



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**  
**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

# FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

## Wellbeing in our Community

**2017 - 2022**



**Cysylltu  
Connect**



**Bod yn fywiog  
Be active**



**Bod yn sylwgar  
Take notice**



**Dal ati I ddysgu  
Keep learning**



**Rhoi  
Give**

# Contents

1.	Doing Different Things .....	1
2.	Investing in People's Wellbeing .....	2
3.	Glossary .....	3
4.	Introduction .....	4
5.	Financing the Plan .....	5
6.	Involving Our Communities .....	6-8
7.	Wellbeing Objectives .....	9-12
8.	Contribution of our Wellbeing Objectives to the Wellbeing Goals .....	13
9.	Best Start 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 .....	14-15
10.	Working Life Objective: People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination .....	16-17
11.	Environmental Wellbeing Objective: Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside .....	18-19
12.	Living Well Objective: People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health .....	20-21
13.	STEPS to help achieve the seven national wellbeing goals .....	22-27
14.	Get involved .....	28

## 1. Doing Different Things

- 1.1. Welcome to our wellbeing plan "Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community". In our plan, we set out what we expect from our Councillors and what we expect from the Council to achieve our Wellbeing Objectives. As stated last year this has been formulised into political priorities and integrates our local Wellbeing Objectives and the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan.
- 1.2. As a Council, we continue to be committed to working closely with our communities to build resilience across the County Borough and bring people together. As Leader, I want to use my role to continue to build connections between people and empower community action as a way to improve wellbeing.
- 1.3. Like all public bodies, the Council is facing increasing pressures coupled with continued cuts in government funding. How we respond to these challenges can be an opportunity to do different things. Mobilising our assets within individuals and communities, to focus on what people value most, will be crucial in identifying opportunities to do different things.
- 1.4. As Councillors, we will continue to lead community development by bringing people and communities together. We will use our own knowledge, skills and experiences to promote opportunities for community involvement to achieve positive and long lasting changes.



**Councillor Kevin O'Neill**

Leader of the Council

"I want our Councillors to be out there in our communities, working alongside our community members to make Merthyr Tydfil better."

## 2. Investing in People's Wellbeing

- 2.1. On behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, I am pleased to present our updated plan "Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community". This plan sets out what we will do in our communities to deliver our Wellbeing Objectives and how we will work to do this.
- 2.2. The Wellbeing 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 as we continue to experience budget reductions.
- 2.3. We must ensure the decisions we take secure sustained improvements in the cultural, economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the people who live and work in the County Borough today and in the future. In order to achieve this, I will be working to ensure the Council works differently by applying the five ways of working set out in the Act.
- 2.4. The Leader of the Council has outlined the role local Councillors play as community ambassadors. They will help empower local people to transform their community and address the issues they face through community actions.
- 2.5. As I have stated previously, Council Officers have worked with residents to help develop a baseline understanding of wellbeing in the County Borough. This has helped shape the Wellbeing Objectives in our plan. It has enabled us to better understand how to improve wellbeing in our communities.



**Gareth Chapman**

Chief Executive

"Help me to help you, in ensuring the Council and its team of professional and motivated staff work with you, the communities of the County Borough, to deliver the Wellbeing Objectives set out in this plan."

### 3. Glossary

<b>Five ways of working</b>	There are five 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. The five things are:
<b>1- Long-term</b>	The importance of balancing short-term need or demand whilst safeguarding the ability to meet long-term needs.
<b>2 - Prevention</b>	Preventing problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies free up resources and meet their Wellbeing Objectives.
<b>3 - Integration</b>	Considering how a public body's Wellbeing Objectives may impact on each of the Wellbeing Goals, on their Wellbeing Objectives, or on the Wellbeing Objectives of other public bodies.
<b>4 - Collaboration</b>	Acting in collaboration with any other person or different organisations that could help the public body to meet its Wellbeing Objectives.
<b>5 - Involvement</b>	The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the Wellbeing Goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the public body serves.
<b>Wellbeing Objective</b>	The Wellbeing Objectives set out what we feel needs to happen locally to help improve wellbeing for the people of Merthyr Tydfil and achieve the national Wellbeing Goals.
<b>Wellbeing Goal</b>	The seven Wellbeing 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.
<b>Medium Term Financial Plan</b>	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 (five years).

