

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE



Well-being in our Community 2017 – 2022

2022 - Version 6



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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 An introduction from the Council Leader and Chief Executive



Councillor Lisa Mytton

Council Leader



Ellis Cooper

Chief Executive



**Best Start to
Life**



Working Life



**Environmental
Well-being**



Living Well

On behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, we are pleased to present our updated corporate well-being plan "Focus on the Future: well-being in our community".

This follows on from the report we presented last year and remains one of the most important plans that this Council has developed as we continue to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and progress along our transformation and improvement journey. However, we are going to fully review and renew this plan in 2022. We are not going to do this on our own, we want to get the views of our residents, businesses, partners, staff and trades unions to inform our thinking.

In our plan, we set out what we expect from both Elected Members and Officers of the Council to achieve our well-being objectives and corporate priorities. Similar to last year, this plan will provide us with focus to sustainably and equitably deliver our services to meet the needs of our residents and support the wider regional plan.

We have 4 well-being objectives, each with a primary outcome, you can find out more in Section 2 of this plan. Our objectives are integrated with the regional Cwm Taf Public Services Board's [Well-being Plan – Our Cwm Taf](#). Our regional plan is also being reviewed and renewed. Needs assessments have recently been carried out across the region. Although the data is not fully available for this plan, it will be used to inform our reviewed plan later this year.

The Pandemic has meant that 2021 and the start of 2022 has remained exceptionally challenging for us all. As a Council, we have continued to deliver services to our residents, whilst responding to a global pandemic. This has been a joint effort from Elected Members, Officers and Partners. This continues to show how we can work together to overcome major challenges; something we have built on during the pandemic and will continue to build on going forward. Our response to the pandemic has continued to provide us with opportunities to do things differently or indeed do different things. We continue to be committed to working closely with our communities to involve them in how we move forward. As Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, we want to continue to build connections between people and empower communities in improving well-being.

As we reported last year, we have been working with an Improvement and Assurance Board commissioned by Welsh Government. This board has helped us to prioritise, refocus and strengthen key areas of the Council. This led to the development of our '[Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan](#)'. This was included in last year's plan and has been enhanced and is again included in this year's plan. This addresses our immediate risks but also the longer-term. We have continued to work with the support provided by Welsh Government. This has been targeted on our 3 areas of priority as explained in last year's plan. This helps us better deliver our well-being objectives and outcomes included in this plan. Our 3 priorities are: improving our education standards, increasing our resilience in social care and supporting economic recovery.



By taking this approach we will address the question of 'so what?' - We are focused on improving outcomes for our residents and this remains at the heart of what we do.

Various workshops with Elected Members, Scrutiny Members and Officers have enabled us to further strengthen these agreed priority areas for improvement in line with the expectations of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We will continue to work together refining our plans to ensure they continue to help our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and our transformation and improvement journey. This includes holding each other to account and focusing on increasing our performance and quality of services. In doing this we have also focused on our support services and how this resource can help us transform.

Elected Members will continue to lead community development by bringing people and communities together. All involved will use their knowledge, skills and experiences to promote opportunities for community involvement to achieve positive and long-lasting changes. This aligns with our improvement

plans for our scrutiny function. Officers have worked with Elected Members, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and other Councils in planning this. We look forward to how this improves our outcomes going forward.

We will continue to work smarter through using the sustainable development principle set out as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This will ensure the decisions we take enable sustainable improvements and support the well-being of the people who live and work in Merthyr Tydfil today and in the future. Over the last year we have focused on improving our data and how we use it in our decision making. We look forward to developing this further in 2022.



Tackling poverty remains a key focus for us. Over the last year we have studied the data available and better understood our communities needs through the regional needs assessment. We want to take that further this year. We will engage with groups to inform our plans going forward and most importantly to help us meet the needs of our communities. This plan shows how [tackling poverty](#) is a cross cutting theme. We are acutely aware of the impact of austerity on people living and working within the County Borough. We are using data and findings to develop a model to identify how we can be preventative in our approach and, as well as addressing the immediate needs, think of the long-term.

To make sure we deliver this plan and the recovery, transformation and improvement we set out below in this document, we must also focus on how we support delivery and monitor our performance. Improving our governance will remain a focus to ensure we improve efficiently, effectively and economically. Our scrutiny, both as part of our internal governance and formal committees, will play a major part in our transformation and improvement journey. Our staff performance and development are still a focus for us. We have, and will continue to, build our capacity including supporting our apprenticeship programme.

There are still significant challenges that we will overcome. We will remain focused on addressing these and reshaping the organisation to meet the needs of our residents now and into the future.



Supporting
Change

Lisa Mytton
Council Leader

Ellis Cooper
Chief Executive

1.2 Focus on the Future - Summary



1.3 The purpose of Our Focus on the Future Plan

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, public bodies in Wales must work in a sustainable way to achieve the common vision to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of Wales. Therefore, we need to make sure that when we make decisions, we take into account the impact they could have on the people living in Merthyr Tydfil now and in the future. These are set out in the 5 ways of working (sustainable development principle).

The Act means we have a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. The Commissioner's role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales and to support public bodies listed in the Act in working towards achieving the seven national Well-being Goals.

As well as wanting to inform and involve you in our plans, we have a duty under the 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to publish our well-being objectives and supporting statement (Our Statement of Well-being) at the start of the financial year, showing how we are contributing to the 7 national well-being goals. As part of this plan, we are also publishing our key priorities for improvement.

Seven well-being goals

The Act sets out for the first time in law, that public bodies are working towards the same purpose. The Act puts in place 7 national well-being goals which represent the shared vision for Wales and makes it clear that the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals and not just 1 or 2.

Sustainable Development

The Act places a legal duty on public bodies to adopt sustainable development as the central organising principle when setting well-being objectives and in taking steps to meet those objectives.

The Act confirms that sustainable development is the central organising principle that public bodies must apply when making decisions and taking steps to achieve their well-being objectives.



“public bodies in Wales must think about the long term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.”

(Future Generations Commissioner: Sophie Howe)

Five Ways of Working

In the Act, sustainable development is exemplified by 5 ways of working. There are ways of working that public bodies must adopt to evidence how they have used sustainable development as their central organising principle. Following these ways of working offers a huge opportunity to make long-lasting, positive change to current and future generations. There are details on how we have changed our ways of working in line with the sustainable development principles below in this document.



Our Focus on the Future Plan

In our Statement of Well-being, we set out the scope of each Well-being Objective and outline why we consider that meeting the Well-being Objective will maximise our contribution to the achievement of the 7 national Well-being Goals.

In this plan, we set out how we intend to achieve our well-being objectives. This includes associated priorities, details of key plans and strategies, and how the plan will be financed.

We review our plan annually to make certain that the key priorities, plans and strategies remain relevant and clearly aligned to our well-being objectives. This outlines the changes made as part of this review and the rationale. In addition, we will also publish an [Annual Performance Report](#), which will evaluate the progress we have made.

Things are changing slightly in 2022. We will review and renew our Corporate Well-being Plan to make sure we are still meeting the needs of our communities. We will use the findings from engagement and consultation done within our region and build on this. We will also be producing our first 'Self-Assessment Report' to meet our duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This report will replace our Annual Performance Report.

The diagram opposite is a simple illustration to visualise how our plan sits in relation to the regional work across Cwm Taf.



1.4 Involving our Communities

The County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil has a population of around 60,000; that is more people per square km than Wales as a whole. A brief summary of the County Borough, in comparison to the rest of Wales, shows Merthyr Tydfil has the:

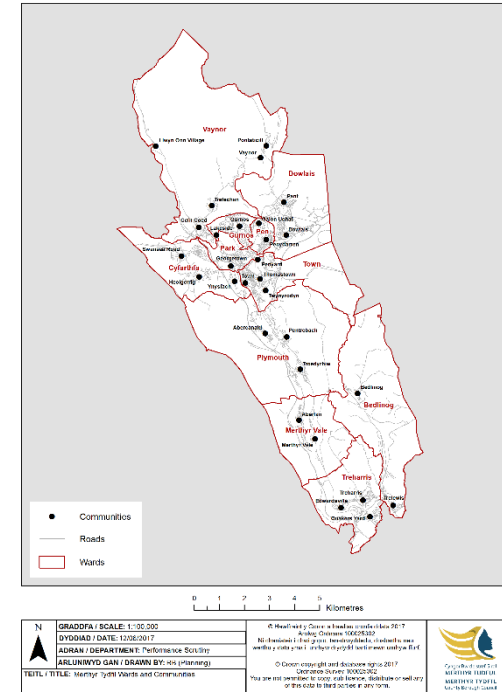
- 4th highest percentage of people aged under 16 in Wales;
- 3rd lowest percentage of people aged over 65 in Wales;
- 2nd highest percentage of people claiming benefits in Wales;
- 3rd highest average band D council tax in Wales.

(Taken from (source): www.mylocalcouncil.info; February 2022)

There are 11 Electoral Divisions (wards) in Merthyr Tydfil, represented by 33 Ward Councillors. Our Councillors play a leadership role as community ambassadors, helping provide community intelligence and helping empower local people to improve their communities through the provision of advice, guidance and practical support.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC), a unitary authority, employs 1,297 corporate staff and 1,179 school-based staff.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires a more 'active' level of community involvement in order to achieve outcomes. As a Council, this means that we need to involve our communities in the planning and designing of services, together with involving communities in understanding how they will be affected.



What did our Cwm Taf well-being and Cwm Taf population assessments tell us?

Cwm Taf is made up of 2 local authority areas, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. Both the Cwm Taf well-being and Cwm Taf population assessments were produced in March 2017, setting the basis of our local and regional plans. We have continued to review our objectives to ensure that we focus on the outcomes of these assessments.

The needs assessments carried out in 2021 (and will be used in future plans) was conducted across Cwm Taf Morgannwg. It should be noted that Cwm Taf Morgannwg is made up of 3 local authority areas, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend. Once analysed, the 2021 needs assessments will be used to inform our corporate well-being plan and other strategic plans.

This plan however has been based on the needs assessments carried out in 2017, until the new plan is published later in 2022.

The [Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment](#) was conducted through the Public Services Board (PSB) to work together to improve services and communities across the region. The report explains how communities have their own identities and data showed the demographic of the population and likely trends e.g. a forecast large increase in the over 85 age range, changing the way we consider social care in the long-term. This work informed the PSB Well-being Plan and our Well-being themes and Objectives.

The [Cwm Taf Population Assessment](#) was conducted in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It considers the 4 pillars of the Act (namely, Well-being, People, Partnership and Prevention) and 3 key areas of: 'What level of care and support is needed?'; 'Where the gaps are and how to fill them?'; 'How services need to change to make sure that they are providing that level of care and support and preventative services?'. 6 overarching themes were concluded: Using our Data more effectively; Information – Finding out more about support services; Connections; Working together; Stopping problems before they start, or get worse; Making it personal – being listened to and understood. This informs how the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and MTCBC work. This has informed regional and local objectives, including key themes in our [Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan](#).

Developing Community Action

We will continue to provide support to our Councillors so they can carry out community-based work and support community-led initiatives where it is required. You will find examples of community group work that has taken place throughout the County Borough by visiting our [‘Contact Magazine’](#) web page.

A number of community collaborative activities are already under development for the coming year. These include:

- The ongoing development of activities within the Cyfarthfa Heritage Area;
- Our Raising Aspirations Raising Standards strategy was launched in September 2021, and work is now ongoing with key stakeholders to deliver this;
- We will begin delivery of our 15-year economic vision for the County Borough, are working collaboratively with local businesses; social enterprises and key partners to begin work on a variety of activities; and
- Our projects around addressing unemployment and training needs will continue, to support our communities using feedback from participants to develop ad design courses and learning activities.

Section 2 – Focus on the Future – Our Plan

2.1 Our Shared Vision

This visual shows how our shared vision fits with our 7 national goals, together with how our 4 well-being objectives fit with our regional PSB well-being objectives.

We will review our vision as part of our Recovery Transformation and Improvement Plan to ensure we are still meeting the needs of our communities.

Our local and regional well-being objectives will be reviewed and updated as part of community engagement as required.

The Wales we want:



A Prosperous Wales



A Resilient Wales



A Healthier Wales



A More Equal Wales



A Wales of Cohesive Communities



A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language



A Globally Responsible Wales

OUR SHARED VISION

“ACTING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”



To strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys, and be a place to be proud of where:

People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions,
People live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life,
People visit, enjoy and return

The **shared vision** for Merthyr Tydfil to get there:

How will Merthyr Tydfil CBC work?



Long Term



Prevention



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement



How will we work together to deliver the Our Shared Vision and achieve our goals?





Focus on the Future	PSB Well-being Plan	Improvement Priorities
 Best Start to Life Children and young people have the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.	Community Resilience and Well-being To promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets.	 Improving our Education Standards
 Working Life People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil as an attractive destination.	Lifestyles, health and vulnerability To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.	 Increasing our Resilience in Social Care
 Environmental Well-being Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside.	Economy and Infrastructure To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.	 Economic Recovery
 Living Well People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	Tackling loneliness and isolation (Cross cutting objective) We will work in new ways to channel the undoubted strengths of our communities, including volunteers to tackle more effectively the loneliness and isolation which often exists within many of them.	

2.2 Our Well-being Themes and Objectives – A summary

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to work better with each other and communities through involvement and by taking a collaborative approach. This is increasingly important to meet the challenges we face.

In order to set our well-being objectives, we contributed to the development of a joint needs assessment across Cwm Taf. You can read more about the well-being assessments on the '[Our Cwm Taf](#)' website. This was carried out to inform the development of the Statement of Well-being and subsequently led to the development of the Council's well-being objectives. The 4 themes and objectives presented in the 2020/2021 iteration of the Plan remain unchanged for this 2021/2022 plan.

We will review and renew our Corporate Well-being Plan 2022 using the findings from the needs assessments carried out in 2021 across the region.

Well-being Theme	Objective	Primary Outcome
 Best Start	Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.	Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people
 Working Life	People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination.	Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish
 Environmental Well-being	Communities protect, enhance, and promote our environment and countryside.	Maximise the amount of material and resources reused and recycled in line with the waste hierarchy
 Living Well	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities

In this plan, we set out the steps that we will take to ensure that we maximise our contribution to the corporate priorities and well-being objectives. This plan will focus on what is being done to achieve the Well-being Objectives, including key corporate priorities and associated plans and strategies.

Since the publication of version 5 (2021-22) of our plan, we have further developed our 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan 2020 – 2025'. Here we have identified areas that we need to improve to provide the services our residents need now and in the future. This means we have prioritised

areas to better deliver our well-being objectives in a sustainable and equitable manner. The 'Recover → Transform → Improve – Our Plan 2020 to 2025' section below provides more detail on the plan.

We are continuing to work with teams from across the Council to refocus our strategies. We are using the sustainable development principle and are doing different things or doing things differently. We are continuing to use our easy to understand 'Strategy on a Page' (SOAPs) for each well-being objective to help us deliver our outcomes. These are considered by all teams as they complete the corporate self-evaluation process: the primary vehicle used to reflect on whether we are making a difference.

As with previous years, we are continuing to learn lessons and further strengthen delivery in line with our agreed outcomes. There are a number of examples of how we will do this:

- integrated scrutiny committee workshops to focus on key aspects or topics;
- collaborative working groups to explore opportunities for joint planning and service delivery with both internal and external partners; and
- cross-service critical challenge sessions to 'test' and explore ideas, key findings of activities and to share lessons learned more widely.

Our Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan also identifies ways that our support services can help deliver our priorities. We can't deliver this on our own and we've identified our key partners that we collaborate with to deliver the well-being objectives and corporate priorities.

To develop greater awareness and understanding of the changes taking place, and to enable staff and partners to identify how they work they fit into the bigger picture, we have a 'Shared Vision' document which connects not only the Council's priorities, but also those of the regional Public Services Board.

2.3 Focus on the Future – Our journey so far

We have provided a step-by-step summary below of our journey so far in delivering our services following the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 coming into place. We have been able to look at what we do and how we do it. You will notice through previous versions of our Focus on the Future Plan (sometimes referred to as our Corporate Plan or Corporate Well-being Plan) and Annual Performance Reports, that we have been able to become more focused on our well-being objectives and our outcomes. This will be further strengthened in 2022 as we have identified key areas for improvement as part of our Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan and as we review and renew our Focus on the Future - Corporate Well-being Plan.

