

Corporate Services Departmental Business Plan

for delivering our Corporate Strategy
and Well-being Objectives

March 2021

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

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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This Departmental Business Plan has been produced to give staff, customers, elected members and partners a guide to the services provided by the department. It translates strategic objectives, to service objectives, to individual staff targets. It provides an open and transparent way of showing what is to be achieved and how we plan to do this.

It shows how resources will be used to achieve objectives and the service implications of budgetary increases or reductions. It shows what we get for what we spend and if we are making the most of what we have. We aim to show at a high level what the department will do to support the Corporate Strategy 2018-23 and the Well-being Objectives we have set (see Page 3 below), also taking account of the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

How the Department's Services support the Well-being Objectives

Revised Well-Being Objectives	Financial Services	Revenues and Financial Compliance	Specific focus for 2021/22
Start Well			
1. Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences			Expansion of Flying Start
2. Help children live healthy lifestyles			Mental health issues post lockdown
3. Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners			Re-engage in learning and regain any learning lost due to COVID
Live Well			
4. Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work and improving the lives of those living in poverty		✓	Poverty
5. Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county	✓	✓	Focus on SME Foundational economy Rural regeneration Pentre Awel
6. Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes			Local housing crisis - escalating costs and second homes
7. Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)			
8. Support community cohesion, resilience and safety			Community cohesion and resilience
Age Well			
9. Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years			
In a Healthy and Safe Environment			
10. Looking after the environment now and for the future			Climate change with particular focus on flooding Net Zero Carbon
11. Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity			
12. Promoting Welsh Language and Culture	✓	✓	Supporting national target of a million Welsh speakers
In addition a Corporate Objective			
13. Better Governance and Making Better Use of Resources	✓	✓	We support 3 out of the 7 areas of Corporate Change: 2 Financial Planning 4 Procurement 6 Risk Management



[HOS and Well-being Objective Map](#)

[Steps within Well-being Objectives](#)

Executive Board Member Foreword



I have great pleasure in introducing the Corporate Services Departmental Summary Business Plan for 2021/22. I am satisfied that this Business Plan provides a comprehensive overview of the Departmental performance. It also provides the Department's aims and objectives for 2021/22.

Sign Off Cllr. David Jenkins

Date: 22.4.21

Introduction by Director of Corporate Services



The Directorate for Corporate Services supports all the Departments within the Authority and employs over 200 people with an overall of budget of nearly £31 million. The department is diverse and includes Accountancy, Treasury Management, Payroll, Pensions, Revenue Services including Council, Housing Benefit and Debtors, Internal Audit, Corporate Procurement and Risk Management.

After a challenging year dealing with COVID 19 I would like to thank all staff for their contribution and dedication often under challenging circumstances; I would like to thank you for your commitment, flexibility and personal resilience shown and this deserves to be recognised, thank you.

All services have been working hard and responded well during the Covid pandemic. We have adapted to new ways of working and re-acted quickly by introducing new processes in a timely manner such as the introduction of electronic processing for both our banking transactions and treasury management practices, supporting local businesses via business grants and procuring of PPE, whilst managing both capital and revenue accounts and Welsh Government funding.

We plan for services to develop in a post COVID world and we do so from a position of strength in which the whole local authority has responded well to the unprecedented challenges. The introduction of the new Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 with the changes to our existing Audit Committee structure, we will reflect on the recommendations of the CLES report and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales Procuring Well Being Report and supporting the health and well-being of our staff are key priorities for 2021. We will do this alongside playing our part corporately in the recovery of the whole council. To achieve our key priorities, we will look to reshape our services, working with the new ways of working group.

Our key priorities and actions as detailed in this plan have all been developed in line with the Future Generation principles of planning for the long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement.

Our vision is strongly linked to the priorities of the Authority and summarises our central purpose of **'Making Better use of Resources'**

Chris Moore, Director of Corporate Services

The following Summary Divisional Plans are included:

- **Financial Services Division – Head of Service Randal Hemingway**



Financial Services includes 3 distinct areas:

Accountancy – we provide a decentralised accounting and financial management service covering Technical Accounting (Preparation of final accounts, corporate accounting, and taxation), Management Accounting (Month end close, maintenance of financial records and budgeting) and Strategic Finance functions (projects, planning and financial advice to members).

