



# **CABINET**

**4.00 pm WEDNESDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 2021**

## **REMOTE MEETING - MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**Please note that today's meeting will be recorded.**

**This recording may be broadcast on the Authority's internet**

**All attendees will be in view of the camera and, by attending you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings being used as outlined above.**

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Any reference documents referred to but not published as part of this agenda can be found on the Council's website or intranet under Background Papers.

## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 relating to Council Tax, the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct

**Note:**

- (a) Members are reminded that they must identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest and
- (b) Where Members withdraw from a Meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chair when they leave

**OPEN SESSION**

**Strategic**

- 3. Public Spaces Protection Order/s Restricting Access Over Five Public Highways In Merthyr Tydfil Through The Installation Of Gates  
To consider report of the Interim Chief Executive **5 - 28**
- 4. Bus Emergency Scheme (BES)  
To consider report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive **29 - 36**
- 5. RE:FIT Cymru Energy Efficiency Framework- Approval of Salix Loan and entering into Works Contract  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Neighbourhood Services **37 - 42**
- 6. 3-16 Voluntary Aided School - Site Consultation  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Education **43 - 82**

**Portfolio**

- 7. Transforming Towns Programme Funding for Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1  
To consider report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive **83 - 86**

8. Amendment of Existing Order - Upper High Street, Merthyr Tydfil  
To consider report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive **87 - 90**
9. School Balances 2019-2021  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Education **91 - 96**
10. Swan Street area - Proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the New Bus Station  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Neighbourhood Services **97 - 110**
11. Various Roads Twynrodyn - Proposed one-way driving restriction and 20mph zone Traffic Regulation Order  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Neighbourhood Services **111 - 122**
12. Winter Protection Plan 2020-21  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Social Services **123 - 158**
13. Annual Report Social Services Complaints Representations and Compliments 2019-20  
To consider report of the Chief Officer Social Services **159 - 182**

### **Information**

14. Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Adoption Collaborative Annual Report for 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020  
To receive report of the Chief Officer Social Services **183 - 224**
15. Foster Care Incentives  
To receive report of the Chief Officer Social Services **225 - 230**
16. Any Other Business Deemed Urgent by the Chair

## **CLOSED SESSION**

### **Exempt**

In order for the following to be considered in private, it is suggested that the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph/s (14) under Part 4 of Schedule 12A Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

17. 21st Century Schools Band B Programme,  
Construction of a New 3-16 VA (Voluntary Aided)  
Faith School

To consider report of the Chief Officer **231 - 236**  
Neighbourhood Services

#### **COMPOSITION:**

Councillors K O'Neill (Chair)  
L Mytton (Vice-Chair)

Councillors A Barry, C Davies, D Hughes and  
G Thomas

together with appropriate officers

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Simon Jones
Service Area	Legal & Democratic
Committee Division	Strategic
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Public Spaces Protection Order(s) Restricting Access Over Five Public Highways In Merthyr Tydfil Through The Installation Of Gates**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to consult on a proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order(s) (PSPO) under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 to gate the public highways at 5 locations namely;

- the lanes adjacent to residential premises at Upper Thomas Street
- the lane to the rear of Upper Thomas Street and Union Street
- the lane to the rear of Lower Thomas Street and Union Street (Somerset Place)
- the lane to the rear of William Street and Mary Street; and
- the lane to the rear of Rees Street

1.2 The purpose of the order is to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime associated with persons who pass along the aforementioned public highways or use the highway to illegally deposit waste.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

2.1 The undertaking of formal public consultation on the proposal to introduce PSPO gating orders with consultation commencing on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be approved.

- 2.2 A further report, following completion of the statutory public consultation, which considers any representations received and, if appropriate, seeking approval of the Public Spaces Protection Order(s) be produced and placed before Cabinet.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides local authorities and the Police with the powers to tackle anti-social behaviour and provide better protection for victims.
- 3.2 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) are designed to stop all individuals, or a specific group of persons, committing anti-social behaviour in a public space. The criteria that must be satisfied when considering whether to make a PSPO is whether a particular activity or activities has or is likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and that the activity is, or is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature or that the activity is unreasonable and any restriction is justified.
- 3.3 Essentially an Alley Gating PSPO is a situational crime prevention measure usually by way of lockable gates installed at the end of alleys with the aim of prohibiting access to that alleyway for those that do not need to use the alleyway. Those that do need to use the alleyway would usually be given keys to open the gates or access to an unlocking code. Alley gates are a potential effective measure in reducing crime and ASB which not only affects the residents but also place a demand upon the police and a wide range of different stake holders.
- 3.4 For the proposed public area to be restricted, there is a requirement for the Council to undertake a statutory public consultation exercise with the following:
- (a) The chief officer of police, and the local policing body for the area.
  - (b) Whatever community representatives the local authority thinks it appropriate to consult.
  - (c) The owner or occupier of land within the area.
  - (d) The parish council or community council (if any) for the area.
  - (e) Utility companies.
- 3.5 PSPOs provide Councils with a flexible power to implement local restrictions to address a range of anti-social behaviour issues in public places to prevent future problems.
- 3.6 It is important that PSPOs are used proportionately and that they are not seen to be targeting behaviour of children / young people where there is a lack of tolerance and understanding by local people.
- 3.7 A PSPO can be made for a maximum of three years. The legislation provides for the Order to be extended at the end of the period, but only for a further period of up to three years. However, Orders can be extended more than once. Local authorities can increase or reduce the restricted area of an existing Order, amend or remove a prohibition or requirement, or add a new prohibition or requirement. They can also

discharge an Order. The variation or discharge of an Order are subject to statutory consultation requirements.

- 3.8 Enforcement is usually shared between the Council and the Police. Breach of a PSPO is a criminal offence which can result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or a prosecution resulting in a fine of up to £1,000 on conviction. Enforcement can be undertaken by Council Officers, any person designated by a local authority for the purpose of issuing fines for breaches of a PSPO, and Police Officers. In relation to Alley Gating PSPOs there would be no ongoing enforcement so the service of a Fixed Penalty would not be appropriate. There is no offence of breaching an alley gating PSPO. The PSPO simply permits the Council or the Police to instal a gate/s.
- 3.9 Before making the Order, the local authority must notify people who are potentially affected by the proposed Order and notify them of how long they have to make representations. Officers will then consider any representations made with the intention of bringing a report back to Cabinet.
- 3.10 The consultation will last 4 weeks and will include a canvass of residents and businesses living and working in the vicinity of the alleyways that are proposed to be gated by the PSPO. The council will engage in an open public consultation to give the users of the public spaces the opportunity to comment on whether the proposed restrictions are appropriate, proportionate, or needed at all. Others will be notified via the Council's website, Facebook, and Twitter. Posters will also be put up on site, inviting representations.
- 3.11 At the conclusion of the consultation period, responses will be considered, and a further report put to Cabinet to consider whether to impose a PSPO(s). This final report will address detailed issues such as the practical arrangement of implementation and enforcement.

## **4.0 FACTORS FOR AND AGAINST GATING PSPOs**

- 4.1 A review by the College of Policing of 43 case studies of Gating PSPOs identified a number of different ways in which alley gates may reduce or increase crime. They were as follows -
- 4.2 Alley gates are physical barriers designed to prevent access to alleys and connected properties and are difficult to climb over or crawl under. Therefore, they might decrease crime by increasing the effort required for offenders to commit burglary (and other crimes).
- 4.3 Residents are encouraged to be responsible for closing the gates and controlling access to them, which is believed to increase guardianship and surveillance, which in turn might reduce crime.
- 4.4 Residents are encouraged to see the alley as their territory and take an interest in the behaviour of people who access it – therefore the gates may plausibly increase territoriality.

- 4.5 Offenders can also no longer use the excuse that they did not realise access was prohibited, as gates physically mark the boundaries to where they can and cannot act and are often accompanied by signage. Thus, excuses are removed.
- 4.6 Applying the concept of 'broken windows' suggests that open alleys are unregulated spaces where signs of disorder are produced, creating a permissive environment for crime. By gating the alleys and creating orderly and clean spaces, cues are provided suggesting that this is not a suitable place to offend, and that the risk of detection is high.
- 4.7 Alley gates may also work through deflection, which suggests that gating some alleys may reduce the attractiveness of the area more generally to offenders and remove it from the awareness space of those liable to offend. Since offenders can no longer pass through networks of alleys uninhibited, they may no longer offer an attractive space in which to offend.
- 4.8 Alley gates may reduce the rewards to offenders by limiting the items which are possible to remove during offences. If an offender can no longer easily access, and escape from alleys, they are no longer able to remove large items or those not easily concealed and carried.
- 4.9 One way in which alley gates may act to increase crime is by reducing guardianship – if gating the alleys reduces their usage by legitimate individuals such as residents, then guardianship and natural surveillance may decrease. This could then increase perceptions of anonymity of potential offenders.

## **5.0 ASB AND CRIME ISSUES**

- 5.1 For many years, the alleyways referred to in paragraph 1.1 have been used as places to conduct illicit activities, away from the scrutiny of residents, passing pedestrians, the Police other enforcement officers. There is no CCTV coverage of these alleyways.
- 5.2 A summary of the issues at each alleyway is as follows:
- 5.3 LANE 1 - The lanes adjacent to residential premises at Upper Thomas Street

The photograph and plan at appendix 1 show the alleyway directly outside the entrance to St Tydfil's Park where offenders congregate for the purposes of drug and alcohol misuse. Numerous complaints of ASB have also been made to the Police by residents in this area. This alleyway currently provides an area where perpetrators can hide out of sight. This area is not currently covered by CCTV or sufficient lighting. It is worth noting that opposite this alleyway are residential houses. The house adjacent to the entrance to St Tydfil's park already has a gate at the side of the house, however it is set back from the front of the house. This gate is a privately owned but consideration should be given to advising the owners to move the gate to the front of the house so to prevent any displacement of ASB to the side of their property.

#### 5.4 LANE 2 - The lane to the rear of Upper Thomas Street and Union Street

The photographs and plan at appendix 2 show that this alleyway is located at the side of the Brunswick Public House and is an area where people gather for drug and alcohol misuse. There is a large amount of litter discarded in the alley and evidence of fly-tipping. Both residents and businesses have complained of the ASB created by people who congregate and hang around the alleyway, often under the influence of drink and drugs. It will be noted that there is a garage at the rear of the house at the end of Upper Thomas Street and access is gained to this via Union Street. If the garage is in use an alternative would be to erect the second gate at the top of the alley just prior to the garage, allowing access from Union Street.

#### 5.5 LANE 3 -lane to the rear of Lower Thomas Street and Union Street (Somerset Place)

a. The photographs and plan at appendix 3 show that this alleyway is a continuation of the rear alley from side of the Brunswick Pub into Twynyrodyn. Similar crimes were also reported in this area. This is a very long rear lane that runs at the rear of Somerset Place. As the houses are lower down than the rear gardens, the garden walls are also low (approx. 4' high) thereby allowing easy access for any would-be burglar. The lane is littered with rubbish and the sign that read "No Fly-Tipping" which was situated at the entrance of the alley is a clear sign that this is a real issue in this alleyway. There was also evidence of "rough-sleepers" in the lane and alcohol misuse as the photographs show. Occurrences at this location include youths smoking drugs and suspicious males looking into houses. The lane also runs in a straight line to Union Street and the lane at the side of the Brunswick Public House. Further occurrences that have taken place in these alleyways include.