2015-2016



The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 receives Royal Assent.



A Population Assessment is jointly undertaken to identify community needs across Cwm Taf

2016-2017



Elected Members and Officers worked together to build the Corporate Well-being Plan



The Corporate Well-being Plan – Focus on the Future: well-being in our community receives Council approval



The Council begins to deliver activities/services to make progress against its corporate priorities and well-being objectives



Throughout the first year of delivery, the Council's scrutiny committees consistently reviewed progress against the Plan, providing challenge and feedback.

2018-2019



The Council's scrutiny function reviews and scrutinises the Annual Scrutiny Report - a backward looking report demonstrating performance and impact made through the first year of delivery of Focus on the Future



The Public Services Board produces its' first Well-being Plan 'Our Cwm Taf'



Working Better Together

With more integrated objectives and using lessons learned throughout Year 1, the Council uses the 5 ways of working with a view to further maximising their impact on its outcomes



At the end of Year 1, we reviewed and refocused; the 9 objectives initially set within the Plan reduce to 4 in readiness for Year 2 of delivery



At the end of Year 2, we reviewed and refocused the Plan, now showing our changed approach using the 5 ways of working e.g. more integrated service delivery; collaborative working



Re-launched corporate self-evaluation process to support status review, acknowledgement of good practice; and identification of areas for development and priorities for improvement



Following an examination visit; Wales Audit Office (now Audit Wales) produced a report on the Council's use of the 5 ways of working. The report shows good progress and proposing actions for future improvements.



The Council's DRAFT Tackling Poverty strategy is under development and officers explores the opportunities to integrate this into its' Corporate Plan to maximise and reinforce delivery opportunities across the organisation



2020-21

TO DO LIST

- ☒ Continue self-evaluation
- ☒ Explore tackling poverty further
- ☒ Refresh/refocus/review Corp Plan
- ☒ Develop 5 ways of working methods
- ☒ Review and improve governance



2021-22

- ☒ Continue to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and transition to recovery
- ☒ Deliver our Recovery Transformation and Improvement Plan (focusing on our priorities for improvement)
- ☒ Work with our Improvement and Assurance Board by continuing to focus on our governance, performance and financial position
- ☒ Ensure we remain focused on tackling poverty
- ☒ Continue self-evaluation and prepare for the requirements of the Local Government and Elections Act
- ☒ Ensure we continue to deliver our services by using the 5 ways of working and supporting the delivery of the 7 national goals
- ☒ Deliver other changes to legislation, for example the new Socio-Economic Duty placed on the Council



Moving into 2022/23

- ☐ Continue to respond to, and recover from, the coronavirus pandemic
- ☐ Continue to deliver our Recovery Transformation and Improvement Plan (focusing on our priorities for improvement)
- ☐ Work with our Improvement and Assurance Board and transition to being self-sufficient
- ☐ Remain focused on tackling poverty
- ☐ Continue self-evaluation and implementation of the Local Government and Elections Act
- ☐ Ensure we continue to deliver our services by using the 5 ways of working and supporting the delivery of the 7 national goals





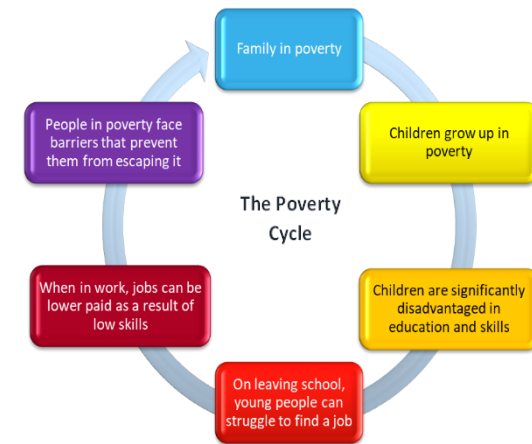
Focus on ... Tackling Poverty

In our Focus on the Future report version 4, we introduced a cross-cutting focus on tackling poverty. This is a root cause of many issues we face now and into the future, especially following the coronavirus pandemic. We identified the poverty cycle showing how we work across our well-objectives can positively impact on the cycle. As such we need to integrate our strategies and collaborate to tackle this wicked issue. We are applying the 5 ways of working to tackle poverty, and in doing so, help us better support delivery of the 7 national goals.

Several reports have outlined how the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic can adversely impact upon communities already experiencing high levels of deprivation. The 'Centre for Towns' produced their report called 'The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on our towns and cities' in April 2020. In this report towns with high reliance on retail and pubs and restaurants and ex-industrial towns were highlighted as being impacted upon. This report, and other similar reports, were used when developing our priorities in our RTI Plan to better understand how to prioritise our transformation (hence the 'Economic Recovery' priority being developed). As such, Economic Recovery will play a big part in tackling poverty.

The socio-economic duty allows us to renew our focus on how we assess impacts on socio-economic disadvantage and enable equity in decision making. We will continue to ensure services consider how we can tackle poverty to reduce the impact our communities. We currently deliver a raft of services in partnership with other organisations that help to do this.

Over the last couple of years, we have produced a list of the main contributors to tackling poverty and how they help us contribute to the 7 national goals. We are continuing this work, building on the work we have done. Some of this work has been included in our Annual Performance Report (APR) produced earlier this year and we will include more in our self-assessment report later this year.



2.4 Our Well-being Objectives – The detail

As stated above, we set our well-being themes through the development of, and findings from, the joint needs assessment across Cwm Taf. This also informs the Statement of Well-being and development of the Council's well-being objectives. When we review and renew this plan later this year, the findings from the regional needs assessments carried out in 2021 will be ready to use.

The tables in the sections below outline the service areas from across MTCBC and our partners that collaborate to deliver the well-being objectives and corporate priorities. The detail below is summarised in our '[Corporate Plan Summary](#)' and '[Shared Vision](#)' documents. To focus on our transformation, we have also included our improvement priorities.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's well-being themes and objectives are detailed below.



Best Start to Life



Portfolio Member
Councillor Lisa Mytton

Objective	Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals
Primary Outcome	Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people
Lead Officer	Director - Learning
Improvement Focus	Improving our Education Standards

Well-being of our children and young people is of paramount importance, even more so as we move out of the coronavirus pandemic. When children and young people have better health and well-being they are more likely to be ready to learn and ultimately achieve better academic standards. Raising standards of attainment is a key priority for the Council but this has to be set in the context of post pandemic recovery and partnership working. From the earliest possible opportunity, we recognise the need to work with families to ensure that our children have the best support to be equipped with the skills they need to reach their goals and their academic potential. It's important to realise this ambition is everyone's business, early years settings; families; youth settings, schools, and wider partners have a key role in supporting our children and young people to achieve the very Best Start to Life.

Below are examples of how departments of MTCBC contribute to this well-being objective.

Education Department	Children's Services	Other Departments
School Improvement	Youth Services	Parks department
Additional Learning Needs	Early Years	Employability programmes
Music Service	Adult Community Learning	Active Merthyr
Inclusion & Wellbeing	NEETs team	Property Services & Estates
Welsh Language - WESP	Parenting team	HR

English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Team Around the Family	Welsh Language – Workforce & Compliance
School Planning and Support Resources	Children Looked After team	Road Safety
	Play	Equalities
	Safeguarding	School Transport
		ICT/ Schools ICT

There are other partners that contribute to delivering this well-being objective, these are listed below.

Schools	School Governors	Central South Consortium
Estyn	Other Local Authorities	Merthyr Tydfil Borough Wide Youth Forum (MTBWYF)
Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board	The College Merthyr Tydfil	Welsh Government
Members of the Public Service Board	Careers Wales	Outdoor pursuit centres
Wellbeing Merthyr (including library services)	Universities	Duke of Edinburgh
Members of Welsh Education Forum	Early Years Settings	Third sector organisations
Employers and businesses	Public Health	

This well-being objective offers an holistic and sustainable approach to meeting the well-being needs of children and young people. This approach is important for all children, even more so due to the coronavirus pandemic and will particularly benefit children who face disadvantage or have a high risk of poor outcomes later in life.

Education is one of the clearest predictors of life outcomes, such as employment, income and social status, and is a predictor of attitudes and well-being. The objective integrates the complete educational journey, from the early years through to compulsory schooling, and post-16 and seeks to provide children and young people with the skills and attributes to help them improve their own lives.

The key outcomes that Best Start to Life wants to achieve are:

- Children live in a nurturing and stimulating home environment;
- Children have access to high quality pre-school and school education;
- Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people; and
- Children and young people have good health and emotional wellbeing.

We recognise the outcomes for Best Start to Life and as this work has developed these have been integrated into an overarching strategy - Raising Aspirations Raising Standards (RARS). This strategy aims to deliver the primary outcome of improving the educational outcomes for all children and young people through the following themes and goals:



Theme 1: Partnership & Collaboration	Theme 2: Post Pandemic Recovery
Goal 1: Performance Management & Systems Governance	
Goal 2: Developing the Education Workforce	
Goal 3: Supporting Learners' Health and Well-being	
Goal 4: Improving Achievement and Progression	
Goal 5: Developing the Environment for Learning	

How will we know if things are getting better?

Each objective uses a consistent performance management framework which is captured on a resource known as SOAP – Strategy On A Page. This document identifies the well-being objective, outcomes and key performance indicators (KPIs) and forms the basis of self-evaluation and the departments Business Improvement Plans. It is important to note that for the academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21 Welsh Government will not publish a range of performance measures across services, including all attainment measures (Flying Start, Schools, Youth Services) and attendance figures. This affects the current KPIs as identified on the SOAP.

We will know things are better when all children and young people:

- Have high aspirations and expectations for themselves;
- Begin statutory education having experienced a good start to learning both at home and in pre-school education where appropriate;
- Are provided with education experiences that excite them and inspire them to learn and achieve;
- Are educated in settings that are relevant and appropriate to meeting the needs of a 21st century curriculum;
- Leave primary schools' literate, numerate and digitally competent, ready to continue their education confidently and successfully;

- Leave statutory schooling with the necessary attributes and life skills to enable them to make a successful transition to employment, education or training;
- Feel safe and have strong emotional well-being;
- Have a voice in plans that impact on their own future health and well-being and plans for future developments of their local environment; and
- Have the skills to adapt to challenges and are able to work as independent and interdependent citizens.

How does the 'Best Start to Life' theme support the achievement of wider priorities?

Focus on the Future



Working Life

- Supporting children and young people to attain higher skills supports a more skilled labour market
- Schools and other settings introduce children and young people to the concept of place, and help broaden their understanding of their heritage and culture
- The Business and Education Partnership (BETP) will engage with children and young people from primary to experience the world of work



Environmental Well-being

- Awareness raising in relation to the need to ensure they recycle materials
- Provision and upkeep of green spaces which can be used by children, young people and their families free of charge
- Re:fit energy efficiency scheme reducing carbon emissions in schools and improving financial sustainability of energy use
- Provision of sustainable, low carbon and energy efficient school buildings with low maintenance costs through the 21st Century Schools Programme

PSB Well-being Plan

Community Resilience and Well-being

- Schools and other settings provide a learning environment and provide support around skills development to enable children and young people to be more self-reliant/resilient

Lifestyles, Health and Vulnerability

- Schools and other settings provide opportunities for young people to learn about different types of sports and activities, supporting improved health and lifestyles choices
- Schools and other settings provide opportunities for children, young people, and their families to be more physically active through a range of partnerships locally and regionally



Living Well

- Better qualified young people have a wider choice of options regarding careers and employment: well-paid work can lead to an improvement in their chances to live independently and have positive mental well-being
- Best Start practitioners work closely with the Active Merthyr Team to ensure equality of access to activities, supporting improved physical and mental well-being

Economy and Infrastructure

- Through the Business and Education Together Partnership, the Best Start scheme aims to raise aspirations among young people; and make them aware of career options and the path they need to take to improve their chances to achieve their goals
- The 21st Century Schools capital investment programme delivers innovative new build and refurbished schools supporting the economy through local procurement, community benefits and provision of community assets

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

- Schools and other settings engaging with children offer opportunities for children and young people to make and maintain connections outside the school environment



Working Life



Portfolio Member
Councillor Geraint Thomas

Objective	People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing; safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination
Primary Outcome	Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish
Lead Officer	Deputy Chief Executive
Improvement Focus	Economic Recovery

As a Council we are focused on supporting our residents, businesses and the economy. We will continue to work together to deliver our 3 key outcomes of: 'Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities'; 'People value and enjoy the built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our cultural assets for current and future generations'; 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others'. Using the Economic Recovery Plan; and 15-year Economic Vision for the County Borough approved by the Council in November 2021; we will work together to develop targeted responses to challenges faced that will enable us to improve how we support our communities.

Below are examples of how departments of MTCBC contribute to this well-being objective.

Employability and Skills programme teams	Business Support and Inward Investment teams	Sports Development; Heritage and Culture team
Strategic Regeneration	Strategic Infrastructure	Destination Management team
European and External Funding team	Environmental Health	Trading Standards team
Licensing team	Community Safety	Trading Standards
Revenues and Benefits team	Housing, Homelessness & Housing Support Grants	Planning department

Highways team	Engineering team	Social Services
Estates department	Countryside, Parks and Biodiversity teams	Education department
Early Years department	Adult Community Learning	Performance & Scrutiny Teams
Finance & Accounting Team	Human Resources	ICT department
Legal department	Corporate Communications team	Local school representatives
Commercial Unit		

There are other partners that contribute to delivering this well-being objective, these are listed below.

Department of Work and Pensions	South Wales Police	The College, Merthyr Tydfil
Heritage Lottery Fund	Valleys Taskforce	Cardiff and Region City Deal
Rent Smart Wales	Tydfil Training Consortium	Merthyr Tydfil Enterprise Centre (MTEC)
British Gas	Taf Bargoed Regeneration Partnership	Town Centre Partnership
Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association	Wales & West Housing Association	Merthyr Valley Homes
Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board	Ffos y Fran	Bevan Foundation
Welsh Food Microbiological Forum	Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Trust	UK Border Force
Canolfan Soar	Welsh Food Law Enforcement Liaison Committee	Welsh Government
Penydarren Boys & Girls Club	BAWSO	National Probation Services
Community Occupational Health Teams	Llamau	Safer Merthyr Tydfil
Careers Wales	Citizens Advice Bureau	Food Standards Agency
Business Wales	Town Centre Partnership	The Roost, Troedyrhiw
Welsh Heads of Trading Standards (WHoTS)	Cwm Taf Morgannwg MIND	Alzheimer's Society
Adref	Design Council for Wales	The Urbanists
Ian Ritchie Architects	The MEANS	CADW
The Cyfarthfa Foundation	Equinox	UK Government
Cwm Taf Public Services Board		

This well-being objective offers a holistic and collaborative approach to reducing social disadvantage by supporting the continued development of the local economy; sustaining and improving communities' awareness of opportunities open to them whilst offering advice and support on how to access these.

Evidence suggests personal well-being and material well-being are not separate: they are linked, with personal freedoms and fulfilment very much reflecting people's resources. By developing a skilled and well-educated population in an economy, both wealth and employment opportunities are created, allowing people to take advantage of these by being supported to secure fair work. The provision of enabling services such as improved, connected public transport will help this to be achieved.

The Council's Protection and Safety Services continue to play a major role in keeping communities safe during the ongoing pandemic. Work will continue to help make sure that consumers are protected from unfair trading and that businesses they access continue to be safe and legitimate. Activities such as the provision of advice and support will continue to be local businesses; licensed premises and other organisations offering services to residents over the coming 12 months; helping them to continue trading safely, sustaining their businesses. Homelessness forms a key focus for the Council. This will support how we address the outcomes below.

The key outcomes Working Life wants to achieve are:

- Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities;
- People value and enjoy the built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our cultural assets for current and future generations; and
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

We will deliver these outcomes through activities in response to our key strategy, the Economic Recovery Plan, and by addressing our key priorities for improvement:



ECONOMIC DIVERSITY: We will diversify our economy; increase the proportion of new and surviving businesses including social enterprises to increase resilience to future challenges.	DESTINATION MERTHYR TYDFIL: Support and build our visitor economy by supporting and developing suitable tourism, leisure and recreational sites; making best use of our natural environment and world-renowned heritage/cultural assets
EDUCATION AND TRAINING: We will improve access and uptake of learning leading to an increase in the number of people in our communities with the skills, knowledge and qualifications they need to thrive in the economy of tomorrow.	MODERN HOMES AND GREAT PLACES: Diversify and increase our housing supply with sustainable and renewable housing, and renewable energy developments to ensure all people have a safe place to call home
TRANSFORMING CONNECTIVITY: We will strengthen our physical and digital infrastructure to provide opportunities for residents and business to grow; creating sustainable communities with a strong sense of place	PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SERVICES: We will be innovative in how we deliver services and manage our public assets to make sure our communities receive quality front-line services; and supporting community organisations to develop and thrive
A CLIMATE RESILIENT, LOW CARBON ECONOMY: We will protect and enhance our natural resources for the benefit of our current and future generations. We will embrace and promote renewable technologies and industries and support local people and businesses to transition to a low carbon economy	

How will we know if things are getting better?