Pensions Administration, Systems, Accounts Payable & Administration – Carmarthenshire County Council is the statutorily administering authority for the Dyfed Pension Fund. It also acts as the administrator for the unfunded Police and Fire pension schemes for Dyfed Powys Police Authority, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service respectively. The systems function ensures the integrity of the comprehensive corporate financial system for both the Authority and several external clients. The corporate payments service provides a range of payment solutions that support both internal and external clients in the settlement of supplier invoices relating to the receipt of goods and services.

Treasury Management, Pensions Investments and Technical – the unit manages the strategic direction and operation of the Dyfed Pension Fund Investments and Dyfed Welsh Church Fund, as well as the host authority function of the Wales Pension Partnership. The unit also manages the Treasury Management and Banking Service areas. The Technical Section is responsible for financial, grant compliance advice and accounting support for specific grant funded projects and the research, interpretation, and consultation responses on local government finance matters.

- **Revenues & Financial Compliance Division – Head of Service**

Helen Pugh



Revenues & financial compliance includes 5 distinct areas:

Revenue Services – responsible for the administration, billing and recovery of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates. This service also undertakes the billing, collection and recovery of miscellaneous income as well as having the responsibility for operating the Councils three full time cash offices, self-service kiosks, and other income processing functions. In addition, Revenue Services is responsible for the administration of Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit Schemes which help low-income households meet their rent and/or Council Tax.

Internal Audit – Audit provides an ongoing review of the Authorities systems and operations to minimise risk of loss from error, fraud, waste, or extravagance.

Risk Management ensures that strategic and operational risks are fully identified and managed by the Authority and aims to minimise overall losses to the Authority.

Corporate Procurement – monitors and supports the delivery of strategic procurement issues across the Authority. The procurement function balances value for money factors with community and political preferences, resource and investment needs, equality, employment, workforce, environmental and sustainability considerations in line with the Welsh Governments Wales Procurement Policy Statement.

Business Development – promotes and supports a culture of performance management and provides business support to Corporate Services.

Financial Services Summary Divisional Plan

Ref	Key Actions and Measures	By When?	By Who?	WBO Ref
A	Financial Services			
1	We will provide significant financial support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B6
2	We will undertake the closure and Audit of the Accounts within the appropriate timescales	June 2021	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B6
3	We will ensure an unqualified audit of the final accounts	September 2021	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B7
4	We will monitor and implement changes to the Local Government Pension scheme as a consequence of legislation changes, including Sargeant/McCloud	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway /Kevin Gerard	
5	To support the Pensions Board	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	
6	To collaborate with other LGPS Funds and pools on investments and governance	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	
7	To manage the Host Authority Function for the Wales Pension Partnership	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	
8	To ensure timely closure of accounts for the Dyfed Pension Fund	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	
9	We will fully support staff in their health and well being	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B5
10	We will identify a set of key performance indicators taking a balanced scorecard approach	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B6
11	Use of the Councils reserves to invest in the County and support future development (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire)	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B6 MF5-96
12	Ensure the Council manages its budgets effectively and prudently (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire)	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway	WBO13-B6 MF5-98
B	Key Measures of Success			
1	The % of undisputed invoices which were paid in 30 days (CFH/006)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Karen Mansel	WBO5-D

2	Return on Investments to outperform the average 7 day LIBID (London Interbank Indicative) rate for the year (6.1.2.1)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	WBO13-B6
3	New borrowing rate to outperform the average PWLB rate for the year (6.1.2.2)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Randal Hemingway/ Anthony Parnell	WBO13-B6

Key Divisional Risks

Risk Ref	Risk Score	Identified Risk	Control Measures
CSV250001	12	Threat of financial crisis impacting on Treasury and Dyfed Pension Fund Management	Monitoring of PI Ref: 6.1.2.1/6.1.2.2 & 6.1.3.4 (See table B above)
CRR190004	20	Ensuring that the Authority effectively manages its financial resources and responds to the challenges of reduced funding	Medium term Financial Strategy – 5 year plan. Full County Council Elected Member engagement to set priorities and allocate the budget. Challenge from Scrutiny Committees. Public consultation re: budget priorities. (see A10 above)
CRR190005	16	Ensuring effective management of Grant Funding (including accessing grant funding)	Project management training. Grant Funding Bodies Guidance briefings and training. Grants Panel. Grants manual/CPRs/FPRs