- the finding of drug paraphernalia by a member of the public
- 3 males drinking alcohol
- 8-10 persons causing issues in the lane by the Brunswick
- suspicious male seen coming out of the lane with a toolbox (possibly linked to a burglary)
- male in the lane holding a load of aluminium sheets (this male was also seen stripping copper from the old St Tydfil's Hospital)
- male seen injecting in the lane.

b. Several residents were spoken to whilst conducting this survey and all seemed to agree that alley-gates would be a really simple way of reducing the issues.

#### 5.6 South Wales Police Crime figures for the alleyways detailed at 5.3, 5.4 & 5.5 for the year preceding November 2020 record –

##### Upper Thomas Street

- 1 x ASB environmental report,
- 3 x ASB nuisance reports,
- 4 x crime related incidents St Tydfil's hospital reports,
- 3 x concern for safety in the locality reports,
- 1 x absconder report,
- 1 x missing person report,

2 x suspicious circumstances reports,  
1 x public safety report.

Union Street

4 x ASB environmental reports,  
5 x ASB nuisance reports,  
4 x crime related incidents reports,  
15 concern for safety reports,  
2 x absconder reports,  
4 x missing persons reports,  
15 x violence against the person reports,  
1 x damage report,  
1 x drugs report,  
5 x theft and handling reports,  
1 x burglary report,  
2 x suspicious circumstance report.

Lower Thomas Street

1 x ASB nuisance report,  
1 x ASB personal report,  
15 x violence against the person reports,  
1 x burglary report,  
1 x theft and handling report,  
3 x crime related reports,  
6 x concern for safety reports.

5.7 LANE 4 - The lane to the rear of William Street and Mary Street

The photographs and plan at appendix 4 show the lane and the proposed location of the gates. Crimes reported at this location over the past two years include violence, robbery, burglary and a theft from a rear garden. There was clear evidence of fly tipping in the lane and insecure gardens with no rear gate. South Wales Police Crime figures for the year preceding November 2020 record –

William Street

- 1 x ASB environmental report,
- 1 x ASB nuisance report,
- 1 x ASB personal report,
- 6 x violence against the person reports,
- 2 x burglary reports,
- 2 x theft and handling reports,
- 1 x damage report,
- 3 x crime related reports.

Mary Street

- 1 x violence against the person report,
- 1 x theft and handling report,
- 2 x concern for safety report,
- 1 x missing person report,

- 2 x suspicious circumstances report.

#### 5.8 LANE 5 - The lane to the rear of Rees Street

The photographs and plan at appendix 5 show the lane and the proposed location of the gates. Information from residents highlighted crime and ASB associated with the alleyway at the rear of Rees Street. A local resident complained about (1) groups of males congregating there to “smoke drugs” and (2) the lane being a place where regular fly tipping is committed. This alley also runs behind Highland View. The entrance into the alley at Highland View leads to an Electricity sub-station, however the proposed alley-gate would be able to be positioned so that it only closes the lane directly at the rear of the houses. The following crimes have been reported over the last two years – ASB, Violence, Criminal Damage and Burglary where access was gained via rear garden. South Wales Police Crime figures for the year preceding November 2020 record

- 2 x ASB environmental reports,
- 1 x ASB personal report,
- 1 x violence against the person report
- 2 x crime related incidents.

5.9 It is suggested that in relation to each alleyway detailed above the actual number of incidents of ASB and crime are far greater with many incidents of crime and ASB not reported. Residents will be asked about specific individual experiences of ASB and crime during the consultation period.

5.10 The Council’s Environmental Cleansing and Enforcement Team have provided the figures below showing the number of occurrences where fly-tipping has been reported and where the street cleansing team have been called to the specific areas to clean up litter and waste. The figures relate to the lanes and the streets themselves and the years when the reports were made. Church Street is included in the figures as some of the aforementioned lanes lead off from Church Street so some waste incidents may be recorded there. In addition, the Council’s Tascomi database records different names for Thomas Street so Cross Thomas Street is also included to ensure figures recorded are not missed.

Street	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
<b>Church Street</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>84</b>
Fly Tipping	4	4	49	15	6	78
Street Cleansing			3	1	2	6
<b>Cross Thomas Street</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>5</b>
Fly Tipping		1	2	1		4
Street Cleansing			1			1
<b>Lower Thomas Street</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>64</b>
Fly Tipping	4	14	8	11	7	44
Littering			1			1
Street Cleansing		6	7	1	5	19

Street	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
<b>Lower Union Street</b>				1		1
Fly Tipping				1		1
<b>Mary Street</b>		2	6	2	5	15
Fly Tipping (p01)		2	6	1	5	14
Street Sweeping				1		1
<b>Thomas Street</b>		1	2	1	10	14
Cleanse Animal Foulings					1	1
Fly Tipping (p01)		1	2	1	8	12
Street Cleansing					1	1
<b>Union Street</b>	3	39	30	14	14	100
Fly Tipping (p01)	3	24	24	7	5	63
Graffiti Removal				1		1
Street Cleansing		15	6	6	9	36
<b>Upper Thomas Street</b>	2	7	10	2	5	26
Fly Tipping (p01)	1	5	8	1	3	18
Street Cleansing	1	2	2	1	2	8
<b>William Street</b>		4	5	12	4	25
Fly Tipping (p01)		3	5	11	4	23
Street Cleansing		1		1		2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>334</b>

- 5.11 A site visit conducted on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 revealed on going, current and significant fly-tipping and litter issues in Lanes 1 to 5.
- 5.12 Whenever a PSPO is proposed it is essential that the Council and those consulted consider whether the making of the proposed PSPO will displace the ASB or crime reported for that public space to another public space. Evidence from the College of Policing who considered this issue with University College London found this not to be the case for Gating PSPOs. They found that the installation of the gates made the carrying out of crime and ASB simply more difficult by increasing the effort of offenders to gain access to alleys to then commit ASB or crime. It was also found that residents whose properties have access to the gated alleyway take greater care of the alleyway and in doing so are more likely to act as capable guardians.
- 5.13 The design of the gates for instance whether they will be key, or keypad activated, manually lockable or self-locking will be determined following the completion of the consultation exercise. As a rough estimate if gates were key activated then gates at:
- Lane 1 would require keys for 5 properties and 1 property
  - Lane 2 would require keys for 21 properties and possibly 1 other property
  - Lane 3 would require keys for 58 properties
  - Lane 4 would require keys for 44 properties
  - Lane 5 would require keys for 22 properties



## 6.0 LEGAL POSITION

- 6.1 A PSPO can be made by a local authority (section 59) if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met. Firstly, that –
- (a) Activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; and
  - (b) It is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect
- 6.2 The second condition is that the effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature such as to make the activities unreasonable and therefore, justifies the restrictions imposed by the Order.
- 6.3 Section 64 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 deals with Gating PSPOs. It states that the Council when making a Gating PSPO must consider-
- (a) the likely effect of making the order on the occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway;*
  - (b) the likely effect of making the order on other persons in the locality;*
  - (c) in a case where the highway constitutes a through route, the availability of a reasonably convenient alternative route.*
- This section also states that before making such an order a local authority must—
- (a) notify potentially affected persons of the proposed order,*
  - (b) inform those persons how they can see a copy of the proposed order,*
  - (c) notify those persons of the period within which they may make representations about the proposed order, and*
  - (d) consider any representations made.*
- 6.4 This statutory consultation and consideration of any representations received is important because, if a PSPO is eventually made, it can be challenged in the High Court by any person directly affected by the making of the Order within 6 weeks of the Order being made.
- 6.5 The most likely basis of challenge is that the prohibitions or requirements are unnecessary or that procedurally the Order(s) is defective.
- 6.6 Planning permission is not required for the siting of the gates in the proposed positions although the consent of home/land owners would be required if it was proposed to fix a gate to wall in the ownership of anyone other than the Council.
- 6.7 Section 65 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 prescribes certain highways that cannot be gated using a PSPO. The Highways Department have confirmed that lanes 1 to 5 are Highways that do not fall within the categories of Highway that cannot be gated.

## 7.0 NEXT STEPS

7.1 The next steps in preparing the PSPO are:

### Task Dates

- Prepare Draft Order(s) and consultation documents: **7<sup>th</sup> January 2021**
- Consultation is for 4 weeks – **7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to the 3rd February 2021** – to ensure that consultation is thorough officers from the police/council knock doors of residents near the gate locations to obtain views on the PSPO proposal
- Responses will be considered between the **4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.
- Report put to Cabinet on the **24<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.
- If Cabinet determines to make the PSPO Gating Orders the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Publication of Public Spaces Protection Orders) Regulations must then be complied with which states that the Council must publish a PSPO on its website and cause to be erected on or adjacent to the public place to which the order relates such notices as it considers sufficient to draw the attention of any member of the public using that place to the fact that a PSPO has been made and the effect of the PSPO having been made. To allow sufficient time for the PSPO(s) to be publicised and for the signage to be put up it is proposed that the PSPO(s) would not come into force until the **26<sup>th</sup> March 2021**.
- When in force legislation states that a person has six weeks to challenge a PSPO which in this instance is the **7<sup>th</sup> May 2021**.

## 8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There will costs associated with the design, manufacture and installation of the gates, the production of keys (if appropriate), the upkeep and maintenance of the gates and as there is a requirement for publication, promotion and signage there will be costs associated with that. However, the costs will be covered by the 2020-2021 Safer Streets Fund grant award of £29,808.00 if all work is completed by 31 March 2021. A full costs position will be obtained when the next report is brought before Cabinet.

## 9.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	10 of 10	0 of 10	0 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
<b><u>Summary:</u></b>  <p>The main positive impact is that enforcement of this legislation will help ensure that all residents in the locality of the proposed gated alleyways will see a reduction in crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour linked to the alleyways.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts.</p>			