We will know things are better when:

- People in Merthyr Tydfil secure the skills to meet employers changing needs;
- Our developing environment and infrastructure changes to meet identified need and will encourage inward investment and support business survival rates;
- Our heritage and cultural assets will continue to be valued, protected, promoted and drive new economic activity;
- People living, working and visiting Merthyr Tydfil will feel safe and included; and
- The needs of our most vulnerable community members will be reflected in the housing and support being developed.

How does the 'Working Life' theme support the achievement of wider priorities?

Focus on the Future



Best Start to Life

- Ensure the skills learned at school are further developed, maximising the young person's chance of securing employment
- Our Business, Education and Training Partnership (BETP) has been set up and will grow connections between the business sector and Merthyr Tydfil's education providers



Environmental Well-being

- Promote opportunities to businesses and inward investors around the use of sustainable resources, including the use of renewable energy
- We are refocusing our plans regarding our Commercial Programme to better understand how we can effectively and efficiently progress

PSB Well-being Plan

Community Resilience and Well-being

- Offer accessible services so that community members can receive targeted support through community hubs
- Provide advice, guidance and support around issues that impact on families e.g. housing, school transport etc.
- Focus on providing targeted support in relation to the economic recovery of businesses and communities arising from the coronavirus pandemic

Lifestyles, Health and Vulnerability

- Provide advice, guidance and practical support to communities through our Protection and Safety Services
- Environmental Health services will offer support to communities to ensure they stay safe; and remain updated on changes to regulations which will affect them



Living Well

- Provide targeted work/learning pathways to children looked after in partnership with key partners/stakeholders
- Protection and Safety Services safeguard community members in their day-to-day lives (e.g.) preventing distraction burglaries
- Provide housing support to parents and carers securing a more safe and secure environment for families, supporting all people to remain living independently in their own homes
- We are further strengthening our collaboration to better deliver our outcomes e.g. building employment pathways

Economy and Infrastructure

- Lead on Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board's Economy and infrastructure theme. Through the provision of its' services, the Working Life theme fully supports this area of the PSB's Plan

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

- The Community Safety team will offer support around community cohesion, crime and fear of crime
- The Licensing and Trading Standards team help safeguard community members in their day-to-day lives



Living Well



Portfolio Member
Councillor Tony Rogers

Objective	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health
Primary Outcome	Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities
Lead Officer	Director – Social Services
Improvement Focus	Increasing our resilience in Social Care

As Cabinet Member for Social Services, I, alongside the Director for Social Services, Corporate Management Team colleagues, the Council's Cabinet and wider Council Members, play a key role in ensuring the successful delivery of the Council's well-being objectives. This includes responsibility for the 'Living Well' objective, which seeks to ensure 'people are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health'.

We will continue to work on our strategies and plans, focusing on three main priority outcomes: 'People live independently within their communities'; 'Children and adults are safeguarded from harm and feel safe'; 'Children and young people live safely with their family or close to home and have transitioned well into adulthood'.

There is a key focus across both Adults and Children Services on Early Intervention and Prevention work, as outlined in the detail within this plan. There is positive internal work being undertaken cross directorate, improved relationships with the third sector and good partnership working across the region. Partnership working with neighbouring authorities, Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board and Third Sector has been essential and I feel relationships are stronger than ever as a result. We will continue to work with partners to ensure that we are providing services to our most vulnerable.

Below are examples of how departments of MTCBC contribute to this well-being objective.

Sustainable Success and Transition	Early Intervention and Prevention	Initial Response and Enablement
Safeguarding Team	Supporting Change Team	Older People and Disability
Early Help Hub	Residential Care	Commissioning Services
Community Mental Health	Children Looked After	Enhanced Care Services
Education Department	Employability and Skills	Community Safety
Licensing Department	Youth Services	Housing and HSG
Children with Disabilities Team	Sports Development, Heritage and Culture team	Team Around the Family
Legal Department	Family Support Team	Revenues Department
Business Change Department	Environmental Health	Property Services

There are other partners that contribute to delivering this well-being objective, these are listed below.

Barnardos	Adref	Gofal
Care and Repair	Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind	The College, Merthyr Tydfil
Regional Safeguarding Board	Bridgend County Borough Council	Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT)
Regional Partnership Board (RPB)	Regional Adoption Collaboration	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Llamau	Regional Front Door for Fostering	National Fostering Framework
Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service and Management Board	South Wales Police (SWP)	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
National Probation Services	Cwm Taf and Bridgend Emergency Duty Team	4Cs Commissioning Framework
Citizens Advice Merthyr Tydfil	Transformation Steering Group	Social Care Workforce Development
VAMT	Joint Equipment Board	Safer Merthyr Tydfil
Public Health Wales		

The Living Well objective is about building the capacity of individuals, families and communities to secure the best outcomes for themselves. It is about building resilience and providing the right level of support before problems materialise or escalate. This will help to reduce the need to be involved in a crisis and enable more preventative work.

Working closely with our partners to address the poor life experiences of children early on will help ensure more vulnerable families remain together; increasing the number of children who are able to live safely at home (or close to home) and preventing them from becoming looked after.

Providing vulnerable older people with the right information and support at the right time will enable them to have more control over their lives, help prevent loneliness and isolation, and live safely within their own home. Through services such as 'Initial Response and Reablement' and '@Home Service', older people will be supported to maintain their health and independence at home, avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions. Where hospital admission is essential, individuals are supported to return home in a safe and timely manner.

The outcomes that Living Well wants to achieve are:

- People live safe and independent lives within their communities.
- Children and adults are safeguarded from harm and feel safe.
- Children and young people live safely with their family or close to home and have transitioned well into adulthood.

We will deliver these outcomes by focusing on our priorities for improvement: (taking into account the implications from Covid-19).

Improve early intervention and prevention (adults, children and families).	Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.
Safely reduce the number of children looked after.	Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society.
Enable a greater number of adults to live independently.	Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.
Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.	Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.
Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.	Review and improve services in light of the pandemic and focus on recovery post COVID 19.



There are a number of plans and strategies that help to deliver this objective, including the Council's Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan; Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board 'Regional Plan 2018-2023'; and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Plan 2020-2021. Work will be undertaken with key officers and other stakeholders to review and streamline existing plans and strategies; helping address duplication and identify opportunities for joint working.

How will we know if things are getting better?

Each objective uses a consistent performance management framework, which is captured on a resource known as a SOAP – strategy on a page. This document identifies the well-being objectives, outcomes and key performance indicators; and forms the basis of self-evaluation.

We will know things are better when:

- There is an increase in the number of children who are able to live safely at home;
- Of the children who are looked after, a greater number have a stable school life;
- There is a reduction in the number of older people having to stay in hospital longer than necessary due to social care reasons;
- There is an increase in the number of adults who are able to live independently following a period of Reablement;
- An increase in the number of families accessing early help;
- An increase in the number of people who are supported to remain at home through Stay Well @ Home Phase 2; and
- We will promote service users having a voice by increasing our offers of advocacy.

How does the 'Living Well' theme support the achievement of wider priorities?

Focus on the Future



Best Start to Life

- Our newly developed fostering programme aims to increase our supply of Merthyr Tydfil foster carers.

PSB Well-being Plan

Community Resilience and Well-being

- We will ensure looked after young people and care leavers achieve a stable and successful transition into adulthood.

- We are working with children, young people and their families to ensure safeguarding and reduce risks of harm to children's welfare.
- We are working together with education to promote Early Help and Prevention.



Working Life

- Through a joint project, we are continuing to work with the Employability team to deliver a pathway to work process for care-experienced young people that will maximise their working potential and improve well-being as young adults.
- Social Care creates employment within the area.
- We are seeking to explore opportunities to develop and apprenticeships programme.



Environmental Well-being

- Supporting children looked after to become more active citizens and more socially responsible.
- Tackle fuel poverty by promoting warm homes programmes.
- We are working with Care & Repair through the Healthy Home Project.
- Consideration is given to environmental features in any new builds.
- Supporting care homes to be more energy efficient.
- Working with housing colleagues as part of the strategic planning to ensure that properties being developed are suitable for those with social care needs.

- The Early Help Hub is a multi-agency preventative hub that works in collaboration with key partners across the Council, public services and third sector to increase resilience in the vulnerable population.

Lifestyles, Health and Vulnerability

- Many foster carers and providers make good use of the outdoors in their work with young people to build resilience and improve health and well-being.
- We are working with health colleagues to deliver integrated services that improve outcomes.
- We provide support services (including therapy) to improve the emotional health of looked after young people.

Economy and Infrastructure

- Work with older people to develop a range of homes in dementia friendly communities.
- We are working with housing and Care & Repair to improve home environments to enable people to remain in their own homes.

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

- Work with Housing and RSLs to increase the supply of supported accommodation.
- Work with Corporate Parenting Board and partners to reduce the isolation, impact and stigma of being looked after or a care leaver.
- Work with third sector partners on befriending projects to reduce loneliness and isolation.



Environmental Well-being



Portfolio Member
Councillor Michelle Jones

Objective	Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside
Primary Outcome	Maximise the amount of material and resources reused and recycled in line with the waste hierarchy
Lead Officer	Director – Neighbourhood Services
Improvement Focus	Environmental Well-being

The Environmental Well-being objective provides a holistic and sustainable approach to meeting the environmental well-being needs of Merthyr Tydfil. Our priority is to work towards the all-Wales target of becoming a zero waste nation by 2050 and playing our role in the Welsh public sector becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Our actions, and how we use the environment, will be critical to a sustainable future for Merthyr Tydfil and the benefits of improving our environment will be felt by all. By increasing our resilience to climate change risks, we will reduce our exposure to flood damage caused to buildings, infrastructure and services, whilst enhancing green spaces. Spending time in green or natural spaces has great benefits to physical and mental well-being.

Below are examples of how departments of MTCBC contribute to this well-being objective.

Waste Services	Biodiversity	Property Services
Policy and Implementation	Development Controls (including conservation areas)	Heritage and Cultural Assets
European and External Funding	Landscape Services	Open Spaces
Street Cleansing	Highways and Engineering	Civic Amenity Sites
Building Control	Strategic Regeneration	Strategic Infrastructure
Fly-tipping	Environmental Health	Education Department
Furniture Re-use Centre	Parks & Bereavement	Community Regeneration
Community Safety	Housing and Supporting People	Business Support and Inward Investment
Heritage, Tourism and Culture		

There are other partners that contribute to delivering this well-being objective, these are listed below.

WRAP Cymru	Local Authority Building Control (LABC)	Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC)
Caru Cymru	Taff Bargoed Friends	Keep Wales Tidy (KWT)
County Surveyors Society	Carmarthenshire Council	Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT)
South Wales Trunk Road Agent (SWTRA)	Merthyr Valleys Homes (MVH)	Fly-tipping Action Wales (FtAW)
Capita	Waste Data Flow (WDF)	South Wales Police (SWP)
Natural Resource Wales (NRW)	Carmarthen County Borough Council (CBC)	County Surveys Society Wales (C.S.S.W.)
Barod	Redstart	Cardiff City Council
Planning Officers Society for Wales (POSW).	South East Wales (and wider) Development Management Managers Group	Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB)
Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association	Viridor Waste Management LTD	Energy from Waste (EFW)
Biogen LTD	Newport City Council	Dwr Cymru
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC)	South East Wales Flood Risk Management Group	South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Gwent Police	Greenspace Wales	(Scoops) Cafe at Park Taff Bargoed
Cyfarthfa Model Railway	Merthyr Angling Society	Welsh Water
Friends of Cyfarthfa Park	Friends of Taff Bargoed Park	Aberfan Disaster Charity
Vale of Glamorgan	Transport for Wales	Pontsticill Community Group

This well-being objective offers a holistic and sustainable approach to meeting the environmental well-being needs in Merthyr Tydfil. Those needs should be interpreted broadly to include quality greenspace and connectivity, habitat protection and biodiversity, resilient ecosystems, landscape character and pollution prevention. While this approach is important for the environment as a whole, it will particularly benefit areas where there are key environmental issues or risks.

The focus of this well-being objective is the work we do with our stakeholders to protect, enhance and promote the environment and countryside. How we act toward the environment and countryside will be a critical factor of a sustainable future in Merthyr Tydfil because the benefits of improving our environment will be felt across all of our well-being objectives.

The key outcomes the Environmental Well-being wants to achieve are:

- Environmental damage is minimised by preventing pollution;
- Maximise the amount of materials and resources reused and recycled in line with the waste hierarchy;
- Merthyr Tydfil has good quality, biodiverse and connected green infrastructure and open spaces; and

- Decarbonise our buildings, fleet, waste, land management and procurement by reducing energy consumption and using renewable and low carbon technologies where possible.

We will deliver these outcomes thorough the Waste Management Plan, Carbon Management Plan (CMP) and Nature Recovery Plan and by focussing on addressing our key priorities for improvement:

Increase the amount of all recycling in the County Borough in order to meet and exceed the recycling targets set by Welsh Government	Reduce the levels of fly-tipping
Decrease the kilograms of residual waste generated per person	Increase the number of Priority Open Spaces (out of 23 Priority Open Spaces) that meet or exceed the quality standard: Healthy, Safe and Secure
Improving the standard of cleanliness on our highways	Reduce Carbon Emissions



Other important strategic drivers that will help us deliver on this objective include the Local Development Plan, Nature Recovery Plan, Net Zero Carbon Roadmap and the Corporate Asset Management Plan.

How will we know if things are getting better?

Each objective uses a consistent performance management framework which is captured on a resource known as a Strategy on a Page (SOAP). This document identifies the well-being objectives, outcomes and key performance indicators, which forms the basis of self-evaluation. Work will also be undertaken to review and develop robust Business Improvement Plans.

We will know things are better when:

- The air quality on Twynyrodyn Road improves;
- The Council's Green House Gases are reducing;
- The time taken to clear reported fly-tipping incidents on Council land improves;
- The cleanliness of our highways improves;
- Our waste recovery rates improve; and

- There is an increase of Priority Open Spaces (out of 23 Priority Open Spaces) that meet or exceed the quality standard.

How does the 'Environmental Well-being' theme support the achievement of wider priorities?

Focus on the Future



Best Start to Life

- Support schools in any awareness raising they are undertaking in relation to the need to ensure they recycle materials.
- Provision and upkeep of green spaces which can be used by children, young people and their families free of charge.
- Support schools in appropriately managing carbon emissions.



Working Life

- Providing waste management; recycling and street cleansing services, strengthening the Town's commitment to being a place to be proud of and ensuring the environment is safe, clean and free from risk.
- Supporting Community Regeneration and housing to achieve planning permission and adhere to building regulations.

PSB Well-being Plan

Community Resilience and Well-being

- Fulfil the Council's statutory duty of maintaining the streetlights within the County Borough, helping create a safer environment for local communities.
- Ensure the safety and protection of communities by ensuring that new and altered buildings and heritage building comply with current Building Regulations.
- Ensuring the safety and protection of communities by proactively managing flood risk.

Lifestyles, Health and Vulnerability

- Provision and upkeep of green spaces which can be used by children, young people and their families free of charge.
- Work closely with the Community Regeneration teams to provide better pedestrian routes and spaces and encouraging active travel.



Living Well

- Provision and upkeep of green spaces which can be used by children, young people and their families free of charge.
- Work closely with the Community Regeneration teams to create spaces for low cost social and cultural events.
- During the pandemic to use a clean green open space to walk through and use to assist with mental health.
- Supporting care homes to be more energy efficient.

Economy and Infrastructure

- Ensuring a safe, clean infrastructure and making Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination for those who live, work and visit.
- Ensure all new housing developments include an allocated number of affordable units to meet identified demand.





Tackling Loneliness and Isolation





- Work closely with the Community Regeneration teams to create spaces for low cost social and cultural events.