Revenues & Financial Compliance Summary Divisional Plan

Ref	Key Actions and Measures	By When?	By Who?	WBO Ref
1	We will continue to provide significant procurement support and advice to the Swansea Bay City Region Carmarthenshire led projects	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO5-A
2	We will promote the updated Financial Procedure Rules, the Antifraud and Anti-corruption strategy and any other specific strategies/policies or regulatory recommendations.	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Caroline Powell	WBO13-B1
3	Implement the changes to our Audit Committee structure in line with the new Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021.	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Caroline Powell	WBO13-B7
4	We will address the recommendation or proposals for improvement arising from the Wales Audit Office review of Risk Management arrangements	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/Julie Standeven	WBO13-B6
5	We will continue to support the early engagement of Local Businesses and have due regard to the effect of our procurement on the local economy	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Clare Jones	WBO5-D
6	We will monitor effective Contract management throughout the Authority	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Clare Jones	WBO13-B6
7	Advance our progressive procurement action plan following on from the work with the Centre for Local Enterprises (CLES)	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Clare Jones	WBO13 -A
8	We will address the key findings, highlighting good practice and recommendations from the 'Procuring well-being in Wales' report (publish 25 th February 2021) from the Office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/ Clare Jones	WBO13 -A
9	We will contribute to tackling poverty within Carmarthenshire.	March 2021	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh/Ann Thomas	WBO4-D
10	Build Talent – attract, develop, and retain high calibre of staff	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO13-B5
11	We will fully support staff in their health and well being	March 2022	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO13-B5

B	Key performance measures			
1	Actual achievement against Annual Audit Plan. (6.4.1.3)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO13-B7
2	Average number of days taken to process new Housing/ Council Tax Benefit claims. (6.6.1.2)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO4-D
3	Average number of days taken to process notifications of changes of circumstances in Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims. (6.6.1.3)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO4-D
4	% of recently calculated Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims that have been calculated accurately based on a sample check. (6.6.1.9)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO4-D
5	% of council tax due for the financial year which was received by the authority. (CFH/007)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO13-B6
6	The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority. (CFH/008)	Quarterly	Chris Moore/ Helen Pugh	WBO13-B6

Key Divisional Risks

Risk Ref or New?	Risk Score After control measures	Identified Risk <small>All risks can be profiled in the Divisional Plan. In this departmental plan the Division should identify: 1. Any Risks that it has on the Corporate Risk Register 2. Significant Risks (scored 16+) (3. Service High Risk (scored 12+) – see Divisional Plan)</small>	Control measures
CSV330003	15	Additional Council Tax Reduction Scheme Workload due to the extra verification work for the increasing number of customers in receipt of Universal Credit	Monitoring of PI Ref: 6.6.1.2/6.6.1.3/6.6.1.5/6.6.1.6 & 6.6.1.9. (see B in Table above)
CV330005	25	Potential pressure on the Discretionary Housing Payment Funding provided by Department of Works and Pensions	Monitoring of the DWP Fund (See B in Table above)
CSV340002	25	Insufficient resources (within the unit or elsewhere) to progress identified service improvements and system changes: Agresso/Debtors System	To undertake a proactive service improvement and development role – (included in Financial Services Divisional Plan)
CSV340003	20	Insufficient resources (within the unit or elsewhere) to progress identified service improvements and system changes: Northgate Server/Revenues and Benefits System	To undertake a proactive service improvement and development role (included in Financial Services Divisional Plan)

