as necessary. (Ref 14987)	✓	A continuous review is undertaken of current public convenience premises to include any changes to opening times and types of facilities available. Suitable additional premises are also added to the list of available toilets, for example, new buildings / toilet facilities, and appropriate office facilities as and when they become available. An interim report on the Local Toilets Strategy was published and approved in the 4th quarter of 21/22. A formal review of the strategy will be undertaken within a year of each ordinary election. The next election date in Wales is Thursday 5th May 2022. Therefore, the latest date for review of Carmarthenshire's Local Toilets Strategy will be the 4th May 2023.	E&PP
The development of Market Stability Reports is a regulatory requirement under the Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. This involves an assessment of both sufficiency of supply and stability of all regulated services. (Ref 15079)	✓	This work has been undertaken within the West Wales Care Partnership and involved a extensive programme of engagement with care providers, commissioners, and local people across West Wales. The information collated has contributed to the development of a Market Stability Report. The report is finalised and will be published in June 2022.	SC&H
We shall implement the review of Social Care Direct Payments, including the decommissioning of contracted service and development of in house service. (Ref 15080)	✓	The Tupe transfer of staff took place 1/4/21. The new service will be considered in line with the commissioning re-structure.	SC&H
Recommissioning of Community Support (Domiciliary Care) –we will re tender domiciliary care to put a new framework contract in place. (Ref 15082)	✓	A re-commissioning and tender exercise was completed in November 2021. The new Framework contract was awarded in January 2022. During January and March 2022, we have been working with providers to transition from the old contract over to	SC&H

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		the new contract. New services have commenced April 2022.	
We will ensure an effective and efficient contract management to ensure care & support providers comply with their duty to provide quality, reliable and safe services while securing value for money. (Ref 15084)	✓	Our work continues to ensure quality services. Contract monitoring officers are undertaking proactive monitoring and reactive monitoring and where necessary, performance issues are being address through our provider performance arrangements / protocol.	SC&H
We will reshape our approach to supporting patients home from hospital in a safe and timely way by making sure that a) the processes are in place to support this and b) we have the mechanisms in place to monitor delays and issues that prevent this from happening. (Ref 15090)	✓	Our intermediate care multi-disciplinary team is now in place to support safe discharge from hospital, admission avoidance as well as respond to crisis in the community. We have an interim Senior Manager in post responsible for this team, and will soon be appointing substantively to the post. We are tracking all patients in hospital who are ready to leave, and work as a multi-disciplinary team to plan for discharge. Any issues preventing discharge are escalated to a twice weekly hospital panel where they are worked through. The multi-disciplinary team continues to meet twice daily to support admission avoidance and expedite discharge. Whilst the mechanisms are progressing well to support this action, we are still compromised currently by the lack of available care across the system. However, having the team in place allows us to take all opportunities possible to maximise the resources available and help people remain safe and independent outside of hospital.	SC&H
Adult Social Care will collaborate with colleagues in Commissioning, Housing and the Health Board to develop a range of supported accommodation. (Ref 15093)	✓	Since the last report a number of new schemes within the Council housing are stock are opening/ about to open. Additionally, we have recommenced meetings with an Independent sector Provider to de-register a further 8 residential beds in the Ammanford locality. This type of work will continue to be a priority in subsequent financial years.	SC&H
We will ensure we let Care Homes voids as efficiently as possible in a post COVID world. (Ref 15096)	✓	Care Homes provided (and continue to provide) Short Term stays for individuals assessed for Packages of Care that were/are not available due to a staffing crisis.	SC&H
We shall review the Transport & Facilities services in-line with the alternative offer for Day Care in Carmarthenshire. (Ref 15088)	✗	The transport team have been working with service managers to look at the best way to reintroduce the transport service in the most economical way. The centre's will reopen at the end of April. work should be completed by the end of Quarter 1 22/23.	SC&H
We will continue to reduce the number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (PAM/015) 2020/21 Result - 347 days (29,188/347) /2021/22 Target - 326 days	✓	2021/22 Result - 259 days (31,621/122) Delivering Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations during the last couple of years has been challenging due to COVID-19 restrictions with delays and the ability to complete ongoing site work. Our average number of days to complete these adaptations pre-COVID was 176 days, and well below the Welsh average of 204 days. This greatly increased during 2020/21 to 347 days and above the Welsh average of 261 days. This disruption created a backlog with a continued high number of days during 2021/22, but as the backlog is being addressed during the year, the average number of days has improved significantly to 259 days.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
Number of people waiting in hospital for domiciliary care (ASC/001) <i>New measure for 2021/22 – No target set</i>	!	2021/22 Result - 59 people There were 59 people waiting in hospital for domiciliary care at the end of 2021/22. Increase in numbers waiting from previous quarter linked to slower rate in new packages of care being picked up over the last few weeks.	SC&H
C - Higher value health and social care.			
No actions or measures monitored for this step during 2020/21			
D - A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce			
We will implement phase 1 and phase 2 of the new structure for Integrated Services. (Ref 15089)	✓	The role profiles have now all being drafted and are currently being evaluated for grading by both the Local Authority and Health Board. Once they are graded, we will be in a position to commence consultation with the Senior Management Team.	SC&H