2.5 Contributing to the National Goals

The 7 national well-being goals show the kind of Wales we want. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies in Wales to work towards. The chart below provides a brief summary of where our Well-being Objectives primarily align to the 7 national well-being goals.

When developing this Plan, we mapped the initial planned response to the national well-being goals. As we approach the end of this version of the Plan, we continue to ensure it is resourced effectively. We have reviewed our current contribution to the well-being goals to identify whether, by doing different things and doing things differently, we are now able to show a larger contribution to the 7 national well-being goals. Through reflection and evaluation, we have identified examples of how our contributions have developed as a consequence of us working in different ways. Our Annual Performance Report offers examples of how we have done this.

Well-being Objective	Contributions to Well-being Goals at 2017						
 Best Start to Life	Yellow	White	Red	Red	White	White	Blue
 Working Life	Yellow	Orange	White	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
 Environmental Well-being	Yellow	Orange	White	White	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
 Living Well	White	White	Red	Red	Dark Blue	White	Blue

Well-being Objective	Contributions to Well-being Goals at 2022						
 Best Start to Life	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
 Working Life	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
 Environmental Well-being	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
 Living Well	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	White	Blue

Contributions to Well-being Goals at 2020						
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	White	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
White	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	White	Blue

Contributions to Well-being Goals at 2021						
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Dark Blue	White	Blue

Section 3 – Delivering the Plan

3.1 Recover → Transform → Improve – Our Plan 2020 to 2025

Following setting a balanced budget for 2019/2020, we took a proactive step and asked Welsh Government (WG) to support us in these challenging times. The Minister for Housing and Local Government appointed an Improvement and Assurance Board to carry out a rapid assessment exercise. To respond to the outcomes of this assessment, we developed a Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan.



The development of the RTI Plan was done in 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. As with most organisations, we have firstly had to respond to the needs of our residents during the pandemic. Following this, we will transition to recovery. This is reflected in the RTI Plan, please refer to appendix 1.

The RTI Plan is a live document that enables us to focus on sustainability when recovering from the pandemic, transforming the way we work and improving delivery of outcomes for our residents. This plan will provide a 5-year improvement path for MTCBC.

Our RTI Plan identifies **3 areas we need to address urgently** to be able to better deliver our well-being objectives, meaning better outcomes for our residents.

These are our **3 priorities for improvement:**



These will address our **priority outcomes:**

Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people

Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities

Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish

Working with our Improvement and Assurance Board, we have considered the short, medium and long term. We have prioritised our improvement, allowing us to use our limited resources to best deliver the needs of our residents. With the support of WG, Elected Members, our Staff and Partners we are creating a modern and agile Council that is focused on providing quality services to the people of Merthyr Tydfil.



To better deliver our outcomes we must change the way we work. The RTI Plan is supported by 4 council-wide transformation work programmes. These help us consider our **digital opportunities**, become more **commercially aware**, have the right resources (a **Healthy Organisation**) and **good governance** (the way we work).



Our RTI Plan also focuses on decarbonisation and how we support reuse and recycling (you may have seen this being referred to as the 'Waste Hierarchy'). This has been developed into our **supporting Environmental Well-being** programme.

To achieve our shared vision, we must deliver our services differently - we need to look at how we work better together, with more joined up thinking, increased partnership and embrace new technology and innovation. This approach has been adopted to help us to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and we will use the lessons learnt to inform how we move forward.

These principles and priorities form the basis of the RTI Plan and were supported by all Elected Members at a workshop in September 2020. The principles align with our operating model and the sustainable development principle.

We continue to engage with Elected Members as we further refine and deliver our RTI Plan. We will continue to strengthen and refine our recovery, transformation and improvement journey in line with reviewing and renewing our Corporate Well-being Plan. We will focus on how best to engage, involve and communicate with our partners and communities.

We have identified internal money (e.g. in our report to Council on the 14th July 2021 - '[Medium Term Financial Plan Update – Financing The Recovery, Transformation And Improvement Plan](#)') and external funding to help us deliver the plan. Using external funding makes good economic sense, but also shows how our plan fits with national strategies in delivering the [7 national goals](#).

3.2 Our Ways of Working

Well-being of Future Generation Act

The sustainable development principle (5 ways of working) and national goals, set out in sections 1 and 2 above, underpin this plan and our RTI Plan.



Long term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

We are using the 5 Ways of Working by:

Using our updated impact assessments in line with the new socio-economic duty allowing us to make better informed decisions
Having a recovery, transformation and improvement plan with a mission statement that makes us consider the long-term



Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

We are using the 5 Ways of Working by:

Using the Social Services and Well-being Act in our work
Tackling poverty through programmes that will help us to consider prevention, including unintended consequences of wider decisions
Including prevention in our response to the coronavirus pandemic e.g. mass testing



Integration

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

We are using the 5 Ways of Working by:

Focusing on integrating our plans, including our recovery, transformation and improvement plan so that we have the greatest contribution to our well-being objectives and national goals
Prioritising our outcomes and implementing our Governance Improvement programme to have the biggest positive impact on our well-being objectives and support our partners (e.g. the Team Merthyr approach)



Collaboration

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

We are using the 5 Ways of Working by:

Building on work we have done with partners throughout the pandemic
Taking a Team Merthyr approach with our partners to better use resources and have a greater impact on delivering our well-being objectives and contributing to the national goals
Integrating our PSB objectives into this plan

**Involvement**

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

We are using the 5 Ways of Working by:

Engaging with, and involving, our residents, partners and businesses so that they can help us shape our journey to give better outcomes, some examples include our RARS strategy, Team Merthyr approach and the Business, Education and Training Partnership
Strengthening our scrutiny function as part our recovery, transformation and improvement plan

Our key governance and decision-making documents and procedures have been previously redesigned to allow us to work within the Act. Our integrated impact assessment means we must assess how our decisions will contribute to the 7 national goals but ensure we are working to the 5 ways of working. Both our core values and operating model align with the Act, meaning we can work towards delivering our well-being objectives, contributing to the 7 national well-being goals and working to the sustainable development principle.

There are 5 ways of working that public bodies must adopt to evidence how they have used sustainable development as their central organising principle. Following these ways of working offers a huge opportunity to make long-lasting, positive change to current and future generations.

Our Core Values

We have 7 core values. These were developed with our staff as part of a programme of staff involvement and engagement regarding how we want to work. These values are embedded in our 'golden thread' (a link from personal objectives to team goals to our well-being objectives and vision) where all members of staff test how they are working to our values during in their 1-2-1 meetings with their manager, annual and mid-year reviews (Focus on Performance process).

Our Operating Model

Our Council approved operating model has been designed to set out how we will deliver our services. It supports us in transforming and improving how we work. Last year we updated our operating model to support the RTI Plan so that it sets out the framework for how we will work.

Our Core Values



The Council has adopted a set of **core values** and associated **behaviours**, which are:

Honesty & Openness

Trust & Respect

Accountability

Learning

Aspiration

Team Working

Communication



**Digital
Transformation**



**Healthy
Organisation**











**Commercial
Programme**



**Governance
Improvement**

Our operating model (built on the 5 ways of working) includes how we should **economically, efficiently and effectively** work. We have set out the 8 operating principles and expectations below. We will continue to review our operating model to ensure it is fit for purpose and we will continue to put our customers and residents first.

Operating Principles		Operating Expectations
	Listening and engaging with our stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our service offer will be informed by the need of our customers • We will make clear the customer contact options for different customer groups
	Clear communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a clear communication strategy • We regularly engage with stakeholders • We manage actively our relationships, reputation and brand • We will focus on leadership
	Embracing digital technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have an integrated, single record for each customer • We will rationalise our systems • We promote self-service and online access • We will consider the use of digital technology to improve access to and delivery of services • We will use the learning from the pandemic to work in an agile way reducing our carbon footprint
	Focusing on the key priorities and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a resilient and adaptable organisation • Core business is always focussed on realising our Vision • Strategic plans will be set as part of a coordinated approach to reaching our key priorities • Targets are linked to achieving our key outcomes • We will be a healthy organisation investing in staff (e.g. apprenticeships) and addressing our capacity issues
	Consistent and timely implementation of the strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are up to date and fit for purpose • Delivery plans are clear, understood and owned • We will improve our governance • We use robust project management which ensures timely delivery within budget • We use standardised ways of working • We develop our skills, knowledge and understanding in order to achieve our key priorities • Supporting the business functions will be centralised
	Everyone is accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are empowered and accountable for making the right decisions, about the right things at the right time • We fulfil our roles and responsibilities in line with our 'Focus on Your Performance' process • We will recognise achievement and poor performance • We will monitor, challenge and support performance in order to deliver our key priorities • Data will inform decision making

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management will be a focus for us all
 Aligning the budget to the key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will define full service costs • We will understand and manage service demand • We will make financial decisions which are intelligence led (use our data) • We review and identify the best way to provide each service • We will consider our commercial opportunities
 Promoting independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We empower individuals and communities • We define clearly our service provision and promote and signpost alternative provision working with partners • Issues are resolved at the first point of contact • We agree the level of risk we are prepared to take

Leadership and Governance – Having good leadership and governance is essential to delivering this plan. With Officers and Elected Members continuing to work together, and having the correct systems and processes in place, we will be in a strong position to deliver this plan, continuously improve and recover from the pandemic while transforming the organisation. We can't do it alone, we will need to continue to work with our partners and increase partnership working, building on our learning we gained during the coronavirus pandemic.

We will:

- Continue to develop our staff skills, enabling them to work in new ways
- Invest in apprenticeship and graduate schemes to support our succession planning, capacity and resilience
- Continue our journey in becoming a learning organisation and developing our own talent
- Continue to monitor our capacity and address any issues
- Be an employer people want to work for (employer of choice)
- Place greater emphasis on transformation and performance through the approved portfolio member for 'Transformation and Commerciality'
- Build on our partnership working arrangements to better deliver outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil
- Improve our governance to become more economic, efficient and effective

Communication and Engagement – By involving and engaging our staff and residents, we will be better placed to efficiently and effectively deliver the services our communities need.

We will:

- Develop a participation and engagement strategy (in line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021)
- Engage with our residents in a timely and meaningful manner by using various channels (including non-digital channels for those who choose them)
- Use our operating model and core values to be open and transparent in delivering our services
- Apply the Welsh language standards in our communication and engagement
- Keep our Community Council well informed in line with our Charter
- Ensure we have effective communications with all our staff, including using our staff forum

3.3 Our Governance and Supporting the Plan



Portfolio Member
Councillor Chris Davies

Quote from the Portfolio Member	<i>"We realise that good governance and continuous improvement is essential to our recovery and transformation."</i>
Service Areas	Governance and Resources
Strategic Focus	Governance and Supporting the Plan

We realise that good governance and continuous improvement is essential to our recovery and transformation. Through our improvement we will be able to sustainably and equitably deliver our well-being objectives, meaning better outcomes for our residents. We will build on the work done and lessons learnt during the coronavirus pandemic. By collaborating, integrating our plans, involving others, and being preventative, we can address the long-term benefits in providing better outcomes.

To be able to sustainably support our recovery, transformation and improvement to better deliver this Focus on the Future plan, we must make sure we prepare well, using our resources economically, effectively and efficiently. As we look to place further emphasis on our priorities for improvement and cross-cutting themes in this plan, such as tackling poverty, we must modernise the way we work to meet the needs of our residents.

To be able to deliver our well-being objectives we need to efficiently and effectively support our plans.

We have key legislation such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Social Services and Well-being Act, Welsh language standards, the Socio-Economic duty, Equalities duty, Older People's duty and Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, as well as several others, to support us.

Our focus going forward continues to be adapting in line with changes to legislation and strengthen our governance and performance. We will use our learning from responding to the coronavirus pandemic to help.

Working with partners, using new ways of working and better use of our data (including compliments and complaints) will feature heavily in how we approach this. This diagram shows our governance framework. We will continue to enhance our existing governance frameworks and systems. This will be done alongside our staffing and management structures.

We will continue to work with our Elected Members and Scrutiny Members as we deliver the RTI Plan and in setting our Medium-Term Financial Plan. As a Council we will continue to address our performance, especially in priority areas, reduce our corporate risks whilst managing our resources effectively: maintaining the status quo is not an option. Constructive challenge has taken place though our Scrutiny function, Governance and Audit Committee and internal quarterly performance and improvement reviews (QPIRs). We want to build on this as we go forward. Our induction for Members following the Local Elections in May will be integral to this.



Corporate Planning

Corporate planning is key to how the Council operates especially in delivering our well-being objectives to meet our shared vision.

As outlined above we have 4 well-being objectives, each with a set of outcomes (one being a primary or priority outcome for each objective). To capture this, along with how we measure our success (using key performance indicators and case studies), we have a strategy-on-a-page (SOAP) for each objective. This provides focus and help accountability and monitoring our achievements. To deliver our SOAPS we have departmental business improvement plans and other key documents such as resource plans, financial plans and risk registers. This links with individual staff plans, often referred to as the 'golden thread'.

Our corporate planning is done by considering key pieces of information and data. This includes the outcomes of our self-evaluation, annual governance statement and annual performance report (this will be replaced by our self-assessment report later in 2022). In doing this we consider qualitative and quantitative sources. To provide a full picture we also consider our corporate risks (captured on our approved corporate risk register), our staffing, assets, how we procure and our finances (how we can finance the plan).

All this is done in line with our Welsh language plan, to ensure that we deliver our services against the Welsh language standards, especially ensuring the Welsh language is not treated less favourably. This helps us support a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. The Equalities and Older Peoples duties help us to ensure equity across our service provision, especially in how people access our service, whether that be on-line or in other ways. The duties discussed in this paragraph integrate in how we deliver our services.

As we did last year, we have included our Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan. This sets out key areas where we need to strengthen to better deliver our objectives to produce better outcomes for our residents.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides us with an opportunity to further strengthen our self-assessment. Coupled with this, the socio-economic duty that came into place on the 31st March 2021, enabling us to better assess impacts on socio-economic disadvantage, supporting our cross-cutting theme of tackling poverty.



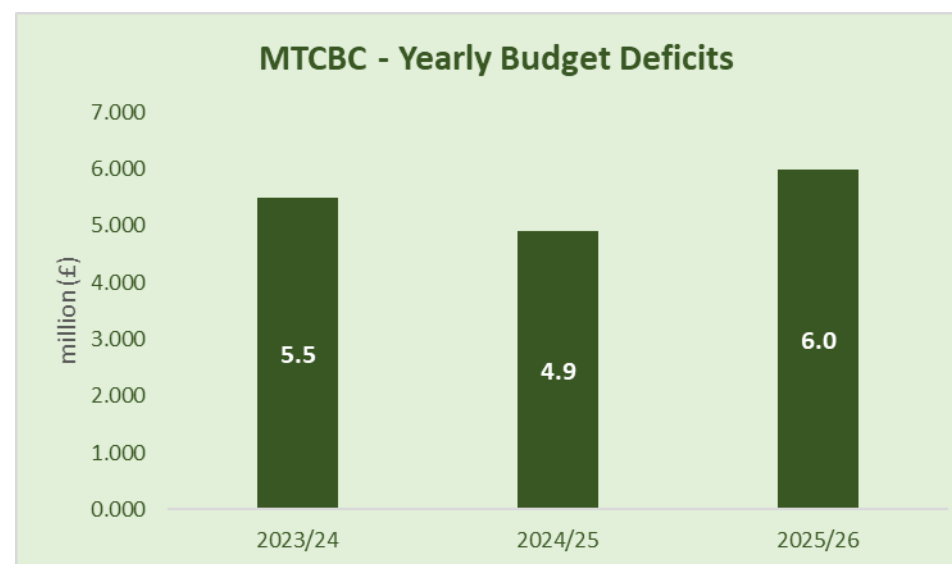
We will ...	Success will look like ...
Build our RTI Plan into our Corporate Plan	A joined-up plan that is understood by all stakeholders. Our resources can be focused on our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and transformation to improvement.
Strengthen our governance and increase the emphasis on performance	Support for our plans. Scrutiny and challenge will improve accountability. A renewed focus on performance. Officers and Elected Members will continue to work together to achieve better outcomes.
Continue to deliver our well-being objectives	Improved outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil. This will be achieved through considering the economic, effectiveness and efficiency of delivering services.
Deliver our services in line with the Local Government and Elections Act and Socio-economic duty	We will use the opportunities in this Act and all our duties to further improve our performance management and continuous improvement.