Coronavirus Risks – Corporate Services

Risk Ref	Risk Score After control measures	Identified Risk All risks can be profiled in the Divisional Plan. In this departmental plan the Division should identify: 1. Any Risks that it has on the Corporate Risk Register 2. Significant Risks (scored 16+) (3. Service High Risk (scored 12+) – see Divisional Plan)	Controls
CORCS0001	20	Loss of Staff in critical business areas to provide a critical service	To work closely with managers in these critical business areas to monitor this situation and to re-deploy staff
CORCS0002	20	Increased workloads in critical business areas – such as in Revenue Services	Monitor workloads with managers on a daily basis and to re-deploy staff and resources
CORCS0003	20	Strategic financial implications – loss of income	Recovery of Council Tax and NNDR whilst being sensitive to the current situation
CORCS0004	20	Financial implications – Increased costs due to COVID 19 demands and compliance with Welsh Government Instructions	Exceptional procurement purchases due to Covid 19 must be signed off by Section 151 Officer
CORCS0005	20	Possible increase in fraud and abuse of internal systems and controls such as procurement, whilst emergency rules in place	Raise awareness with managers and line managers to seek audit advice
CORCS0007	16	Risk of Schools Travel Insurance provider repudiating claims made by Carmarthenshire Schools	Work closely with the Councils Broker to challenge Insurers decision. Encourage and support schools to pursue recovery from travel companies/airlines. Submit complaints to Financial Conduct Authority.
COVST0002	20	Covid – Strategic: Failure to interpret changes in HR legislation – guidance notes not rolled out so managers are not compliant, which would lead to confusion and potential challenge	HR to include controls.
COVST0008	20	Health and Well-being of staff and public	See Action A8.
COVST0015	20	Covid – Strategic: Failure to manage grants and maximise on the funding resources available: Failure to secure funding	Recovery Group reviewing financial position. Reprioritisation of funding to best address the current liabilities.

		<p>Failure to deliver current projects within the set timescales</p> <p>Failure to deliver outputs in line with the T&C's of grant paying departments</p>	<p>Dialogue with grant paying bodies.</p> <p>Reprioritisation of capital programme.</p>
COVST0016	20	<p>Covid – Strategic: Risk of local business and economy not recovering from the lockdown</p>	<p>Financial Support to businesses.</p>
COVST0017	20	<p>Covid – Strategic: Risk of contractor and suppliers failing to deliver projects/schemes:</p> <p>Contractors resources depleted.</p> <p>Contract failure</p> <p>Cost increases</p> <p>Sourcing materials</p>	<p>Procurement processes to continue in selected areas.</p> <p>Set up contracts for work ready after lockdown.</p>
CRR190030	20	<p>Risk to business continuity, system failure and service delivery.</p>	<p>Services are updating Business Continuity Plans.</p> <p>Regional planning group in place with other sector organisations.</p> <p>Risks will be managed by service daily monitoring.</p>

Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

This is a new Act introduced by the Welsh Government, which will change aspects of how we work. 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 and environmental well-being of Wales in accordance with sustainable development principles.

A. The Sustainable Development Principle of the Act

The new law states that 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. The Five Ways of Working required by the Act

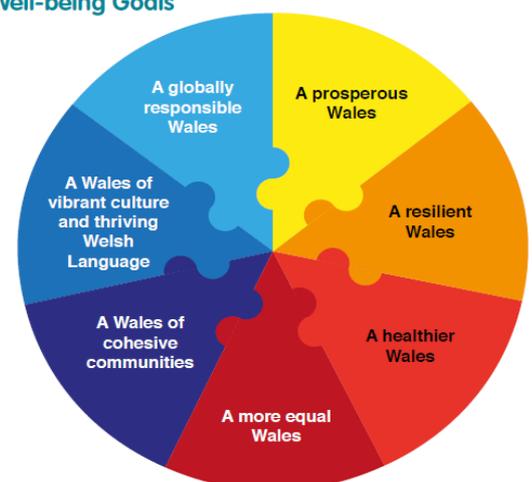
To show that we have applied the sustainable development principle we must demonstrate the following 5 ways of working:-

1. Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
2. Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their priorities;
3. Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them;
4. Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions;
5. Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring.

C. The Seven Well-being Goals of the Act

There are **7 well-being goals** in the Act. Together they provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards. We must work towards achieving all of them.

Well-being Goals



Budget Information:

Attached is the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2020/21 to 2023/24 and the 5 year Capital Programme (Council Fund) 2021/22 to 2025/26 detailing budget information for the Authority including Corporate Services Department.

Revenue Budget Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24



Revenue Budget
Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24

5 Year Capital Programme (Council Fund) 2021/22 to 2025/26



5 Year Capital
Programme (Council Fund)