Well-being Objective 10

Healthy & Safe Environment -

Look after the environment now and for the future

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016			
We will implement the tree strategy to improve the environment and mitigate the effects of air and noise pollution in our more populated areas (This applies primarily to trees on land owned or managed by CCC, but could equally well apply to other land e.g. land managed by other members of the Public Service Board, and Town and Community Councils). (Ref 14822) MF5-23	x	A Draft Strategy has been prepared and is currently undergoing consultation with other authority departments. Consideration is being given to the development of an action plan to support the strategy as a second phase of work. Progress has been somewhat delayed due to other work priorities, but a revised programme plan for delivery has been developed with CMT consideration in early summer. Comments on the draft strategy have been invited from other relevant divisions. Alongside the strategy an Action Plan will be developed.	E&PP
We will work towards ensuring that CCC meets its Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act: planning what actions it will deliver and reporting on outcomes achieved to WG. Evidencing links between this work and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. (Ref 15193)	✓	CCC's 2020-2023 Environment Act Forward Plan went to CMT in March 2022, and to Scrutiny in July 2022. The plan sets out the actions that CCC are taking deliver this duty and includes target dates for delivery of all actions. All officers responsible for the delivery of the actions set out in the plan have been made aware of this responsibility and the need to report on the actions.	E&PP
We will work towards ensuring that CCC regularly updates its Environment Act Forward Plan as required by the legislation. (Ref 15194)	✓		E&PP
Ensure staff across CCC at all levels are aware of the need to deliver CCC's Environment Act Forward Plan and their role in doing this. (Ref 15195)	✓		E&PP
We will ensure that CCC's own development projects deliver biodiversity enhancements, ecological mitigation and compensation, as per the legislation and policy. (Ref 15196)	✓	CCC's Project ecologist works on CCC development e.g. Gwenllian School, Kidwelly, and the re-routing of the cycle way in Lower St Clears, to address and progress the ecological issues such applications raise. At Gwenllian school, biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement has focused on providing alternative dormouse habitat consistent with NRW's EU Protected Species Licencing requirements, which in time will also provide mitigation for the loss of bat habitat on site. Reptile populations will be translocated to local suitable site as a means of safeguarding these populations, and the loss of marshy grassland habitat onsite, due to the development will be mitigated by the creation of a new swale, that will be established with native wetland species. The need to re-route the cycle way in Lower St Clears has provided the opportunity for us to purchase a 4ha field and move the cycle way away from the river. The long-term plan is to manage the 4ha field as Local Nature Reserve, secure this designation, re-route through the cycle way along the edge of this field away from the river, so that it is not subject to erosion. The field includes 1 ha of wet land fen which is species rich and there is the potential for the remaining 3ha to become richer in biodiversity if	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		managed appropriately. The site is currently used by a variety of summer migrant birds, a wide range of invertebrates, and otters. This approach is consistent with CCC's delivery of its Well Being objectives, Green Infrastructure, and Nature Recovery. The management of this site will be set out in a costed biodiversity management plan. £10,801 is the spend on the salary of this post this FY to end of June 21.	
We will continue to deliver the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SAC Marsh Fritillary project, which aims to ensure the management of at least 100ha of Marsh Fritillary habitat in perpetuity. We will expand this successful approach and use S 106 agreements and developer contribution to deliver other necessary biodiversity benefits where this is appropriate. (Ref 15198)	✓	Management of 27 habitat management and maintenance projects with local contractors Grazing management and facilitation at 17 sites Conducting controlled burns on 2 grassland sites, advice to BC and 2 landowners on burning in March 22 Work parties and marsh fritillary surveys with volunteers from BC and WTSWW and work experience students Summer engagement event for CMM stakeholders , BC, WTSWW, PONT Engagement and grassland habitat management advice at 4 sites Engaged with NRW, PONT, BC, WTSWW, Plantlife, Llannon CC, Llanedi CC, Tumble RFC, Swansea Community Farm, CCC colleagues on joint projects/ interests. Setting up new procurement framework for Specialist Countryside Contractors	E&PP
B - Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015			
We will continue with the preparation of a Revised Local Development Plan (LDP) in accordance with statutory provisions. (Ref 14820) MF5-20	✓	The preparation of the Revised LDP is currently ongoing in accordance with statutory provisions. Following the consultation on the Deposit version of the Plan County Council at its meeting on the 9th March 2022 agreed on the next steps in the Plan's preparation. This report reflected the impacts arising from the pandemic and phosphate guidance. A further consolidated Deposit Revised LDP will be prepared for public consultation this calendar year along with a Revised Delivery Agreement and timetable for Welsh Government endorsement.	C&R
We will continue to monitor and where appropriate manage the use of monies raised through developer contribution including s106 agreements. As a consequence, we will ensure monies are appropriately used and that there is an efficient turn around in the use of funds. (Ref 14821) MF5-21	✓	The unit continues to monitor monies received through developer contributions (incl section 106 agreements) along with matters of compliance in respect of their use. The application for the use of monies received or for the drawdown of funds has now transferred to regeneration. Continued support will be given to ensuring monies are used in a positive and timely way following the transition to regeneration. Reference is made to the cross-service Section 106 working group which seeks to facilitate, promote and support the timely use of monies. As part of the ongoing need to drive delivery and the timely and positive use of monies, the role and remit of the working group and its terms of reference is being further developed to ensure it challenges the accountability of other internal service areas on the timely and effective use of monies. Further, consideration is being given to opportunities to increase revenue through a charge on developments for monitoring services and on compliance checks when received. This approach is increasingly being adopted across Wales and would assist in income generation and add to the resilience of the s106 monitoring and compliance function.	C&R
We will develop a joint working strategy between the Countryside Access Unit and the Countryside Operations/Ranger Unit to ensure an effective working partnership. (Ref 14970) MF5-23	✓	A close working arrangement is in place between Countyside Access and Operations with co-location at Mynydd Mawr. Both teams are working closely on a number of joint projects and their shared IT systems CAMS is being migrated to cloud, expanded and updated with the introduction of joint	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		working across both teams and public reporting. The extended CAMS system is also being developed to improve asset management and to harness the contribution of the voluntary sector.	
Fully implement the Strategic Planning Review Report received Jan 2020. (Ref 15186)	✓	The recommendations made by the Strategic Planning Review in January 2020 have now been superseded by the action plan agreed to address the Recommendations of the Audit Wales report. Any actions not completed from the Strategic Review are now being addressed by the Audit Wales action plan. This action can therefore be closed.	C&R
We shall set up a Corporate Planning Group (Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 11, 12, 15 and 21). (Ref 15187)	✓	A Major Projects team was established to focus on the timely determination of applications to support the delivery of major planning proposals. The group/team involves and engages with council officers representing the range of services involved in development proposals, e.g. Planning, Regeneration, Highways & Legal (but not limited to) and reports through RDT. Focus to be afforded to projects that deliver jobs and growth in support of the Council's economic recovery plan. This will build on existing and developed links between planning and the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives (including clearly defined roles in internal and other groups. This reflects the recommendations contained in the Strategic Planning Review as well as responding to the WAO report.	C&R
Planning Service Managers to commit to Planning Performance improvement (Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 32). (Ref 15188)	✓	A Planning Performance framework has been prepared and adopted with a commitment to transparent monitoring. Transparent reporting - quarterly reports are presented to the Planning Committee based on a series of core indicators including end-of-year progress reports. This reporting process utilises internal and external indicators and targets – performance monitoring includes identified responsible officers with lines of reporting as part of a process of accountability. Progress on the indicators will be monitored quarterly including through reports to the planning committee. A report on the Planning Performance Core Indicators was presented to CMT on the 29th of September 2021 with quarterly reports presented to Planning Committee. Further quarterly reports will be presented along with an end-of-year statement of performance.	C&R
Performance Management Schedule to be written and implemented for whole Division. Includes specific measures for the development management function (Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 32). (Ref 15189)	✓	Performance Management Schedule forms part of the Planning Performance Framework set out under PIMS 15188 (response below). A Planning Performance framework has been prepared with a commitment to transparent monitoring. Transparent reporting - quarterly reports will be presented to the Planning Committee based on a series of core indicators including end-of-year progress reports. The Performance Framework utilises internal and external indicators and targets include identified responsible officers with lines of reporting as part of a process of accountability. The outcomes within the framework reflect that reporting timelines will vary with a full Performance Framework to be completed annually - progress on the indicators will be monitored quarterly including through reports to the planning committee. A report on the Planning Performance Core Indicators was presented to CMT with subsequent reports on Quarters 1 and 2 presented to Planning Committee. This forms part of a	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		commitment to transparency through ongoing quarterly and end-of-year reports.	
We shall use consultants on a temporary basis to address the backlog of planning applications. <i>(Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 24) (Ref 15190)</i>	✓	Use of consultants has been successful in supporting performance improvements. Contract ended on 31st March 2022	C&R
We shall address capacity issues within the structure to ensure sustainable Planning Application caseloads moving forward <i>(Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 24). (Ref 15191)</i>	✗	Caseloads have been reduced but there are capacity issues that still need to be addressed. The whole Division structure is being reviewed by the Head of Place & Sustainability	C&R
We will continue to review the implementation and effectiveness of the Dangerous Structures Policy. <i>(Ref 15197)</i>	✓	The review of the Dangerous structure policy and procedure was completed during the financial year. This involved looking at our back-office system and how much improved it is over the old system we operated. We worked with sundry debtors over old files and confirmation of details to allow recovery of monies owed to the authority, along with working our finance officer	C&R
We will produce and publish the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) in relation to the adopted LDP by the 31st October 2021. This reflects the impact on monitoring arising from Covid-19. <i>(Ref 15200)</i>	✓	The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR for the period 2019 - 2021 has been finalised and reported to the meeting of the County Council in November 2021. The AMR combines two reporting periods reflecting the constraints arising from Covid. Note: the AMR has been published and provided to the Welsh Government by the 31st October 2021 in accordance with statutory requirements.	C&R
We will review the current Service Level Agreements within the Planning Service to ensure that they are reflective of the demands on the service and the work being undertaken. SLA's will be revised as necessary. <i>(Ref 15204)</i>	✓	Review of Bridgend SLA is progressing. New SLA's are agreed with Newport and Blaenau Gwent and are subject to formal signatures on the document	C&R
We will develop a customer charter for Planning services. <i>(Ref 15205)</i>	✓	The preparation and establishment of a Planning Customer Charter will allow the service to set out clearly the standards and timescales service users can expect. Specific customer commitments in relation to enforcement and major applications are being prepared. Collectively this will represent a transparent approach and provide confidence to the user and for staff in providing the service. The charter will have regard to user expectations in its preparation. Whilst the preparation of the charter has commenced it will be developed to ensure it links with the corporate charter which is under preparation. A key part of the planning customer charter relates to our commitments and clarity of the service to be provided - in this respect reference is made to the preparation of the enforcement protocol, major projects protocol, and the consultation protocol.	C&R
We will develop and implement a Planning training programme for Members. <i>(Ref 15206)</i>	✓	A member training schedule has been prepared with sessions having commenced in 2021, the formal schedule was placed on pause to ensure the service-focused attention on addressing the issues arising from the WAO report. Whilst it should be noted that recent training/briefing has been undertaken on the issues of phosphates in protected rivers. The formal schedule will be revisited with further sessions across a range of areas programmed following the election induction programme. The schedule for training will be supplemented by focused sessions with the planning committee to aid in awareness and decision making.	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will work with stakeholders to improve sewerage capacity within the County through the development of appropriate schemes. Also to ensure planned programed improvements are designed and implemented to address capacity issues and water supply. (Ref 15207)	✓	We continue to work proactively and positively with infrastructure providers to seek to ensure there is an appropriate and shared awareness of sewerage and water capacity issues within the County. We seek to ensure their future plans and programmes reflect needs associated with any given area. Note: the Council cannot ensure planned programmes are designed and implemented to address capacity issues but rather work in partnership to inform decisions that address those issues	C&R
We will formalise our process for dealing with all pre-application planning enquiries, both statutory and discretionary, including the receipt of fee income where appropriate. This will include Built Heritage enquiries. (Ref 15192)	✗	Some progress due to the lack of capacity to deliver the service. This will be reviewed so that we can commence this service from October 1st 2022	C&R
We shall undertake a review of the Built Heritage function to consider whether there is any scope regarding fee generating opportunities (e.g. training, advisory service etc.). (Ref 15199)	✗	The Canolfan Tywi (Tywi Centre) currently offers programs of training in on Built Heritage construction techniques, this includes an element of fee generation and grant funding – additional opportunities continue to be explored whilst ensuring this does not undermine the delivery of statutory responsibilities. This training (albeit reduced and transitioned to virtual) has continued during Covid and is ongoing – including opportunities to internal partners. There remains potential to expand on the offer albeit within the context of the need to challenge and improve performance. There is currently no charging structure for Discretionary pre-applications whilst this will be subject to further consideration it requires a commitment on the level of service provided. Consequently, any implementation would be resource-dependent. Note: In order to assist in addressing current resource issues recruitment has progressed and agency support is being utilised.	C&R
We will continue to maintain and where possible develop the internal Planning delivery/advice service. (Ref 15203)	✗	Reference should be had to PIMs 12652. The delivery of the delivery/advice service (also referred to as planning consultancy) is resource-dependent. Consequently, delivery is vulnerable at times of priority workloads. Remedial action would at this point require additional resourcing. Consequently, future development and operation is being held in abeyance pending the availability of resources. Previous growth bids have not progressed and as such funding has not been secured to further develop the consultancy. Further consideration will be given to its operation post-LDP preparation. In the interim opportunities to undertake focused commissions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.	C&R
The % of all planning applications determined in time (PAM/018) 2020/21 - Result - 60.3% (735/1,219) /2020/21 Target - 75%	✓	2021/22 Result - 80.8% (1,538 / 1,900) There has been a significant improvement in the last quarter of the year which reflects the improved end of year result of 80.8% And far higher than the 2020/21 result of 60.3%. The progressive improvement reflects the ongoing changes in relation to processes and procedures with a continued commitment to performance meeting and exceeding the set targets. Monitoring progress to ensure the improvements in response to the recommendations of the Audit Wales Report are carried forward and further developed. Embed robust and	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		transparent performance monitoring arrangements, including the continued quarterly reporting to the planning committee. Continual review of processes and procedures to ensure improvements are maintained.	
<p>The % of planning appeals dismissed (PAM/019)</p> <p>2020/21 - Result - 53.8% (7/13) /2021/22 Target - 70%</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result – 76.5% (13/17)</p> <p>This is on target and well improved on the previous year, although the low figures involved can easily distort the result from year to year. We will continue to monitor decision-making processes and identify improvements. We will ensure decision-making reflects material planning considerations and the content of the Adopted Development Plan and continued guidance and training to members of the planning committee to supporting their decision making.</p>	C&R
C - Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030			
<p>We will continue to extend the use of 'smart' and sub-metering technology to ensure accurate and timely capture of energy consumption data and develop appropriate carbon reduction target for the Council's non-domestic buildings as part of action plan. (Ref 14812) MF5-13 (NZC-05 & 06)</p>	✓	<p>Our NZC Plan recognises that accurate data is critical for planning, monitoring and reporting progress towards becoming net zero carbon; accordingly, 'smart' and sub-metering technology is being extended to ensure timely capture of energy consumption data. The roll-out of 'smart' metering technology is progressing, with 100% of our gas supplies now having smart meters. We are currently focussing on upgrading our water meters to be followed shortly by our electricity meters.</p>	E&PP
<p>We shall deliver Re:fit Cymru (Energy Efficiency) Phase 1 project to achieve energy / carbon savings. (Ref 14813) MF5-13 (NZC-01)</p>	✓	<p>Our Re:Fit Cymru Phase 1 project has now been completed. This comprised various energy conservation measures, including solar PV installations, at 29 of our non-domestic buildings including schools. An interest-free loan of £2,438,787.92 has been secured under the Wales Funding Programme, with repayments spread over the next ten years commencing in October 2022. Phase 1 is projected to save £315,726 675 tCO2e each year, with further phases to be developed to help us become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.</p>	E&PP
<p>We shall continue to work with Welsh Government Energy Service to explore and deliver opportunities for large scale renewable energy projects. (Ref 14814) MF5-13 (NZC-13)</p>	✓	<p>We continue to work with Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) to explore and deliver large-scale renewable energy projects. WGES have undertaken various assessments of our land holdings, and these are currently being prioritised to take account of constraints and/or other competing demands for that land such as Regeneration, and Biodiversity / Sequestration. Whilst we continue to look for potential priority sites, our previous applications to develop large scale. High Grid connection costs remain a constraint to development.</p>	E&PP
<p>We will explore the feasibility of tree-planting, and other such measures, on Council controlled land to contribute towards carbon offsetting. (Ref 14815) MF5-13 (NZC-15)</p>	✓	<p>Planting schemes have been undertaken in various locations. 4 council owned sites in Carmarthenshire that are suitable for tree planting are subject to grant applications under the Welsh Government's Glas Tir woodland creation scheme. This will provide approx. 8.8ha of woodland on these council land holdings and would equate to a carbon sequestration of 5.5 tCO2e. A further in-depth study of the carbon sequestration potential of our Council land holdings is underway in an effort to identify further areas that could be enhanced with habitats to increase our carbon offsetting.</p>	E&PP
<p>We will develop appropriate target for renewable energy generation as part of</p>	✓	<p>In accord with Policy 76 of Welsh Government's Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2: 2021 to 2025 (October 2021), we</p>	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
annual review of action plan. (Ref 14816) MF5-13 (NZC-16)		propose to review our NZC Plan to incorporate 'Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide' (May 2021) and 'Net zero carbon status by 2030: A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector' (July 2021) to develop and publish a revised plan by March 2023. This will incorporate appropriate targets that are informed by discussions with Welsh Government and Western Power Distribution regarding the capacity of the local electricity distribution network. We will also be developing a Carmarthenshire Local Area Energy Plan to complement the SW Wales Regional Energy Strategy	
We will continue to work with Carmarthenshire Public Service Board (PSB) partners to identify and develop opportunities for collaboration regarding carbon reduction and Work with Welsh Government and Swansea Bay City Region partners to establish a Regional Energy Plan for South West Wales. (Ref 14817) MF5-13 (NZC-19 & 20)	✓	Natural Resources Wales (NRW) held a virtual SW Wales PSBs Net Zero Workshop on 29th September 2021. This event included speakers from Welsh Government and their consultants who provided an overview of the Public Sector Net Zero Reporting. NRW also shared their experience in determining baseline emissions and developing carbon reduction strategies through their Carbon Positive Project. The recently adopted SW Wales Regional Energy Strategy sets a strategic framework to guide the transformational interventions needed to help achieve a net zero Wales by 2050. It has been a collaborative exercise developed by WGES and the four local authorities, with input from a wide range of stakeholders - public, private, and voluntary. Delivering the four Local Area Energy Plans that will underpin the Regional Energy Strategy will involve significant coordination across the public, private and third sectors with the involvement of businesses, communities, and agencies. In Carmarthenshire, this will be led by the Place and Sustainability Division.	E&PP
We will continue to work with Ynni Sir Gâr, and others, to deliver and support local renewable energy projects. (Ref 14818) MF5-13 (NZC-23)	✓	Ynni Sir Gâr have been funded under the Welsh Government Rural Development Fund LEADER programme to identify and explore the feasibility of small-scale community energy projects in the County. The project is working collaboratively with our Ten Towns initiative. We are also supporting Ynni Sir Gâr to deliver carbon reduction projects at Ysgol Bro Dinefwr including the potential installation of EV charging points.	E&PP
We will review the action plan following publication of Welsh Government guidance regarding new national carbon reporting framework. (Ref 14819) MF5-13 (NZC-27)	✓	The 'Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide' was due to be issued in April 2020, but its publication was delayed until 24th May 2021. We duly reported to Welsh Government in accordance with the requirements of this Guide by the 31st October 2021 deadline. Some of the prescribed reporting methodologies are comparatively blunt instruments based on £ spend and / or assumptions rather than accurate data. This is notably the case for the Supply Chain – applying the Guide would make it impossible to actively reduce a Procurement footprint other than by reducing the corresponding £ spend. This spend doesn't reflect Progressive Procurement / Circular Economy principles as it doesn't distinguish whether the spend is in Brazil or Bynea. We will, therefore, continue with the existing scope of our net zero carbon commitment but adopt the corresponding reporting methodologies prescribed in the Guide. We propose to revise our NZC Plan by March 2023 to reflect Policy 76 of Welsh Government's Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2: 2021 to 2025 (October 2021).	E&PP
We will develop projects and programmes to contribute to the Authority's net-zero carbon ambitions. (Ref 14981)	✓	Whilst as a section over a number of years we have been developing and delivering projects in various categories to consider energy efficiencies, low energy usage and costs with good success, we constantly review with scheme sponsors as	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		to how they wish to implement NZC agenda in going forward with their projects whilst taking into account best practice, new requirements and technologies that will meet the criteria. We are implementing a range of projects to contribute to the Authority's NZC commitment, through the utilisation of either the Passivhouse or Fabric First approach wherever possible, including within refurbishment and upgrade of existing buildings etc. Whilst on educational scheme we have been delivering to these standard for a number of years, we have recently completed the re:FIT programme and the first site of new homes, with others due to be handed over shortly, as well as passivhaus and other fabric first designed buildings to reduce future carbon requirements. A number of scheme on site. let or being tendered are all now based on these developing standards with the aim of aspiring to the authorities' goals through continual improvement, innovation and cost effectiveness.	
We will review future plans for Nantycaws in relation to Net Zero Carbon. (Ref 14992)	✓	This project is currently as an early conceptual stage and is dependent upon two key external factors; Welsh Government (WG) funding in support of our desire to develop an eco-park at the site; and improved access from the A48 trunk road. WG are currently in the early stages of feasibility with respect to road/access improvements and we are currently in discussion with WG in relation to the eco-park development from a regeneration, waste and a decarbonisation perspective. Conceptual designs being prepared. However, on a pan-Wales basis, WG are undertaking a wider review of their highway works programme and will need to conclude this before they can make any further commitment to works on the A48. we are in development of feasibility study for regional WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) treatment facility and are engaged with potential site partners to support our circular economy aspirations for the Eco-park.	E&PP
D - Flood & Waste Management Plan & Shoreline Management Plan.			
We will work in accordance with our Flood Risk Management Plan and commence implementation as part of the strategy for identifying, managing and mitigating flood risk within our communities. (Ref 14988)	✓	Procedure in place and operating.	E&PP
We will undertake the role of Lead Local Flood Authority in investigating widescale incidents of flooding in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act. Including the coordination of flood investigations where there's multiple sources of flood causations involving partner organisations as asset owners/Risk Management Authorities (RMAs). (Ref 14989)	✓	The team have completed all outstanding reports in this respect. The most recent report is due to be shared with the affected community in July 21.	E&PP
We will develop and produce a flood guidance document. (Ref 14990)	✓	Flooding web pages on the Council's website have been updated to include information on how to prepare your home for flooding; what to do before, during and after flooding, flooding insurance and info on an emergency kit.	E&PP
We shall protect and manage our coastal facilities, including the Millennium Coastal Park, working within regional shoreline	✓	There has been progress with securing funding to replace / divert part of National Cycle Network and Coastal path at Morfa Baccas, Bynea. Work also commissioned to consider options for coastal protection along Burry Port East Beach to	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
management plan, overseen by Environment Department. (Ref 15074)		protect against erosion and exposure of remnants of former Carmarthen Bay Power Station, with a draft report on this and an additional report on Cefn Sidan produced and considered in June 2022.	
E - Towards Zero Waste strategy.			
We will continue to review our waste treatment strategy options and recycling infrastructure needs to ensure that we can continue to meet our statutory recycling targets and landfill diversion targets from April 2018. (Ref 13256) MF5-16	✓	We have now finalised and received approval for our Future Waste Strategy in Oct 21 - This work will now move into delivery phase.	E&PP
We will continue to work with CWM Environmental to review our waste treatment/disposal arrangements in the immediate term and long term by securing appropriate arrangements for treating and disposing of our waste. (Ref 14983)	✓	This year the Council has approved the Future Waste Strategy for Carmarthenshire, CWM environmental are a key stakeholder in the development of the future workplan and infrastructure requirements. The development of interim and long-term infrastructure plans to accommodate our future waste collection strategy is progressing. We have also worked in conjunction with CWM to develop Circular Economy Projects in two localities in the county.	E&PP
We will continue to review existing household recycling participation rates to maximise landfill diversion and increase recycling. Undertake a programme of door-stepping to advise and encourage householders to participate in our recycling schemes. (Ref 14984)	✓	Due to our response to COVID-19 household participation monitoring and engagement were suspended. These activities recommenced in October 2021. An all-Wales compositional analysis is underway, to assess the level of recycling contained within our residual waste this will support our directed targeted education programmes. A bespoke engagement and contamination plan has been developed and commenced to improve recycling performance in future years.	E&PP
We will undertake a full review of our waste collection methodology at the kerbside, with a view to assessing alternative models of delivery on a cost vs performance gain basis. This will include a consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders. (Ref 14985)	✓	We have now finalised and received approval for our Future Waste Strategy in Oct 21 - with public consultation taking place in July 2021. This work will now move into delivery phase with ongoing public engagement being a key facet of change.	E&PP
We shall continue to target local environment quality issues, including dog fouling, fly-tipping and general litter blight. Review effectiveness of Public Space Protection Order. (Ref 14986)	✓	The Enforcement team have continued to enforce legislative powers in an attempt to improve Local Environment Quality Issues namely Fly Tipping, litter, Dog Fouling etc. As a result of the ongoing challenges of Covid, and slight changes to the normal method of Enforcement, officers remain positive and strive to tackle environmental crimes to improve our Local Environmental Quality. Officers carry routine patrols and targeted enforcement of known problem areas and issue Fixed Penalty Notices and or prosecute offenders. An engagement survey of the PSPO's has been carried out with relevant stakeholders and organisations. The process of extending the current PSPO has been completed.	E&PP
We will work with local stakeholders to manage the local environment quality in terms of managing blight and associated problems on public land by undertaking litter and fly-tipping management arrangements across the County, including enforcement work. This will include a particular focus on some areas of Llanelli that have specific problems. (Ref 14991)	✓	The Environmental Enforcement Team with support from local stakeholders and council departments, have been able to target specific areas where issues such as fly tipping have been identified as an ongoing problem. The Enforcement Team have been able to deploy covert and overt CCTV in an attempt to catch those committing such offences, therefore improving the local environmental quality. The Enforcement Team will continue to collaborate with stakeholders, enforcing and educating the public in attempt to reduce fly tipping and litter on public land.	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
<p>We will reduce the amount (Kg) of municipal waste that is not reused, recycled or composted during the year per person (PAM/043)</p> <p>2020/21 - Result - 153.5Kg (29,183,440/190,073) / 2021/22 - Target - 167.9Kg)</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result – 153.9Kg per person (29,258,400/190,073)</p> <p>This is on within the increased target which was set to reflect the response to the ongoing effects of the pandemic and resources available to service during 2021/22, but this means that it's showing a decline on last year</p>	E&PP
<p>We will continue with to re-used, recycled or composted a high percentage of waste (PAM/030).</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 66.08% (51,494/77,928 / 2021/22 Target - 65%</p>	✗	<p>2021/22 Result - 61.68% (49,420 / 80,118)</p> <p>As a consequence of the fire at CWM's Nantycaws materials recovery facility, there has been significant disruption to our normal waste sorting, treatment and disposal arrangements. This has meant that CWM have had to find alternative outlets for sorting and disposal of waste. This has resulted in materials going to landfill facilities and alternative plants, some of which have less efficient sorting processes than would normally be the case. Consequently, our overall recycling performance has dropped. In addition to this given the suspension during COVID of the kerbside restrictions of black bags being eased and the increased contamination of our kerbside recycling the capture of high-quality recycling has decreased. With contamination of Blue Bags more than 30% an increase compared with 15% previously. The short-term arrangements for recycling treatment remained in place for the duration of the financial year, with CWM negotiating alternative arrangements as part of a medium term strategy to recover the position. In addition, the black bag restriction policy and recycling contamination engagement programme recommenced in October 2021.</p>	E&PP
<p>We will keep the average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents to a minimum (PAM/035)</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 5.2 days (10,560/2,014) / 2021/22 Target - 4.0 days)</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result - 2.4 days (5,026/2,073)</p> <p>This is on target and improved on last year figures are now back to pre-COVID levels.</p>	E&PP
<p>We will maintain a high level of streets that are clean (PAM/010)</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 98.1% (177/181) / 2021/22 Target - 92%)</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result - 94.1% (369/392)</p> <p>This measure is on target but has declined on the previous year and well below pre-covid figures. The number of inspections undertaken this year are back to pre-COVID numbers.</p>	E&PP
<p>We shall maintain a high level of cleanliness of our highways based on the Keep Wales Tidy and Cleanliness Index inspections (STS/005a)</p> <p>2020/21 Result - 80.7% (740.5/918) / 2021/22 Target - 74%)</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result - 76.8% (903.5/1,176)</p> <p>This measure is on target but has declined on the previous year and well below pre-covid figures. The number of inspections undertaken this year are back to pre-COVID numbers.</p>	E&PP