## 4. Introduction

- 4.1. Under the Wellbeing 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 wellbeing 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 their lives in Merthyr Tydfil now and in the future.
- 4.2. The Act establishes the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, whose role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and to support the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards achieving the Wellbeing Goals.

### **Our Plan, Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community**

- 4.3. In our Statement of Wellbeing, we set out the scope of each Wellbeing Objective and outline why we consider that meeting the Wellbeing Objective will maximise our contribution to the achievement of the seven Wellbeing Goals.
- 4.4. In our plan (Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community), we set out how we intend to achieve the Wellbeing Objectives. This includes associated priorities, details of key plans and strategies, and how the plan will be financed.
- 4.5. We review our plan annually (this being the third year and second review), to make certain that the key priorities, plans and strategies remain relevant and clearly aligned to our Wellbeing Objectives. This outlines the changes made as part of this review and the rationale for the changes. In addition, we will also publish an Annual Performance Report, which will evaluate the progress we have made.
- 4.6. Opposite is a simple diagram to visualise here our plan (*Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community*) sits in relation to the regional work across Cwm Taf and within the Council.



## **5. Financing the Plan**

- 5.1. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outlines the budget allocation for the current year and projects future budget requirements. Our future MTFP is set out against our Wellbeing Objectives.
- 5.2. In order to align the Council's financial management to the Wellbeing Objectives, we will continue to develop the prioritisation of services ensuring scarce resources are allocated to priority services defined by wellbeing objectives
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. This will enable the Council to align future Revenue and Capital Settlements to our Wellbeing Objectives in the future publications of our MTFP, these will be available in March/April of each year.

## **6. Involving Our Communities**

- 6.1. There are eleven Electoral Divisions in Merthyr Tydfil, represented by 33 Councillors. Our Councillors play a significant leadership role as community ambassadors, helping provide community intelligence and helping empower local people to transform their community and address the issues they face.

### **Merthyr Tydfil Electoral Divisions (Wards) – See map overleaf**

- Bedlinog
- Cyfarthfa
- Dowlais
- Gurnos
- Merthyr Vale
- Park
- Penydarren
- Plymouth
- Town
- Treharris
- Vaynor

- 6.2. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires a more 'active' level of community involvement in order to achieve outcomes. This means that we need to involve our communities in the planning and designing of services, and involve communities in the decisions that affect them.

### **Developing Community Action**

- 6.3. We will continue to provide support to our Councillors so they can carry out action workshops in our local communities. This aims to ensure communities are enabled to investigate and plan ways to address local issues they face and then support can be provided as appropriate.
- 6.4. As reported previously, we continue to involve communities to meet their needs. Following trials, we are also continuing with Councillor and community led initiatives. This has enhanced Councillor engagement (which appears in the Cabinets Work Programme) and involves communities. There are a number of examples of this. Litter picking and fly-tipping remain issues across the County Borough, with these being political priorities. As such there are several community groups, championed by Councillors that undertake regular voluntary litter picking sessions. In promoting the Welsh Language, a community group has been recently set up and is supported by the ward Councillor. This initiative provides the community the opportunity to speak Welsh and promote the Welsh language; going some way in addressing the national goal of 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving

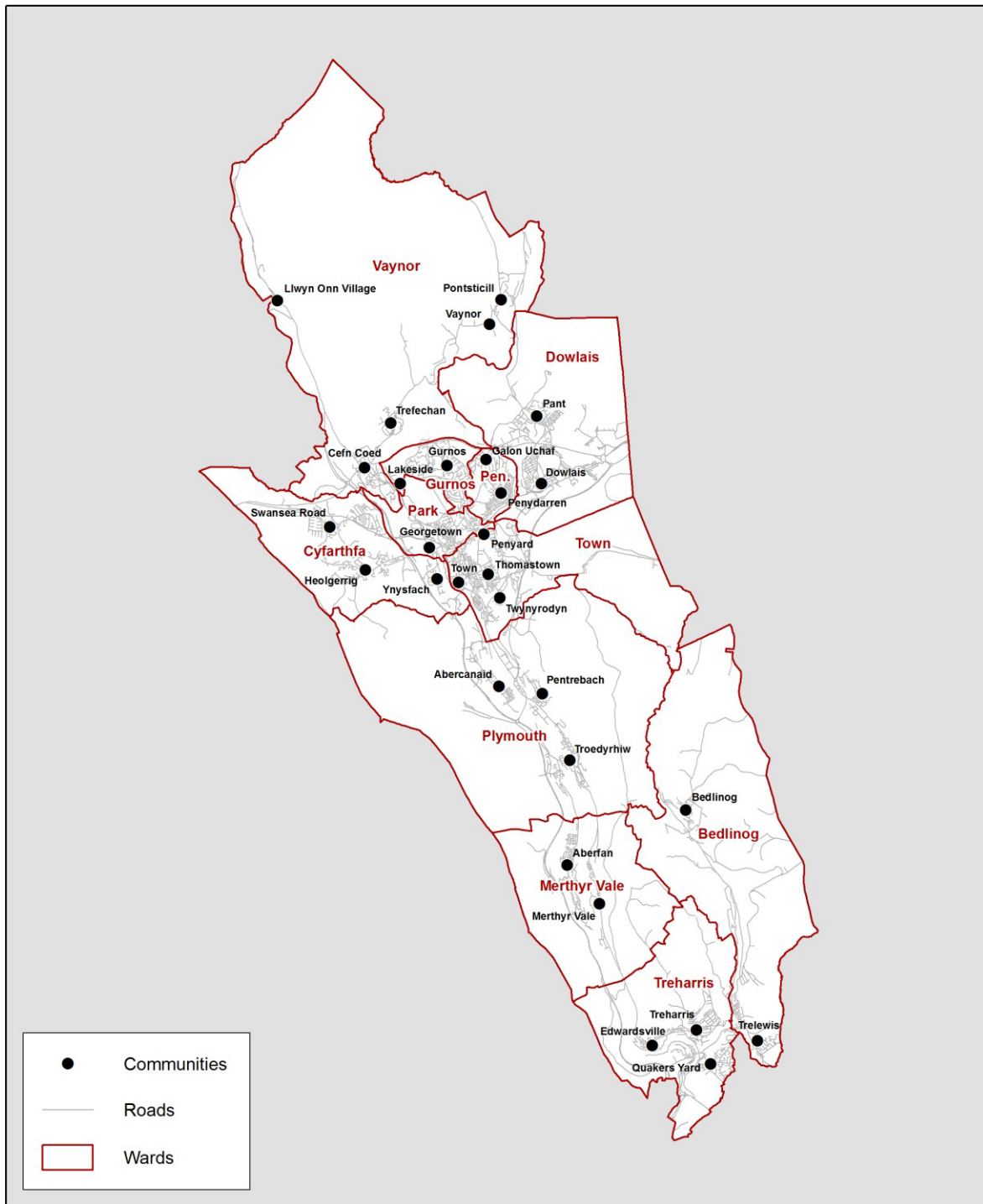


Welsh language'. The Council's Welsh Language Champion, Councillor Geraint Thomas says:



*"Club Dysgu Cymraeg Calfaria is enhancing the cultural experience of people of all ages attending our weekly get together. Immersing themselves in the Welsh Language, talking freely in an informal setting is breathing new life into our wonderful mother tongue. Cymru am byth!!"*

This approach will be continued and widened.

- 6.5. Please visit our '[Contact Magazine](#)' web page, where you will find numerous examples of community group work that has taken place throughout the County Borough.



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## 7. Wellbeing Objectives

- 7.1. In order to set our Wellbeing Objectives we carried out a wellbeing assessment across Cwm Taf<sup>1</sup>. This was carried out to inform the development of the Wellbeing Objectives as part of the Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community document, which was released in 2017, for the period of 2017 to 2022. In addition, work was undertaken together with residents to establish a baseline understanding of wellbeing in Merthyr Tydfil. During the first year of the plan we recorded the delivery and captured lessons learnt, especially relating to the governance of the plan. This knowledge helped shape the Wellbeing Objectives and understand potential responses to improve wellbeing. In brief, our Wellbeing Objectives<sup>2</sup> cover four themes. Learning the lessons from year one, where we engaged with scrutiny members, we streamlined the original nine objectives into four. These provide focus of delivery under each theme. However, it should be noted that all priorities following the original engagement remain. The four themes and objectives remain unchanged for 2019 / 2020.

Wellbeing Objectives:

**BS Best Start to Life**

BS 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

**WL Working Life**

WL 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

**EW Environmental Wellbeing**

EW Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside

**LW Living Well**

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

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<sup>1</sup> You can read the [population wellbeing assessments](#) and the [well-being assessments](#) on the [Our Cwm Taf](#) website.