**ELLIS COOPER**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

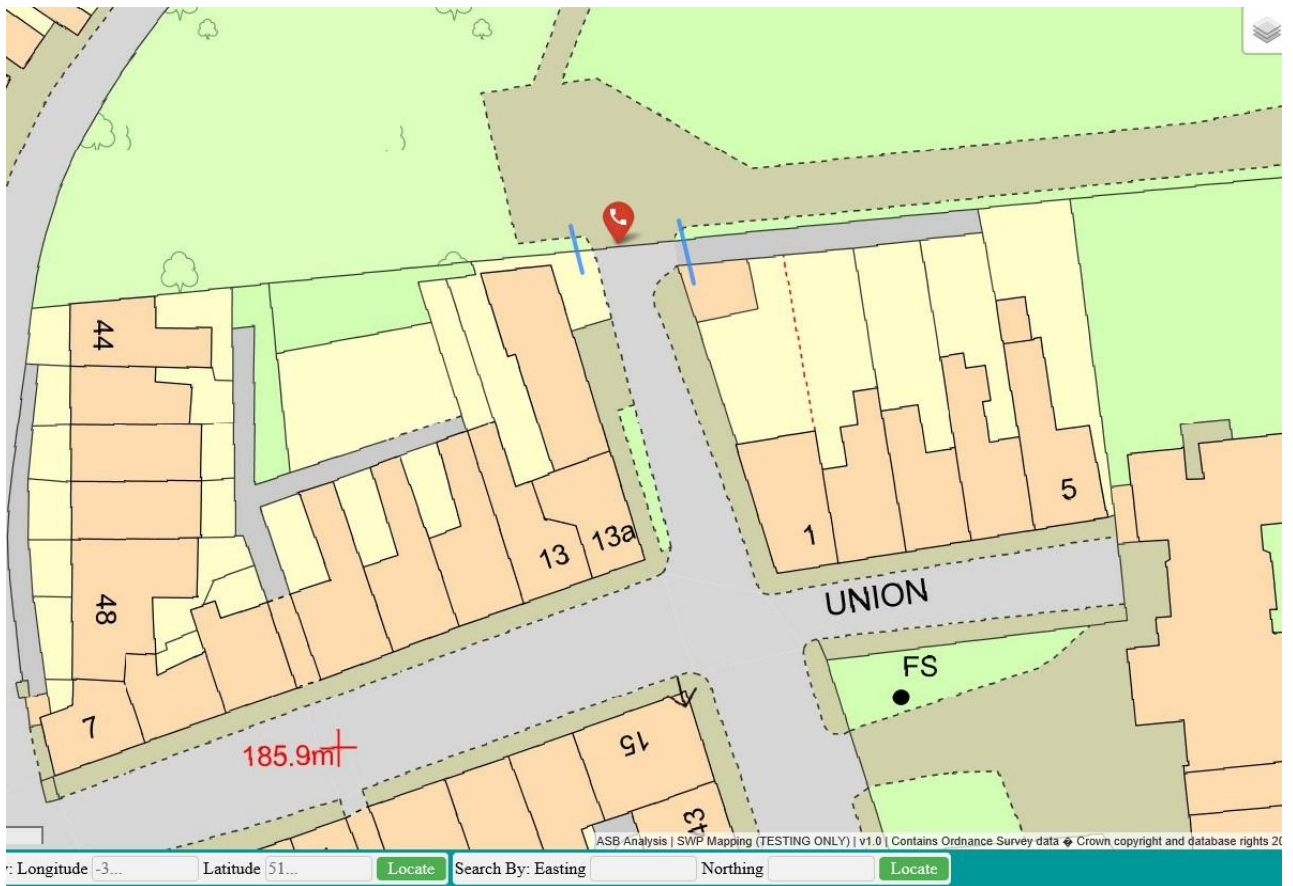
**COUNCILLOR ANDREW BARRY**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE**  
**AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Photographs of lanes	14.12.20	Legal department
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