Well-being Objective 11

Healthy & Safe Environment - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Highway infrastructure			
We will support the Council's vision for Carmarthenshire to become the Cycling Hub of Wales by continuing to develop Active Travel infrastructure. We will also support the delivery of major on road cycle events. (Ref 14959) MF5-1	✓	Significant progress has been made on the development and delivery of a number of projects across the County that support and promote Cycling and wider Active Travel. Furthermore we have been successful in applying for 16.7m of UK Government funding which coupled with CCC Capital will allow us to deliver the Tywi Valley Path, as such work has accelerated on all aspects of this scheme, which aims to have a complete and open route within 3 years. This year, the following projects are live : Llanelli Infrastructure - specific schemes under construction: 1. New Dock, 2.A484 Bridge 3. Penyfai. 4. Coed Cae St Clears - Riverside path. Cross Hands Active Travel Link. Preparatory work underway for future year programme.	E&PP
We will continue to support and contribute to the Weltag process with Welsh Government to support the delivery of a bypass for Llandeilo to improve air quality and safety in the town of Llandeilo. (Ref 14960) MF5-4	✓	We are awaiting the outcome of the WG Welsh Transport Appraisal Process (WelTAG). We have been actively engaged in the WelTAG advisory panel. We have clearly set out the position of CCC in terms of the Bypass being the only feasible option available to address long standing concerns in and around Llandeilo, as well as in terms of the impact that congestion has on the strategic Swansea to Manchester trunk road. The panel review associated with WelTAG 2/3 has concluded and we are awaiting the subsequent report and recommendations.	E&PP
We will deliver the 3 year capital investment program for highway maintenance in accordance with then resources available. (Ref 14965) MF5-6	✓	A prioritised risk based programme of highway surface remedial schemes has commenced. The surfacing dressing programme (13 Capital funded) is completed and a programme of 47 road re-surfacing schemes is complete. The programme invested Capital funding alongside WG grant funding. Budget £2,098,000. Small underspend carried forward.	E&PP
We will develop the Highway Maintenance Policy to in accordance with the Highways Asset Management Plan. (Ref 14967)	✓	The HAMP adopted in 2018 included an undertaking to develop a Maintenance Manual which will be a portfolio of individual service manuals developed over a period of time to cover individual service areas such as Highway Inspections, Safety Defect Repairs, Winter Service, Bridge Inspections etc. The first four sections of the Maintenance Manual were adopted by Cabinet on the 6th December and covered the topic areas of Highway Maintenance Management, Highway Network Hierarchy, Highway Inspection and Repair Regime and Road Condition Assessment and Investment Prioritisation. Further service topic areas are set out in the maintenance policy and a programme for completion of the further manuals will be finalised in Qtr 1 2022/23.	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will develop, maintain and deliver a 3 year capital maintenance programme of highway bridge strengthening and replacement schemes. Prioritising delivery of schemes with the resources available. (Ref 14968)	✓	This years Capital programme has strengthened/replaced 2 sub-standard structures and is developing further schemes for the forward programme. Railway Inn Llanpumsaint and Danrheol Bridge strengthening schemes were reprogrammed to 22/23 due to land and procurement.	E&PP
We will conclude the study into the feasibility of developing an overnight lorry park/s within the County. (Ref 13272) MF5-9	✓	Phase 2 of the report has now been completed. A number of quantitative and qualitative surveys have been undertaken, including detailed discussion with freight market representatives at strategic and operational level, additional site surveys and a policy review a final report has been completed which concludes that whilst there is no current case to for CCC to pursue this, we will keep a long range review of the industry.	E&PP
We will minimise the % of A roads in poor condition (PAM/020) 2020/21 Result - 4.1% (19.822/478.541) / 2021/22 Target - 5.0%)	✓	2021/22 Result - 3.6% (17.097/478.345) The condition of A roads have improved with a lower % in the 'Red Zone' i.e., in poor condition and in need of maintenance. The improvement evidences targeted investment using a risk based evidence led prioritisation model.	E&PP
We will minimise the % of B roads in poor condition (PAM/021) 2020/21 Result - 3.4% (21.83/635.062) / 2021/22 Target - 5.0%)	✓	2021/22 Result - 2.8% (18.072/640.689) The condition of B roads have improved with a lower % in the 'Red Zone' i.e., in poor condition and in need of maintenance. The improvement evidences targeted investment using a risk based evidence led prioritisation model.	E&PP
We will minimise the % of C roads in poor condition (PAM/022) 2020/21 Result - 12.0% (298.665/2490.659) / 2021/22 Target - 12.0%)	✓	2021/22 Result - 11.7% (298.914/2479.941) The condition of C roads have improved with a lower % in the 'Red Zone' i.e., in poor condition and in need of maintenance. The improvement evidences targeted investment using a risk based evidence led prioritisation model.	E&PP
We will minimise the % of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal (C) roads that are in overall poor condition (THS/012) 2020/21 Result – 9.4% (340.31/3604.26) / 2021/22 Target - 9.5%)	✓	2021/22 Result - 9.4% (325.08/3599.01) The condition of A, B and C roads have improved with a lower % in the 'Red Zone' i.e., in poor condition and in need of maintenance in all three road categories. The improvement evidences targeted investment using a risk based evidence led prioritisation model.	E&PP
B - Integrated Public Transport Network			
We will continue to work with national and regional bodies to develop the public transport network to support carbon reduction and economic development. (Ref 14962) MF5-6	✓	On a strategic basis we are actively working with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales regional partners, user groups and operators to influence and contribute to the national bus reform work. We continue to be a key partner in the development of a south west Wales METRO which looks to enhance and integrate public and active modes of transport to provide a coherent network for moving people in and around the region. We have been successful in drawing down Welsh Government funding this year and have utilised it to introduce high quality bus shelters, a number of Real Time Information displays, wayfinding signage, significant infrastructure enhancements at Carmarthen and Llanelli Bus stations. These improvements are designed to encourage modal shift away from the private car thereby contributing to carbon reduction, social inclusion and economic activity, as well as improving	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		the attractiveness, accessibility and vitality of our economic centres. Works to make physical improvements to both Carmarthen and Llanelli bus stations are well underway and due for completion in the Summer	
C - School Transport network			
We will continue to support the delivery of the Modernising Education Programme – redesigning networks to facilitate the movement of pupils as set out in our home to school transport policy. (Ref 14969)	✓	We have continued to work with MEP team to deliver transport where required to support the MEP programme where possible.	E&PP
D - Support Community and rural Transport.			
We will ensure that the Council works with partners to develop community transport opportunities across the county, which should consider all feasible means of transport to address local needs. (Ref 15106)	✓	We have successfully maintained existing schemes such as Demand Responsive Transport, Country Cars and Shopmobility, and hope that these services will rebuild their patronage post Covid.	E&PP
We will ensure that the Council improves promotion of its Country Cars scheme. (Ref 15107)	✓	Our delivery partner, the Royal Voluntary Service, has continued to promote the scheme throughout the year and we are discussing with them ways in which the scheme can be further promoted in the future.	E&PP
E - Road Safety Strategy.			
We will work with communities to submit bids to the Welsh Government to secure funding for the development of Safer Routes in Communities and Active Travel to improve walking routes to encourage more sustainable travel to assist with achieving the objective of decarbonisation. (Ref 14964) MF5-7	✓	A total of £714,050 funding was secured across the three schemes and is broken down below: Swiss Valley & Felinfoel - £497,700 Peniel - £166,350 School Streets Initiative - £50,000 These schemes will now move to delivery in the 22/23.	E&PP
Number of people killed and seriously injured on roads in Carmarthenshire (5.5.2.21) 2020/21 Result - 55 / 2021/22 - No Target set	!	81 people were killed or seriously injured on Carmarthenshire roads during 2021. We have the second largest road network in Wales and the third highest traffic levels which has an influence on road collision statistics. In 2020 the covid pandemic suppressed travel levels in Wales generally which then rose in 2021 towards pre-pandemic levels. This has unfortunately led to an associated increase in the number of casualties killed or seriously injured on our roads. The overall trends remains downwards, and our Traffic & Road Safety Team continue to worked in partnership with emergency services to promote improved road safety through education, enforcement and engineering initiatives.	E&PP
Number of motorcyclists killed and seriously injured on roads in Carmarthenshire (5.5.2.22) 2020/21 Result - 10 / 2021/22 - No Target set	!	16 motorcyclists were killed or seriously injured on Carmarthenshire roads during 2021. We have the second largest road network in Wales and the third highest traffic levels which has an influence on road collision statistics. In 2020 the covid pandemic suppressed travel levels in Wales generally which then rose in 2021 towards pre-pandemic levels. This has unfortunately influenced an associated increase in the number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on our roads. Our Traffic & Road Safety Team continue to work hard to improve safety of motorcyclists on Carmarthenshire's roads	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		with engagement events held in partnership with the Police, Go Safe, Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service and ROSPA. The Team also undertakes specific initiatives focused on motorcyclists such as Dragon Rider to provide training sessions to enhance riding skills which is delivered in partnership with advanced motorcycle trainers and the Bike Down initiative which provides training sessions for motorcyclists to provide first aid skills in emergency situations to enable those first on scene to preserve life.	
Number of young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on roads in Carmarthenshire (5.5.2.23) 2020/21 Result - 15 / 2021/22 - No Target set	!	13 young people aged 16-24 were killed or seriously injured on Carmarthenshire roads during 2021. We have the second largest road network in Wales and the third highest traffic levels which has an influence on road collision statistics. We are pleased that the 2021 statistics show a downward trend from previous years and our Traffic & Road Safety Team are continuing to work with partner agencies to influence further reductions through a range of measures and engagement events. Through our Pass Plus Cymru initiative we work with driving instructors to give our young drivers enhanced skills as they take to our roads and our Mega Drive initiative focuses on 16 - 18 year olds to enhance road safety awareness and is delivered in partnership with Go Safe and our emergency services.	E&PP
F - Modernising our vehicle Fleet			
We will update the Council's Fleet Strategy to reduce the level of Carbon and Nitrogen Dioxide emissions from our transport operations over the next five years - including Reducing fossil fuel: train staff in new technologies; explore use of alternative vehicles and promoting active travel. (Ref 14961) MF5-5	✓	Electric charging infrastructure tenders have been completed and determined with construction due to commence at the identified strategic sites mid to end 2022. The path in transition to ULEV vehicles is further aided by manufacturers producing an increase in variety of electric models, and competition between them is gathering pace. Successful grant funding will result in the electric vans being added to fleet in 22-23 replacing the diesel-powered ones. The 3 electric refuse trucks are due delivery towards end of 2022. The fleet replacement programme will be re-aligned over the next 5 years to reflect changes in frontline services with ULEV vehicles being the first choice at tender.	E&PP
We will continue to develop the infrastructure for the use of electric vehicles across the county including in rural areas. (Ref 14963) MF5-6	✓	We are nearing the completion of 15 fast charging points across the County, bringing the number installed up to 41. This latest tranche includes a number of leisure centres including Carmarthen, St Clears and Newcastle Emlyn. We have completed and opened the Cross Hands Rapid Charging Hub which is a custom built location adjacent to the A48 that houses 4 x 50kW Rapid Charging Units and 1 x 150kW Rapid Charging Unit, the first of its kind in Wales.	E&PP

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>We have also been successful in drawing down external funding to support installations at main council sites and to expand the sustainable fleet. Alongside this Wales leading programme, we have also been working with the WG to shape their EV charging programme, as a consequence they have recently announced significant investment to create charging facilities at Llanybydder, Newcastle Emlyn and Llandovery, with discussions ongoing in relation to a possible hub at Ammanford. Strategically we have recently adopted the CCC EV infrastructure Strategy.</p>	