Financial Planning

The Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlines the budget allocation for the current year and projects future budget requirements. The Council continues to face significant budgetary challenges. The framework for planning and managing its resources over the last 5 financial years has helped us face these significant challenges. The total required service efficiencies for the 4-year period 2022/23 to 2025/26 is projected to be £15.5. The graph opposite shows the scale of projected budget deficits over the next three years.

To achieve this scale of change, there has been a requirement to radically refocus and reconfigure what we do, and this process has resulted in the formulation of the Council's Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan.

To be able to deliver our Recovery Plan and the improvement we need, it is critical to align our finances accordingly.



The principles we will adopt will be:

- Explore and utilise external funding to maximise the delivery of our outcomes (working in partnership where possible);
- Reshape our MTFP in line with our priorities and outcomes;
- Adopt new operating models building on investment made during the Coronavirus pandemic to reduce our outgoings;
- Build on work already completed (e.g. a corporate capacity exercise); to review operating models to focus on outcomes and exploit savings opportunities; and
- Build on existing policies, changing as required, to be more commercially focused on our approach to service delivery, ensuring value for money.

To align the Council's financial management to the corporate priorities and well-being objectives, we will continue to develop the prioritisation of services ensuring resources are allocated to clearly defined priority services to meet our statutory duties. At the same time, we will ensure that we are delivering effective, efficient and value for money services that our citizens and customers need.

The work to prioritise services will be reviewed on a continuous basis to ensure the Council will be well informed in providing affordable services. This work will be completed in time for the announcement of the annual provisional Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlement.

This will enable the Council to align future Revenue and Capital Settlements to our priorities and objectives in the future publications of our MTFP, these will be available in March of each year.

[Our Response to the Financial Challenges Moving Forward](#)

We need to continue to build on the work done to date by remaining customer-focused and financially responsible in everything that we do. Being a 'fit for purpose' Council underpins all our work and enables the delivery of our well-being objectives and wider corporate priorities.

Over the coming months and years, we will focus on the following areas to positively respond to the challenges we face.

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Transforming our services and investing in our staff	A skilled and motivated workforce that can support the Council's recovery, transformation and improvement through delivering our RTI Plan and improving the delivery of this corporate well-being plan (including our well-being objectives).

Further strengthening and developing our partnership working	We cannot do everything on our own. We have made strong partnerships in responding to the coronavirus pandemic and want to build on this. Integrating our plans and collaborating in using our resources, will help us better delivery our well-being objectives and lead to improved outcomes for our residents.
Continue to secure investment in our communities	We will use external funding where available to support our well-being objectives and priorities for improvement in our RTI Plan.
Maximising our local government financial settlements	We will align our finances to support our well-being objectives and priorities in our RTI Plan to improve outcomes for our residents.

Workforce Planning – Healthy Organisation

MTCBC has a wealth of skills and experience across its most valuable resource; the workforce. Our employees work with partners to provide services that, first and foremost, meet the needs of our residents. This has become especially apparent when responding to the coronavirus pandemic.

We are a lean organisation, meaning our challenges include ensuring all our resources (including our Staff) are appropriately supported and are focused on meeting our priorities. The Council has invested in its workforce following capacity exercises and in financing the RTI Plan. In addition to general growth approvals, approximately £1.5million investment in 2021/22 has strengthened how we can deliver our objectives and priorities. This investment has helped how the Council has strengthened areas identified by our regulators and our priorities for improvement. We will continue to review this in line with the challenges and changes we face.

We have been able to use staff data to help us add resilience to our services and support our staff. We have learnt many lessons during the pandemic, most of which can be used in shaping our Healthy Organisation plan going forward.

Our Healthy Organisation programme is a key theme in our RTI Plan. It will help us respond to the challenges the Council and our communities face over the coming years.

We have used the information from our annual staff culture survey in designing our Healthy Organisation programme. Our aim is to ensure we have A MOTIVATED, ACCOUNTABLE & ENGAGED WORKFORCE WHO HAVE THE SKILLS AND ABILITY TO DELIVER THE ORGANISATION'S GOALS. Following this we are reinstating our staff engagement programme (staff forum).



Through gathering and analysing our staff data we can better understand and support our workforce and our key plans, for example the Strategic Equality Plan and various duties such as Older People and Welsh language.

We will continue to use our performance management framework and personal development plans ('Focus on Your Performance') to support our staff to develop, better deliver our outcomes linked to our corporate priorities, well-being objectives, and shared vision (the 'golden thread').

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Continue to carry out our Focus on Performance process	Each member of staff has a SMART set of objectives and focused development plans that link with team goals to improve accountability and support our well-being objectives and improve outcomes for our residents.
Continue to gather and analyse data using modern technology in supporting our staff (e-performance)	An e-Performance module that enables us to gather and analyse data in an economic, efficient and effective way to form focused development plans and objectives for our staff. Develop a training and develop plan for staff.
Allow people to apply for jobs at MTCBC in an easy to use and modern manner, if they so wish (e-recruitment)	An e-Recruitment module that is easy to use and allows people to apply for jobs with MTCBC (improving our reputation around this issue). This can help us fill roles effectively and attract candidates. Succession planning, capacity and resilience issues can be better addressed as a result. Build resilience in new types of roles within the Council e.g. data analytics.
Increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities at MTCBC	Improved succession planning, adding capacity and resilience across MTCBC. Staff can share skills and experience (part of being a learning organisation). New ideas can make for a more attractive place to work.
Continue on our journey in becoming a learning organisation	Staff have focused development plans aligned to team goals and the golden thread to our shared vision. Staff can share skills and experience, providing an economical, efficient and effective way to upskill individuals. We will work with partners and use external funding where possible to allow us to achieve this.

Procurement – Commercial Unit

We have been improving internal resources to enable the service to evolve into the Commercial Unit. The Commercial unit is responsible for Corporate Procurement and transactional services (purchasing and payments).

The commercial unit has agreed a number of phases of development for 2022/23 which includes a detailed analysis of the Council's baseline spend and using this information to inform future opportunities. Aligning activity to promote increased local spend, creating greater links under the procurement banner with local anchor organisations and developing a new governance system for value for money projects.

In addition to commercial activity, procurement will be supporting Council departments to ensure that we are delivering greater value through our 3rd party spend to positively contribute to social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes. Underpinning this activity is the Wales Procurement Policy Statement and its 10 principles that was refreshed in March 2021.

It is intended that during 2022/23 a new commercial strategy replacing the existing procurement strategy will be published along with a social value policy.

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Develop the commercial unit and gain a greater understanding of our 3 rd party spend behaviours	Finalised structures and the development of a robust commercial analysis and reporting framework. An approved commercial strategy that will govern future commercial and procurement activity across the Council
Maintain and develop procurement services	Maintaining a robust procurement infrastructure that makes best use of modern technology and resources. Developing procurement and general commercial knowledge to deliver better outcomes from procurement projects. Continued integration of the WFGA 2015 and five ways of working into procurement projects and Early engagement of procurement services in project work Continued leverage through collaboration on a local, regional and national level A mature contract register which is maintained by a robust forward plan of work
Incorporate best practice and legislation	Better informed procurement staff to ensure that through our procurement activities we ensure that social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes are met The development of the social value toolkit to measure the 'value' of our Contracts to the community.
Continue to ensure invoices are paid within 30 days	90%+ of invoices payments are maintained within 30 days of invoice date

Assets

The review of our Asset Management Plan is nearing completion. This document has 6 overarching priorities aligned to our well-being objectives and underpinned by the 5 ways of working.

The Maintenance Strategy	Statutory Compliance
Estate Rationalisation/Agile working	Energy/Carbon Management/Decarbonisation
Commercialisation	Disposals and Property Review

As you will notice, these priorities also help us achieve our RTI Plan, we have integrated our plans.

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Approve our reviewed and updated asset management plan	An integrated plan to support the delivery of our RTI Plan and well-being objectives, leading to better outcomes for our residents.

Risk Management

Our Risk Management Strategy (RMS) has been designed to make sure we identify, monitor and mitigate risk. At MTCBC we use a 'Plan-Do-Review-Improve' approach underpinned by the sustainable development principle and our operating model. This ensures that risk management is not done in isolation, is not reactive and does not just focus on the short term. We have placed extra emphasis on mitigation over recent years, this will better inform our plans.

We have had an RMS in place for several years, with full reviews made in line with change. As part of our on-going improvement to our governance we are reviewing our RMS along with other key governance documents to ensure we are working as efficiently and effectively as possible.

By using our RMS, we have identified and assessed our position and have 11 corporate risks. This position is reviewed by Senior Officers and Elected Members alike. Our processes allow us to formally review the position at least twice a year by holding workshops with Senior Officers and Elected Members. Our findings are presented to our Governance and Audit Committee and then approval is gained at a Cabinet meeting. The latest version of our corporate risk register was published in the autumn of 2021. The systems of governance comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounts framework.

As well as our corporate risks, we have processes to identify, monitor and mitigate operational risks. Officer meetings take place through the year with accountable officers assigned to risks, including meeting with our insurance department. All of this enables us to use the information and data we have on risk to inform how the Council plans and operates. We are better integrating operational risk with service performance and improvement plans and financial plans. Risk also forms a key part of our quarterly performance and improvement reviews. In addition to the RMS the Council has a health and safety section and Business Continuity section.

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Review and publish our updated RMS	An easy-to-understand strategy allowing us to identify, monitor and mitigate risk more efficiently and effectively. This means we can act faster and make more informed decisions.
Continue to review our corporate and operational risks – publishing our findings	An open and transparent assessment of the corporate risks identified.
Use of risk data to better inform decision making	Decisions made from using easy-to-understand risk data. This will allow us to address root causes and deliver better outcomes for our residents.

Doing this means we will be better placed able to apply the sustainable development principle.

Section 4 – Monitoring the Plan

4.1 Monitoring Our Performance

We believe efficient and effective performance management is vital to accountability and achieving better outcomes for our residents. We are continuing to place more focus on performance and are using data to enable us to make better informed decisions to continuously improve. To do this we are strengthen understanding and delivery of performance and governance. We have developed a 'Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework' (please see appendix 3). This sets out robust approaches so that we can manage our performance and assure quality. It includes how we collect information and data, how we analyse this and present our findings. It will help us make sure we follow our systems and processes consistently across the Council and ensure our governance arrangements are used so that we can better manage our performance. Our data will inform scrutiny, reporting, our Self-Assessment Report, Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and our Corporate Planning.

As outlined in the Healthy Organisation section above, we are supporting our staff and making clear links between job roles and our shared vision. We are placing greater emphasis on how we communicate performance internally in our drive to becoming more outcome focused.

We are continuing to use our self-evaluation process. This year it has been delivered in a slightly different way due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Each theme/objective is being scrutinised throughout the year at scrutiny committees and the reports are being used to improve how we deliver services together. For example, our support services learn how they can better support our frontline services. Teams then work together to come with a solution always aimed at providing better outcomes.

This approach has helped us with our corporate planning and will be used in our Self-Assessment Report due to be published on our website later this year. We will build on our learning to use this approach to become focused on areas we need to improve.

We will ...	Success will look like ...
Improve our performance management and governance frameworks	An easy-to-understand framework in one document setting out processes that improvement accountability and lead to better outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil. It will help us efficiently and effectively monitor and continuously improve, but also adapt to any changes in legislation.
Further develop our easy-to-understand ways of presenting data that can be used to inform decision making	Improvements in the way we use data in reports and plans, leading to better decision making. Issues will be spotted sooner and addressed quicker. Planning can be better informed, and we will be able to provide greater focus when applying the sustainable development principle to our work.

Build on our performance and improvement review process	An economic, efficient and effective process that uses data to improve performance and hold Officers and Cabinet Members to account. Ultimately this will lead to improved outcomes for our residents.
Make data more accessible and easier to understand	Using more modern methods of analysing and displaying data to improve awareness and understanding. This leads to better communication and engagement allowing us to provide greater focus when applying the sustainable development principle to our work.

4.2 Scrutiny

As well as Officer and Cabinet monitoring through our internal processes such as quarterly performance and improvement reviews, our Scrutiny Committees (made up of Elected Members, Co-opted Members and specific roles to partners in our Education Scrutiny Committee) play a vital role in monitoring our performance. We are reviewing our scrutiny provision in line with our transformation and improvement together with changes to legislation. More information about our scrutiny function can be found in our Annual Scrutiny Report.

We have 5 main scrutiny committees and a Governance and Audit Committee covering all aspects of this plan and all that we do. The names and remits of these committees may change following the Local Elections in May 2022 to better fit with how services are structured to deliver our objectives and priorities.

The current **5 scrutiny committees** are:

• Transformation, Commercialisation and Corporate Services	• Neighbourhood Services, Planning and Countryside
• Learning and LGES (Local Government Education Service)	• Regeneration and Public Protection
• Social Services	

The scrutiny function has **4 principles to ensure effective scrutiny** (*The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS)*):

- Provide **‘critical friend’ challenge** to executive policy-makers and decision-makers
- Carried out by **‘independent minded governors’** who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drive **improvement** in public services
- Enable the **voice and concerns** of the public and its communities

The role of our scrutiny committees is not decision making nor political but can be encapsulated in these 4 points:

- **Holding the Executive (Cabinet) to account**
- **Performance Monitoring**
- **Policy review and development**
- **External Scrutiny**

Our Governance and Audit Committee is independent of our Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet function. The purpose the Governance and Audit Committee is to provide to those charged with governance independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes, complaints and performance (these last 2 items are through changes following the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021). It oversees and receives reports from our Regional Internal Audit Service and our External Auditors - Audit Wales. This committee approves our accounts as well as playing a key role in our governance, especially regarding our budget setting process and risk management and performance.

4.3 What the Regulators said

As a Council, we continue to engage with our key regulators and continue to respond to any challenges, areas for development or recommendations we receive. We have used the outcomes of these discussions and reviews to help formulate our strategic planning, as well as our service improvement planning over the short, medium and long-term.

Audit Wales

In a report issued to the Council in April 2021, Audit Wales provide 10 recommendations (see below). Our plans will be developed and integrated with our improvement plans.

R1 - The Council should address the lack of capacity and expertise to drive and sustain the transformation agenda.	R6 - The Council must build on its current financial position to strengthen its financial resilience. It is imperative that it takes a much more medium to long-term approach to its planning including considering the level of savings it expects to realistically achieve through transformation, and the level of investment needed to deliver the RTI Plan.
R2 - The Council should provide more permanency in its senior management structure at the earliest opportunity	R7 - The Council should ensure that as a corporate body it remains focused on improving the education outcomes of all children and young people.
R3 - The Council should continue with its capacity review to reflect the transformation needed and learning from the pandemic. This should be	R8 - The Council should continue to strengthen its performance management arrangements and culture. It needs to use arrangements

done in conjunction with considerations about the future shape and skills of the Council's workforce.	effectively to monitor and challenge performance at individual, service and corporate levels, and to ensure these arrangements are robust to support the delivery of the RTI Plan.
R4 - The Council should refine the RTI Plan and ensure it is fully costed, that it has the financial and human resources required to deliver it.	R9 - The Council should strengthen its scrutiny arrangements including how scrutiny could have a more focused and impactful role. For example, scrutiny committees could consider their role in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the RTI Plan; and • holding the Cabinet to account in accordance with statutory guidance.
R5 - The Council should strengthen its communication and engagement with staff to ensure there is ownership, and understanding, of the Council's plans and ambitions.	R10 - The Council should build upon its recent partnership working and put in place arrangements to assure itself that its partnership activities are providing value for money.

ESTYN

In January 2021, ESTYN published a national report titled 'Local authority and regional consortia support for schools and PRUs in response to COVID-19'. This report makes 5 recommendations (see below) on how local authorities and regional consortia have worked with schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) to promote learning and support vulnerable pupils during the COVID-19 period (between June and November 2020). These national recommendations are being used to inform our plans.