## **APPENDIX 1**



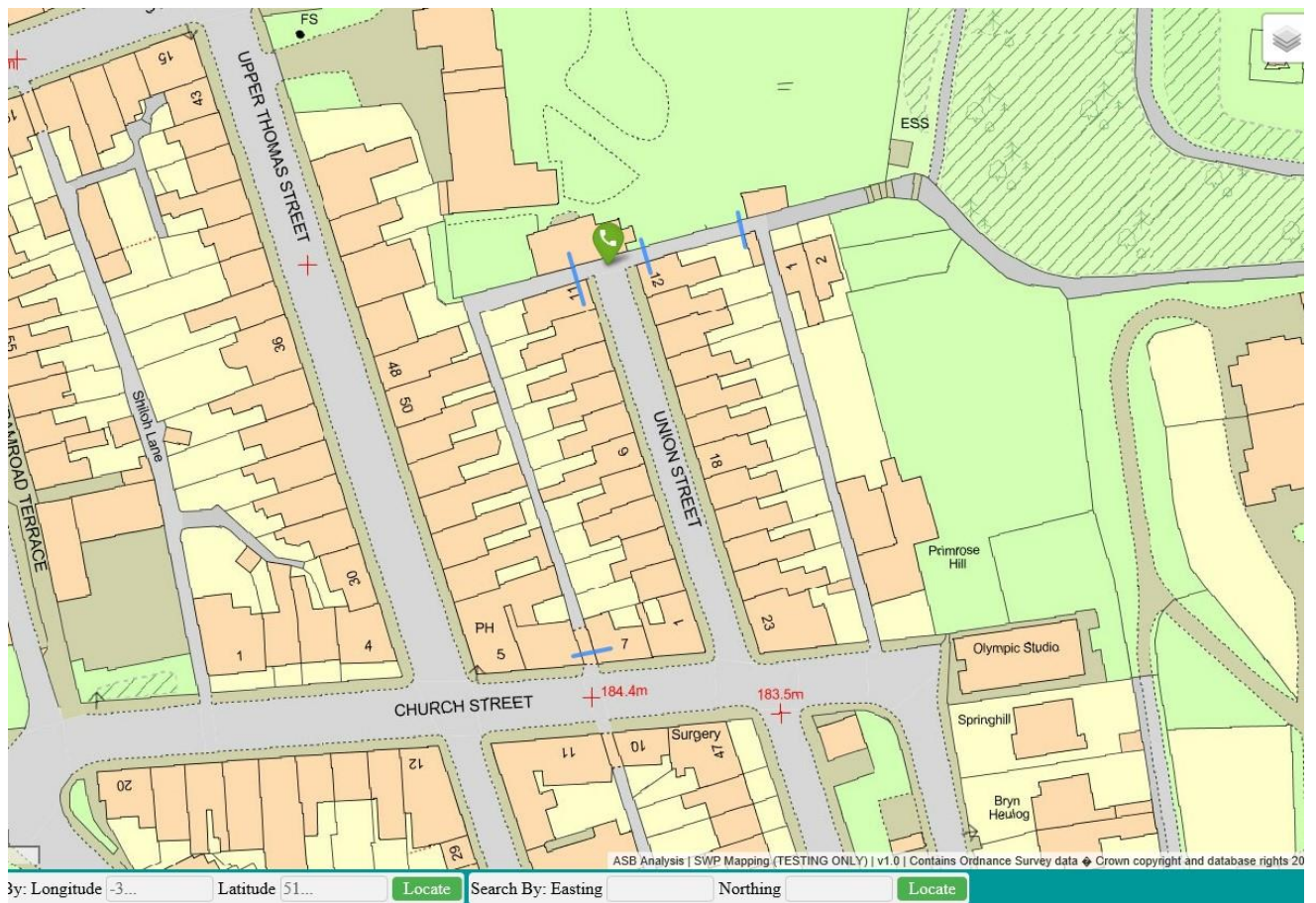


## APPENDIX 2





## APPENDIX 2



### APPENDIX 3





## APPENDIX 3



## APPENDIX 4





## APPENDIX 4



## APPENDIX 5



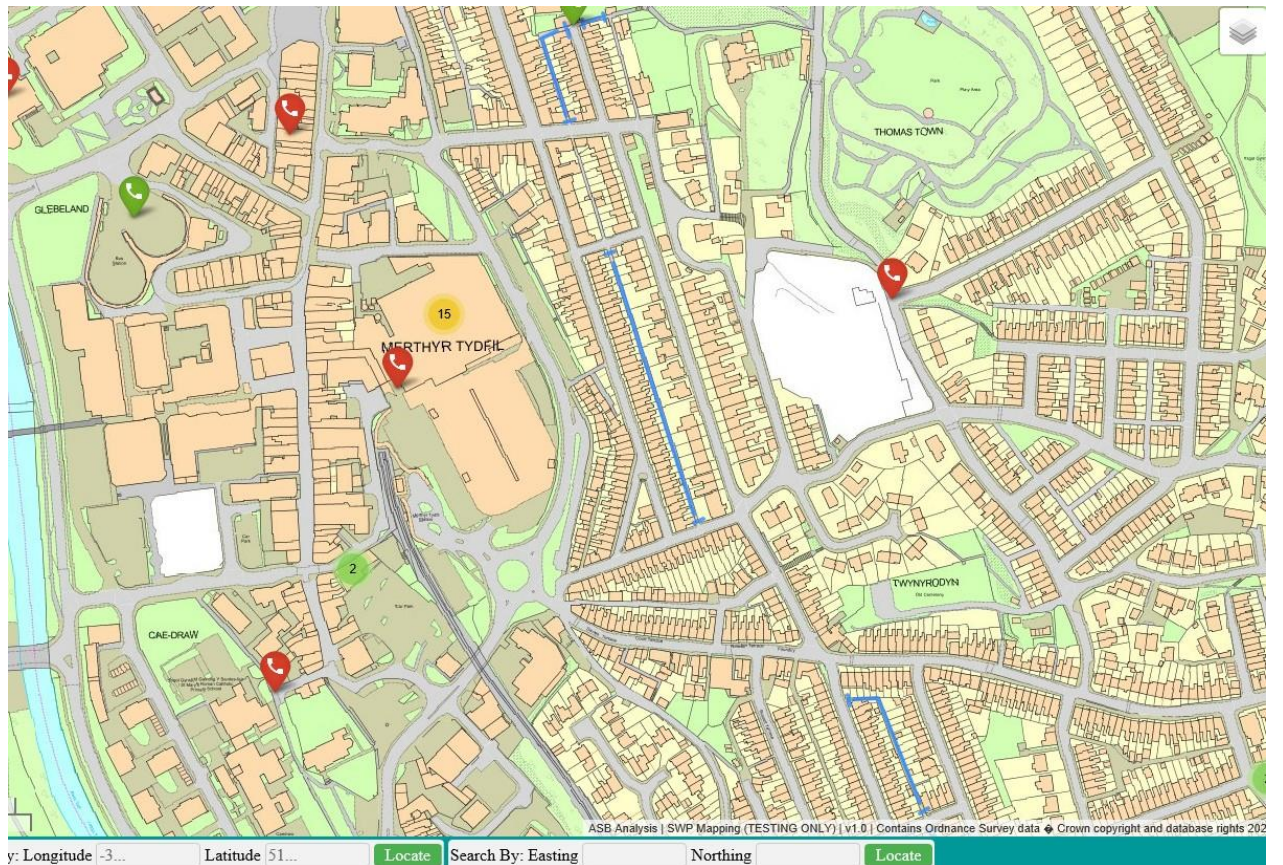


## APPENDIX 5

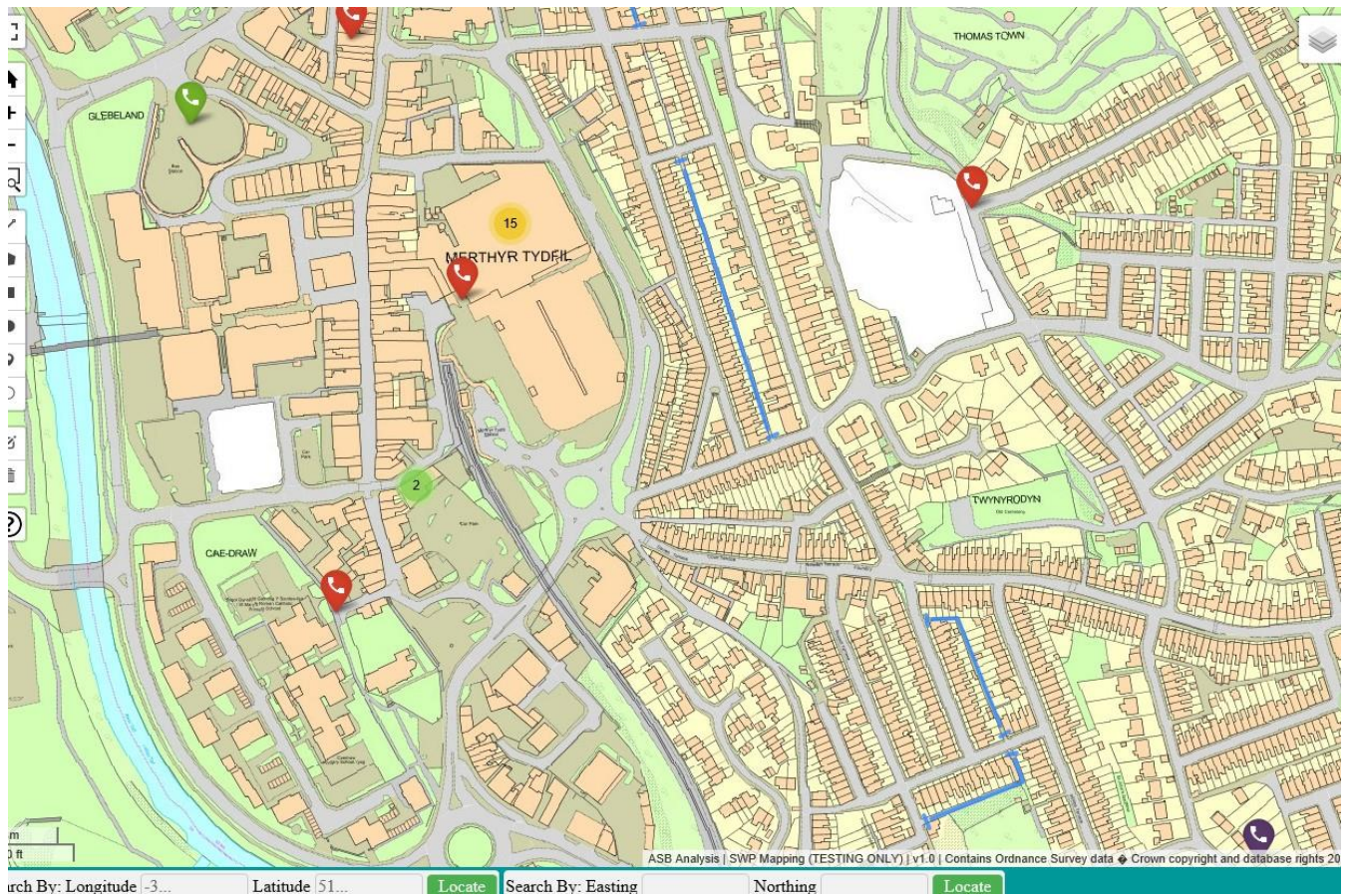




## APPENDIX 6







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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Alyn Owen/Paul Lewis
Service Area	Community Regeneration
Committee Division	Strategic
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non-Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **BUS EMERGENCY SCHEME (BES)**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report sets out the wider context, the background to, and reasons for the Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) and seeks the agreement of this authority to sign up to the BES2 scheme.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 the principles of the BES 2 agreement (Appendix 2) to secure (conditional) financial support for the bus sector and to establish a relationship with their regional lead authority and signatory, that ensures that the ongoing emergency funding meets the authority's priorities and is delivered on its behalf be approved.
- 2.2 a call for a further report on bus reform proposals relating to the future management of bus services in Wales be approved.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Bus travel has been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Passenger numbers have plummeted, whilst social distancing and additional cleansing requirements have placed added burdens and costs on operators.
- 3.2 Welsh Government (WG) and local authorities (LAs) have stepped in to support the sector with substantial financial assistance. There has also been an excellent,

ongoing dialogue between all parties to discuss and agree on support arrangements.

- 3.3 Prior to the pandemic, WG had consulted on a range of proposed changes to the way bus services are delivered in Wales. A Bus Bill was due to have been brought forward during the current Senedd term. Pressures associated with not only Covid but also the large volume of legal work generated by Brexit and the transition period forced WG to postpone the planned legislation.
- 3.4 Due to the large amount of public funding that goes into bus services from WG and LAs, WG would like to see the public sector having greater influence over areas such as the networks of services provided, ticketing and integration with rail services. It also sees a greater role for Transport for Wales, which is now responsible for rail services in Wales.
- 3.5 This raises two issues: (i) short term survival of operators and (ii) longer term reform of the sector. WG believes that these two can be linked. In the short term, the funding being provided to keep operators afloat is therefore being provided with a number of conditions attached. These are to incentivise operators to engage in planned changes that are in line with their longer-term ambitions for reform.
- 3.6 The Minister of Economy and Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates MS, has met with Leaders of all 22 LAs, along with his officials, to outline Welsh Government's direction of travel. Further details have been included in the Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) which has been the subject of consultation. More recently, the Deputy Minister, Lee Waters MS, met with all Leaders to discuss the WTS but also to encourage LAs to sign up to the Bus Emergency Scheme 2 (BES2). This is the latest phase of financial support to help operators through the period of the pandemic (more details on BES 2 below).
- 3.7 Leaders have agreed to establish a WLGA Bus Member Group, with a focus on the longer-term proposals to reform the sector's operations. That group includes the WLGA Leader (who is also the WLGA's Transport Spokesperson), the deputy Transport Spokesperson, the chairs of the four regional transport bodies and the

co-chairs of the WLGA Rural Forum. That Member Group is due to meet with Lee Waters on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The problems facing operators were recognised at an early stage of the pandemic. Looking ahead, to secure their services for the future, local authorities agreed to continue making payments for contracted services even though many services were initially suspended.
- 4.2 Alongside this, WG stepped in to help operators deal with reduced income on commercially operated routes and the additional costs being incurred. Initially, WG made £29m available from a Hardship Fund, which operated from April 2020 for three months. This Fund was assembled from monies that would otherwise have been paid via Bus Services Support Grant, Mandatory Concessionary Fare reimbursement and the 'My Travel Pass' scheme.
- 4.3 The Bus Emergency Scheme was then introduced in July to provide ongoing support. This became known as 'BES 1' and it continued to maintain operators' income at historic levels, based on what was being paid to them under previous grant schemes. In return for this financial support Welsh Government signalled that it expected operators to contribute to a reshaping of bus services in Wales – to include improved regional networks with greater integration with rail services, smart ticketing and timetabling.
- 4.4 'BES 1.5' was introduced in August, administered by the lead Authorities, through whom BSSG had been paid since 2013<sup>1</sup>. It provided £10m of so-called 'ramp up funding' to support the reopening of schools and economic activity. This funding helped to cover the cost of reinstating services suspended when travel restrictions associated with the pandemic were introduced, and which were needed to meet increasing demand, given capacity constraints of social distancing. BES 1.5 was

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<sup>1</sup> The lead authority acts as a conduit for BSSG funding from Welsh Government to operators. Current lead authorities are Monmouthshire (for South East Wales); Flintshire (for North Wales); Swansea (for South West Wales), Ceredigion and Powys. Within each LA, transport staff play an important role liaising with operators on a range of issues to meet local Members' requirements. The roles include administration of Concessionary Fares reimbursement and provision of support for contracted journeys on non-profitable routes.

then extended to the end of March 2021 following the announcement of a further support package in September 2020<sup>2</sup>. Operators were once again asked to sign up to a range of terms and conditions to access the BES funding.

- 4.5 WG, working with Transport for Wales (TfW), are now proposing to enter into a longer-term BES 2 agreement with operators and local authorities to protect services. It will operate for an initial maximum term of up to 2 years from the date BES 1.5 commenced (i.e. up until 31 July 2022, unless market conditions recover sufficiently for an operator to no longer require BES support for any of its services whether they be contracted or commercial.

## 5.0 KEY FEATURES OF BES2

- 5.1 BES 2 will continue to address the loss of farebox revenue and the additional costs associated with responding to the pandemic. Under BES 2 the WG funding will sit alongside local authority funding provided through the Concessionary Travel Scheme and via Revenue Support Grant and the Bus Services Support Grant to make up the shortfall.
- 5.2 Welsh Government will be a co-signatory to the BES 2 agreement with bus operators, along with Transport for Wales<sup>3</sup>. Local authorities retain legal responsibilities for bus services and therefore remain central to determining which local services receive this support. They need to sign up to the principle of the agreement and the relationship with their Lead Authority, in ensuring that the ongoing emergency funding meets their priorities and is delivered on their behalf. This will provide the legal basis for WG to make payments to the operators. **In this way, WG can use its powers to support operators, whereas the additional funding would breach local authorities' de minimis limits for direct award contracts** (further details in the briefing note in Appendix 1 and the full proposed Agreement is in Appendix 2). Local Authorities will remain responsible for those services which they currently contract directly with bus operators. Local Authorities will need to consider planning for contingencies, such as if the BES2 agreement is

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<sup>2</sup> Overall, an additional £45m has been provided by WG to support the bus sector this financial year including the £10m ramp up funding an extra £35m from September to the end of the year..

<sup>3</sup> Given that the agreement is under discussion between Welsh Government, operators and Transport for Wales as well as local authorities, and must be approved by all parties, it may be subject to some changes before it is finalised.

not signed or the level of funding for BES2 is reduced during the period of the agreement.

### 5.3 Key features of BES 2 will be as follows:

- Maximum term until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 or until operators enter into an embedded partnership agreement
- development and delivery of a Reference Network, intended to provide a range of benefits to communities; multi-operator ticketing; and operator sign-up to an Economic Contract at the heart of WG's Economic Action Plan (and its principles of fair work, health, decarbonisation, skills and learning etc)
- long term co-operation and co-ordination across TfW, LAs and operators by entering into partnerships with a clear set of obligations and shared standards
- one agreement per operator in each of the regions that they work in, signed by Welsh Government, TfW, a lead authority and the operator

operators will be allowed to make a (capped) profit on services that has not been possible under emergency funding to date.

## 6.0 BEYOND BES 2

6.1 Discussions are starting to take place in relation to the planning of future networks<sup>4</sup> and the respective roles of WG, TfW, LAs and operators. It is important to note that these are not the prime focus of BES2 agreement. It will be vitally important for further detailed discussions to take place with Members on these matters. However, this is not a reason to delay the signing of the BES 2 agreement. WG does believe that the BES2 offer will help to engage operators in the discussions about the future at a time when their income is more dependent that ever on public sector support. In signing up to BES 2, though, LAs are agreeing to financial support being provided to the sector. They are not committing themselves to any specific, future model of bus service management as that will be the subject of further debate.

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<sup>4</sup> The reference network will need to be designed and agreed collectively by WG, TfW and LAs and discussed with operators. An All-Wales Bus Network officer group has been established to progress the thinking around this.

## 7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications at this time.

## 8.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	2 of 4	0 of 4	2 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<b><u>Summary:</u></b>  This report has a positive impact on our Living Well and Working life objectives with no negative impacts on other objectives. The report demonstrates that impact positively on the 5 ways of working. The report does not impact on protected characteristics, nor biodiversity.			