<sup>2</sup> You can read our Statement of Wellbeing on the Council [website](#).

- 7.2. In this plan, we set out the steps that we will take to ensure that we maximise our contribution to the Wellbeing Objectives. This plan will focus on what is being done to achieve the Wellbeing Objectives, including key priorities and associated plans and strategies.
- 7.3. During 2017 / 2018 the regional objectives for Cwm Taf were developed. This was done with engagement and involvement with communities across Cwm Taf and involved several organisations. This has resulted in forming three regional objectives and these can be viewed in the 'Our Shared Vision' document overleaf. Political priorities have also been formulated, being taken from the views expressed by communities of Merthyr Tydfil during the local election period.
- 7.4. This has meant that our Chief Officers have worked with their teams and with each other to refocus their strategies to achieve their Wellbeing Objectives and be better informed when designing affordable services. Each Wellbeing Objective is the focus, and key performance indicators will show how well we are delivering. The five ways of working are the basis for doing different things (and doing things differently). This creates an easy to understand strategy on a page (SOAP) for each Wellbeing Objective. This will then form the basis of the self-evaluation process going forward; in other words a means to test if we are making a difference. Please visit the ['Statement of Wellbeing'](#) page on our website where you will find the latest Strategies on a Page.
- 7.5. As with previous years, we are continuing to learn lessons and further strengthen delivery in line with our agreed outcomes. An example of this being strategies and project delivery. As part of strengthening our self-evaluation approach it became apparent that we have the opportunity to streamline strategies to better focus on delivering our well-being objectives. We therefore plan to explore refocusing our strategies to better deliver our objectives and help us to provide constructive self-evaluation. This then leads on to projects. By refocusing our strategies, we can identify priorities and align resources accordingly. Resources can also be better aligned to cross-cutting projects and as such work to enhance delivery through the five ways of working.
- 7.6. Again learning lessons from year 2 and completing a self-evaluation tool from the Future Generations Commissioners Office, we are strengthening the way in which we integrate strategies. The tables in the sections below outline the service areas from across MTCBC that collaborate to deliver the well-being objectives. In year three we will focus on how the strategies can be better integrated and how internal and external partners can further collaborate to deliver our well-being objectives.
- 7.7. In order to raise awareness, understanding and desire for change across the Council and wider we have developed a document called 'Our Shared Vision'. This connects the local Wellbeing Objectives outlined above with the Cwm Taf regional objectives and political priorities; synergy is clearly apparent. The document links this to the Wales we want and how we will achieve it (i.e. the five ways of working). Each Wellbeing Objective has a strategy on a page sitting beneath them, as explained above. This creates a clear thread

from the Wales we want all the way down to strategies and then operational plans and staff appraisals in delivering this. This means that individual staff members can see how they are contributing. This explanation is used to make the connections and the 'Our Shared Vision' document used to reinforce the message. Our internal staff performance appraisal process has been reviewed to ensure connections to the Wellbeing Objectives and five ways of working are clearer. This forms part of the 'golden thread' linking our vision, well-being objectives, team aims and personal goals.

## Our Shared Vision

**"ACTING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW"**

*The Wales we want:*

<b>A prosperous Wales</b>	<b>A resilient Wales</b>	<b>A healthier Wales</b>	<b>A more equal Wales</b>	<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b>	<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b>	<b>A globally responsible Wales</b>
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*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



Involvement



Collaboration

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

Focus on the Future	PSB Wellbeing Plan	Political Priorities
<b>Best Start to Life</b> 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.	<b>Community Resilience and Wellbeing</b> To promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the wellbeing of residents and visitors and building on our community assets.	We will look after all our citizens by providing an affordable quality education and social care enabling everybody to lead their lives to their full potential.
<b>Working Life</b> 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.	<b>Lifestyles, health and vulnerability</b> To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.	We will encourage active lifestyles and promote wellbeing.
<b>Environmental Wellbeing</b> Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside.	<b>Economy and Infrastructure</b> To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.	We will support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful environment and economy.
<b>Living Well</b> People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	<b>Tackling loneliness and isolation</b> <i>(Cross cutting objective)</i> 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.	