Well-being Objective 12

Healthy & Safe Environment - Promote Welsh Language and Culture

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Implement and monitor the Welsh Language Standards			
We will ensure the Council complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. (Ref 13280) MF5-86	✓	The Policy & Involvement team work across all departments to ensure compliance. However, new issues and opportunities arise regularly therefore constant communication is required. We have recently been working with departments to remind them of the requirement for all initial correspondence to be bilingual and how to ensure that we record and deliver in accordance with linguistic choice. We have recently met with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office to discuss the quality assurance exercise they undertook in Carmarthenshire. The feedback is positive; however, it must be noted that the sample is very small in terms of the number of interactions.	P&R
B - The development of Welsh in all our Education services			
Work with the County's primary and secondary schools to move them along the Welsh language continuum and also ensure that individual pupils within relevant schools are provided with opportunities to continue with their Welsh medium education throughout all key stages. (Ref 15015) MF5-31	✓		E&C
The % of pupils assessed in Welsh at the end of the Foundation Phase. (EDU/033) 2020/21 No Result available-18/19 Academic Yr/ 2021/22 Target - 57% - 20/21 Academic Year	!	2021/22 - Results not available Due to the Pandemic, there was no Welsh Government data collection on Teacher Assessments undertaken at the end of summer term 2021. WG instruction was not to aggregate local schools data up to LA data. This data would not be comparable to previous years data due to the circumstances encountered during this period whilst not all schools undertook Teacher Assessments at this time. Teacher Assessments are due to be undertaken during summer term 2022. We will await instruction from WG on data collection / published data for this cohort in preparation for reporting in 2022-23 (Academic Year 2021-22).	E&C
The % of year 11 pupils studying Welsh (first language) (EDU/034) 2020/21 No Result available-18/19 Academic Yr/ 2021/22 Target - 57% - 20/21 Academic Year	!	2021/22 - Results not available Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students were unable to sit final exams in summer 2021 and instead their grades reflect predicted results based on coursework and mock examination results. Results by County were not published and would not be comparable to previous years if known. WG instruction was not to aggregate schools data up to LA level data. Summer exams 2022 are due to go ahead as	E&C

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		scheduled. Results will be published later in the year. Comparison to previous years may not be applicable as some course were truncated due to the pandemic.	
C - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy			
We will review and refresh the County's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in light of the progress to date and expected Census 2021 results during the year. (Ref 14896) MF5-86	x	The requirement of the Welsh Language Standards was to complete the second Strategy during 2021; however, with the Census results being so close to being released, the team and the Welsh Language Forum agreed to delay to consider the local results. This has been discussed with the Commissioner's Office, therefore based on the original target of 31st March 2022, this is currently classed as off target and a new target date agreed to reflect the importance of the Census results. The Policy & Involvement Team are currently preparing a detailed assessment on the county's first Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. This assessment will be discussed by the Welsh language Strategic Forum and will provide the baseline for our second strategy. A detailed assessment framework of local indicators and data has also been prepared. The team will also commission a detailed analysis of the Census 2021 results (upon release) on a county basis and for the three Mentrau Iaith areas.	P&R
We will review the current Internal Use of the Welsh language policy in line with latest developments. (Ref 14897) MF5-86	✓	The Policy & Involvement Team met with Bangor University and the Welsh Language Unit at Welsh Government, to discuss the ARFer project and its potential use within the council. ARFer aims to introduce different elements of bilingual working and is tailored to individuals' linguistic skills. The team have prepared a draft framework of support which is available across the council, and we will look to develop this support further with other key partners. Discussions are also underway with teams who lead on key areas such as Recruitment and Learning & Development.	P&R
We will further strengthen the provision and use of the Welsh language within social care services, supporting our staff to learn virtually currently, to be able to provide services in the language of service users' choice and ensure compliance with the 'Active Offer'. (Ref 14954) MF5-56	✓	During 2021/22, Integrated Services continued to prioritise a commitment to Welsh Language training with a number of team members being supported to learn or improve their proficiency in the language by attending the on-line courses that have been available during the COVID pandemic. Welsh Language assessments are undertaken as an essential part of any Recruitment process and new starters in the Division, are, if necessary, supported to learn the language as part of a Learning Agreement. This has resulted in an increase use of the language in the workplace and also with our service users in accordance with the "Active Offer".	SC&H

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We shall prepare a Welsh Language Action Plan within Planning Service (Strategic Planning Review Recommendation 2). (Ref 15208)	✓	The Council has a strategy to promote the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire. Whilst not titled an action Plan it is similar in purpose and scope. A component of this strategy relates to the Welsh Language within the Planning Service. The strategy will link in relation to the service connect with the Council's corporate objectives and the content of the business plan.	C&R
D - Promoting our Welsh Culture & Heritage			
We will deliver a transformation plan for the existing Museums provision at the County Museum Abergwili, Parc Howard, Kidwelly Industrial Museum and Museum of Speed Pendine to improve the provision for residents and visitors. (Ref 13289) MF5-64	✓	<p>Carmarthenshire Museum and Bishop's Park is site-wide project and is managed through the Joint Working Group, overseeing preparations for the transition from capital development to operational phase.</p> <p>Museum: The museum partially reopened 29 January 2022. The final phase of reopening is subject to making good emergency building repairs in the refurbished galleries; no end completion confirmed. Adaptations to meet Government Indemnity Scheme security standards to borrow material from UK national collections is 50% completed due to supply issues. 95% of collections have been relocated to the refurbished attic store. 97% of windows have been refurbished (by end April).</p> <p>The museum WiFi extension scheme is 85% complete (by end April). Some storm damage was reported to the museum's Big Shed roof.</p> <p>Park: The Tywi Gateway Centre is being fitted out, anticipated to be ready for occupation by the Tywi Gateway</p> <p>Trust from May 2022. £58K capital grant awarded by CCC to progress the gardener's compound and the room for volunteers. The first phase of the transformation plan for this museum is 90% complete.</p> <p>Parc Howard</p> <p>The first phase of essential works capital programme is 95% complete. The project has stabilised all structural elements of the museum to achieve watertightness. Currently underway are additional works associated with updating mechanical and electrical systems (10% complete). Costs are awaited on the proposal to relocate the museum entrance to bring the accessible ramp into use; museum interior redecoration costs have been received and are pending approval, subject to funding.</p> <p>A whole museum interpretation plan is in development to be tested through community engagement. The museum redisplay is provisionally anticipated to be completed by</p>	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>end of December 2022 with the museum reopening February 2023.</p> <p>Llanelli Town Council has confirmed its financial contribution to Parc Howard for 2022-2023. A consultation exercise to support the Friends of Llanelli Museum to relaunch in alignment with the museum transformation was completed January-March 2022. The first phase of the transformation plan for this museum is 45% complete.</p> <p>Museum of Land Speed</p> <p>The museum capital programme is nearing completion, paving the way for fit-out. The wider project is managed by Economic Regeneration the Pendine Attractor Project Board, with the museum element being developed through the museum service and wider leisure services. A mid-August date has been set as the target completion/opening date, acknowledging internal and external factors may impact on this. The Project Curator is working closely with design and fit-out contractors to finalise content, design and production. The £150K Transformation Grant funding from Welsh Government was spent and the project completed by 31 March 2022. Outputs in terms of community benefits arising from the transformation funding are to be measured and reported on when the museum is operational. Additional capacity was temporarily provided to the museum service through redeployment from the library service. Bryn Jones Associates has submitted a financial plan for the new service provision at the Museum of Land Speed, subject to review and sign off (95% complete). The Museum of Land Speed transformation is 75% complete pending fit-out.</p> <p>Kidwelly Industrial Museum</p> <p>The Kidwelly Industrial Museum Trust has received external expert advice from museum consultant, Sam Hunt, funded through the Association of Independent Museums. A set of recommendations made in March 2022 has led to the museum management returning to Carmarthenshire County Council through the museum service, to enable assessment and survey works to progress. The Trust will not be progressing with any proposed changes to its governance until further notice. The survey works and assessments will provide baseline information about liabilities and assets of listed structures, scheduled ancient monuments, museum collections, and</p>	

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		biodiversity. The survey period will commence April 2022 and is anticipated to continue for 6 months, subject to engagement from other County Council support services. The Kidwelly Industrial Museum transformation is at 1%, pending surveys to determine future plans.	
We will review governance and deliver re-development options for Oriel Myrddin to improve the provision for residents and visitors. (Ref 13530) MF5-64	✓	A draft management agreement and business has been shared with Trustees. CIO approved with Charities commission. Good progress made on governance front with legal input to final draft HoT. Physical works scheduled to start on site Summer 2022.	C&R
We will begin the museums transformation plan with the delivery of a £1.2 million redevelopment of the County museum at Abergwili. (Ref 13290) MF5-65	✓	Carmarthenshire Museum partially reopened to the public on 29 January 2022, almost two years since its closure. The publicly open areas include all first-floor galleries and 60% of ground floor galleries. Two large, ground floor galleries (the Discovery Gallery and Bishops Dining Room) refurbished through £200k received through the Welsh Government Transformation Fund will remain closed until further notice pending making good works following mould treatment; this is a delay of five months as of 31/03/2022. The fund also supported upgrades to the museum reception area and shop, which are receiving favourable public feedback. Visitor spend is being monitored through a new EPOS system; early trading figures indicate 54% increase in shop sales arising from these changes. The special exhibitions gallery on the first floor assessed by the National Security Adviser in December 2021 has benefited from 50% of the recommended adaptations to meet Government Indemnity Scheme security standards to borrow material from UK national museums. The gallery is not yet fully compliant but is intended to be in time for the next exhibition of this nature. 95% of collections have been returned to the refurbished attic stores, following temporary relocation during roofing works. 97% of windows have been refurbished internally and externally (completion due April 2022), creating a significant visual enhancement to the property. The museum WiFi extension scheme is 85% complete (by end April), enabling other areas in the museum to be used for public engagement activity. Storm Eunice caused some damage to the museum's Big Shed roof. The Big Shed will be repaired in due course and essential maintenance works carried out to improve its visual appeal and structural integrity from April 2022. Small grants received from the Federation of Museums and Galleries in Wales during 2021-2022 have supported the purchase of a digital interactive table for the museum (£4,000),	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		conservation grade mannequins for display of textiles (£3,000), and Winter of Wellbeing project in collaboration with the education department, Oriel Myrddin, and Tywi Gateway Trust (£10,00) to produce educational resources to support the new curriculum. Park: The Tywi Gateway Visitor Centre and café is being fitted out, anticipated to be ready for occupation by the Tywi Gateway Trust from May 2022. £58K capital grant awarded by CCC to progress the gardener's compound and the room for volunteers. An Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) development grant has been awarded to the Trust to develop detailed plans and costs for the Walled Garden development. A business consultant, also funded through the AHF, is preparing a case for longer term revenue support with early discussions with the NLHF underway. Funding has been awarded under the NLHF/Cadw 15-Minute Heritage scheme. The first phase of the transformation plan for Carmarthenshire Museum is 90% complete.	
We will deliver a new archive repository and information hub for Carmarthenshire. (Ref 13292) MF5-63	✓	Collections return - tender process completed, with contractor appointed. Collections starting to return. Looking to fully open later in Spring.	C&R
We shall continue to review and re-develop the Council's Theatre Services provision for future resilience i.e. online, outdoor, community and traditional programming and development plan. (Ref 14957) MF5-66	✓	Theatres continued with a recovery programme in this quarter and presented 86 events with 11,318 attendances. This included 2.5 weeks of SAVE THE CINEMA film shown at the Lyric with sold out screenings and lots of public interest. 3 events were hybrid with digital streaming offered to audiences as well as the live events. Nearly 750 free tickets were distributed to families for theatre performances under the Winter of Wellbeing scheme.	C&R
E - Support our Annual Cultural awards and promoting Annual Village and town of Culture			
We will promote our Welsh Culture & Heritage supporting annual culture awards and town and village of Culture. (Ref 14037) MF5-70	✓	The Culture awards were held at Y Ffwrnes Theatre on Tuesday the 8th March. Town and village of Culture working ongoing for 2022/23	C&R



Well-being Objective 13

Better Governance and use of Resources

The following are our commitments and end of year progress comments for this Well-being Objective during 2021/22.