**ALYN OWEN**  
**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COUNCILLOR GERAINT THOMAS**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND**  
**REGENERATION**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	10 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
Report Author	Iain Goldsworthy
Service Area	Neighbourhood Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **RE:FIT Cymru Energy Efficiency Framework- Approval of Salix Loan and entering into Works Contract**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to access external funding and enter into a works contract to undertake a programme of energy conservation and renewable works to corporate buildings and schools by utilising the provisions of the RE:FIT Cymru Energy Efficiency Framework.
- 1.2 RE:FIT Cymru is a Welsh Government promoted scheme that aims to accelerate the energy efficiency improvement of all public sector buildings in Wales.
- 1.3 The scheme provides a commercial model for public bodies to implement energy efficiency and renewables' to their buildings achieving substantial guaranteed energy savings and a reduction in carbon emissions.
- 1.4 Ameresco have carried out over 50 investment grade energy audits in 31 of Merthyr Tydfil Council properties. These audits have led to the production of the MTCBC Investment Grade Proposal (IGP) document detailing the proposed energy conservation measures, capex, payback and the energy and carbon savings.
- 1.5 The REFIT Project is estimated to save £135,400 and 251 tonnes of Carbon per annum with a payback of 8.5 yrs, at a cost of £1.145 million. On top of the savings the buildings will also benefit from an improved learning and working environment, reduced maintenance costs and increased comfort conditions for occupants.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 For the Installation of energy conservation measures detailed in the MTCBC Investment Grade Proposal (Combined 8.5yr payback, £1.145 Million Capex) to be approved.
- 2.2 Utilisation of Salix Interest Free Loan to pay for the installation of energy conservation measures as per the IGP, to be approved.
- 2.3 Entering into a works contract with Ameresco to install the energy conservation measures in MTCBC buildings as per the Investment Grade Proposal, to be approved.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Awareness of decarbonisation is increasing in all spheres and there is a growing expectation for organisations to demonstrate their commitment to this increasingly significant agenda.
- 3.2 Local and national governments have communicated the priority given to this by introducing ambitious targets, requiring organisations to embrace innovation and respond in increasingly creative ways. The Welsh Government has ambition for public bodies to be carbon neutral by 2030
- 3.3 The objectives of this project are supportive of the Authority's environmental responsibilities under its' charter, of the Welsh Government's obligations under the Environment (Wales) Act 2015 and of the requirements placed on all public sector bodies in Wales by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Decarbonisation is also a key objective in the Councils Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan.
- 3.4 Energy prices have all recently increased and are expected to continue to rise. MTCBC could face estimated base energy related pressures exceeding £300,000 by the end of 2025. Implementing this project will provide mitigation against future utility price increases and potential changes to energy taxes.
- 3.5 The Council approved its first Carbon Management Plan by committing to reduce its carbon emissions from buildings by 2025. The RE:FIT programme will identify and implement an accelerated programme of energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy generation projects to reduce carbon emissions necessary to deliver Decarbonisation Targets.
- 3.6 RE:FIT started in England in 2008 as a pilot scheme in London and was subsequently rolled out to the rest of England in 2009. RE:FIT is therefore established and is a tried and tested model. RE:FIT Cymru was launched in 2016 and provides guaranteed savings on energy efficiency measures installed under the RE:FIT scheme.

- 3.7 RE:FIT Cymru is a Welsh Government promoted scheme that aims to accelerate the energy efficiency improvement of all public sector buildings in Wales. RE:FIT Cymru gives Welsh public bodies the opportunity to use a UK framework comprising 16 contractors to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. Measures such as energy efficient lighting upgrades, boiler system upgrades and fabric insulation are some of sixty three potential measures that could be included within Refit. Loans can be made available for RE:FIT phases that include measures with an overall 8-10 year simple payback through the guaranteed energy savings. It is the appointed contractor that guarantees the savings, over the loan term. The monitoring and verification (M&V) report that they provide alongside their saving predictions specifies an agreed methodology for how the savings are going to be measured. If there is an under performance then the contractor will make payments to the Council against the guarantee.
- 3.8 Assistance in the administration of RE:FIT has been provided by the Welsh Government via the RE:FIT Cymru Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Green Growth Wales and Local Partnerships. The support provided by the PIU includes help in securing funding and resources, project brief development, delivery of the mini competition process and obtaining Investment Grade Proposals.
- 3.9 Under the existing delegated authority, the service provider (Ameresco) was appointed in November 2019 to undertake a High Level Appraisal (HLA) then produce Investment Grade Proposals (IGP) for 31 MTCBC buildings. This document confirms designs, costs, guaranteed kWh savings and measurement and verification plans that will form the basis of the Salix Funding Application.
- 3.10 The energy efficiency measures include LED lighting upgrades and intelligent controls, solar panels, building management systems and insulation.
- 3.11 It's projected that the works will take between 12-15 months to complete from project start to completion. On average each energy conservation project per site will take between 3 days to 2 weeks to complete.

## **4.0 PROCUREMENT**

- 4.1 The procurement process was undertaken via a mini competition under the National RE:FIT framework.
- 4.2 The Council's requirements were developed into a robust invitation to tender which was published via eTender Wales on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019.
- 4.3 Thirteen providers were invited to the tender process. Nine of those providers accessed the tender.
- 4.4 Three valid tenders were received on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019, after evaluation the service provider Ameresco were awarded the MTCBC RE:FIT Contract to undertake HLA and IGP proposals.

## 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The RE:FIT and client support agreements along with associated documentation has been submitted and reviewed by our legal section. The RE:FIT support agreement includes provision for review and guidance relating to the savings guarantees associated with the RE:FIT works.
- 5.2 Our legal department will also be consulted over the terms and conditions of these guarantees at the stage that they are presented.

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The total capital costs of the project are £1.145 million which includes Salix repayments, contingencies, monitoring and verification. The total annual financial savings of the project are £135,400. Over a fifteen year period, the total cumulative financial savings are estimated to be in the region of £2.031 million **(See Appendix Items 1 and 2)**.
- 6.2 The cost of ECMs will be funded by a Salix interest-free loan available from Welsh Government (WG), repayable from energy savings generated over a 10-year period. The Salix funding criteria requires an 8.5-year payback generating a net saving for the Council. Salix loan repayments will be made from energy savings recovered from energy budgets over a period of 10 years, the terms of the RE:FIT programme require the Service Provider to guarantee kWh energy savings over the period.
- 6.3 Energy consumption savings at each site will be itemised to allow recovery of the financial savings from individual energy budgets. Energy savings from School buildings will need to be recovered through the Individual School Budget Formula funding allocation. It is recommended the formula allocation for the respective schools is top sliced by the projected annual kWh savings each year. This top slice from the formula funding has been formally agreed with the Schools Forum.

## 7.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	3 of 4	0 of 4	1 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	4 of 5	of 5	1 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	1 of 1	*0 of 1	0 of 1
<b>Summary:</b> RE:FIT will assist MTCBC to make energy cost and carbon emission savings through the installation of energy efficiency measures. The energy efficiency technologies that deliver these savings are readily available, tried and tested, and often repay their initial capital cost within just a few years. Such improvements could provide long-term cash savings for MTCBC, reduce exposure to future changes in energy costs, improve internal conditions for employees, potentially improving the productivity of building occupants and reduce the environmental impacts of MTCBC.			

**JUDITH JONES-CHIEF OFFICER  
PLANNING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES**

**DAVID HUGHES – CABINET MEMBER  
OF PLANNING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Appendix 1-Investment Grade Proposal	3.12.20	<a href="\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT">\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT</a>
Appendix 2-Site Summary	3.12.20	<a href="\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT">\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT</a>
Appendix 3-Financial Summary	3.12.20	<a href="\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT">\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT</a>
Appendix 4-Savings, costs and payback by site	3.12.20	<a href="\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT">\\mtcbcf1\MIMS\REFIT</a>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	16 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 *
Report Author	Anthony Lewis
Service Area	Learning Department
Committee Division	Strategic
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **3-16 Voluntary Aided School – Site Consultation**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update regarding the 3-16 Voluntary Aided (VA) School site consultation outcomes and to seek approval for the new school build to progress to design development on the recommended option.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that**

- 2.1 The land south of the 'Greenie', west of Galon Uchaf Road, be selected as the site for the purpose of building the new 3-16 school, be approved.
- 2.2 Option A, as identified within the 3-16 Consultation Pack – Appendix 1, design development subject to the pending appointment of a successfully tendered contractor is progressed.
- 2.3 Design development be undertaken with all relevant stakeholders, particularly to address concerns identified through the consultation exercise and others that may emerge through ongoing engagement and dialogue be undertaken.
- 2.4 Use of the whole current upper BHHS site as a contingent option to supplement Option A, if required, be retained.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the local authority approved the proposal to close St Aloysius Roman Catholic (RC) Primary, St Illtyd's RC Primary and St Mary's RC Primary Schools and Bishop Hedley RC High School (BHHS) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022, creating a 3-16 all through VA Catholic school.
- 3.2 The new 3-16 school would operate across the current four school sites for a 12-month period until the completion of a new build as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B Programme in readiness for September 2023.
- 3.3 The statutory consultation on the school reorganisation proposals to merge the four schools as a 3-16 all through school, identified the land south of the 'Greenie', west of Galon Uchaf Road, as the preferred site for the new school. A potential option using the current BHHS upper and lower sites was also taken forward from the consultation as a candidate site solution, subject to an appropriate feasibility study being carried out.

### **4.0 3-16 VA SCHOOL FEASIBILITY STUDY**

- 4.1 Atkins were commissioned to undertake a feasibility study of the potential options on the above sites for a new 3-16 school accommodating a 525-pupil place primary school with 100 full time equivalent nursery places, and a 600 pupil (four form entry) secondary school.
- 4.2 As part of the investigations Atkins were asked to consider site layouts, proposed requirements and site/environmental constraints and their scope included Site Accessibility, Acoustics, Flood Risk, Drainage and Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), Public Utilities, Geo-technical and Ground Conditions, Site Terrain, Ecology, Statutory Design Considerations, Site Opportunities and Site Constraints.
- 4.3 A total of seven different site scenarios, using a combination of some or all of the three sites, were scoped and from this scenario analysis four site layout options were developed further that considered potential building positioning and location/type of sports facilities to ensure the requirements of the Building Bulletin 98/99 for Primary and Secondary school areas were met.
- 4.4 Due to site constraints identified on the Galon Uchaf Road/Greenie site the four options developed all utilised some element of the current BHHS site either for car parking, drop-off, sports facilities, or all of these to ensure sufficient space was provided overall to meet the space requirements for the 3-16 school.
- 4.5 From this study two viable options emerged that satisfied the site constraints, the vision of the local authority as expressed throughout the statutory consultation processes to develop a single all through 3-16 school, and the funding constraints subject to further detailed design considerations and investigations.



## 5.0 SITE OPTIONS CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The two viable options identified as Option A and Option B were shared with Portfolio Lead members, Ward Councillors, Archdiocesan officers, and school leaders to discuss stakeholder consultation options in order to ensure ongoing listening and engagement could be undertaken in line with the Council's Focus on the Future Wellbeing Plan and the sustainable development principles.
- 5.2 Following these discussions, a three-week public and stakeholder consultation was run from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November – Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- 5.3 Please see Appendix 1 for the consultation pack that was made available online via the Council's webpage and social media as well as hard copies being delivered to residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the proposed school sites.
- 5.4 Hard copies and display plans from the consultation pack were also made available across the four local catholic parish churches.
- 5.5 Two letters were received from interested parties during the consultation and the views expressed have been factored into the consultation outcomes analysis undertaken in the following section.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

- 6.1 Detailed consultation findings have been included in Appendix 2.
- 6.2 A summary of the consultation outcomes and a consideration of the key themes is provided within this section.
- 6.3 There were 58 responses to the consultation that can be summarised into the following categories

**Table 1: Number and % Respondents by Category**

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage
Resident	26	44.8%
School Community (inc. parishes)	27	46.6%
Other	5	8.6%
<b>All</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

- 6.4 The preferred option selected overall was option A and this is preferred to option B by residents, the school community and other respondents as can be seen below.

**Table 2: Preferred Options selected**

<b>Respondent Category</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Neither*</b>
Resident	31%	19%	50%
School Community (inc. parishes)	56%	33%	11%
Other	60%	20%	20%
<b>All</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>29%</b>

\* the survey only gave options A or B, however some responses indicated that they did not support either option and this has been reflected in the analysis.