- R1** - Urgently address barriers to learning at home, particularly where this is due to a lack of access to suitable computers or adequate connectivity
- R2** - Improve the quality of the distance and blended learning experiences for pupils by supporting more effective teaching across and within schools and PRUs
- R3** - Develop a coherent approach to improve progress in literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills of vulnerable pupils disproportionately affected by the pandemic, for example pupils eligible for free school meals
- R4** - Establish strategies to monitor and address the long-term impact of the pandemic on the physical and mental health of pupils
- R5** - Create opportunities to take stock and evaluate the impact of policies and practices developed since the start of the pandemic to inform future ways of working and curriculum design

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

There was an Inspection of Adult and Children Services in October 2020. The recommendations within this report were built into the service plans. CIW lead inspector has continued to meet with Director and Heads of Service throughout the past 12 months, with the last formal meeting taking place in December 2021. During which time the progress from the previous year was discussed and the plans for the following year explored.

CIW will continue to meet with Director and Heads of Service in 2022-23 to review the progress against the Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan.

CIW will review performance data from each local authority which will help inform their programme of work.

From April 2022 to November 2022 there will be a National thematic review on Public Law Outline (PLO) which is a follow up on previous recommendations from their earlier report December 2016 and also considering the recommendations made in achieving best practice in the child protection and family justice systems (March 2021).

Current to September 2022 - CIW continues to work jointly with HIW on emerging national reviews including (but not limited to) joint inspections of CMHT's.

CIW will also continue to liaise with the Registered Individual of the Care homes and carry out Inspections as and when required.

4.4 Partnership Working

As done previously, we will continue to develop our partnership working. We have learnt how collaborative working throughout the coronavirus pandemic has helped us deliver our services and can improve outcomes for our residents. This starts within the Council. Our departments will continue to build better working arrangements this will help us align our limited resources against outcomes.

We will continue to work with Welsh Government, our Improvement and Assurance Board and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) on our recovery, transformation and improvement journey.

We will also form stronger partnerships with other sectors in Merthyr Tydfil. The Team Merthyr approach and Business, Education and Training Partnership are great examples of this. We will continue to work to the charter with our Community Council.

We will continue to work with other Councils, especially when accessing Welsh Government funding. We are looking to expand on the work we are already doing this year to help support our RTI Plan and delivering our well-being objectives. We will also continue to be actively involved in our regional partnerships, for example the 'Regional Partnership Board' and the 'Public Service Board'.

Section 5 – Glossary

5 ways of working & the sustainable development principle	There are 5 things that public bodies need to think about to show that they can work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing. This is often referred to as the sustainable development principle. The 5 ways of working are:
1- Long-term	The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
2 – Prevention	How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
3 – Integration	Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
4 – Collaboration	Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
5 – Involvement	The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.
Well-being Objective	The Well-being Objectives set out what we feel needs to happen locally to help improve well-being for the people of Merthyr Tydfil and achieve the national Well-being Goals. MTCBC has 4 well-being objectives.
Well-being Goal	The 7 Well-being Goals show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies in Wales to work towards.
Medium-Term Financial Plan	A plan to balance the financial implications of objectives and policies against constraints in resources, which provides a financial basis for decision making, to ensure financial sustainability over the medium term (5 years).
Poverty	When a person’s resources are well below what they require to meet their minimum needs.

Deprivation	Deprivation can be defined as a consequence of a lack of income and other resources, which cumulatively can lead to a state of poverty.
Relative poverty	Where a household has a low income, they have some money but not enough to afford anything above the basics.
Absolute poverty	Where a person does not have the minimum amount of income needed to meet the minimum requirements for one or more basic living needs over an extended period of time.
Cabinet Work Plan	A list of key decisions and other planned Cabinet Member decisions to be taken on behalf of the Council. The purpose of the Work Programme is to give notice of those decisions and an opportunity for consultation.
Corporate Risk Register	Within all large organisations, there exists risks that relate to core business functions, corporate health and strategy – these are categorised as corporate risks. The Corporate Risk Register is a log of all identified corporate risks; it is used to monitor these risks and evidence how they are being managed/mitigated.
Qualitative Performance	We demonstrate this through monitoring performance without comparing data e.g. case studies.
Quantitative Performance	We show this by using more traditional ways to monitor and analyse performance, i.e. by using data.
Well-being <small>(Dodge R, Daly A, Huyton J & Saunders L. (2012) The Wellbeing challenge of defining wellbeing, International Journal of Wellbeing, 2 (3), 22-235)</small>	The balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges they face.

Section 6 – Get Involved

There are a number of ways to get involved with the Council. One of the main ways to get involved is through your local Councillor. You can find out who your local Councillor is and how to get in touch with them by visiting the Council's [website](#).

We want to maintain community involvement and continue to develop our understanding of the communities within Merthyr Tydfil. We welcome you to share your thoughts on well-being or your ideas on how we can improve well-being in Merthyr Tydfil at wellbeing@merthyr.gov.uk.

Scrutiny Committees have arrangements to allow people who live or work in the local authority area to make representations on any matter being discussed. There are many different ways you may wish to get involved in the work of scrutiny, including:

- suggesting a topic for scrutiny to investigate;
- attending a meeting to listen to discussion and the debate;
- attending a meeting to speak on an agenda item; or
- providing information and evidence as a witness, to inform a particular piece of review work being undertaken by a scrutiny committee.

Guidance on Public speaking at Scrutiny Committee meetings - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council welcomes and encourages the active participation of its residents whenever possible and an opportunity exists for members of the public to speak at Scrutiny Committee meetings on an item on the agenda.

Scrutiny Committees will consider requests to examine issues put forward from any sector of the public. To qualify; requests must affect a group or community of people; relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake; not be an issue which scrutiny has considered during the last 12 months; not be a matter dealt with by another County Borough Council Committee (e.g. planning issues) except where the issue relates to the Council's decision-making process.

You can also find us on:



www.facebook.com/merthyrtidfilcbc



www.twitter.com/merthycbc



www.youtube.com/c/MerthyrTydfilCBC

Appendices

Appendix 1 – RTI Plan Summary Work Programmes

Appendix 1.1 – RTI Plan Mission statement



Our Mission Statement

We will be innovative and adaptable to meet the needs of the communities we serve by:

Engaging with all our stakeholders;

Tackling issues through addressing root causes; and

Adopting new ways of working that lead to better outcomes

Appendix 1.2 – Improving Our Education Standards



Improving our
Education
Standards



Cabinet Member: Councillor Lisa Mytton
Senior Responsible Officer: Director - Learning

Well-being objective: Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Projects or Strategies
Theme 1: Partnership & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 1: Performance Management & Systems Governance Goal 2: Developing the Education Workforce Goal 3: Supporting Learners' Health and Well-being 	RARS Strategy
Theme 2: Post Pandemic Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 4: Improving Achievement and Progression Goal 5: Developing the Environment for Learning 	Data Project (CapitaONE) 21 st Century Schools

So what does this mean?

Success for every child – Llwyddiant i bob plenty

The opportunity for all children and young people in Merthyr Tydfil to access high quality education so that they develop as ambitious capable learners, enterprising and creative contributors, ethically informed citizens and healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives.

So what needs to be done?

All of us need to work together to deliver our RARS Strategy. We must improve our learning offer across the County Borough and especially as a response to pandemic recovery, support the emotional well-being of our learners. All this includes more engagement with partners and increasing accountability.

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Appendix 1.3 – Increasing Our Resilience in Social Care



Increasing our
Resilience in
Social Care



Cabinet Member: Councillor Tony Rogers
Senior Responsible Officer: Director - Social Services

Well-being objective: People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health



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Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Projects or Strategies
We need to be more resilient to be able to deliver our well-being objectives, so we need to bolster areas of the service and change how we work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery Resources and Service Improvement Resilience and Sustainability 	<p>Adapt and respond to a post pandemic environment</p> <p>Improve service outcomes and better manage capacity and finances to meet demand</p> <p>Expand and improve collaboration and integration</p>

So what does this mean?

To be able to continue to deliver our services to the current standards, we need to ensure the right staffing levels and skills are in place together with continuing to undertake partnership working to support our service delivery.

So what needs to be done?

We will: continue to monitor or staffing provision following the increased resources, as a result of the capacity exercises and growth; invest resource into our data team allowing us to work more efficiently and effectively; review areas of our service to change the way we work to increase our resilience.

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Cabinet Member: Councillor Geraint Thomas
Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Chief Executive

Well-being objective: People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing; safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination



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Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Projects or Strategies
We need to address our economic recovery to avoid unemployment and support our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement our 15-year Vision for the economy of Merthyr Tydfil, Economic Recovery Strategy and Economic Growth Strategy using our Economic Recovery Board Continue to analyse business activities and services, with specific focus on the impact of the pandemic We will continue to develop and grow the connections between the business sector and Merthyr Tydfil's Education provision 	15-year Economic Vision & Economic Growth Strategy Economic Recovery Board Business Engagement Commercial Programme Business, Education Together Partnership

So what does this mean?

Our situation before the pandemic meant our economy was vulnerable, this has been made worse by the pandemic. We need to align our resources to work together to support our businesses and our economy.

So what needs to be done?

Our Economic Growth Strategy, overseen by the Economic Recovery Board, provides sound governance. Our Business, Education Together Partnership will, amongst other things, build partnerships and opportunities for our learners.

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Cabinet Member: Councillor Geraint Thomas



Senior Responsible Officer for the Commercial Programme:
Deputy Chief Executive



Commercial Programme outcomes: The delivery of this programme will **support the priority outcomes** identified – This is to be **built into our Economic Recovery work programme**.

Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Strategies or Projects
By being more commercial we can support the financial sustainability of the council	<p>Commercial Environment – Create an organisational environment that enables commercial activity</p> <p>Investment Programme – Create a portfolio of investment opportunities and review current contract to ensure value for money</p>	<p>Commercial Development Plan</p> <p>Commercial Investment Plan</p> <p>Commercial Team Development</p>

So what does this mean?

We need to be aware of commercial opportunities in our services and how to take advantage of them. This can include invest-to-save options.

So what needs to be done?

Following the Council approval of a Commercial Manager as part of the capacity exercise, we are developing an investment programme of commercial opportunities to help address our long-term financial sustainability challenge. We must create a commercial environment across the Council to take advantage of commercial opportunities.

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Cabinet Member: Councillor Michelle Jones
Senior Responsible Officer: Director - Neighbourhood Services



Well-being Objective: Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside



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Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Projects or Strategies
We need to recover from the pandemic to maximise the amount of material and resources reused and recycled in line with the waste hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the knowledge and participation of the community to increase recycling rates Ensure there is business continuity throughout the service Collaborate with and support registered social landlords Reduce carbon emissions from Council buildings, schools and fleet in order to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 	Keeping up with the Joneses Frontline workforce Digital opportunities Recycling and Engagement Programme Decarbonisation

So what does this mean?

We need to recover from the pandemic to continue on our journey of creating a better environment now and for future generations.

So what needs to be done?

We need to work with partners to engage and involve them in our recycling and decarbonisation programmes. We will change the ways we work and align our resources to focus on reuse, recycling and decarbonisation.

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Appendix 1.7 – Digital Transformation



Cabinet Member: Councillor Chris Davies

Lead Officer: Head of ICT & Print



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
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County Borough Council

Digital Transformation outcomes: Improved **agility, flexibility and cost-effectiveness**; Transformed **business processes**; Use **data** to better inform and transparent **decision making**

Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Strategies or Projects
We need to build on the work done during the pandemic to support our services	To improve our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Culture • Digital Infrastructure • Digital Economy • Digital Information 	Agile Working Programme Digital Infrastructure Development Digital Transformation – Supporting our Economy Data Project

So what does this mean?

To allow us to efficiently and effectively deliver services that our residents need, we need to improve our digital offer. This has allowed us to continue to work throughout the pandemic and we can learn from this going forward.

So what needs to be done?

We can use the infrastructure we have built and learning during the pandemic to help our staff deliver services and support our priorities.

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Appendix 1.8 – Healthy Organisation



Cabinet Member: Councillor Chris Davies

Lead Officer: Head of HR



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Healthy Organisation outcomes: Increased workforce support developing new ideas and skills helping **succession planning**; Reduce staff turnover and increase success through **motivating and investing in our staff**; Move to new ways of working by **upskilling our staff**

Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Strategies or Projects
We have a wealth of skills and experience across our most valuable resource, the workforce. We must invest in our workforce to achieve our priorities.	To improve our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled Workforce • Engaged Workforce • Motivated and Accountable Workforce 	Staff Development Programme Working Better Together Project Performance and Accountability Project Support our Recovery

So what does this mean?

We must make sure we have the right levels of staff with the correct skill sets to deliver change and work in new ways. This will help us deliver the services our residents need.

So what needs to be done?

We need to: improve efficiency and effectiveness by changing our recruitment, monitoring staff performance and upskilling by using digital technology; utilise apprenticeship and graduate schemes to support succession planning and upskilling our workforce.

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Appendix 1.9 – Governance Improvement



Cabinet Member: Councillor Chris Davies

Senior Responsible Officer: Head of Legal



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Governance Improvement outcomes: Informed and transparent **decision making**; Continuing to deliver **democracy** and refocus our **scrutiny function**; **Our Elected Members** will have a clearer focus in their role and updated Professional Development Records

Why is this a priority?	Objectives for this priority?	Strategies or Projects
We must engage effectively to improve the way we work, including how we challenge performance and increase accountability, to manage risk and achieve our priorities.	To improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Democracy • Delivering Outcomes • Demonstrating Accountability 	Digital Democracy Programme Governance Maturity Programme Scrutiny Development Programme Performance Programme

So what does this mean?

We need to continue our focus on outcomes for our residents. To do this we need to have clearly defined roles and functions with staff working to core values with the appropriate skills and capacity to deliver.







*Merthyr Tudful ...
... lle i fod yn falch ohono*

So what needs to be done?

Further develop our data team, building on additional staffing approved as part of the capacity exercises and growth. We will continue to update our constitution and governance documents to reflect our transformation. Further develop our digital options to make sure democracy can still happen during the pandemic.

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Appendix 2 – The 7 National Well-being Goals

	National Goals	Parts of the RTI Plan that improve how we contribute to the National Goals
	A Prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Improving our Education Standards Economic Recovery Environmental Well-being Healthy Organisation Commercial Programme
	A Resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Environmental Well-being Digital Transformation
	A Healthier Wales People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and health impacts are understood	Improving our Education Standards Increasing our resilience in Social Care Healthy Organisation
	A More Equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Economic Recovery Healthy Organisation Digital Transformation
	A Wales of Cohesive Communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Economic Recovery Environmental Well-being
	A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language The Welsh language and culture are an integral part of our communities, and contribute to the rich heritage of the country	Economic Recovery Governance Improvement
	A Globally Responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	Improving our Education Standards Increasing our resilience in Social Care Economic Recovery Environmental Well-being

Our updated **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)** plays a key role in how we assess the impact on these 7 national well-being goals as well as other parts of the Act, protected characteristics, Welsh language, biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems and socio-economic disadvantage. The IIA also requested that data is used as part of the assessment along with how communication and engagement has been undertaken (where required).

Section 1 – Why do we need Performance Management and Quality Assurance?

What do we want to achieve?

We want to work together to achieve the best outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil in delivering our shared vision. This also means we are all clear about what we trying to achieve.

In our Corporate Well-being Plan – Focus on the Future 2021/22, we set out our 4 well-being objectives and priority outcomes. We explain how the Council itself needs to work as one and with partners to deliver these objectives and achieve the outcomes. Cross cutting themes and support services will help us achieve this and address some of our wider challenges such as how we tackle poverty.

To do all this, remain focused on our priorities and support our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, we have developed a ‘Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan 2020 to 2025’. This sets out three priorities for improvement and how they link to our priority outcomes.

These are our **3 priorities for improvement:**



These will address our **priority outcomes:**

Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people



Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities



Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish

But how do we know if we are achieving this?

To better understand this, we need to ask challenging questions such as:

- Have we done what we said we were going to do?
- Have we achieved what we set out to achieve?
- Does this meet the standards needed by our service users?

These are questions we would find difficult to answer without effective and efficient performance management and quality assurance.

So, we want this framework to help us:

- ensure we can effectively and efficiently answer these questions but more importantly transform to improve and provide better outcomes for our residents;
- take a consistent approach to managing performance and quality assurance based on a continuous cycle of 'plan-do-review-improve';
- create an environment where staff clearly understand their responsibilities that will support our governance to strengthen accountability;
- align our resources effectively, efficiently and economically so that we remain sustainable in achieving our shared vision; and
- to use our data to make informed decisions using the sustainable development principle, the five ways of working.

Five ways of working



Long Term



Prevention



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement

Why does this matter?