*Merthyr Tydfil ... a place to be proud of  
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council*

# 8. Contribution of our Wellbeing Objectives to the Wellbeing Goals

8.1. The seven Wellbeing Goals<sup>3</sup> show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies of Wales to work towards. The chart below provides a brief summary of where our Wellbeing Objectives primarily align to the Wellbeing Goals.

Wellbeing Goal
A prosperous Wales
A resilient Wales
A healthier Wales
A more equal Wales
A Wales of cohesive communities
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
A globally responsible Wales

Wellbeing Objective	Wellbeing Goals						
Best Start to Life							
Working Life							
Environmental Wellbeing							
Living Well							

<sup>3</sup> You can find out more information on the Act and Wellbeing Goals in this [Guide](#).

## 9. **Best Start 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**

*The priority for this objective is to secure improvements in the educational outcomes of children and young people.*

Examples of contributors to this wellbeing objective		
<u>Service Areas</u>		<u>Other Contributors</u>
Raising Standards	Community Wellbeing	Sports Resources
School Improvement	Youth Services	Team Around the Family
Additional Learning Needs	Inclusion and Wellbeing	
Early Years	School Planning and Support Resources	

- 9.1. This wellbeing objective offers a holistic and sustainable approach to meeting the wellbeing needs of children and young people. While this approach is important for all children, it will particularly benefit children who face disadvantage or have a high risk of poor outcomes later in life.
- 9.2. Education is one of the clearest predictors of life outcomes, such as employment, income and social status, and is a predictor of attitudes and wellbeing. The objective integrates the complete educational journey, from the early years through to compulsory years, and post-16 and seeks to provide children and young people with the skills and attributes to help them improve their own lives.
- 9.3. 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 wellbeing.
- 9.4. We will deliver these outcomes through refreshing our key strategy Raising Standards and by focusing on addressing our key priorities for improvement:
- Increase attainment levels in particular, mathematics and English at Key Stage 4
  - Tackling and reducing persistent absenteeism
  - Improving the quality of leadership in schools
  - Meeting the needs of our vulnerable learners
  - Improve pupil wellbeing



- Enhancing the effective use of data to inform targeting of resources delivering better outcomes

### **How will we know if things are getting better?**

- 9.5. 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 wellbeing objective, outcomes and key performance indicators and forms the basis of self-evaluation and the departments Business Improvement Plans.

We will know things are better when:

- Outcomes and educational standards for learners and groups of learners improve;
- Early language development of children improves;
- The health and wellbeing of children and young people improves;
- The resilience among families in receipt of support improves

### **Would you like to know more?**

Visit the Council's website to learn more about:

[Schools and Learning](#)

[Family Information](#)

[Employability and Adult Learning](#)

[Social Care for Children and Families](#)

**10. Working Life Objective: People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination**

*The priority for this objective is developing the environment and infrastructure for business to flourish*

Examples of contributors to this wellbeing objective		
Service Areas		Other Contributors
Community Regeneration	Housing and Homelessness	Estates
Physical Regeneration	Employability and Skills	Planning
Community Safety	Transport	Countryside
Inward Investment	Heritage and Cultural Assets	
Economic Development	Environmental Health	
Licensing and Trading Standards		

- 10.1. This wellbeing 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.
- 10.2. Evidence suggests personal wellbeing and material wellbeing 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.
- 10.3. 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.
- 10.4. We will deliver these outcomes through activities in response to our key strategy, the Economic Growth Strategy, and by addressing our key priorities for improvement:
- Improve access and uptake of learning leading to an increase in the number of residents with qualifications;

- Increase the number of local people gaining access to; securing and sustaining employment, improving the availability of labour supply to the local market;
- Increase the proportion of new and surviving businesses including social enterprises;
- Increase business sector productivity;
- Support suitable tourism, leisure and recreational developments, making best use of our natural environment and heritage/cultural assets;
- Increase opportunities for sustainable and renewable housing, and renewable energy developments;
- Create sustainable communities with a strong sense of place which have increased economic potential; and
- Improve public transport with sustainable modes of transportation.