6.5 Option A was selected by 56% of the school community, the 11% selecting neither option did so because either they do not support the school merger or because they consider there to be better alternative site options. 50% of residents selected neither option expressing a view that the school should not be built on the land identified as the preferred site south of the Greenie. The other 50% of residents supported the proposals and favoured Option A 31% to Option B 19%.

## 6.6 Option A

6.6.1 62% of all responses were generally favourable to Option A. The majority of these responses came from the school community with 81% providing overall positive responses although 58% of residents provided unfavourable responses.

6.6.2 The many positive responses include:

- ✓ Good design and excellent facilities indicated including forest school and dance studios
- ✓ All of the school site remains on one side of the main road
- ✓ Gives a large macadam area which pupils could use during break and lunchtimes
- ✓ Very good sports facilities including the All-weather pitch
- ✓ Good amount of outside space
- ✓ Seems safest option for children
- ✓ Less disruption to students during building works
- ✓ Essential that traffic calming measures, safe drop off and safe routes to school are incorporated as indicated in high level plans
- ✓ Some of the current BHHS site could be redeveloped as a green area for communal land

## 6.7 Option B

6.7.1 53% of responses were generally favourable to Option B. The majority of these responses came from the school community with 70% providing overall positive responses although again 58% of residents provided unfavourable responses.

6.7.2 The many positive responses included;

- ✓ This is the better option as has extra outdoor space
- ✓ Provides more green space for all pupils

- ✓ Extra grass pitches for the primary school pupils
- ✓ More outside space for primary pupils that is away from secondary pupils
- ✓ I think this option makes more sense due to the size and potential scope for further expansion
- ✓ I like that they may use some of the upper BHHS site as it keeps some tradition of the current schools
- ✓ Better outdoor space and grass pitches but safety measures for pupils moving between two sites requires careful consideration

## **6.8 Key Questions, Suggestions and Concerns**

- 6.8.1 The most important factors identified by respondents when selecting the site of a new school are Safety (52%), Accessibility (50%) and Facilities (48%).
- 6.8.2 These elements feature strongly in the main questions, suggestions and concerns identified in relation to both options.
- 6.8.3 The potential issues / most important matters requiring further consideration for Option A, taken from both favourable and unfavourable responses have been summarised below:

## **6.9 Parking / Drop-Off, Traffic Congestion & Safety**

- 6.9.1 Concerns over location of staff parking and parent drop-off on other side of a busy road and the safety of children crossing over to access the school building. Cars currently park on the road outside the Upper BHHS site and this causes traffic backlog, difficult access/egress for residents and the danger of passing vehicles. Concerns that traffic calming measures may lead to more traffic congestion at the start and end of the school day and that the road infrastructure will not cope with the extra volume of traffic from three primary schools being added to BHHS. Concerns that the extra traffic congestion will lead to extra air pollution.
- 6.9.2 Questions whether sufficient parking and drop-off spaces including for school transport have been provided within indicative plans.
- 6.9.3 Suggestions that alternative solutions such as a pedestrian bridge and / or another access road or a second car park further away be considered to reduce the congestion. Suggestion that school opening/closing times be staggered for primary / secondary to help reduce the congestion.

### Local Authority Response

Alternative design options with regards to parking and drop-off can be considered in order to ease congestion and mitigate related risks as part of phase 1 design development if Option A is chosen as the preferred site option. Further consideration can be given to locating car parking and parent drop-off on the main school site in order to mitigate some of the risks identified. Key to this will be the outcome of the Traffic Impact Assessment and the detailed ground investigations that will inform the necessary design development.

## **6.10 School Transport and Safer Routes to School**

Questions regarding how transport will work for younger school pupils and whether there will be direct safe access from the Gurnos Estate for students i.e. to avoid having to walk around and up Gwaunfarren Road onto Galon Uchaf Road.

### Local Authority Response

Free school transport is provided by the local authority in line with the statutory requirements i.e. for primary aged pupils travelling more than 2 miles and secondary aged pupils travelling more than 3 miles. Transport is also provided for pupils who do not have an available safe walking route to school. The potential for direct access to the site from the Gurnos can be considered as part of design development and ensuring that the options for safe and available walking routes to school are optimised.

## **6.11 Ground Conditions**

Concerns have been raised regarding the site indicated for the school build as being a former landfill area and the exacerbation of current drainage issues with water run-off from the site towards some residents' properties. Questions have been raised regarding the impact disturbing the land will have on people's health, the stability of the ground and the impact a school build will have on site drainage due to the removal of natural vegetation. Concerns have been raised regarding the risk of landslide and property subsidence.

### Local Authority Response

Ground conditions, flood risk and SUDS have all been considered as part of the feasibility study which indicated a defined landfill area within the site and the school siting options indicated within the options have taken that into account however extensive ground investigations will be carried out at the site that will confirm any issues with ground conditions from previous use and design development solutions will factor this in accordance with legislation and current guidance. A sustainable urban drainage scheme will be designed in accordance with current standards and specific approval will be required for this to ensure there is no risk of flooding of the site or nearby properties. The above factors will ensure that all risks are substantially mitigated.

## **6.12 Positioning / Orientation of School Building on the site**

6.12.1 Concerns raised regarding the loss of privacy that will be experienced by residents due to close proximity of school backing on to properties and higher elevation of proposed siting of building. Concerns also that the siting of the school presents an increased security risk to residents as school would back onto gardens at the rear or properties and the risk of anti-social behaviour from pupils e.g. throwing objects into gardens and littering near residential properties.

6.12.2 Questions have been raised regarding the positioning and orientation of the school building and whether this is an aspect that residents could have more involvement with regards to the options being considered.

#### Local Authority Response

The proposed plans show a play area for nursery and reception pupils that will be located in the area of the site where the school building itself backs onto some residents' properties. It is proposed that shrubs and foliage will be reinstated to provide an appropriate barrier between the nursery/reception play area and the residents' back gardens. Further consideration will be given to the exact positioning of the building given the vantage point from the windows on the first floor to mitigate risks to privacy. There will also be significant shrubs and foliage behind the rear gardens that back onto the school playing fields and this will provide an appropriate barrier between the school grounds and the residents' properties to mitigate risks from anti-social behaviour.

Phase 1 design development will require further site exploration and consideration with residents regarding the exact positioning of the school building and appropriate mitigations will be included as part of this process. At this stage plans are only indicative and during the design development stage full consideration will be given to the neighbouring properties to mitigate and minimise any impact the school may have.

### **6.13 Other Impacts on Residents / Community**

Noise and disruption for residents caused by the building work and the ongoing use of the site during the school day and community use in the evenings; including from use of Macadam, All Weather facility and impact of floodlights. Concern regarding property value for properties that will be surrounded by the school or directly impacted by its positioning. Concern regarding the loss of green playing field space, common land and negative impacts on wildlife.

#### Local Authority Response

Unfortunately, an element of noise and disruption from the school building works will be unavoidable, however we will work with residents through a stakeholder project group to be set up in order to minimise impacts during construction and foster good relationships that can support positive dialogue during the operational phase of the project.

Further mitigation to minimise noise and disruption from the site will be considered as part of the design development phase and will involve the stakeholder project group. New school buildings can help to increase the retail value of houses but the impact of the proposed school development on the property values of neighbouring properties is unknown at this stage.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken as part of the feasibility study and its conclusions and recommendations have been considered as part of the site options proposed and will be factored into ongoing design development.

As Option A retains all sports facilities on the main school site the repurposing of the current upper BHHS site for alternative uses such as for green open space can be given further consideration.

## **6.14 Facilities**

- 6.14.1 Concern has been raised regarding a lack of grass sports pitches compared to Option B and whether there will be enough sports pitches overall for both Secondary and Primary pupils to use simultaneously without being concerned about shared use and timetabling. It has been suggested that all Primary age pupils should have access to the outdoors directly from their classroom and noted that this doesn't seem to be the case in the current plans.
- 6.14.2 Questions have been asked regarding whether there will be different entrances for Primary/Secondary schools, how will Primary/Secondary pupils be separated and safeguarding implications if there are shared spaces. Further questions have been asked about the internal design and use of space.

### Local Authority Response

Option A provides sufficient sports facilities and outdoor space that meets the requirements set out in BB98/99 but this is achieved in part through the use of a Macadam pitch facility and an all-weather pitch as these have multiple uses and can be used to a higher frequency and more regularly than grass pitches. Shared use and appropriate timetabling would be required to manage the access for the different age groups at the appropriate times.

The detailed design work has not taken place yet and so there are no explicit plans regarding entrances, internal design and use of space; however indicatively the vision is for there to be a single main entrance with separate wings of the school for Primary and Secondary. Nursery pupils will have a separate entrance to the main school.

## **6.15 Other Questions**

A question has been asked whether as part of the project improvements can be made to the facilities on the Greenie that will be outside of the school boundary such as the current play area, MUGA, drainage on the upper playing field and the existing right of way between Galon Uchaf and the Gurnos Estate.

### Local Authority Response

21<sup>st</sup> Century school capital grant from Welsh Government can only be used to improve facilities within the school boundary on any given project. However, there may be potential to consider alternative sources of funding such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support related projects that will help improve the facilities on the Greenie and in and around the vicinity of the school for the benefit of the whole community. Further consideration will be given to this aspect.

## **6.16 Key Questions, Suggestions and Concerns continued**

Many questions, suggestions, and concerns were also noted for Option B and the majority of these have been noted in 6.8 - 6.15 above as they apply to both options, however matters raised that specifically relate to Option B only have been captured below.

## 6.17 Parking / Drop-Off, Traffic Congestion & Safety

Concern that the siting of the grass pitches across the road will lead to additional traffic congestion and presents a safety hazard to pupils accessing the facility

### Local Authority Response

Traffic calming measures and safe access to the main school site will be carefully considered and developed as part of design development if Option B is selected.

## 6.18 Facilities

Concern that the choice appears to be more grass pitches or a Macadam whereas both should be considered. Suggestion that the current BHHS upper site should be put to better use than just as playing fields and that more facilities could be located here to further improve the school.

### Local Authority Response

The inclusion of a macadam surface on the main school site is only required to ensure recommended sports facility requirements are met as part of option A and this is not required if grass pitches are provided on the other site. Sufficient internal space has been provided within the current school buildings to provide the space required for the planned for number of pupils. The inclusion of a macadam on the main site as well as grass pitches on the current upper BHHS site would not be affordable within the current cost plans and neither would additional buildings on the grass pitch site.

## 6.19 Disruption

Concern that the demolition of existing buildings on BHHS upper site increases the chance of encountering problems with the project and gives more potential for current BHHS pupils to be disrupted during project.

### Local Authority Response

The demolition of existing school buildings would be carefully planned and scheduled but would add additional complexity and cost to the phasing of the design and build project. This however has been scoped in the feasibility study and is achievable within the overall project timeline and funding envelope.

## 6.20 Shared Community Asset - All Weather pitch

6.20.1 The views expressed with respect to the all-weather facility that will have shared community use are positive overall with 69% of responses favourable, 19% negative and 12% no view provided. This can be seen in the table below

**Table 3: Views regarding shared community facility: All-Weather pitch**

Respondent Category	Positive	Negative	No response
Resident	54%	35%	12%
School community	81%	4%	15%
Other	80%	20%	0%

All	69%	19%	12%
-----	-----	-----	-----

6.20.2 The vast majority of the school community 81% favour the proposed facility with only one response disagreeing. The majority of residents 54% support the proposal but 35% are not in favour.