This Performance Management and Quality Assurance framework sets out robust approaches so that we can manage our performance and assure quality. This includes how we collect information and data, how we analyse this and present our findings. It will help us make sure we follow our systems and processes consistently across the Council.

This will help us involve our communities in how we are meeting our performance requirements and in our scrutiny function. We want to make sure everyone is clear as to what we are doing and how this will improve our outcomes through the Council's vision.

Our leadership team will use the approaches in this document to support communication with our Staff and Elected Members. We will be better able to explain our position, how we are recovering from the coronavirus pandemic and transforming to improve.

This supports how we make more informed decisions, hold better scrutiny, are forward thinking and hold Staff and the Cabinet to account. This further enhances our governance arrangements.

This framework allows us to improve accountability and how we all understand our roles and responsibilities in being part of the framework to improve our outcomes. This is again a vital part in improving the Council's governance.

By taking this approach we will address the question of 'so what?' - We are focused on improving outcomes for our residents and this remains at the heart of what we do.

Section 2 – What does our Performance Management and Quality Assurance include?

To answer this question, we must first look at how we work. Our performance management is based on a cycle of continuous review and improvement. We use the principle of '**Plan – Do – Review – Improve**'. This underpins the Council's continuous improvement approach to performance.

Our main **plan** is called our Corporate Plan (Focus on the Future – Well-being in our communities 2017 to 2022). This plan includes our priorities for improvement. These have been developed as part of the Council's Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan. The RTI Plan explains what we need to do to improve, we will find out more about this in section 4 below.

To allow us to **do** what's in our high-level plans and strategies, we have operational approaches for services across the Council. Section 5 explains this in more detail. These strategic and service level plans fit with individual development and action plans. We call this 'Focus on My Performance'.

We will keep our performance under **review** to find out how well we are doing. We will consider our corporate, service and individual staff performance. This is explained in more detail in section 6 below. Each member of staff has regular reviews with their manager and links made to individual actions through to our Council objectives to deliver our shared vision (this is often referred to as the 'golden thread').

We will **improve** by consulting on performance and using data and findings to set out improvement plans that consider economic, effectiveness and efficiency. We will report on this to ensure we are open, transparent and held to account. This will be done through our governance processes and focusing our resources on improving our outcomes.

For this cycle to be effective and efficient our performance management and quality assurance must ask the right questions. For example, our performance management will ask how much of something has been done or how many things have been produced, whereas quality assurance asks how well it has been done and has it met expectations. When these 2 elements are put together, we can make sure our improvement is timely, meeting our targets, how well we are doing and the impact on our outcomes.



Our Principles

We have worked with Elected Members, Scrutiny Members and our Officers to develop principles for effective performance management and quality assurance. These principles directly align with our operating model.

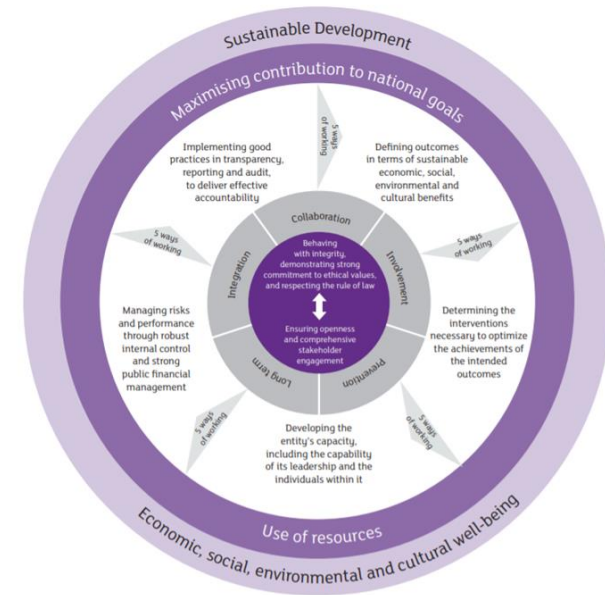
- **Work together to overcome our challenges**
- **Use data to make informed decisions**
- **Regularly monitor our performance and strengthen our scrutiny function asking the 'so what' question**
- **Strengthen our self-evaluation and develop our self-assessment reporting to lead to better outcomes**
- **Use performance management and quality assurance to strengthen our governance and accountability**
- **Celebrate success**

Section 3 – Our Governance Framework

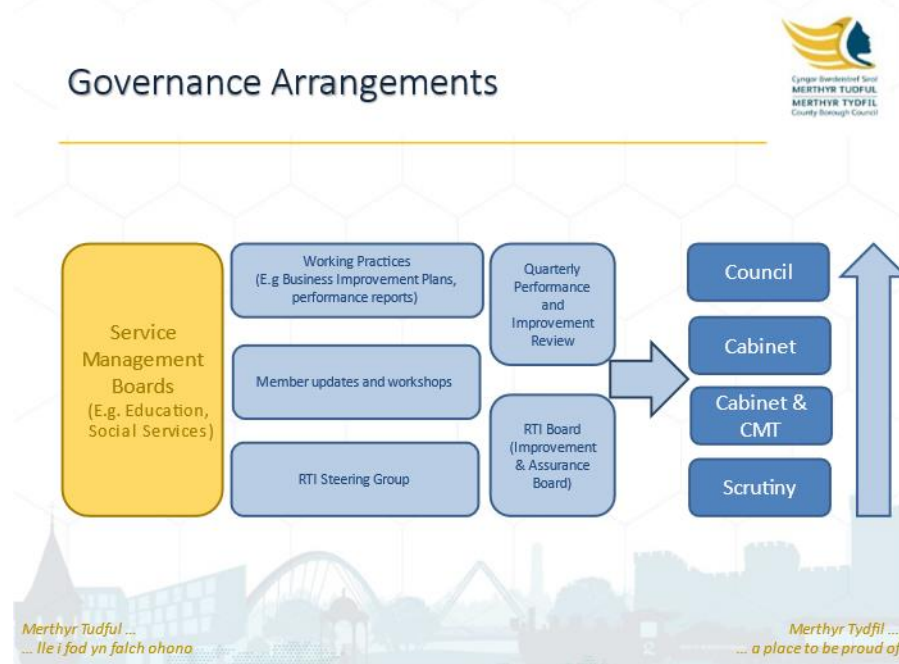
We need good governance to underpin our performance management and quality assurance framework and indeed all that we do.

We want to work together to deliver the best outcomes we can for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil. This focuses on how Elected Members and Council Officers understand and deliver the needs of our residents. We are not going to do this on our own, we want to get the views of our residents, businesses, partners, staff and trades unions to inform our thinking.

The diagram opposite shows the linkages between the Well-being of future Generations (Wales) Act and good governance. The pillars of the Act (Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Well-being) allow sustainable development. Couple this with efficient and effective use of resources we can maximise our contributions to the national goals. By using the 5 ways of working (from the Act) we can strengthen how we deliver our governance.



Source: 'International Framework and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015'; Future Generations Commissioner for Wales



For example, managing risk, finance and performance by being preventative and considering the long-term would be extremely advantageous. This diagram forms the basis of our governance framework.

'Our Governance Framework' builds on 'International Framework and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' diagram by applying the key elements of our governance and our stakeholders in a cycle leading from our Corporate Well-being Plan through to service and individual plans. This mirrors the 'golden thread' through the organisation.

When these diagrams are applied together, we are able demonstrate good governance through our processes. This forms the basis of our performance management and quality assurance.

Our Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees and Governance and Audit Committee have forward plans to enable us to plan ahead and add constructive challenge to achieve better outcomes. For example, the Cabinet Forward Plan is a list of all key decisions and information reports to be made by the Cabinet. Key decisions are important decisions that are likely to either have a significant impact on communities living or working in the County Borough or result in the Council spending or making savings. In Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, the Cabinet Forward Plan is updated on a quarterly basis.





Our Scrutiny Committees and Governance and Audit Committee have plans for the year and use the Cabinet Forward Plan (along with key strategies and policies) to inform their plans. The Scrutiny Forward Work Programme lists the topics to be considered by one of the Council's scrutiny committees.



Key Elements of Our Framework

Our Shared Vision is underpinned by our Corporate Well-being Plan (Focus on the Future). Strategic decisions are made by our Elected Members.

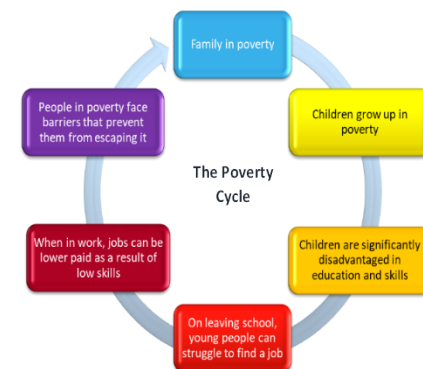
In our Corporate Well-being Plan – Focus on the Future 2021/22, we set out our 4 priority outcomes and well-being objectives. We also explain how ‘Tackling Poverty’ is a cross-cutting theme. This means everything we do should tackle poverty across the County Borough. To do all this, and support our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, we have developed a ‘Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan 2020 to 2025’.

Well-being Theme	Objective	Primary Outcome
 Best Start	Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.	Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people
 Working Life	People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination.	Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish
 Environmental Well-being	Communities protect, enhance, and promote our environment and countryside.	Maximise efficient use of materials and resources by means of the waste hierarchy
 Living Well	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities



Tackling Poverty

Tackling poverty is a cross-cutting theme in our Corporate Well-being Plan. Poverty is a root cause of many issues we face now and into the future, especially following the coronavirus pandemic. The poverty cycle shows how if we work across our well-objectives we can positively impact on the cycle. As such we need to integrate our strategies and collaborate to tackle this wicked issue. We are applying the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working) to tackle poverty, and in doing so, help us better support delivery of the 7 national goals.



Recover → Transform → Improve – Our Plan 2020 to 2025



We have been working with an Improvement and Assurance Board commissioned by Welsh Government. This board has helped us to prioritise, refocus and strengthen key areas of the Council. This led to the development of our 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan'. A key focus of the Recovery, Transformation Improvement Plan (often referred to as the RTI Plan) is to ensure that we can economically, efficiently and effectively deliver our strategies, well-being objectives, corporate plan and priorities to provide better outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil. This has been targeted on our 3 areas of priority. Our 3 priorities are: improving our education standards, increasing our resilience in social care and supporting economic recovery.



Improving our
Education
Standards



Increasing our
Resilience in
Social Care



Economic
Recovery

Our **annual performance report** (which will be replaced by our self-assessment report in 2022 as part of our response to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) sets out the Council's performance on an annual basis. This report is built from our continuous monitoring of performance throughout the year.

This is challenged throughout the year as part of our **scrutiny function** (Elected Member scrutiny) and **quarterly performance and improvement reviews**.

As well as **self-evaluation** the Council considers its **performance data** (including benchmarking and trend data) before reaching overall judgements against our well-being objectives (including how services are performing in delivering our objectives).

This is set out in our **strategies-on-a-page (SOAPs)** for teams to use to monitor performance. Our **Business Improvement Plans (BIPs)** put in place operational action plans that focus on how and what we need to improve. These are monitored as part of departmental management arrangements.

Our **quarterly performance and improvement reviews (QPIRs)** provide an officer led challenge that complements our scrutiny function. The QPIRs allow the senior leadership team and Cabinet to challenge performance (and other aspects of governance) and testing the impact on our outcomes. This fits alongside our monthly **Budget Board** (finance monitoring) that focuses on our financial position and our **Corporate Risk Register**. Our QPIR reports include data and context regarding performance, HR data, Finance data, Compliments and Complaints, Risk, progress against delivering our RTI Plan, audit recommendations and general data of the County Borough.

Other **operational level plans** compliment strategic plans, for example operational risk registers and the corporate risk register, workforce plans and the Healthy Organisation work programme.

Our **‘Focus on My Performance’** process links these corporate and service actions into staff members performance. We have annual and six-monthly reviews in addition to regular 1-2-1 meetings between members of staff and their line manager.

This creates a thread between individual actions all the way through to the Corporate Well-being Plan and Our Shared Vision – this is often referred to as the **‘golden thread’**.

An **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)** is completed as part of each programme/project and each decision made at Council or Cabinet. Our IIA plays a key role in how we assess the impact on these 7 national well-being goals (as well as other parts of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act), protected characteristics, Welsh language, biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems and socio-economic disadvantage. The IIA also requested that data is used as part of the assessment along with how communication and engagement has been undertaken (where required).



Our Core Values and Operating Model

We have 7 core values that have been developed with our staff. We work to these core values when delivering our roles. This creates the culture we want to work to.

We have an operating model that goes alongside our core values. Our Council approved operating model has been designed to set out how we will deliver our services.

Our Core Values



The Council has adopted a set of **core values** and associated **behaviours**, which are:

Honesty & Openness

Trust & Respect

Accountability

Learning

Aspiration

Team Working

Communication



Section 4 – How will we plan?

We will use the principle of **'Plan – Do – Review – Improve'**. This underpins the Council's continuous improvement approach to performance.

Our shared vision (appendix 1) sets out the vision for the Council in the regional and national context. This fits with our 7 national goals, together with how our 4 well-being objectives fit with our regional Public Services Board (PSB) well-being objectives.

Our main **plan** is called our Corporate Well-being Plan (Focus on the Future – Well-being in our communities 2017 to 2022). This sets out what we are going to do and is captured in our well-being objectives and outcomes. To remain focused, we have identified the 4 primary outcomes that have the greatest impact in realising our objectives.

Our 'Statement of Well-being' accompanies our Corporate Well-being Plan and sets why we are doing what has been set out.

We are not going to do this on our own, we want to get the views of our residents, businesses, partners, staff and trades unions to inform our thinking.

Council and Cabinet form the main high-level decision-making tier of the Council.

Our RTI Plan has been developed to address areas that could have a detrimental impact on delivering our shared vision. The RTI Plan sets 3 improvement priorities. Workforce plans allow each section of the Council to set out how it will use its resources to achieve the required outcomes. These plans are being developed as part of the 'Healthy Organisation' work programme in the RTI Plan.

This means there is a 'golden thread' through all that we do. In other words, each member of staff has objectives set out to deliver team aims which in turn help us deliver our well-being objectives to contribute to our national goals.



Section 5 – What will we do?

To allow us to **do** what's in our high-level plans and strategies, we have operational approaches for services across the Council. These are summarised into Strategies on a Page (SOAPs). The SOAPs allow us to review and improve what we do as well by including the aim, how other services contribute to the SOAP, outcomes and key performance indicators. Sitting beneath the SOAPs we have Business Improvement Plans (BIPs). These set out what services are doing to deliver the strategies. Our Staff have 'Focus on My Performance' reviews twice a year (accompanied by regular 1-2-1 meetings with their line manager) to link their individual roles to service strategies and plans and how this fits together to deliver our objectives and achieve our shared vision. Our SOAPs and BIPs are used by teams to deliver. Team meetings compliment this approach by making connections between individual objectives and team aims. This is often done in a 'huddle' style approach to make best use of staff time and focus on delivery. This is then supplemented by longer team meetings as required.

We use our project management framework to deliver projects. This is based on a tradition 'PRINCE2' style but can be adapted to use more modern style approaches such as 'Agile' project management techniques. If there are skill gaps, the 'Focus on My Performance' will identify it and it can be built into our workforce plans and/or the Merthyr Tydfil CBC curriculum that is being developed to support our staff. Our new e-performance approach for 'Focus on My Performance' allows us to more efficiently and effectively monitor the process so that more time can be spent on developing our staff.

When we are considering delivery and performance, we use the 'SMART' principle.

The Council is continuing to develop its workforce to support delivery of the RTI Plan and wider services. We have continued to employ apprentices and increase our capacity.

Our Corporate Management and Senior Leadership teams deliver services in line with the decisions made at Cabinet and Council and in line with our Corporate Well-being Plan.

Our manager's network will further help us to work together across the Council.

SMART

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Realistic	Time Bound
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What exactly do we need to do and what results are we expecting?• Do we have enough detail to be able to achieve this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are we able to measure our achievement?• How will we know when it has been done?• What data is available?• What indicators will we use to measure success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does this fit with what we are trying to achieve in our strategic plans e.g. Corporate Well-being Plan or RTI Plan?• Have we got the capacity and skills to do this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are we or you the right people to do this?• What support do we need?• Is the proposal achievable when considering all parameters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have we set specific timescales?• Have we got milestones?• What happens if we go over the timescales?• Do other activities depend on these timescales?