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
A - Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) the way we work and deliver services			
We will ensure the Council makes the most efficient & effective use of its remaining community-based assets by reviewing and enabling any relevant Community Asset Transfer requests from interested parties. (Ref 14891) MF5-15	✓	Community Asset Transfer Policy has been reviewed. With Cabinet approval (acting as trustees) for assets held under trust, commencing formal a reporting process in December 2021. With formal reporting process for assets held under trust concluded and Cabinet approval obtained.	P&R
We will in line with our Digital Transformation Strategy, continue to engage and understand the Departments needs to allow them to deliver effective services. (Ref 14899) MF5-88	✓	<p>Our 'Cloud First' strategy has moved ahead during the last year- it allows us to improve upon business resilience and business continuity and allow services to maximise the use of their systems with the inclusion of citizen portals to harness 24/7 self-service for their customers and full automation and integration into back-office and drive operational efficiencies. Key highlights this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Implemented the new back-office system for Waste Services for AHP (Nappy Collection Service), which will be further extended for all of Waste Services (Garden Waste, Bulky etc.). Migrated the HR/Payroll ResourceLink system to a cloud hosted environment - tender exercise being undertaken to replace the Web Recruitment element of the system. * The new cloud Asset Management System (needed as part of the Housing Stock Verification Project is progressing well), as is the implementation of Total Connect (Housing Repairs) and integration between these systems is in development. Progress expected during 22/23 with the replacement Housing / Housing Rents system, with integration between all 3 systems key towards the wider Net Zero Carbon agenda. * A new Social Care system is now in Phase 2 development - with Adult Services launched successfully in October 2021 with Children Services expected to be migrated to the new cloud system by the Summer/Autumn 2022. 	P&R
We will 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. (Ref 14132)	✓	<p>We have continued to develop online services and improvements to various services which has allowed us to improve customer experience and/or range of services available to our customers on-line via the corporate website, My Account and via our Contact Centre / HWBs. These include various on-line forms and processes; particularly around businesses to help with the various Welsh Government grants, on-line process for the Winter Fuel Support Scheme. Most recently various on-line forms and processes in response to the war in Ukraine and the Ukraine refugee crisis.</p>	P&R
We will implement robust and sustainable infrastructure solutions to support the changing landscape of Local Government. (Ref 14904)	✓	We have replaced aging core infrastructure hardware at both data centres and core sites over the year using capital monies that has been provided. We have virtualised our telephony environment and rolled out software which supports hybrid working. We have resilient data centres in	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		Carmarthen and Ammanford both with independent power and internet access.	
We will ensure the Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) programme continues to implement a balanced work programme so that TIC can support and promote longer term, sustainable change and improvement, whilst also recognising the need to focus on meeting the financial challenges in the short term and medium term. (Ref 14915)	✓	The Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) programme is now focussed on the delivery of 6 thematic workstreams which reflect key organisational priorities. The areas of work within each workstream have also been re-prioritised to reflect key issues and learning emerging from the Council's experience of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme also continues to place great emphasis on the delivery of financial savings and the identification of PBB savings in respect of staff travel and print has served to strengthen the links between the TIC work and the PBB efficiency programme. This approach will also be reviewed as part of the consideration of the next phase of the Council's transformation programme which will include the development of a Transformation Strategy for the organisation.	P&R
We will ensure that the Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) Income Thematic Workstream is focussed on the development of a more commercial approach across the organisation and will aim to implement the outcomes and recommendations of the Audit Wales Review of Commercialisation in Local Government. (Ref 14916)	✓	The findings of the Wales Audit Review - 'Commercialisation in Local Govt' has been considered by the TIC Income Workstream. The toolkit included within the report has been used to support a self-assessment exercise by the workstream. A facilitated session was held with the Heads of Service forum in December. Further service specific workshops will now be held with priority services and the findings from these exercises will now be used to inform a discussion at CMT and with elected members. It is hoped that this will help clarify the Council's ambitions in this area and what capacity/skills the Council possesses or requires to further progress this agenda.	P&R
We will support the effective monitoring and reporting of the response to the Strategic review of the Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the Council, with a view to ensuring that the learning and opportunities for improvement are integrated into new ways of working (Ref 14917)	✓	Updates will be reported to Corporate Management Team (CMT) highlighting progress against all the actions included in the action plan that was developed in response to the Strategic Review of the impact of Covid-19. Learning from the report/action plan has also been used to inform projects being undertaken via the 6 thematic workstreams. This information will also be used to inform priorities for phase 2 of the Council's transformation programme and the development of a Transformation Strategy for the organisation.	P&R
We will develop and implement more effective consultation and engagement mechanisms with the public and service users about the design of the Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) programme and the shape of future services. (Ref 14105)	✗	One of the key aim within the Transforming, Innovating and Changing (TIC) Communications Plan was to seek ways of engaging residents and service users in the identification of future TIC priorities and projects. This is key objective of the TIC Service Improvement workstream and is already considered as part of specific service reviews and projects. However further work is required to consider how public /residents can be engaged in shaping the future of the wider TIC programme. This will now be considered as part the next phase of the Council's transformation programme which will formally be launched in September 2022.	P&R
We will review the strategic operational property portfolio with the various services as a result of new ways of working. (Ref 14922)	✓	Responses from Heads of Services on accommodation requirements received at end of January 2022 to New Ways of Working Project Manager. These replies have been analysed with a high level report provided to Corporate Management Team (CMT) on potential space requirements.	C&R
We will review land and property availability, including strategic	✓	The Authority continues to consider all opportunities with a view to achieving the best use of land and property within	C&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
acquisitions, to ensure that best use of commercial land and property is being made to support the local economy and / or to generate capital receipts. (Ref 14923)		the county and furthermore release our strategic landholdings to generate capital receipts. For example a new 5 year capital receipts strategy has been prepared and the use of land for Net Zero Carbon purposes continues to be reviewed - 3 sites totalling 5.71ha have been identified for tree planting purposes. Strategic acquisitions in relation to the former Debenhams in Carmarthen town centre and 3 Stepney Street Llanelli have taken place. Feasibility option work for future use of strategic development sites in Llanelli has also been undertaken. this will support future bids for funding opportunities to deliver development proposals arising from the review feasibility work. This continual review of our land and property supports delivery of the strategies and aspirations of the agreed Recovery Plan.	
We will support departments with their messaging by proactively promoting changes to services and continue to assess customer engagement across all of our digital platforms. (Ref 14925)	✓	Throughout 2021/22 we have seen an increase in residents and businesses accessing information, support and council services online, the number of visits to our website has increased yet again this year by a further 7%. Our digital platforms have been essential in providing accurate, timely information across as broad an audience as possible. Customer services have been able to guide many calls to the website and providing detail through our frequently asked questions feature has improved the consistency and simplicity in how we respond to enquiries. Accessibility of information is key, and we are proud to have this year passed the accessibility standard. It is so important to remember that residents, visitors and businesses are now accessing the website in various ways and interestingly 58.9% access using their mobile device. This is key when considering how to present information to ensure we engage to as a wider audience as possible.	P&R
We shall aim to increase the public use of the Council website (ICT/005) 2020/21 Result - 2,969,796 hits / 2021/22 Target - 2,750,000 hits	✓	2021/22 Result - 3,017,983 hits There have been over 3 million user sessions by the public on our website during 2021/22 which is excellent news and figures have increased from last year.	P&R
We will increase service user involvement: The Council should develop a systematic approach to involving service users in the future design and development of its online/channel shifted services. (Ref 14926)	x	Due to the pandemic and not being able to fill the Digital Content Manager post we have had to re-evaluate for the time being how we involve service users in design and development. We continue to evaluate feedback from the website and digital processes and use this information to improve our digital services. We actively ask for feedback at every opportunity and reflect and action when practical. We will continue to consider digital solutions such as Useberry and Hotjar to enable us to assess user journeys, identify weak spots etc. however we do not have the resources in place to make the most of these tools until the new manager is appointed.	P&R
We will advance our progressive procurement action plan following on from the work with the Centre for Local Enterprises (CLES). (Ref 14949)	✓	Progressive procurement Cluster meetings have been held regularly throughout 2021/22 between Procurement, Policy and Economic Development to deliver the actions in the Centre for Local Enterprises (CLES) Progressive Procurement Report. The draft Social Value Policy is awaiting feedback from Officers on the Business, Economy and Communities Workstream before being taken through the Council's approval process. We have developed a strategy for working with colleagues in Economic Development and Marketing and Media to	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		<p>promote tenders in advance to the marketplace, and in particular local SME's. We regularly highlight any tenders where there is likely to be suppliers based locally who might be interested to bid and who may not be registered on Sell 2 Wales which is our traditional method of advertising tenders. The intention of this early engagement is to target SME's in the County to inform them in advance of these tendering opportunities which they might be interested in bidding for and to understand and promote the support available to bid via Business Wales.</p> <p>This engagement will also inform the Council of any potential barriers there maybe for suppliers to tender which we could factor into our lotting strategy and overall procurement approach.</p> <p>A supplier survey went live in January to understand any potential barriers for suppliers in tendering for Council work or expanding their business. Findings have been shared with procurement and Economic Development which will help further shape our approach to support suppliers in the County moving forward.</p>	
<p>We will address the key findings, highlighting good practice and recommendations from the 'Procuring well-being in Wales' report (published 25/02/2021) from the Office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. (Ref 14950)</p>	✓	<p>We continue to carry out Sustainable Risk Assessment (SRA) exercises on our tenders over £25k. Following the SRA, a set of recommendations are drawn up which ensure that the sustainability issues such as environmental, social, economic & cultural issues can be factored into the specification for individual tenders.</p> <p>In addition to this, we now incorporate elements of the Well-being Future Generations Act by providing relevant information linking to the Well-being Objectives, we also include service provision information relating to the 5 ways of working i.e., Long Term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration & Involvement.</p>	P&R
<p>We will work with others to develop and implement the new system-Finance Module for charging. (Social Care). (Ref 15085)</p>	✓	<p>Only early engagement undertaken to date. implementation will depend on OLM the system developer's availability, and product being ready.</p>	SC&H
<p>We will review our systems and processes to respond to a more digitalised approach to future working practices. (Social Care - Commissioning). (Ref 15087)</p>	✓	<p>Review of current process has been completed, with new process being implemented. The work of continuous improvement will be sustained on an ongoing basis.</p>	SC&H
<p>We will develop a new pro-active Public Health and Infection Control Service that will build on what we have learned from the COVID experiences. (Ref 15097)</p>	✓	<p>Following the successful appointment to the post of Social Care and Health Protection Manager, the team is currently under design.</p> <p>An Officers Decision Report will shortly be issued to give approval for the skeleton management structure and staffing requirements.</p>	E&PP
<p>We shall increase the number of Transactional Council Services available to the public online. (ICT/003) 2020/21 Result - 41 / 2021/22 Target - 45</p>	✓	<p>2021/22 Result – 46</p> <p>Since 2014/15 we have launched 46 new online transactional council services which are now available to the public. Five of these have become available during 2021/22, such as:- Same day recycling centre bookings, Pupil Deprivation Grant, Winter Fuel Scheme, and most recently, Ukraine Support and Street closure applications for the Jubilee celebrations.</p>	P&R
B - We shall follow the 7 Principles of Good Governance			
B1 - Integrity and Values			