#### Positive Comments

- ✓ Positive opportunity for the mental and physical health & wellbeing of children and young people and whole community
- ✓ The local community should absolutely benefit from the new school
- ✓ This is a great idea and the community needs to be involved to make it a success
- ✓ Great idea, potential to bring in extra revenue to the school
- ✓ Considering the climate an all weather pitch would be an asset as would sharing with the community.
- ✓ Positive depending on the conditions surrounding it such as maintenance and timetabling.
- ✓ May help the school generate more income by renting out the pitches
- ✓ This is an excellent facility and would provide the children with excellent opportunities
- ✓ Community assets will offer significant positive outcomes for the school, the communities they serve and a wide range of other stakeholders.

6.20.3 There were also many suggestions, questions and concerns noted. For detailed comments please refer to Appendix 2, Q8 but the key concerns fall under the following themes

#### **6.21 Management of facility / Community Access**

Who will be responsible for the facility? How will maintenance be managed? What access will the community have? Will the site be secure and separate from the school? How will open space loss be compensated?

##### Local Authority Response

The site will be the responsibility of the school but there will be a clear expectation as part of the project delivery that the site is used as a community asset, and this will be required in order to satisfy open space strategy requirements. The site will be securely fenced and gated and will have secure access to the main school and separate to the community access. Community use of the facility will be bookable and timetabled for outside of school hours. Local clubs will be encouraged to make use of the facility on a regular basis to generate appropriate community use and usage agreements may be required to secure long-term agreements and shared responsibilities including ensuring facilities are properly maintained when in use and afterwards.

The school will be required to generate an income from the community use of the facility in order to maintain the facility to an appropriate standard and the details of this will be for the school to consider in collaboration with community groups and the local authority.



## **6.22 Traffic/Parking**

There are concerns that parking is already an issue when the current Greenie pitches are used on evenings and weekends as cars are parked dangerously on the bend of the road which will be exacerbated with increased use. Questions regarding whether additional parking will be provided and what impact will the additional traffic have on residents on evenings and weekends? A suggestion has been made regarding whether it would be possible to provide parking spaces along the north-west side of the pitches?

### Local Authority Response

These concerns are noted and will be addressed further through consideration of the Traffic Impact Assessment and the detailed design development that will be required to ensure these risks are mitigated with a fully specified design before any final plans for the build and community facility are signed off to progress to build stage.

## **6.23 Disturbance**

Concerned that extra use from the school renting out facilities will increase disturbance for residents on evenings and weekends. Concerns regarding disturbance from floodlights, noise, bad language and anti-social behaviour

### Local Authority Response

The use of the facility will be controlled through booking via the school and all end users will be subject to terms of use agreements with expectations on their behaviour, treatment of the facility and impact on neighbouring properties. Mitigation to minimise noise and disruption from the community facility will be considered as part of the design development phase and will involve the stakeholder project group.

## **6.24 Value for money**

Concerns have been raised that the current facilities are not well used and that included this within the project is not good value for money.

### Local Authority Response

There are existing local clubs and service users that would benefit greatly from the new facility. Providing brand new state of the art facilities also helps to generate additional demand for facilities previously under utilised. The success of the shared community facility will depend on the school-community engagement and this will be an important aspect of the project stakeholder group.

## **6.25 Alternative Options**

Question regarding why this enhancement couldn't be carried out without the need for the school to be built on the lower part of the site.

### Local Authority Response

There are significant funding implications for purchasing and maintaining an all-weather facility and therefore a sustainable project is required for this to be a viable option. The local authority is able to access 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools funding to build a

new school that is needed by the local community and this has provided the opportunity to be able to use these funds to enhance a community facility which would be managed and maintained by the school but shared with the community so that there is a clear positive benefit to the community. Alternative funding streams would need to be accessed and operational arrangements put in place to manage this facility without the access to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century school monies.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The land south of the Greenie, west of Galon Uchaf Road is a viable site for the purpose of building the new 3-16 school.
- 7.2 Option A as identified within the 3-16 Consultation Pack is the preferred specific option with the consultees and although many questions, suggestions and concerns have been raised the feasibility study undertaken and professional officers' advice provide confidence that appropriate mitigating solutions will be found through the design development stage.
- 7.3 Further site investigations and a detailed traffic impact assessment are required as part of design development in order to appropriately design the required solutions.
- 7.4 Design development should be undertaken with all relevant stakeholders, particularly to address concerns identified through the consultation exercise and others that may emerge through ongoing engagement and dialogue.
- 7.5 There may be additional benefit to the design development solutions from retaining the current upper BHHS site as a contingent option to supplement Option A subject to budget availability. This is since the additional space provided by the site may support relevant design development solutions needed for car-parking, drop-off, sports facilities or other.

## **8.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 Subject to the approval of the preferred option indicated in the Recommendations, a Stage 1 contract for design development of the proposed new 3-16 school build needs to be awarded to the successful bidder from the tender process undertaken 6<sup>th</sup> November – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- 8.2 A separate report will be brought seeking appointment of the successful contractor.
- 8.3 The successful contractor will then work with all stakeholders including residents and schools to ensure that all concerns, suggestions, and questions are appropriately addressed as part of the site design development during 2021.

## **9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The indicative cost plan from the feasibility study indicate that both Option A and Option B are deliverable within the current funding envelope.
- 9.2 The required local authority match funding for the 3-16 VA school project is secured within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

## 10.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 10.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	2 of 4	0 of 4	2 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	3 of 10	0 of 10	7 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p><b><u>Summary:</u></b></p> <p>The main positive impacts are that the proposal to choose a 3-16 school site with a shared and enhanced community facility makes a positive contribution to the 'Best Start to Life' and 'Living Well' wellbeing objectives.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts. At this stage there are no impacts on Biodiversity but that may change as the project progress though its phases.</p>			

**SUE WALKER**  
**CHIEF OFFICER LEARNING**

**COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR LEARNING**

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
School Reorganisation 3-16 VA School Cabinet Report	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Intranet
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Cabinet Report	17 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Intranet
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B Strategic Outline Programme (SOP)	August 2017	Learning Dept.
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B SOP Revision Annex 1	February 2019	Learning Dept.
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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# 3-16 Catholic School Site Consultation







# Council consults on preferred site for 3-16 Catholic School

Northyr Tyfil County Borough Council is consulting residents, churches, pupils, staff and the wider local communities on the preferred site for its plans to build a single all through 3-16 Voluntary Aided (VA) Catholic school.

The new school is expected to open on the new site in September 2023 and its construction will mean closure of the current Bishop Hedley High School, St Aloysius RC Primary, and the Federation of St Illtyd's and St Mary's RC Primary Schools.

The Council approved the merger of the four existing schools in September 2019 following a statutory consultation process, with the schools planned to merge in September 2022, a year before moving to the new site. Please see links to Cabinet report and appendices <https://bit.ly/32u4i9T> and <https://bit.ly/2If6R8C>

Two viable options are proposed for the building:

- Option A would see all school accommodation on the land south of the Greenie playing fields, with proposed shared use of one of the community playing fields - which would be enhanced to an all-weather facility. Car parking and drop off facilities would be provided at the current upper Bishop Hedley site.
- Option B would be as Option A but include additional grass pitches on the existing upper Bishop Hedley site instead of a macadam multi-court pitch on main school site south of the Greenie.

The Council is running a three-week consultation exercise from November 9-November 30. Please find links to the survey and site plans here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/singlecatholicschool/>

Provision is being planned by the County Borough Council in partnership with the Archdiocese of Cardiff. Archbishop of Cardiff, the Most Reverend George Stack has said the new provision will allow for a seamless transition from early years to GCSE.

*"It will put us in an advantageous position to deliver the new curriculum and give our children the benefits of an uninterrupted educational journey," he added. "It will allow us to continue to build upon the very good education currently offered by those schools in a state-of-the-art campus."*

*Cabinet Member for Learning Cllr Lisa Mytton said: "We're confident that our new school will provide the best possible learning environment for our students. We're asking the community to support us in choosing the best possible site for it."*

For further media information, please contact Jackie Huybs on 01495 449797/ 07814 070239

# Proposal for a single aged 3-16 years Voluntary Aided Catholic school

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is consulting residents, churches, pupils, staff and the wider local communities on the preferred site for its plans to build a single all through 3-16 Voluntary Aided (VA) Catholic school.

We would be very grateful if you could take a short time to fill in our survey.

Please find links to the site plans [here](#) and [here](#). \*these are attached

1. Are you:

☐

a resident

☐

local community representative

☐

school pupil

☐

parent of pupil

☐

teacher/member of staff

☐

member of a local parish

☐

Other (please specify)

Comments:

2. What is most important to you when considering a suitable school site for the education of children and young people?

3. What is your view of the preferred option A?

4. Do you have any questions, concerns or suggestions you wish to make about this option?

5. What is your view of the alternative option B?

6. Do you have any questions, concerns or suggestions you wish to make about this option?

7. What is your preferred option?

A

B

8. What is your view of enhancing one of the community pitches with an all-weather facility for shared community and school use?

9. Are there any general comments which you wish to make?

10. How would you like to be kept informed on the development of the new school?

☐

Email

☐

Letter

☐

Facebook/Twitter

☐

Other (please specify):



# Proposed new 3-16 VA Catholic School - Preferred Option 'A' Site Plan

## KEY:

### School Facilities:

1. All through school with separate entrances for primary and secondary pupils
- 1a. Primary pupil teaching wing (at ground and first floors)
- 1b. Secondary pupil teaching wing
2. Sports Hall
3. Coach drop off
4. Macadam Pitch
5. Multi-Use Hard Surface Sports Court
6. Grass Pitches
7. All-weather Pitch (Shared Community Use)
8. Staff Parking
9. Drop-off parking with safe route to school
10. Nursery & Reception Class Playing Area

11. Primary Pupil Play Area
12. Secondary Pupil Recreational Area
13. Forest School
14. Outdoor Dining Area
15. School Chapel
16. Traffic calming measures to be introduced, for example school crossings and a 20mph zone. A transport impact assessment is being undertaken

### Existing Community Facilities:

17. Children's Play Area
18. Community Pitches
19. Community Multi-Use Hard Surface Sports court



Proposed new 3-16 VA Catholic School - Preferred Option 'A' Massing Diagram





# Proposed new 3-16 VA Catholic School – Alternative Option ‘B’ Site Plan

This option has different pitch arrangements compared to Preferred Option ‘A’. These differences are as follows:  
 Larger grass pitch area on Land South of Greenie Site (in place of macadam area labelled ‘4’ in Preferred Option ‘A’)  
 Additional grass pitches provided for Primary aged pupils on the existing Upper Bishop Hedley High School Site. Further school crossing safety measures to be considered.