### **How will we know if things are getting better?**

10.5. By monitoring key performance indicators, 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
- Those most disadvantaged in the housing market will feel connected and supported

### **Would you like to know more?**

Visit the Council's website to learn more about:

[Employability and Adult Learning](#)

[Parking, Roads and Travel](#)

[Planning and Building Control](#)

[Childcare](#)

[Family Information](#)

[Rural Development](#)

[Conservation](#)

[Tourism](#)

[Culture](#)

[Welsh Language](#)

[Community Safety](#)

[Crime, Safety and Emergencies](#)

## **FOCUS ON THE FUTURE**

Wellbeing in our community

## 11. Environmental Wellbeing Objective: Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside

*The priority for this objective is to improve the efficient use of materials and resources by means of the waste hierarchy and to produce the Council's first Nature Recovery Plan.*

Examples of contributors to this wellbeing objective		
Service Areas		Other Contributors
Waste Services	Street Cleansing	Community Regeneration
Property Services	Environmental Health	
Highways and Engineering	Estates	
Biodiversity	Landscape Services	
Policy and Implementation	Building Control	
Development Control (including conservation areas)		

- 11.1. This wellbeing objective offers a holistic and sustainable approach to meeting the environmental wellbeing 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.
- 11.2. The focus of this wellbeing objective is the work we do with our communities 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 wellbeing objectives.
- 11.3. The key outcomes the Environmental Wellbeing wants to achieve are:
- Environmental damage is minimised by preventing pollution;
  - To maximise the amount of materials and resources recycled in line with the waste hierarchy;
  - Merthyr Tydfil has good quality, biodiverse and connected green infrastructure and open spaces; and
  - The use of renewable and low carbon energy is increased.
- 11.4. We will deliver these outcomes thorough the Waste Management Business Plan and Nature Recovery Plan and by focussing on addressing our key priorities for improvement:
- Increase the amount of metals and paper being recycled in the County Borough in order to meet and exceed the recycling targets set by Welsh Government;
  - Improving the standard of cleanliness on our highways;

- Reduce the levels of fly-tipping;
- Produce and obtain Council approval of the Nature Recovery Plan;

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

### **How will we know if things are getting better?**

- 11.5. 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 wellbeing 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.
- 11.6. We will know things are better when:
- The air quality on Twynyrodyn Road improves;
  - The local authority's CO2 emissions reduce by 3% from its buildings (per annum);
  - The time taken to clear reported fly-tipping incidents on Council land improves;
  - The cleanliness of our highways improve;
  - Our recycling rates improve; and
  - There is an increase of Priority Open Spaces (out of 23 Priority Open Spaces) that meet or exceed the quality standard: Healthy, Safe and Secure.

### **Would you like to know more?**

Visit the Council's website to learn more about:

[Bins and Recycling](#)

[Fly-tipping](#)

[Air Pollution](#)

[Open Spaces](#)

## 12. Living Well Objective: People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health

*The priority for this objective is to ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities.*

Examples of contributors to this wellbeing objective		
Service Areas		Other Contributors
Sustainable, Success and Transition	Early Intervention and Prevention	Education Services
Safeguarding	Edge of Care	Community Regeneration
Older People and Disability	Community Mental Health	
Day Services	Residential Care	
Supporting People	Commissioning Services	
Initial Response and Reablement		

- 12.1. 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.
- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. 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

12.5. We will deliver these outcomes by focusing on our priorities for improvement:

- Improve early intervention and prevention (adults, children and families)
- Reduce the number of children looked after
- Enable a greater number of adults to live independently

There are a number of regional plans and strategies that help to deliver this objective, including the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board 'Regional Plan 2018-2023' and the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Plan 2018 – 2019. Work will be undertaken with key officers and other stakeholder to review and streamline existing plans and strategies. This will help address duplication and identify new opportunities for joint working.

### **How will we know if things are getting better?**

12.6. 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 wellbeing objectives, outcomes and key performance indicators; and forms the basis of self-evaluation.

We will know things are better when:

- We see a decrease in the number of children on the Child Protection Register or becoming looked after
- 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
- More people are participating in physical activities
- Of those that have been subject to domestic violence, more people have reported an improvement in their quality of life

### **Would you like to know more?**

Visit the Council's website to learn more about:

[Safeguarding](#)

[Help to live at home](#)

[Social Care for Adults and Older People](#)

[Equalities](#)

[Sport and Leisure](#)

[Mental Health](#)

### **FOCUS ON THE FUTURE**

Wellbeing in our community

### 13. STEPS to help achieve the seven national wellbeing goals

The Council has a duty to take all reasonable steps on our journey to achieving the 7 wellbeing goals and our wellbeing objectives. Guidance from the office of the Future Generations Commissioner describes these steps as ranging from simple changes that can be made quickly and easily to more ambitious and stretching actions, and ultimately to transformational actions that will lead the way to the Wales we want for future generations.