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
<i>(Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, & respecting the rule of law)</i>			
We will begin advanced planning and preparation for the 2022 Local Government Elections. <i>(Ref 14912)</i>	✓	<p>With new electoral ward changes, means there is one additional elected member seat for the Local Government Elections May 2022 taking the total number of councillors from 74 to 75.</p> <p>Acceptance of office documentation and political group forms have been complete and a Handbook finalised.</p> <p>An Induction Programme has been agreed and delivery arrangements being finalised together with a Retiring member event.</p> <p>A Diversity in Democracy action plan has been approved by Council and published.</p>	P&R
We will promote the updated Financial Procedure Rules, the Antifraud and Anti-corruption strategy and any other specific strategies/policies or regulatory recommendations. <i>(Ref 14944)</i>	✓	<p>Both Financial Procedure Rules and the Fraud Strategy have now been approved by the Audit Committee. Both documents are available to staff via the Intranet and promoted via the staff e-mail newsletter. Further promotion has also taken place at various strategic meetings, which the Principal Auditor has been invited to attend. Promotion of both documents will continue indefinitely.</p>	P&R
B2 - Openness and engagement <i>(Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement)</i>			
We will work with other Council services to further develop the Council's involvement and use of data approaches as part of a Council wide involvement, participation and consultation framework. <i>(Ref 12435) MF5-91</i>	x	<p>This work will now be embedded as part of the development of the new Council Corporate Strategy in terms of how we ensure continuous engagement and involvement in all that the Council does. The testing of the Engagement HQ platform will also develop this approach over the next 6 months.</p>	P&R
We will work with other Council services to further develop the Council's involvement, participation and consultation framework. <i>(Ref 14902) MF5-91</i>	✓	<p>We have successfully cooperated with all Council departments on essential consultations over the last 12 months. We have made sure that key stakeholders and residents have been made aware of consultations being conducted and provided various mechanisms to participate. To ensure that we have been transparent, we ensured that our website pages and consultations contained adequate information to assist participants when having their say. We now progress by continuing to develop a corporate plan for the consultation process with colleagues to ensure that a more holistic approach is adopted.</p>	P&R
We will lead the review and refresh of the Public Service Boards (PSBs) County Well-being Assessment. <i>(Ref 14906)</i>	✓	<p>The PSB's Well-being Assessment for Carmarthenshire was completed during the year. The work was led by the PSB team and collaboration took place with regional colleagues in in Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire and the Regional Partnership Board throughout the year, particularly in the engagement and data analysis stages. A regional survey was developed which was live from early August to early October. The survey was available online with printed forms also available and an easy read version. It was available in other languages such as Polish, Romanian and Arabic. For visually impaired residents, responses could also be taken over the phone by request. Several engagement events took place during that period. A Regional Data Group was established to take a collaborative approach to the collection and analysis of local, regional and national data to share expertise and avoid duplication. Following the engagement and data analysis stages, the draft Well-being Assessment was developed and this was approved at the</p>	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
		PSB meeting on 24 November. The draft Assessment went out to public consultation from early December to mid-January. All feedback was considered and the PSB approved a final amended version and supporting documentation including community profiles, a Consultation and Involvement report, Data Source document and Environment and Climate Change analysis on 8 March. Publication of the Well-being Assessment and supporting documentation is imminent.	
We will when appropriate update the COVID-19 Community Impact Assessment within Carmarthenshire. (Ref 14909)	✓	Departmental Business Plans for 2022/23 contained a self evaluation for 2021/22 which took into account Covid-19 impact. Our Annual Report on 2021/22 Corporate Strategy has a section on the impact of COVID during 2021/22.	P&R
We will work with departments to ensure a consistent and co-ordinated corporate approach for communicating with the public making sure all our campaigns follow the principle of One Council, One Vision, Once Voice. (Ref 14927)	✓	Carmarthenshire County Council's new branding is now complete. A new corporate communications group has been set up and is meeting regularly. During the year we held a communications review with the leisure department, which was very successful.	P&R
To carry out an effective campaign to ensure that all 16- and 17-year-olds and foreign nationals newly enfranchised living within Carmarthenshire are registered and encouraged to participate in the Senedd Elections taking place on 6 May 2021. (Ref 14930)	✓	May 2021 Senedd Elections successfully delivered	P&R
To implement the finding of the Carmarthenshire Electoral Review in time for the 2022 Local Elections. (Ref 14931)	✓	The final Order on the Electoral Review was published by Welsh Government in September 2021. The new electoral ward changes in Carmarthenshire means there is one additional elected member seat for the Local Government Elections May 2022 taking the total number of councillors from 74 to 75.	P&R
We shall work with Public Services Board partners to develop our approach to engagement and participation with children and young people ensuring their voice is listened to as part of public service development. (Ref 15029) MF5-43	✓	Our Departmental and Corporate Management Teams have received an update in relation to participation and children's rights work delivery during 2021/22. It has been determined that there will be an emphasis on Education and Children's Services departmental priorities in relation to participation of children and young people going forward.	P&R
We will continue to respond to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests within the Statutory deadline - however the emphasis will continue to be on good and adequate replies. (2.1.1.17) 2020/21 Result - 96.87% (649/670) /2021/22 Target - 90%	✓	2021/22 Result - 90.84% (684 /753) Almost 91% of all Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests received in the year were responded to within the Statutory deadline.	P&R
B3 - Making a difference (Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits)			
We will ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the new requirements relating to performance and governance of the Local Government and Elections Act and align them to our current duties relating to	✓	For our Annual Report on the Councils 2020-21 performance published in October 2021, Audit Wales issued the Council with a certificate of compliance for discharging our duties of assessment 2021/22 is the first year that will have to be evaluated and reported under the Local Government and Elections Act 2021.	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
the Well-being of Future Generations Act. (Ref 14898) MF5-87		<p>We updated the Corporate Strategy for the 2021/22 year and outlined the steps we will be taking to achieve our Well-being Objectives. Department and service business plans are aligned to these Objectives and have set detailed actions and targets to achieve them. These actions and targets were monitored quarterly throughout the year.</p> <p>1. We have adapted business plan templates to address the requirements of the new legislation and templates have more emphasis on self evaluating 2021/22 and increased requirement for SMART actions and Measures. We set up a new Engagement and Assurance Panel to work with Departmental Management Teams to ensure their business plans met the necessary requirements. Each Departmental Business Plans was also discussed by the Chief Executive and each Director. Each Divisional Business Plan went through the relevant Scrutiny.</p> <p>2. Quarterly Monitoring has been enhanced and there are now dedicated CMT meetings for quarterly performance monitoring. Furthermore, Monitoring has been enhanced by introducing a more integrated approach covering more than just the actions and targets set out for each objective. For each Well-being Objective wider intelligence available is included in the report e.g., Risk, Regulatory reports, Finance and HR etc.</p> <p>3. We also produced a Performance Management Framework that formalised our established approach and new developments, including the new expectations of the Local Government and Elections Act.</p>	
After publishing a Strategic Equality Plan and monitoring progress, we will respond to any recommendations from the Equalities & Diversity (BAME) Task & Finish Group & ensure they are embedded into the Council's Strategic Equality Plan as appropriate. (Ref 14720)	✓	Recommendations from the Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Task & Finish Group were presented to the Democratic process in the autumn 2021. Alongside our local work, the Welsh Government are due to publish an updated Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan. The Policy & Involvement team will consider how Carmarthenshire County Council will contribute to the work as part of the Strategic Equality Plan, alongside the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group.	P&R
To carefully review current arrangements for delivering the May 2021 combined elections with the view of ensuring that voters are safe and are fully aware of their voting options. (Ref 14929)	✓	The May 2021 elections successfully delivered.	P&R
We will pursue the relocation of our Registration Office for the Ammanford area. (Ref 14934)	x	All necessary works have been completed to move the Registrar from Ammanford Library to Ammanford Town Hall. However, re-location has been delayed as Ammanford Town Hall still has working restrictions (@ the end of the financial year) due to Covid with no staff working there on a permanent basis. Currently awaiting the outcome of what is happening to Ammanford Town Hall and as to whether staff will be moving back to the Hall on a full time basis.	P&R
We will administer and work with our stakeholders in delivering the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc.) Act 2019 that will come into force on 4 May 2021. (Ref 14935)	✓	We have worked with our stakeholders to deliver the requirements as per the 2019 Act	P&R
We shall increase the % of households accessing the Internet in	✓	2021/22 Result - 93%	Page 376 P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
Carmarthenshire based on the National Survey for Wales results (ICT/006) 2020/21 Result - 89% / 2021/22 Target - 89% The result is based on the previous year's National Survey for Wales results due to the timeliness of the data.		According to the 2020/21 National Survey for Wales, 93% of households in Carmarthenshire have internet access. This is an improvement on the 2019/20 survey result of 89%. This is the 7th highest in Wales, we were previously 9th.	
B4 - Making sure we achieve what we set out to do <i>Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes</i>			
We will prepare and make arrangements for the proposals contained within the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act and implement any actions arising therefrom. (Ref 14725)	✓	The Democratic Public Participation Strategy and Petition Scheme were approved by Council in February 2022. These documents form part of the Council Constitution. The Governance & Audit Committee has interviewed applicants for the positions of lay persons and the recommendation for appointment will go to the Annual Meeting in May. The constitution has been updated to include all parts of the act that are in force or coming into force on the 5 th May 2022.	P&R
We will work up arrangements for hybrid democratic meetings as and when the circumstances allow. (Ref 14913)	✓	Multi-location meetings will be operational from the Annual Meeting on the 25 th May 2022.	P&R
We will ensure Elected Member participation to set priorities and allocate budget (CHR190004) (Ref 14914)	✓	A series of all member seminars took place during January 2022 to discuss the budget proposals, thereafter the budget was discussed formally at each Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet and finally the full Council determined the 2022/23 to 2024/25 budget strategy in March 2022.	P&R
We will introduce quality monitoring of service delivery across different customer access channels to ensure that correct processes and procedures are adhered to consistently and professionally, in line with agreed Service Level Agreements. (Ref 14928)	✓	Call volumes and call quality are discussed during weekly meetings with staff. Monthly 1-1 meetings are held where specific calls are discussed and good practice and areas for improvement are identified. Quality monitoring continues to be used as a benchmark for new starters during their induction and for existing staff. Processes across all access channels are continually reviewed with departments to ensure that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities in delivering effective and efficient services. A number of customer compliments are received, praising the quality of the service and these are fed back to staff, Cabinet member and Chief Executive. Introduced new telephony technology to enable calls to be routed through to other parts of the organisation automatically based on customers choice enabling better call handling quality at the contact centre.	P&R
We will ensure that any potential merger of the Coroner's jurisdiction, results in a more resilient and consistent service for the bereaved people by working with key stakeholders including Pembrokeshire Council, Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice. (Ref 14932)	✓	We are currently (April 2022) awaiting an update from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on where the potential merger of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot together with Pembrokeshire /Carmarthenshire is on their timetable The Chief Coroner's intentions is to create larger jurisdictions. With the departure of Pembrokeshire/Carmarthenshire's Senior Coroner, the MoJ have proposed that our jurisdiction is merged with Swansea/Neath Port Talbot jurisdiction. All respective authorities have concerns with this proposals due to geographical needs, Welsh Language needs and convenience to the bereaved families. Our concerns were made known to the MoJ just before the Covid pandemic. All merge talks were put aside so that Coroner Services could prioritise their time on contributing to the death registration journey being managed as smoothly as possible.	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ x	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will continue to deliver a Registrars service that meets and exceeds the national standards in all areas by working closely with our stakeholders. (Ref 14933)	✓	After a really busy 2020/21 with postponement of birth registrations so that the Registration Service could process the death registrations as quickly as possible. Weddings were also postponed except those that needed to be held for exceptional circumstances. The Registration Service national standards are to register deaths within 5 days, and births within 42 days. Birth registrations were postponed for 18 months which resulted in a backlog of 800 birth registrations in Carmarthenshire which we managed to clear the majority within 4 months. There has been a high demand for weddings due to their postponements, working with our external wedding venues in delivering a safe wedding. We are now working to Covid 'level 0' guidance and have re-introduced face to face death registration appointments and updating our risk assessments to reflect this.	P&R
We shall increase the % use of the ICT Self Service helpdesk. (ICT/002) 2020/21 - 60.5% / 2021/22 Target - 61%	✓	2021/22 Result - 68.8% (6,522 / 9,484) This continues to improve and has well exceeded the target. An improved self-service software makes it even easier for customers to complete. This allows time for IT staff to solve the problems rather than spending time answering phones.	P&R
B5 - Valuing our people; engaging, leading and supporting (Developing capacity and the capability of leadership and individuals)			
We shall ensure the Council fully supports staff to maintain a healthy work-life balance and, where necessary, ensure the careful management of staff sickness absences in the interest of the staff and the provision of services. (Ref 14903) MF5-93	✓	The health and wellbeing team work with departments to promote and encourage healthy lifestyles which includes positive work life balance, there is a suite of support and information available to all staff and the health and wellbeing champions offer peer support locally. Sickness absence management is a management responsibility, there is training, policy and guidance to assist, and the Occupational Health and Human Resources professionals are available to give advice on specific cases. Hybrid working will also help improve Work-life Balance.	P&R
We will continue to ensure that our recruitment, retention, people management and development policies comply with changing legislation and reflect the needs of the organisation. (Ref 14731)	✓	A Policy Forward Work programme is in place with the focus for the coming 12 months to review and introduce policies which will support the Council's transition to Better Ways of Working as well as ensuring that any new or changes to legislation are reflected in employment policies such as exit pay cap. Ongoing programme of review in place which will aim to ensure best practice is reflected in policies and processes and comply with legislation	P&R
We will ensure the Council Employment Policy reflects changes to legislation such as the forthcoming exit payment cap legislation, reclaiming exit payments, casual worker agreements and any other employment related legislation introduced post Brexit. (Ref 14729)	✓	Employment Policy forward work programme in place which will ensure that policies are reviewed and updated to comply with legislation.	P&R
We will continue with the further automation of HR and Recruitment processes: e.g. Declaration of interest e-form; Exit surveys; Sickness absence return to work interviews; Induction/onboarding; Honoraria payments; Starter and leaver notifications. (Ref 14730)	✓	Procurement of recruitment software almost completed. Automation of declaration of interest, exit surveys, return to work interviews, and induction are all completed. Ongoing programme of automation to continue.	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will ensure our Pay Policy and annual Equal Pay / Gender Pay Audit/ will comply with legislation and provide transparency around pay decisions. Separate Pay Policy for Teachers. (Ref 14732)	✓	Pay Policy for 21/22 published. Equal pay audits completed and published.	P&R
We will further promote robust sickness absence management within departments to reduce the number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence. (PAM/001) 2020/21 Result - 7.7 days (47268.5/6134.6) /2021/22 Target - 9.6 days	✗	2021/22 Result -11.4 days Sickness figures at the end of 2021/22 of 11.4 days is 3.7 days higher than last year and worse than the 2019/20 Welsh average of 11.2 days. The service areas with the highest figures are Waste & Environment, Adult Social Care, Access to Education and Housing Property & Special Projects and Special Schools. The causes of absence are monitored and the impact and legacy of Covid continues. People Management division provides advice and support for managers, who have the responsibility to manage attendance, they are provided with sickness data and analysis to plan appropriate action to ensure cases are managed and employees supported, in line with our sickness policies and guidelines.	P&R
We will reduce the % of employee laptops with 4GB of memory (RAM) or under used in the council to ensure we continue towards a flexible workforce. (ICT/009) 2020/21 Baseline - 37% (47268.5/6134.6) /2021/22 Target - 32%	✓	2021/22 Result - 28% (787/2,794) The number of laptops with low memory has reduced in the year from 37% to 28%.	P&R
B6 - Managing risks, performance and finance (Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management)			
We will ensure a robust approach to Cyber security and sustainable solutions are implemented for Information Governance. (Ref 14901)	✓	We have continued to enhance our defence towards potential cyber attacks by increasing warning banners on external emails, investing in intelligent AI products such as Dark trace and by rolling out 2FA to all Council owned devices.	P&R
We will use of the Council's reserves to invest in the County and support future development. (Ref 14936) MF5-96	✓	Earmarked reserves detailed review carried out by Corporate Services Director and Head of Financial Services as part of 2020/21 statement of accounts. Specific requests for reserves considered by Corporate Services Director and Chief Executive alongside Corporate funding priorities. Reported to/approved by Governance & Audit Committee at July 2021 meeting as part of draft statement of accounts	P&R
We will ensure the Council manages its budgets effectively and prudently. (Ref 14937) MF5-98	✓	February budget monitoring shows an increased underspend - this is broadly due to a combination of additional unforeseen grants from Welsh Government combined with continuing challenges recruiting staffing to vacant posts in some areas. Existing finance policy incentives prudent dept spending by allowing 50% carryover into dept reserves as well as specific bids for particular pressures over and above. This will be carried out as part of the statement of accounts process which is underway currently	P&R
We will provide significant financial support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region. (Ref 14938)	✓	Ongoing support continues to be provided, including budget monitoring and financial input to NNDR contribution to temp financing costs, with statement of accounts currently being prepared in line with early closure deadlines (30th May, 2022).	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
We will undertake the closure and Audit of the Accounts within the appropriate timescales. (Ref 14939)	✓	Carmarthenshire County Council and Dyfed Pension Fund accounts have now both received an unqualified audit opinion, with commendable audit reports. Whilst the County Council accounts fell behind normal statutory deadlines, they were within the approved flexibility granted by Welsh Government and ahead of a number of other councils.	P&R
We will identify a set of key performance indicators taking a balanced scorecard approach. (Ref 14941)	✗	This has not been progressed as budgets and additional complexities on this years Statement of Accounts have taken priority over recent months.	P&R
We will address the recommendation or proposals for improvement arising from the Wales Audit Office review of Risk Management arrangements. (Ref 14946)	✓	Progress is closely monitored on all recommendations, and they are reported and closely monitored by the Risk Management Steering Group. These are included as a continuous Standard Agenda Item. The Risk Appetite training programme has been successfully undertaken and 2 additional workshops have been scheduled for 14th June & 6th July for CMT & HOS to finalise the Councils Risk Appetite Statement. The new process for updating the Corporate Risk Register has been introduced and is working well. Awareness on project risks with the implementation of project risk registers have commenced.	P&R
We will monitor effective Contract management throughout the Authority. (Ref 14948)	✓	The final draft of a Contract Management Guidance document is complete with accompanying templates to support the guide, work is currently being undertaken on an eLearning Module and Video. The intention is to launch the Contract Management Guidance together with an eLearning Module and Video during 2022/23.	P&R
We will review Transport and Highways systems and processes and modernise our IT systems to improve efficiency. (Ref 14971)	✓	Work has continued during the year on reviewing and improving systems and processes within Transport and Highways with many new processes being adopted. This work continues with a comprehensive timetable of additional service area reviews which will be brought forward over the next 3 years in a rolling programme. The existing system continues to be developed with the implementation of mobile working for public reporting. A more comprehensive system is however required to modernise systems which should include the integration of financial transactions, this will be incorporated into the review of systems within the Environment Department.	EPP
We shall develop, implement and monitor compliant procurement exercises for the Property Division, working in conjunction with the Corporate Procurement Unit. (Ref 14974)	✓	This work continues due to the ever evolving changes to regulations, these require to be constantly reviewed and implemented. Many recommendations were reported and approved by the Departmental Managers Team (DMT) in September 2021. We continually monitor current and future procurement and contract management activity.	P&R
We shall continue to develop mobile working technology and our works management systems for our Property services workforce to enable them to work in an agile and cost-effective way including implementation of effective IT developments to support efficient delivery of services. (Ref 14978)	✓	All operational staff now have mobile devices and a new Total Connect works management system is to be implemented during 2022 to provide greater functionality and resource management tools.	P&R
We will ensure that risks relating to all premises owned or occupied by the council are suitably & sufficiently identified & managed. We will roll out the condition survey programme to	✗	The delay in recruiting Condition Officers whom are only in post since April 2022 together with resourcing issues and other work commitments in the Minor Works team means that the Condition Surveying Programme will need to be	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
develop the "one property" approach to compliance and condition. (Ref 14979)	✗	rescheduled to reflect the above with focus on Count Farm Surveys by Autumn 2022.	
We will continue to maintain and manage the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and cleaning stores. (Ref 14982)	✓	The non social care stores was managed throughout the pandemic and from the end of June it will be a source for contingency stock only.	E&PP
We shall provide technical advice and support on grounds maintenance of playing fields to Town Councils, Community Council's and Sporting Organisations in relation to transferred assets. (Ref 15055)	✓	We have provided technical advice to the stakeholders in relation to transferred assets and all Service Level Agreement (SLA) work complete during 2021/22 and we will continue to do so going forward.	E&PP
We will review and reduce Debt within Social Care charging, and to work with legal to recover outstanding debt. (Ref 15086)	✓	A review has been completed, with a new staffing structure being implemented. Additional staffing resource secured to support the debt recovery.	SCH
We will aim for maximum income of capital receipts to support the capital program of £2.3m (2.1.2.12) 2020/21 Result - 12.39% (£260,090/£2.1m) / 2021/22 Target - 100% £2.13m)	✓	2021/22 Result - Result - 125.64% (£2,871,508 / £2,126,250) This result exceeds the target by almost £0.75m, which is excellent news. This excess makes up somewhat for the £0.4m shortfall in 2019/20 and £1.8m shortfall 2020/21.	P&R
The % of Council Tax collected (CFH/007) 2020/21 Result -95.96% (£104,356,681÷£108,748,379) / 2021/22 Target - 97.5%	✗	2021/22 Result - 97.24% (£111,073,411 / £114,227,660) The result is slightly under target by 0.26% but has increased on the previous year. Recovery action continued throughout this financial 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.	P&R
The % of non-domestic rates collected (CFH/008) 2020/21 Result - 95.55% (£29,271,560÷£30,633,996) /2020/21 Target - 98.1%	✓	2021/22 Result - 97.98% (£32,845,590 / £33,524,189) The result has exceeded the 95.55% target, although lower than the previous year's result.	P&R
B7- Good transparency and accountability (Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability)			
We will introduce a new Integrated Impact Assessment requirement across the Council's decision-making processes to ensure compliance with a range of statutory duties including the new Socio-Economic Duty and climate change / carbon reduction (NZC-25). (Ref 13281)	✓	We have developed a template, guidance and a digital Integrated Impact Assessment form. The Assessment includes the key areas of Five Ways of Working, Equalities, Welsh language, GDPR, Socio-economic Duty, United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Environment Act, Biodiversity and the Council's Net Zero Carbon Commitment. With the May 2022 Local Elections it is a timely opportunity for us to explore this further with the new administration.	P&R
We will implement the new Council Complaints Policy. (Ref 14908)	✓	The new Complaints Policy was approved by the Executive Board on 22nd March 2021 and a letter provided by the Complaints Standards Authority on 26th May 2021 confirming that the new Policy was compliant. The Policy was published and promoted within the Council with posters	P&R