Recover → Transform → Improve – Our Plan 2020 to 2025

Our 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan' is a major part of our improvement. A key focus of the RTI Plan is to ensure that we can economically, efficiently and effectively deliver our strategies, well-being objectives, corporate plan and priorities to provide better outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil. This has been targeted on our 3 areas of priority.

We have other work programmes to support the delivery of the RTI Plan and the 3 priorities. These are summarised as our Environmental Well-being priorities and supporting the plan.

Supporting the RTI Plan

This meant we needed to consider 'Environmental Wellbeing' and our wider cross-Council transformation.



The RTI plan also focuses on **decarbonisation** and how we support reuse and recycling (you may have seen this being referred to as the 'Waste Hierarchy') in supporting **Environmental Well-being**.

The RTI plan helps us do this by considering our digital opportunities (**Digital Transformation**), enabling us to be more commercially aware (**Commercial Programme**), having the right resources (**Healthy Organisation**) and good governance i.e. the way we work (**Governance Improvement**).



Merthyr Tudful ...
... lle i fod yn falch ohono

Merthyr Tydfil ...
... a place to be proud of



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Priorities for our Recovery, Transformation and Improvement



Education – Improving Standards



Social Services - Increasing Resilience



Economic Recovery

We cannot do everything on our own. We have made strong partnerships in responding to the coronavirus pandemic and want to build on this. Integrating our plans and collaborating in using our resources, will help us better delivery our well-being objectives and lead to improved outcomes for our residents

Section 6 – How will we review?

Strategic View

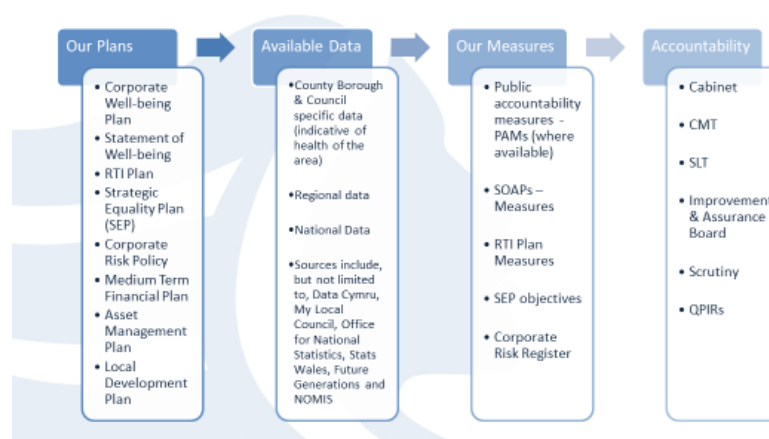
To **review** how we are doing, we consider our corporate, service and individual staff performance. To do this, we have a self-evaluation process and annual performance reporting process regarding the corporate performance. Our updated quarterly improvement reviews, allow us to consider the corporate and service performance regularly. Our annual performance report (this will be replaced by a Self-Assessment Report in 2022 as the Council responds to Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) and annual governance statement allows to undertake formal reviews and publicly report our findings.

The 'Planning → Data → Performing → Accountability' diagrams in this section set out our plans, available data, our measures and accountability across a strategic, operational and individual basis.

We use Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) and local measures to measure our success. These are contained in our strategic documents such as our annual performance report linked to our Corporate Well-being Plan. We use qualitative and quantitative ways to monitor and measure success.



Strategic



Quantitative

Residents and Staff Surveys	National performance measures (e.g. PAMs)
Benchmarking	Local data e.g. staff attendance or staff sickness
Contract performance	Compliments and Complaints

Qualitative

Case studies – Service provision or customer service	Resident and staff feedback
Audit outcomes	Feedback at 1-2-1 meetings – Staff member and line manager
Case study samples (as used in our annual performance report)	Peer review outcomes and viewing others

A dashboard has been developed to capture data from across departments and areas of governance to inform our plans, measures and increase accountability.

Our Scrutiny Committees carry out their duties to hold our Cabinet to account, connecting with our communities and review how we are delivering our objectives and achieving our outcomes. Our Corporate Risk Register and Financial Plans are reviewed regularly by CMT and Cabinet, challenged at our Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) before gaining approval at Cabinet meetings. Our quarterly performance and improvement review process and monthly Budget Board meetings feed into reports to the GAC and Cabinet.

Constructive challenge has taken place through our Scrutiny function, Governance and Audit Committee and internal quarterly performance and improvement reviews (QPIRs). We want to build on this as we go forward. Our induction for Members following the Local Elections in May will be integral to this.

Our annual performance report (which will be replaced by our self-assessment report in 2022 as part of our response to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) sets out the Council's performance on an annual basis. This report is built from our continuous monitoring of performance throughout the year. Appendix 2 sets out the status definitions we use in performance management and project management.

Operational View

Operational performance is monitored at service or team level meetings with the relevant head of service. These are often referred to as service management board meetings and feed up into senior leadership team (SLT) meetings and Corporate Management Team meetings (as required). Through monitoring of performance, links can be made with operational risks and budget monitoring. This means any issues can be addressed efficiently and effectively. This also helps with the implementation of any national changes and integration of plans.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation plays a key part in this element of our governance and performance management. Self-reflection is encouraged coupled with peer challenge. External peer challenge can also be used at this stage. Each aspect is challenged at our scrutiny committees and form part of our officer led QPIR process. This can be used to inform our strategic and operational performance.

Throughout the year we carry out self-evaluation on how we are delivering against our well-being objectives and how we are working together to do this. Our self-evaluation is based on 3 themes. These are:

- 1 - Outcomes
- 2 – Provision and Service Delivery
- 3 – Leadership and Management

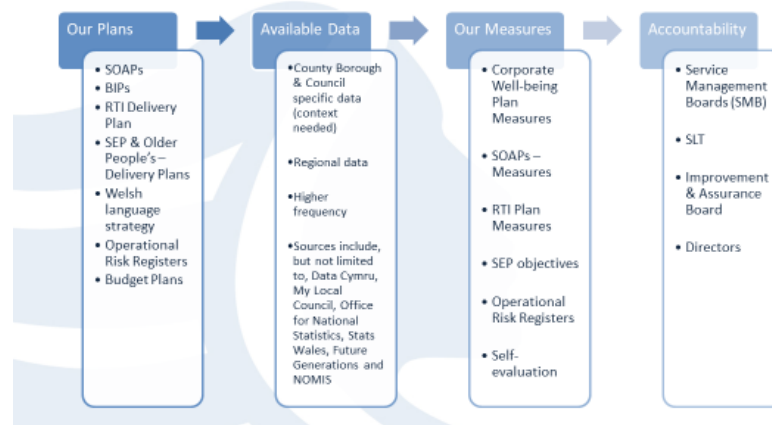
This is challenged throughout the year as part of our scrutiny function (Elected Member scrutiny) and quarterly performance and improvement reviews. These elements are also challenged together at the end of the year at a relevant scrutiny committee e.g. the Living Well self-evaluation report is scrutinised by the Social Services scrutiny committee. Qualitative and quantitative data are used to develop judgements.

As well as self-evaluation the Council considers its performance data (including benchmarking and trend data) before reaching overall judgements against our well-being objectives (including how services are performing in delivering our objectives).

Planning → Data → Performing → Accountability



Operational or Service Level



Our Scrutiny Function

The scrutiny function has **4 principles to ensure effective scrutiny** (*The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS)*):

- Provide **‘critical friend’ challenge** to executive policy-makers and decision-makers
- Carried out by **‘independent minded governors’** who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drive **improvement** in public services
- Enable the **voice and concerns** of the public and its communities

The role of our scrutiny committees is not decision making nor political but can be encapsulated in these 4 points:

- **Holding the Executive (Cabinet) to account**
- **Policy review and development**
- **Performance Monitoring**
- **External Scrutiny**

Our Corporate Management Team and Senior Leadership Team deliver services in line with decision making to best achieve the outcomes in our Corporate Well-being Plan. These teams will use the approaches in this document to support communication with our Staff and Elected Members. We will be better able to explain our position and how we are recovering from the coronavirus pandemic and transforming to improve. Our new manager’s network will further help us to work together across the Council.

We have focused on improving our data and how we use it in our decision making. We look forward to developing this further in the future for example by using dashboards to monitor performance.

Individual Staff Performance

Our staff performance is reviewed as part of our 'Focus on Your Performance' process. Individual objectives are set relating service aims connecting this to our shared vision. This allows staff targets and measures to be put in place.

Data Sources

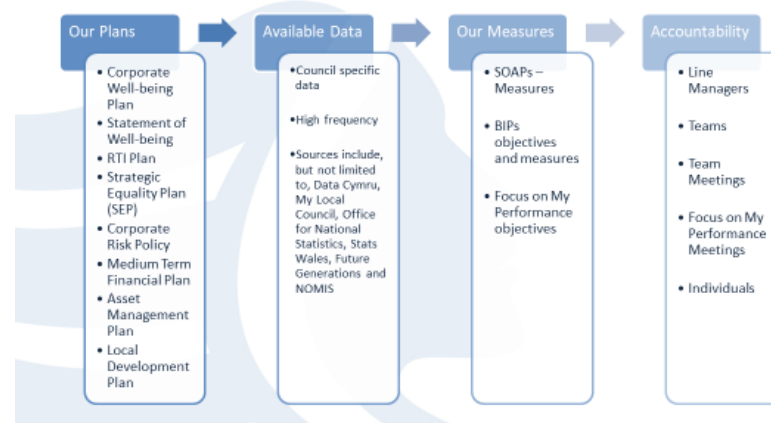
We use data from various sources. These include but not limited to:

- Data Cymru
- My Local Council
- Office for National Statistics
- Stats Wales
- Future Generations
- NOMIS (official labour market statistics)
- Our Cwm Taf

Planning → Data → Performing → Accountability



Individual



Section 7 – How will we know if we’ve improved?

Our RTI Plan sets out our 3 priorities that will enable us to better deliver of well-being objectives and outcomes.

These plans have key performance indicators that form our SOAPs and associated BIPs that our services work to. Delivery and performance will be monitored through our SMBs. This will feed into our self-evaluation and our self-reflection against our well-being objectives (Well-being of Future Generations Template).

We will consider qualitative information as well as quantitative data. Case studies and audit feedback will inform how we are performing and the quality of our work. Some of our usual data is not available due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic so we will need to consider alternative data going forward.

Our QPIR process and scrutiny function (which we are improving as part of our RTI Plan) will allow us to challenge and continuously improve.

This will all be supported by our Focus on My Performance. Our e-performance module will enable us to better monitor how we are implementing this and the quality of our individual objectives.

We will also review this framework to ensure we continue to improve.

Section 8 – Glossary

5 ways of working & the sustainable development principle	There are 5 things that public bodies need to think about to show that they can work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing. This is often referred to as the sustainable development principle. The 5 ways of working are:
1- Long-term	The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
2 – Prevention	How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
3 – Integration	Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
4 – Collaboration	Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
5 – Involvement	The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.
Well-being Objective	The Well-being Objectives set out what we feel needs to happen locally to help improve well-being for the people of Merthyr Tydfil and achieve the national Well-being Goals. MTCBC has 4 well-being objectives.
Well-being Goal	The 7 Well-being Goals show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies in Wales to work towards.
Medium-Term Financial Plan	A plan to balance the financial implications of objectives and policies against constraints in resources, which provides a financial basis for decision making, to ensure financial sustainability over the medium term (5 years).
Poverty	When a person’s resources are well below what they require to meet their minimum needs.

Deprivation	Deprivation can be defined as a consequence of a lack of income and other resources, which cumulatively can lead to a state of poverty.
Relative poverty	Where a household has a low income, they have some money but not enough to afford anything above the basics.
Absolute poverty	Where a person does not have the minimum amount of income needed to meet the minimum requirements for one or more basic living needs over an extended period of time.
Cabinet Work Plan	A list of key decisions and other planned Cabinet Member decisions to be taken on behalf of the Council. The purpose of the Work Programme is to give notice of those decisions and an opportunity for consultation.
Corporate Risk Register	Within all large organisations, there exists risks that relate to core business functions, corporate health and strategy – these are categorised as corporate risks. The Corporate Risk Register is a log of all identified corporate risks; it is used to monitor these risks and evidence how they are being managed/mitigated.
Qualitative Performance	We demonstrate this through monitoring performance without comparing data e.g. case studies.
Quantitative Performance	We show this by using more traditional ways to monitor and analyse performance, i.e. by using data.
Well-being <small>(Dodge R, Daly A, Huyton J & Saunders L. (2012) The Wellbeing challenge of defining wellbeing, International Journal of Wellbeing, 2 (3), 22-235</small>	The balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges they face.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Our Shared Vision

OUR SHARED VISION

“ACTING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”



The Wales we want:



A Prosperous Wales



A Resilient Wales



A Healthier Wales



A More Equal Wales



A Wales of Cohesive Communities



A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language



A Globally Responsible Wales

The shared vision for Merthyr Tydfil to get there:

To strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys, and be a place to be proud of where:

People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions,

People live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life,

People visit, enjoy and return

How will Merthyr Tydfil CBC work?



Long Term



Prevention



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement



How will we work together to deliver the Our Shared Vision and achieve our goals?

Focus on the Future



Best Start to Life

Children and young people have the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.



Working Life

People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil as an attractive destination.



Environmental Well-being

Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside.



Living Well

People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.

PSB Well-being Plan

Community Resilience and Well-being

To promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets.

Lifestyles, health and vulnerability

To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.

Economy and Infrastructure

To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.

Tackling loneliness and isolation (Cross cutting objective)

We will work in new ways to channel the undoubted strengths of our communities, including volunteers to tackle more effectively the loneliness and isolation which often exists within many of them.

Improvement Priorities



Improving our Education Standards



Increasing our Resilience in Social Care



Economic Recovery



Appendix 2 – Definition of Status

Performance Status

Indicator status definitions

Performance definition	Rank	Status
The current position is excellent	1-6	Excellent
The current position is good	7-11	Good
The current position is adequate	12-16	Adequate
The current position is unsatisfactory	17-22	Unsatisfactory
There is no comparable information or only local data	Not applicable	







Descriptor for each status



EXCELLENT	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
GOOD	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
ADEQUATE and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
UNSATISFACTORY and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

Project Status

Category	Explanation
Blue	Project 100% complete and savings accrued
Green	Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly
Amber	Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exists requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun
Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme appears to be unachievable. There are major issues on project/programme definition, schedule, budget required, quality or benefits delivery, which at this stage does not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The Project/Programme may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed

Appendix 3 – Our Operating Model

Operating Principles		Operating Expectations
	Listening and engaging with our stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our service offer will be informed by the need of our customers • We will make clear the customer contact options for different customer groups
	Clear communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a clear communication strategy • We regularly engage with stakeholders • We manage actively our relationships, reputation and brand • We will focus on leadership
	Embracing digital technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have an integrated, single record for each customer • We will rationalise our systems • We promote self-service and online access • We will consider the use of digital technology to improve access to and delivery of services • We will use the learning from the pandemic to work in an agile way reducing our carbon footprint
	Focusing on the key priorities and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a resilient and adaptable organisation • Core business is always focussed on realising our Vision • Strategic plans will be set as part of a coordinated approach to reaching our key priorities • Targets are linked to achieving our key outcomes • We will be a healthy organisation investing in staff (e.g. apprenticeships) and addressing our capacity issues
	Consistent and timely implementation of the strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are up to date and fit for purpose • Delivery plans are clear, understood and owned • We will improve our governance • We use robust project management which ensures timely delivery within budget • We use standardised ways of working • We develop our skills, knowledge and understanding in order to achieve our key priorities • Supporting the business functions will be centralised
	Everyone is accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are empowered and accountable for making the right decisions, about the right things at the right time • We fulfil our roles and responsibilities in line with our 'Focus on Your Performance' process • We will recognise achievement and poor performance • We will monitor, challenge and support performance in order to deliver our key priorities • Data will inform decision making

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management will be a focus for us all
	Aligning the budget to the key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will define full service costs • We will understand and manage service demand • We will make financial decisions which are intelligence led (use our data) • We review and identify the best way to provide each service • We will consider our commercial opportunities
	Promoting independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We empower individuals and communities • We define clearly our service provision and promote and signpost alternative provision working with partners • Issues are resolved at the first point of contact • We agree the level of risk we are prepared to take