We continually seek to make the most of the opportunities provided by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act to shape how we do business. Below are a selection of the steps we are taking to ensure that we as a Council can improve the wellbeing of future generations.

#### 21st Century Schools

As part of our commitment to provide future generations of children and young people with the best start to life, we are working to promote attractive and stimulating learning environments based on low carbon, energy efficient and sustainable design principles through the delivery of our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and capital investment programmes. Working collaboratively with stakeholders including Planning, Property Services and with Blaenau Gwent's Architectural Services, our ambition is to provide the very best sustainable low maintenance and cost-effective learning environments. The construction of our schools will be to the BREEAM excellent standard, which embodies ambitious ecology and biodiversity principles. All school capital investment projects use at least 15% recycled and reused materials.

We are also committed to involving the community in the proposals including engagement regarding school re-organisation options, site selection, building design and intended use of site/buildings so that schools become increasingly valued and well utilised assets within our communities. As part of the capital investment proposals we aim to deliver colocation of early year's education and childcare on school sites and to promoting the Welsh language by increasing the provision of school and childcare places through the medium of Welsh.



## Future pathways for pupils

We want to make sure our children and young people are properly informed and well equipped to make the right choices about their long term future. We equally want to be certain that as a council we are offering children and young people the choices that will help secure a better future.

Working across the council and with external partners, we will take an integrated approach to first identify the range of education, training, and employment opportunities currently available locally and across the wider region of the Cardiff City Deal. This will allow us to identify the most effective pathways for future skills requirements, and identify gaps in current provision.

We want young people to start the discussion about future skills early in their education, so that they and their families are fully informed when it comes to making decisions about the future. By working closely with schools, the college and businesses, we will make certain the curriculum offer for students meets future need.

## Financial capability

Listening to the families we work with, financial capability was identified as an issue that negatively impacts wellbeing and acts as a barrier to positively engaging with services. To support families take control of their debt and allow them to better plan for the future, we are working to preventing families from getting into crisis.

Collaborating with Citizens Advice Merthyr Tydfil, we are providing bespoke support for families to help them take back control of their debt and empower them to be more sustainable. To date we have worked with 13 families (consisting of 33 children) and £153,029.13 of debt has been dealt with. In addition these families have benefitted from £46,636.23 of additional income. We also work to build capacity within these families to avoid future issues of debt occurring and therefore providing these families with the space to be able to access other offers of support available to improve wellbeing.

## Wellbeing

Our Youth Service currently work with young people in a number of our secondary school on programmes to support emotional wellbeing and this work will be rolled out so that we engage with as many young people as possible. Working with partners such as the Central South Consortium and the regional Together 4 Mental Health Partnership we are developing a range of strategies to support children, young people and their families to develop their resilience.

To encourage more pupils to be physically active we are delivering training programmes to teachers to develop their confidence and skills to enable them to design, implement and deliver physical education provision. The aim is to have engaging and exciting physical education lessons that students will want to take part in, whilst supporting teachers to feel deliver them effectively.

We want to promote an inclusive approach to physical activity in schools. To help us achieve this we are rolling out the Insport Education programme which aims to support schools develop an inclusive environment by ensuring pupils with a disability have the opportunity to become more physically active.

## Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife corridors have a huge role to play in helping to minimise the impact of pollution and boost biodiversity habitats, whilst simultaneously providing positive health and wellbeing benefits for individuals and communities.

We are working to increase the number of wildlife corridors throughout the County Borough that will link habitats and help preserve wildlife in the midst of a developed urban environment. The establishment of additional habitat corridors can also benefit people by helping to absorb the pollutants in the environment which have a negative impact on health.

## Wildflower Seeding

More than 97% of ancient wild flower meadows in the UK have been lost since the 1930s. With this loss, road verge habitats became an important resource for a variety of wildlife including bees, butterflies, bats and birds.

Preserving and managing these verges across the County Borough is a key priority. We are working with a variety of stakeholders to ensure we can restore and expand flower-rich habitats along our road networks. Where possible, we will delay the first cutting of lowland grassy verges until late summer to allow plants to complete their life cycle to grow, flower and set seed. This will improve the biodiversity of our road verges helping to safeguard the long term future for wildlife.