Last Year's Commitments	✓ ✗	Progress Comment	Scrutiny
	✓	in public areas, attendance at Departmental Management Team meetings and an article in Staff News. Increased reporting requirements have also been implemented, including regular quarterly reporting to Corporate Management Team meetings and the introduction of a monthly report to Directors from January 2022 on open and closed complaints.	
We will advise on governance arrangements for new models of working, including but not limited to Local Authority Trading Companies, regional Partnerships, Pooled Budgets etc. and the Local Government & Elections Act. (Ref 14911)	✓	1.The Constitution of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) was approved in January 2022. 2.One of the Council's companies has been put into dormant state, and will be resurrected as and when required for specific purposes. 3.Education through Regional Working (ERW) is currently in existence but will be replaced by Y Partneriaeth during 2022/23.	P&R
We will ensure an unqualified audit of the final accounts. (Ref 14940)	✓	Unqualified audits have been received on Carmarthenshire County Council, Dyfed Pension Fund, Swansea Bay City Region JC, Wales Pension Partnership JC, and Burry Port Harbour Authority.	P&R
Implement the changes to our Audit Committee structure in line with the new Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021. (Ref 14945)	✓	Changes to the Governance & Audit Committee structure are underway, with the name change implemented in April 2021 and the Terms of Reference updated to reflect the responsibility the Committee now has in relation to Complaints. The revised Committee structure has been discussed, and agreed by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, to be 8 County Councillors and 4 Lay Persons, giving the Committee 1/3 Lay Persons as required by the Act. Interviews for the roles are taking place on 8th April 2022.	P&R
We will aim to ensure actual achievement against Annual Audit Plan (6.4.1.3) 2020/21 Result - 83% (913/1,100) / 2021/22 Target - 90%	✗	2021/22 Result - 86% Just off target with 86% of the Audit Plan being complete, against a target of 90%. Capacity issues in the team during the year affect our capability to complete all the audits in the Plan.	P&R

CABINET

MONDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair)

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies

L.D. Evans

G. Davies

P.M. Hughes

G.H. John

A. Lenny

J. Tremlett

A. Vaughan Owen

Councillors (Virtually):

E.G. Thomas

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive

J. Morgan, Director of Community Services

G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services

A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law

J. Jones, Head of Regeneration

C. Higginson, Media Manager

L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer

J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer (minute taker)

Also Present (Virtually):

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 10.34 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
A. Lenny	6. Local Innovation Strategy	A close relation works for a company noted within the report.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 14TH NOVEMBER 2022

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th November, 2022 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. LOCAL INNOVATION STRATEGY

[NOTE: Councillor A. Lenny, having earlier declared their interest in this item, left the meeting during its deliberation and voting thereof].

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's proposals to adopt a Local Innovation Strategy to support the recovery and restructuring of Carmarthenshire's economy through innovation opportunities within the areas of Digital Innovation, Health, Foundational Economy and the Circular Economy.

The strategy detailed the innovation prospects for Carmarthenshire within the context of the multi-level policy landscape, together with the local and regional framework for innovation.

Reference was made to the figures presented on pages 37 and 39 of the report pertaining to the agriculture sector which were subject to change as a result of the progress made since publication of the report in relation to the post-Brexit sustainable farming scheme.

The transition towards a circular economy business model approach as a means of improving resource efficiency, collaboration and competitiveness was emphasised to members.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that

- 6.1 The Local Innovation Strategy be endorsed.**
- 6.2 The four innovation opportunities identified in the strategy, in the areas of Digital; Health & Wellbeing; Foundational Economy; and Circular Economy be agreed.**
- 6.3 The innovation opportunities be further explored by officers for implementation where possible.**

7. MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2022 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

The Cabinet considered an update report on the treasury management activities and the prudential indicators for the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Resources reported that the Interest Rate Exposure indicator had been increased from 125.00% to 150.00% to accommodate the Authority's continued increased level of investment balances.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Update Report for 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022, including changes to the limits for Interest Rate Exposure, be approved.

8. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE APPROVAL BODY (SAB) PRE APPLICATION FEES AND CHARGES

Consideration was given to a report which sought the Cabinet's approval to enable the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) to charge fees, under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003, for pre-application advice and guidance associated with the SAB application process.

It was recognised that the introduction of a charging scheme would ensure that the SAB was economically robust and resilient to manage compliance with the statutory duty going forward.

Consideration was given to Regulation 2A, Schedule 4 of the Town and County Planning Regulations 2016, appended to the report, which set out the charges that would be applied by the SAB. The Cabinet noted that implementation of the proposed charging scheme would provide a fair and transparent approach, which was consistent with many other Welsh Local Authorities.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

8.1 That the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) be allowed to charge fees for pre-application advice and guidance associated with the SAB application process.

8.2 That the fees be applied with immediate effect

9. RECLASSIFICATION OF THE A476 CROSS HANDS

The Cabinet was advised that the Cross Hands Economic Link Road had recently been completed which provided a more direct link between the A48 Trunk Road at Cross Hands and the A476 to the north of Gorslas.

The Cabinet noted the benefits that would be derived in terms of relieving congestion pressure points, as well as facilitating access to existing and future development sites. Accordingly, the Cabinet's approval was sought to designate the new Economic Link Road as part of the A476 and to reclassify a section of the existing A476 through Gorslas as a 'B' class road. This reclassification would enable the route north from the A48 along the A476 to Llandeilo to be signed from the grade separated junction to the east of Cross Hands rather than through the existing roundabout.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the reclassification of the A476 be approved.

10. **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.

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as the reports contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

12. **CAPITAL RECEIPTS STRATEGY**

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute no. 11 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act). The public interest test in respect of this report outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained therein as disclosure would significantly undermine the commercial interests of the Council in future negotiations and risk a reduction in the capital receipts realised.

The Cabinet considered a report which provided an update and detailed proposals in respect of the Council's capital receipts.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

- 12.1 That the report be received.
- 12.2 That the recommendations as detailed within the report, be endorsed.

CHAIR

DATE

CABINET

MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER 2022

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

Councillors (In Person):

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

Councillors (Virtually):

P.M. Hughes	G.H. John	J. Tremlett
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Observer (Virtually):

Councillor R. James

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive
 J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
 C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
 L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
 G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services
 P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
 S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
 L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
 K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present (Virtually):

J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 10.20 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
A Davies	7 – School Admissions – Primary School Admissions Review – (Rising 4's)	She and her Daughter own and run a creche

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 28TH NOVEMBER 2022

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 28th November, 2022 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. CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) FOR CARMARTHENSHIRE DOG ORDERS

The Cabinet was informed that the report on the Engagement survey undertaken on the operation of the Carmarthenshire County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2016 had been withdrawn from the agenda for the meeting to enable further work to be undertaken.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the withdrawal of the report be noted

7. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS - PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS REVIEW (RISING 4'S)

(NOTE: Cllr A. Davies having earlier declared an interest in this item re-declared that interest and left the meeting during its consideration)

The Cabinet considered a report on a review undertaken of the Council's current admissions policy for full time education for four year olds (Rising 4's), as recommended by the 2018/19 Education and Children Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group.

The Cabinet noted that the report outlined the review undertaken into the admissions arrangements which considered the following aspects:

- Background to the current primary school arrangements, and the 'rising 4s' policy in particular.
- Detail on the current full time and part time admission arrangements for primary schools.
- Provides a research-based comparison of full time and part time admission arrangements with all other Local Authorities in Wales
- Information on the importance of Admission Numbers and how they affect admission arrangements.
- Outlines the current challenges being faced in relation to accommodation and school capacity, inconsistency with other Authorities, nursery and early years provision, funding and the admissions process itself.

The Report also considered potential implications of any changes to the current arrangements in terms of parental perception, equality of provision, redistribution of funding and consultation arrangements.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the, Council as the Admissions Authority, for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools:

- 7.1 Consults on a change to the full-time admission arrangements of learners from the term of their 4th birthday to the term after their 4th birthday during the annual admissions consultation exercise in January 2023, for potential implementation in September 2024.
- 7.2 Undertakes a detailed assessment on the impact of the change in policy on each school and bring forward a recommendation for each setting.
- 7.3 Reports back on the results of the consultation.
- 7.4 Engages with Voluntary Aided and Roman Catholic primary schools on the consultation and proposed change of policy.

8. INTERIM JOINT PROTOCOL ON MILEAGE RATES

The Cabinet considered a report on a Joint Protocol signed off by both the WLGA Executive Board and the NJC Trade Unions on increasing the rate of re-imbursement of mileage rates for local government employees in recognition of the impact of the cost of living crisis on the workforce and the immediate pressures presented as a consequence of unprecedented increases in fuel costs. The report detailed the various elements of the protocol, together with the agreed sum for re-imbursement which, if adopted by the Council, would represent an 11% increase or, £12.5k on the average monthly spend of £114k.

The Cabinet was advised that, in order for the joint protocol to be implemented, it would need to be adopted locally and the arrangements regarding its administration determined by each local authority in accordance with their local policies and procedures.

It further noted that the agreed threshold at which the additional payment would be triggered for implementation was when the price of fuel attained £1.50 or 15.2 pence per mile as determined by the HMRC Advisory Fuel Rate Assessment. If the cost of fuel fell below that threshold, the additional payment would be removed.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the council adopts the interim Joint Protocol on mileage rates signed off by the WLGA Executive Board and the NJC Trade Unions

9. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023-24

The Cabinet considered the Council Tax Base 2023-24 report. Cabinet Members were reminded that the Council was required to determine, on an annual basis, its Council Tax Base and the Council Tax Base of each community within its area, for the purpose of calculating the level of Council Tax for the forthcoming financial year and, under the provisions of Section 84 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Authorities Executive Arrangements (Functions and Responsibilities) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2004, the annual calculation had been delegated to the Cabinet.

The calculation of the Tax Base for the County Council for 2023-24 was detailed in Table 1a and summarised in Table 1b, which were appended to the report. The calculation for individual Town and Community Council areas for 2023-24 was summarised in Table 2 and detailed in Appendix A, which were also appended to the report.

Cabinet Members noted that the Tax Base report provided calculations which were Authority-wide as well as broken down into all community and town council areas for their precept purposes and that the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2023-2024 had been calculated at £75,071.95.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that

- 7.1 the Council Tax Base calculations for the financial year 2023-24 as detailed within Appendix A of the report be approved;**
 - 7.2 a Council Tax Base of £75,071.95 as detailed within tables 1a and 1b of the report, be confirmed in respect of the County Council area;**
 - 7.3 the relevant tax bases for the individual community and town council areas, as listed in table 2 and detailed in Appendix A of the report be confirmed.**
- 10. 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

CABINET

9 JANUARY 2023

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

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies; L.D. Evans; G. Davies; P.M. Hughes; G.H. John;
A. Lenny; E.G. Thomas; J. Tremlett; A. Vaughan Owen.

Also in attendance (Virtually):

Councillor D.M. Cundy.

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive;
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services;
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services;
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services;
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance);
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
S Burford, Project Manager;
C. Higginson, Media Manager;
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer;
G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager;
A. Eynon, Principal Translator;
M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer (Agency);
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer [Minute Taker].

Also Present (Virtually):

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer;
S. Hendy, Member Support Officer.

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 10:00am - 11:35am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
A. Davies	12 - Second Homes & Empty Properties	She runs an Airbnb as part of her farm business.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 12TH DECEMBER 2022

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 12th December, 2022 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 one public question had been received.

5.1. PUBLIC QUESTION TO CLLR. ALED VAUGHAN OWEN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Chair informed the Cabinet that the questioner Conor MacDonald was not able to be present at the meeting to ask his question however has asked that the Chair formally ask the question to Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen on his behalf.

Question:

“In light of recent changes taken by Edinburgh City Council, East Dunbartonshire, North Ayrshire, Falkirk and Dundee following Unite’s “Get Me Home Safely” campaign, will the cabinet support a change in licensing conditions in Carmarthenshire to ensure hospitality businesses provide late-night workers with free travel home after 23:00? Could the councillor please give reasons for his answer?”

Response by Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen:

“Thank you for the question

We recognise that journeys to or from work at night can expose workers to concerns about personal safety, the threat of violence and even violence itself. I know that research referenced in Unite’s “Get Me Home Safely” campaign found that women feel particularly vulnerable and exposed to the risk of harassment and assault when travelling to and from work. As a council we are committed to reducing violence against women, or threats of it, and our licensing officers actively work with licensed premises, encouraging them to adopt campaigns such as White Ribbon and Ask Angela.

As such, the adoption of the “Get Me Home Safely” campaign in Carmarthenshire is certainly worth exploring further as part of that commitment. Clearly any potential impact on current licensing conditions would be subject to consultation. We will certainly keep an eye on this campaign and respond to any developments in the future.”

6. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet considered the revenue budget monitoring report which provided the latest budgetary position as at 31st October 2022 in respect of 2022/2023.

Overall, the monitoring report forecast an overspend for the year at departmental level of £4,844k with a forecast overspend on the Authority's net revenue budget of £3,473k. At a high level, this was due to a combination of:

- Nationally negotiated pay settlements at much higher levels than budgeted, for which additional governmental funding has not been provided. High level estimates are that that could be £7.1m above budget;
- overspends in service areas driven by increased demand combined with reduced grant funding versus previous years, particularly Learning Disabilities and Children's Service.
- A sustained reduction in commercial income, covering car parks, leisure centres and school meals;
- Capital financing underspends due to scheme delays and a reduced need to borrow

It was noted that as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process, the Authority had agreed a £3m in-year contingency budget which was currently held centrally and provided a partial offset to the above mentioned general pressures. Furthermore, it was reported that £200k has been used to offset the increase in fuel prices impacting on School Transport.

The Housing Revenue Account reported a predicted overspend of £665k for 2022/23, to be funded through a contribution from reserves details of which were provided within Appendix B appended to the report. It was also noted that nationally negotiated pay offers at much higher levels than budgeted would fall directly on the HRA to fund which were estimated to be £0.5m above budget.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 6.1 the Budget Monitoring report be received, and the budgetary position and appropriate corrective action taken be noted.**
- 6.2 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.**

7. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2025/26

The Cabinet considered a report providing an overview of the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2023/24 and the following two financial years. The report provided details of the budget process, the current Welsh Government provisional settlement and the final settlement timetable and identified the validation and budget pressures that needed to be considered by members in setting next year's revenue budget. The report would also form the basis of the budget consultation process to be undertaken during January and February 2023.

The report indicated that, after adjustments for Welsh Government identified transfers, the increase in the provisional settlement for Carmarthenshire was 8.5% (£26.432 million). The Aggregate External Finance (AEF) had therefore increased to £338.017 million in 2023/24. Whilst the settlement was significantly above the indicative figure of a 3.4% increase and provided £15.5m more than the original assumption, it was noted that the Welsh Government had recognised that the increased figure would not be enough to meet the inflationary pressures currently facing councils and that difficult decisions would need to be made.

It was noted that whilst significant work had already been undertaken in preparing the budget, the report was only an initial position statement which would be updated over the coming months as the budget was further developed. However, it was reported that due to the delays in the provisional settlement, and the consequential impact on Welsh Government's budget finalisation, the publication of the final settlement would not be published until the 7th March 2023.

In recognising the critical importance of minimising the Council Tax increase for residents during the current cost of living crisis, it was necessary to respond to the current risks around this Budget Strategy and the ongoing inflationary backdrop. The Budget Strategy, in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan proposed that the Council Tax for 2023/24 be increased to 7%, which sought to mitigate reductions to critical services. The proposal would be considered as part of the budget finalisation process over the next month or so and when the Authority would receive further clarification on cost and grant funding with a view to limiting the Council Tax increase as far as possible. Final budget proposals would then be presented to the Cabinet mid/late February, which will allow a balanced budget to be presented to County Council on the 1st March 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

- 7.1 To note the contents of the report and approve the three year Budget Strategy 2023/24 to 2024/25 as a basis for consultation. Specifically seeking comments from consultees on the efficiency proposals in Appendix A.**
- 7.3 To note the unallocated sum of £716k in the current strategy, would be given further consideration at the completion of the consultation, as noted in paragraph 4.3 of the report.**

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 UPDATE

The Cabinet received a report which provided the latest budgetary position for the 2022/23 capital programme, as at the 31st October 2022 and detailed new projects and virements for noting and Cabinet approval.

It was reported that departmentally, a net spend of £64,369k was forecast compared with a working net budget of £148,334k giving a -£83,965k variance.

The net budget included the original H.R.A. and General Fund capital programmes approved by Council on the 2nd March, 2022 and slippage from 2021/22. It was noted that some budgets had 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.

It was noted that Appendix B detailed the main variances within each department.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

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

9. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Cabinet received a report which outlined information in regard to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24. The report sought formal adoption of the Council Tax Reduction scheme which replaced Council Tax Benefit in April 2013 for 2023/24.

Members noted that the Welsh Government had made regulations that retained the 2013/14 Council Tax Reduction scheme (with limited amendments) for 2014/15 and subsequent years.

Despite being an all-Wales scheme, individual Councils were required by the Prescribed Requirements Regulations to formally adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31st January each year otherwise the “Default Scheme” would apply which meant that the Council would be unable to exercise its discretion with regard to the limited discretionary elements in the prescribed scheme.

Should the Council wish to exercise its powers in relation to the limited areas of discretion available to it, it is required to do so as part of the formal scheme adoption process.

Furthermore, the report outlined for information, with no recommendation for change, the limited areas of local discretion, and the policy adopted by Council in respect of those discretions. However, whilst the scheme is materially unchanged for 2023/24, in addition to the normal annual up-rating of certain financial figures used for assessing individual entitlement and some technical adjustments (as is being provided for in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023), the statutory instrument made a number of other amendments which was detailed in the report.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL subject to the regulations being approved and coming into force on 20th January 2023 that it:-

- 9.1. Formally adopts the standard all-Wales Council Tax Reduction scheme provided for in the
 - a. Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, and****
 - 9.2. Implements the annual up-rating figures (used in entitlement calculations) and other technical amendments, included in the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 due to come into effect 20th January 2023 and these Regulations apply in relation to a council tax reduction scheme made for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2023;**
 - 9.3. Continues to exercise its discretion with regard to the limited discretionary elements of the prescribed scheme as outlined in the Executive Summary.**
- 10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 TO 2025/26 AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2023/24**

The Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2023/24 to 2025/26 and Housing Rent Setting proposals for 2023/24 prior to the consideration of Council. The report prepared by the Director of Corporate Services, in conjunction with officers from the Communities Department, brought together the latest proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for the Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 to 2025/26. It was noted the report had been considered, and endorsed, by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on the 19th December, 2022 as part of the budget consultation process, an extract of the minutes were appended to the report at Appendix C.

The report had been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+) for the future. It was noted the proposed investment within the current business plan had delivered the CHS by 2015 (to those homes where tenants had agreed to have the work undertaken) provided investment to maintain the CHS+ and continued investment for the Housing and Regeneration Delivery Plan.

The report also detailed how rents would increase for 2023/24 with the HRA budget being set to reflect:-

- Social Housing Rent Policy (set by Welsh Government)
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan

The Cabinet Member for Resources advised that capital investment in the region of £231m had provided Carmarthenshire Home Standard to tenants and, more recently, up to the end of the current financial year, a further £92m would have been spent in maintaining the CHS+ home standard for properties and tenants.

Over the next 3 years it was expected that a further £61m would be spent on maintaining and upgrading the housing stock. The budget also provided funding of some £43m over the next 3 years to support the Affordable Homes Programme, which was on top of the £68m expenditure already incurred to the end of this current financial year. The Strategy would also see the increase in the supply of affordable housing throughout the County through various solutions including our new build programme and buyback scheme. Furthermore, whilst the higher cost of materials due to Brexit, Covid, the war in Europe and a shortage of workers had made finding suitable partners among contractors a significant challenge, this would be continuously monitored throughout the coming year.

Cabinet Members were reminded that since 2015, the Authority had been required to adopt the Welsh Government Policy for Social Housing Rent Harmonisation, meaning that the proposed rent increase was prescribed by Welsh Government guidance and provided an equitable distribution of the rents for the social sector tenants.

While that policy ended in 2018/19, and an interim policy applied for 2019/20 the Welsh Government had subsequently developed a new policy for implementation in 2020/21 to apply for a period of 5 years from 2020/21 and contained some additional/amended requirements, as detailed within the report. The main elements of that policy allowed Local Authorities to uplift the total rent envelope by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% for each of the five years to 2024/25. It also allowed for the level of rent for individual tenants to rise by up to an additional £2 over and above CPI +1% for rent harmonisation, on condition that total rental income collected by the social landlord increased by no more than CPI +1%. However, should CPI fall outside the range of 0% to 3%, the policy provides for the Minister with responsibility for Housing to determine the appropriate change to rent levels to be applied for that year only. As CPI was 10.1% in September 2022 this clause has been activated this year and the Government Minister for Climate Change has instructed that the maximum increase in the rent envelope for any local authority should not exceed 6.5%.

Members were made aware that this current policy would apply until 2024/25 and contained some additional criteria around tenant satisfaction, space standards, financial hardship, minimising evictions and energy efficiency.

In the face of the challenges, the Cabinet Member for Resources reported that all priorities had been responded to and that an overall rent increase of 5.5%, which was 1% beneath the cap set by Welsh Government. Included within the overall rent increase envelope it was proposed that the Authority continued with the rent progression, which would be set at a maximum of £1 for properties below target rent.

In summary, the report proposed the following increases:

- Properties at target rent would increase by 5.36%, which represented a large proportion of tenants – nearly 8,000 tenants.
- Properties where rent was below target rent, the rent would increase by 5.36% plus a maximum progression of £1 per week,
- Rents above target would be frozen until they met the target.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

10.1 To increase average housing rent by 5.5% (£5.18) per dwelling per week as per WG Social Housing Rents Policy;

- Properties at target rents will increase by 5.36%, and;
- Properties where rent is below target rent, rent will increase by 5.36% plus a maximum progression of £1.00;
- Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target.

This will produce a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+, resource our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan and is supported by Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team;

10.2. To maintain garage rents at £9.00 and garage bases at £2.25;

10.3. Apply the Service Charge Policy to ensure tenants who receive the benefit from specific services pay for those services;

10.4. To increase charges for using our sewerage treatment works in line with rent increase;

10.5. To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2023/26 (2024/25 & 2025/26 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix A;

10.6. To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2023/24 and the indicative spends for 2024/25 to 2025/26 as set out in Appendix B.

**11. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2023-26
CARMARTHENSHIRE'S HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire's Housing Investment Programme which explained the vision and detail of the Council's Housing Investment Programme over the next three years, including the housing stock improvement plans, the new build programme and the plans to become net zero carbon.

The Cabinet member for Homes, in acknowledging the economic challenges and the difficulties communities faced regarding the increasing cost of living explained that continued support to tenants in need was vital and at the heart of the work being carried out. It was reported that the Council had already delivered over 1,600 additional homes and the new development programme would support the delivery of a further 2,000 homes, supporting the regeneration of our town centres, rural towns and villages and our major regeneration sites including the Transforming Tyisha programme.

The programme of works would make a significant contribution to tackling the climate emergency and follows the Council's principles of becoming a Net Zero Carbon Authority by 2030. The Council was leading the way on its approach to decarbonising homes, which would make homes more affordable for tenants, provide healthier living conditions and create a greener Carmarthenshire. This plan showed a firm commitment to support the investment required for decarbonising our homes which would involve improving the fabric performance of our homes, installing low carbon heating solutions and renewable technology.

The plan outlined that the Council would continue to deliver a comprehensive programme of works to homes and maintain services to all of its tenants. It would also help stimulate the local economy creating new jobs and training opportunities. During the three years of this plan, we would invest over £260m into social housing in Carmarthenshire (Capital £103m and Revenue £157m)

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL TO:

- 11.1 Confirm the vision for our housing investment programmes over the next three years;**
- 11.2 Agree that the 2023-26 Business Plan can be submitted to Welsh Government;**
- 11.3 Note the contribution the Plan makes to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2000 homes;**
- 11.4 Note the importance of the investment included in this plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and creating local jobs and training opportunities.**

12. SECOND HOMES & EMPTY PROPERTIES

[Note: Councillor A. Davies having earlier declared a personal interest in this item left the meeting during the consideration and voting thereof.]

The Cabinet considered a report which provided information on the areas for consideration in relation to Second Homes/Short Term Holiday Homes and Empty Properties. Which had been developed following concerns raised at both a local and National level about the perceived impact of growing numbers of second homes and empty properties on our communities.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, in presenting the report highlighted that in 2021, as part of the Agreement between the Welsh government and Plaid Cymru, ways of tackling the second home crisis were announced, including the right to raise the premium to 300% and use the procedure planning and permits. Central to the intention was to ensure fairness, and that good quality affordable housing was accessible to all whilst the owners of second homes made a fair and effective contribution to the communities where the property is being purchased.

Cabinet Members attention was drawn to the recommendations as set out in the report. A correction should be made to the recommendation about second homes, to be correct, the recommendation in terms of the premium was that to consider raising a premium of either 50% or 100% on Second Homes.

It was noted that Carmarthenshire had circa 2,300 empty houses at any given time. In addition, under the new provision, a long-term vacant house was a dwelling that had been empty and with minimal furniture for a continuous period of at least one year. There are around 1,300 such houses in Carmarthenshire. The challenges in dealing with such properties were wide and varied with much of the responsibility for trying to tackle these problems falling on local authorities. Whilst the Local Authority had the responsibility and the legal powers to bring empty houses back into use, it was not practical or desirable in all cases.

It was reported that raising Council Tax Premiums on Vacant Properties and Second Homes was one option available to the Authority in order to manage the situation locally. However, due consideration must be given to the statutory duties to carry out equality impact assessments under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties of Wales 2011, and all other relevant considerations.

In addition, contacting and consulting key stakeholders, including the local electorate, before deciding whether to raise a premium in either case should be considered.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to:

12.1 Conduct a consultation and impact assessment on introducing council tax premiums on empty properties with a proposal that the following is introduced:

- 50% for those which have been empty between 1 and 2 years;
- The level of premium would then increase to 100% for those properties which have been empty for 2 years up to 5 years;
- then a further increase to 200% for properties empty for 5 years or more;

12.2 Conduct a consultation and impact assessment on introducing council tax premiums on Second Homes/holiday homes with a proposal raising a premium of either 50% or 100% for all properties classified as a second home under Class B of the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwelling) (Wales) Regulations 1998.

13. ST DAVID'S DAY NOTICE OF MOTION

The Cabinet received for consideration a report which set out the progress in regard to the Notice of Motion referred to Cabinet by County Council on 28th September, 2022 [Minute 11.1 refers].

Members noted that the creation of a public or bank holiday is a matter of statute that falls under the responsibility of Westminster Government and that Welsh Government had lobbied Westminster for the responsibility to be devolved to Wales however, this had so far been resisted, although the previous Leader had written to Welsh Government to ask for an all-Wales approach to St David's Day. Fundamentally, without the agreement of Westminster Government or devolved powers to Welsh Government any re-designation of the existing bank/public holidays or creation of a new one would be without funding for the additional costs as a consequence.

The notional cost of applying the extra Statutory day is circa £350k for NJC employees. Should Teaching staff also be included, then the quantum would reach circa £700k.

In view of the current financial situation which the Council faces, the Cabinet Member for Organisation and Workforce, proposed that point c of the notice of motion; *to denote David's Day as an additional day of paid leave for its staff on March 1st annually*, not be progressed at this time. This was duly seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

- 13.1. to call on the Westminster Government to devolve to the Welsh Government the authority for deciding on bank holidays in Wales (through the Banking & Financial Dealings Act 1971) in the same way as at present in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and that we ask all Councils in Wales to make a similar request through the Welsh Local Government Association;**
- 13.2. to note the public support for the creation of a bank holiday on St. David's Day in Wales, and that the Welsh Government has on numerous occasions asked the UK Government to devolve the necessary powers;**
- 13.3 that the investigation of the possibility and implications of denoting St David's Day as an additional day of paid leave for its staff on March 1st annually not be progressed.**
- 13.4. to further consider how the Council can further support St. David's Day celebrations on and around March 1st, working in conjunction with Town and Community Councils and other key partners to deliver cultural and economic benefits.**

14. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/22

Cabinet received a report on the Council's Annual Report for 2021/22, produced in accordance with the requirements of both the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 which required the Council to produce an Annual report on its Well Being objectives and to report on performance, based on a self-assessment approach. The report referenced, in turn, each of the Council's 13 Well Being Objectives and assessed the progress and adaptations made during the year.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report for 2021/22 be received.

15. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

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

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as the reports contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

17. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CHRT/LLANELLY HOUSE

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute no. 16 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act). The public interest test in respect of this report outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained therein as disclosure would reveal financial information about the operation of Llanelly House which could weaken its position in relation to third parties with whom it engages.

Cabinet Members received a report in regard to the financial support for CHRT/Llanelly House for consideration. Llanelly House is key in supporting the Regeneration of Llanelli Town Centre and assistance was required to ensure the continued sustainability of the house.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to continue to support the CHRT/Llanelly House project by approving a support package of up to £60k per annum for a further 2 years.

18. PENTRE AWEL

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute no. 16 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act). The public interest test in respect of this report outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained therein as disclosure undermine the position of the contractor when negotiating with sub-contractors and suppliers putting it at an unfair disadvantage in the market.

Cabinet Members received a report which provided an update on the construction contract and affordability of Zone 1 of Pentre Awel.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism proposed an additional recommendation to delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Services and Chief Executive to continue to negotiate the final contract price and agree this price in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism and Cabinet Member for Resources. This was duly seconded.

The Head of Administration confirmed that the report and recommendations contained therein required consideration by full council for decision as an exempt item.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- 18.1 To receive and note the conclusion and outcomes of the first phase of the two-stage design and build contract to deliver Pentre Awel Zone 1.**
- 18.2 To proceed to the second phase of the contract with Bouygues, Construction, as per the recommendation in the report;**
- 18.3. To note the progress in securing tenancy agreements;**
- 18.4. That any shortfall in funding will be provided through a combination of external funder additional contribution, County Council Pentre Awel (City Deal) contingency funding and additional funding from the market. Upon finalisation of Bouygues' price, a summary table will be shared with Cabinet Members presented to Cabinet. A programme of ongoing Value Engineering will be undertaken with Bouygues throughout the duration of the contract to ensure robust cost management;**

- 18.5 To delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Services and Chief Executive to continue to negotiate the final contract price and agree this price in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism and Cabinet Member for Resources.**

CHAIR

DATE

Agenda Item 12

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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