## Gully Waste

Approximately one million tonnes of road sweeping and gully waste end up in UK landfills, in addition clogged gullies can contribute to the risk of flooding. There are options available to us that we can use to try to prevent these issues from occurring in a way lessens the impact on the environment.

Working with Caerphilly County Borough Council, we will recycle our gully and sweeper waste by using a cleaner and more ecological reed bed treatment system. The reed beds are an attractive addition to the environment whilst also helping to remove impurities from the waste, as the water percolates through them. The remaining waste is left to dry and can then be separated into materials for recycling and the remainder blended with low grade soils and sold as blinding material.

## Reduction in Herbicides

To help protect against the negative impact on biodiversity we have taken the decision to reduce the use of herbicides. Collaborating with professional contractors who use a patented 'weed it' system that uses sensors to detect the chlorophyll in plants the herbicide is only sprayed where it is needed. This targeted approach has led to an almost 60% reduction in herbicide use by the Council, reducing the potential harm to our environment, habitat and species.

## Development of a Drug Litter Reporting App

We want to make sure that communities are safe and that both built and natural spaces are accessible and well used. To address an identified issue around drug litter and related concerns around public safety, the Council developed an ‘app’ which would, in the first instance, be piloted with officers/ selected partners – this pilot began in November 2018.

Early findings of the trial phase have been positive: it has supported evidence-led outreach work to be undertaken by substance misuse services such as Barod (formerly Drugaid). In addition, there have been unanticipated positive outcomes including the intelligence gathered being used as part of Youth Engagement Project Team briefings to highlight the type of drugs in areas where young people gather so youth workers are aware and better prepared.

Since its roll-out, the app has been further developed and now tracks rough sleeper items (such as bedding and tents) found in the area of reported drug litter. This information is improving our understanding of the number of rough sleepers and is giving the Council a more realistic picture of how many people are “street homeless”. The trial for the app is set to run until August 2018 with a review taking place at that stage.

## Development of the Evening Economy

The evening and night-time economy is an important driver of tourism, leisure and business growth within our towns. It consists of a wide range of activity in town centres between the hours of 5pm and 6am, including pubs, clubs, cafes, restaurants, retail, cinemas, theatres or concerts, meeting friends or attending community events. Balancing the competing demands of economic development, public safety and quality of life requires effective partnership working and engagement with residents and businesses.

Many Town Centres have experienced a decline in recent years. This has been recognised by the Council and its key partners who are developing an action plan that will focus on three core objectives: wellbeing (a welcoming, clean and safe town centre); movement (a secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure; and appeal (a vibrant choice and rich mix of entertainment and activity).

Early action linked to the evening/night-time economy has identified that offering a range of cultural activities can attract a more diverse population to town centres later into the evening, including families and older people. As a Council, we will aim to involve others in the development of the action plan, securing suggestions from many perspectives including residents and visitors to the Town Centre. By using tools available to us, we will be able to monitor and measure the impact of the improvement activities we are making.

## Early Help Hub

With a view to improving the existing early intervention and prevention services for vulnerable children and their families; we carried out a review of our Team Around the Family Service called MIA. As part of this review, we asked families for their views about the current service, received input from partner organisations and considered 7 different models across Wales. As a result of the review and feedback from families, we decided to develop an Early Help Hub, which will be implemented from 2019 / 2020.

The Early Help Hub will bring together staff from children's services and grant funded preventative services with a view to identifying need earlier and connecting families to early help. In this way we hope that public confidence in and take up of early help services will increase. We know that by providing the right service at the right time we can, in many cases prevent problems from developing or getting worse. We will make sure that the Early Help Hub also works to enhance the information, advice and assistance that is available to Young Carers and families of children with disabilities.

## 14. Get involved

- 14.1. 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](#).
- 14.2. We want to maintain community involvement and continue to develop our understanding of wellbeing in Merthyr Tydfil. We welcome you to share your thoughts on wellbeing or your ideas on how we can improve wellbeing in Merthyr Tydfil at [wellbeing@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeing@merthyr.gov.uk).
- 14.3. 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.
- 14.4. [Guidance on Public speaking](#) at Scrutiny Committee meetings - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council welcomes and encourages the active participation of its citizens whenever possible and an opportunity exists for members of the public to speak at Scrutiny Committee meetings on an item on the agenda.
- 14.5. 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:**



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[www.twitter.com/merthyrcbc](https://www.twitter.com/merthyrcbc)



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