## KEY:

- School Facilities:

1. All through school with separate entrances for primary and secondary pupils

1a. Primary pupil teaching wing (at ground and first floors)

1b. Secondary pupil teaching wing

2. Sports Hall

3. Coach drop off

4. Multi-Use Hard Surface Sports Court

5. Grass Pitches

6. All-weather Pitch (Shared Community Use)

7. Staff Parking

8. Drop-off parking with safe route to school
9. Nursery & Reception Class Playing Area

10. Primary Pupil Play Area

11. Secondary Pupil Recreational Area

12. Forest School

13. Outdoor Dining Area

14. School Chapel

15. Traffic calming measures to be introduced, for example school crossings and a 20mph zone. A transport impact assessment is being undertaken
- Existing Community Facilities:

16. Children’s Play Area

17. Community Pitches

18. Community Multi-Use Hard Surface Sports Court



# Proposed new 3-16 VA Catholic School – Alternative Option 'B' Massing Diagram

This option has different pitch arrangements compared to Preferred Option 'A'. These differences are as follows:  
 Larger grass pitch area on Land South of Greene Site (in place of macadam area labelled '4' in Preferred Option 'A')  
 Additional grass pitches provided for Primary aged pupils on the existing Upper Bishop Hedley High School Site. Further school crossing safety measures to be considered.



10. Sut hoffech chi gael eich hysbysu ynghylch datblygiad yr ysgol newydd?

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

E-bost

Llythyr

Twitter (Trydar)

Arall (nodwch)

4. Oes gennych unrhyw gwestiynau, pryderon neu argymhellion y dymunwch eu gwneud yn-ghylich yr opsiwn hwn? ?

5. Beth yw'ch barn ynghylch Opsiwn B?

6. A oes gennych unrhyw gwestiynau, pryderon neu argymhellion y dymunwch eu gwneud yn-ghylich yr opsiwn hwn?

7. Pa opsiwn ydych chi'n eu ffafrio?

☐

☐

A

B

8. Beth yw'ch barn ynghylch gwella un o'r meysydd chwarae cymunedol a'i wneud yn gyfleuster pob tywydd sy'n cael ei rannu gan y gymuned a'r ysgol?



# Cynniig ar gyfer Ysgol Gyrradd Gatholig Sengl a Gynorthwyr yn Wirfoddol ar gyfer plant sydd rhwng 3 ac 16 oed

Mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Merthyr Tudful yn ymgynghori â phreswylwyr, eglwysi, disgyblion, staff a chymunedau lleol ehangach ar y safle a ffratir ar gyfer ei gynlluniau i adeiladu un ysgol Gatholig a gynorthwyr yn wirfoddol ar gyfer plant 3 i 16 oed.

Byddem yn gwerthfawrogi petai fodd i chi gwblhau'r arolwg byr hwn.

Dewch o hyd i ddolen i gynlluniau'r safle yma a yma.

1. Ydych chi:

- |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn breswlydd                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn gynrychiolydd cymunedol lleol |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn ddisgybl ysgol                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn riant disgybl                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn athro/aelod o staff           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | yn aelod o'r plwy lleol          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Arall (nodwch)                   |

Sylwadau:

2. Beth sydd fwyaf pwysig i chi pan fyddwch yn ystyried safle addas ar gyfer addysg plant a pho-  
bl ifanc?

3. Beth yw'ch barn ynghylch Opsïwn A?

# Y Cyngor yn ymgynghori ar safle a ffatrïr ar gyfer Ysgol Gatholig 3-16 oed

Mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Merthyr Tudful yn ymgynghori â phreswylwyr, eglwysi, disgyblion, staff a chymunedau lleol ehangach ar y safle a ffatrïr ar gyfer ei gynlluniau i adeiladu un ysgol Gatholig a gynorthwyr yn wirfoddol ar gyfer plant 3 i 16 oed.

Bydd adeiladu'r ysgol newydd yn golygu y bydd Ysgol Uwchradd yr Esgob Hedley, Ysgol Gynradd Gatholig Sant Aloysius a Ffaserasiwn Ysgolion Cynradd Catholig Illtyd Sant a'r Santes Fair yn cau. Disgwylir i'r ysgol agor ar y safle newydd ym mis Medi 2023.

Cymeradwydd y Cyngor y dylai'r pedair ysgol bresennol uno ym mis Medi 2019 a hynny yn dilyn proses ymgynghorol statudol. Y bwriad yw y bydd yr ysgolion yn uno ym Medi 2022, fwyddyn cyn y byddant yn symud i'r safle newydd. Gweler dolenni i adroddiad y Cabinet a'r atodiadau: Gweler dolenni i adroddiad y Cabinet a'r atodiadau: <https://bit.ly/32u4i9T> a <https://bit.ly/21f6R8C>

Mae dau opsiwn yn cael eu cynnig ar gyfer yr adeilad:

- Byddai Opsiwn A yn golygu y byddai holl adeilad yr ysgol ar y tir i'r de o feysydd chwarae'r Greenie a chynigir rhannu un o'r meysydd chwarae cymunedol a fyddai'n cael ei wella i fod yn gyfleuster ar gyfer pob tywydd. Byddai maes parcio a man gadael a chasgliu ar safle uchaf, presennol yr Esgob Hedley.

- Byddai Opsiwn B yr un fath ag Opsiwn A ond yn cynnwys meysydd glaswellt ychwanegol ar safle uchaf presennol yr Esgob Hedley yn hytrach na maes tarmacadam, aml-gwrt ar briff saf-le'r ysgol i'r de o'r Greenie.

Mae'r Cyngor yn cynnal ymgynghoriad rhwng 9 a 30 Tachwedd. Dewch o hyd i'r dolenni a chynlluniau o'r safle yma: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/singlecatholicschool/>

Mae darpariaeth yn cael ei gynllunio gan y Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol a hynny mewn partneriaeth ag Esgobaeth Caerdydd.

Dywedodd Archegob Caerdydd, y Gwir Esgob George Stack y byddai'r ddarpariaeth newydd yn golygu y byddai pontio di-dor o'r blynnyddoedd cynnar hyd at lefel TGAU.

"Bydd yn ein rhoi mewn sefyllfa fanteisiol er mwyn darparu'r cwrwclwim newydd gan roi mantesion taith addysg ddi-dor i'n disgyblion," ychwanegodd. "Bydd yn ein caniatáu i barhau i adeiladu ar yr addysg dda sydd ar hyn o bryd yn cael ei chyflwyno gan yr ysgolion a hynny ar gampons modern." Dywedodd y Cynghorydd Lisa Mytton, Aelod o'r Cabinet ar gyfer Dysgu: "Rydym yn hyderus y bydd ein hysgol newydd yn darparu'r amgylchedd dysgu gorau posib i'n myfyrwyr. Rydym yn gofyn i'r gymuned ein cefnogi drwy ddewis y safle gorau ar ei gyfer."

Am ragor o wybodaeth i'r wasg, cysylltwch â Jackie Hubs ar 01495 449797/ 07814 070239





# Ysgol Gatholig 3-16 Ymgynghoriad Safle

## CONSULTATION REPORT

This report considers the responses of the public and stakeholder consultation on the site options for the 3-16 VA School and details the findings for each question.

### Q1. Are you a Resident, Local community rep, School pupil, Parent of pupil, Teacher/Staff member, Local parishioner, Other?

The responses per category of respondent are shown below

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage
Resident	37	47%
School pupil	1	1%
Parent of Pupil	17	22%
School Staff	8	10%
Parishoner	9	12%
Other	6	8%
<b>All</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were a total of 58 respondents but 13 individuals selected more than one category to describe themselves, some selected as many as three categories which is why the initial data capture suggests there were 78 responses.

For the purpose of providing clear analysis of results, responses from pupils, parents, staff and parishioners have been grouped into an overall group recognising the School Community. Further responses from 'Residents' who are also part of the school community have been recognised in as School Community only unless the response narrative provided was explicit in reference to the perspective of a resident directly impacted by the proposal.

There were two such examples of this and these responses remained in the Resident category.

Further to this a single response from the Other category noted they were a school governor and so this response has been captured within the School Community category instead of Other.

The amended responses per category of respondent following the above filtering of category are shown below

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage
Resident	26	44.8%
School Community*	27	46.6%
Other	5	8.6%
<b>All</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*11 of these responses also selected the Resident category

The 'Other' respondents included former pupils, parents of prospective future pupils, community representatives and other interested parties.

## Q2. What is most important to you when considering a suitable school site for the education of children and young people?

The responses provided have been grouped by factors that came through strongly such as safety 52%, accessibility 50% and facilities 48%. Some 9% of responses indicated that the most important aspect was No Change i.e. not to move the schools from where they are currently located / not to move them onto the Galon Uchaf Road site.

	Safety	Accessibility	Facilities	Disruption	No change
Resident	50%	62%	27%	8%	12%
School community	56%	37%	59%	11%	7%
Other	40%	60%	100%	0%	0%
<b>All</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>

\* Many people gave more than one of these responses so numbers will not sum to 100%

### Safety

The main factors identified when mentioning safety are road safety, traffic calming proposals, safe access/egress to site including pedestrian crossings and safe pick up/drop off points for pupils/parents. Other safety factors mentioned include; a safe environment within the school building and around the school site including the movement of traffic on site and playground access, site security in and out of school hours, privacy/safeguarding for children when located near residential areas and stable ground conditions for building a school.

### Accessibility

The main factors identified when mentioning accessibility are ease of access/egress to site, ample parking and off-road drop off space for parents that are well thought out in terms of other traffic, traffic congestion and the impact on surrounding areas and residents and available and safe walking routes to school for pupils/parents from across the catchment area.

Other accessibility factors mentioned the availability of school transport to the site and adequate space for school buses to park and access/egress the site.

### Facilities

The main factors identified when mentioning facilities are modern facilities suitable for the 21st century that can enrich the education of children and young people with a site large enough to provide good outdoor space for play, exploring nature and with good ecology as part of an environmentally friendly building and site. Other comments reference plenty of indoor space including sports halls, drama studios, and school canteens with scope on site for a school that can grow over the long-term and a site and facilities that encourage pupil aspirations and effective delivery of the New Curriculum for Wales.

### Disruption

The main factors identified regarding disruption is either in relation to the potential negative impact on surrounding areas, residents and wildlife or to pupils in the existing schools. For pupils the risk of disruption is noted both for those already at BHHS and the impact of building on and around the site as well the disruption that may be caused to primary school pupils and the need to maintain their happiness and wellbeing in a nurturing environment within a larger school.

### Other

The other main factor identified as important are that the site meets the needs of children, young people and the community so that a positive school-community relationship and partnership can be established.

**Q3. What is your view of the preferred option A?**

**Q4. Do you have any questions, concerns or suggestions you wish to make about this option?**

62% of responses were generally favourable to Option A.

The majority of these responses came from the school community 81% although 42% of residents also provided favourable comments and 3 out of 5 of the Other respondents also provided positive feedback.

The many positive responses include:

- ✓ Good design and excellent facilities indicated
- ✓ All of the school site remains on one side of the main road
- ✓ Gives a large macadam area which pupils could use during break and lunchtimes
- ✓ Very encouraging that a Forest school has been indicated
- ✓ Very good sports facilities including the All-weather pitch
- ✓ Inclusion of dance studio is essential
- ✓ Good layout and high-level design seems suitable for students needs
- ✓ Good amount of outside space
- ✓ Seems safest option for children
- ✓ An ideal site
- ✓ Less disruption to students during building works
- ✓ Essential that traffic calming measures, safe drop off and safe routes to school are incorporated as indicated in high level plans
- ✓ Some of the current BHHS site could be redeveloped as a green area for communal land

There were also many suggestions, questions and concerns noted. All comments related to the shared community use of the all-weather pitch have been considered under the responses to Question 8.

**Parking and Parent drop-off/collection**

- No on-site parking for pupils, parents or staff
- Parking should be on the same side as the school not across the road this will improve safety and reduce congestion
- Insufficient parking provided overall
- Pupils having to cross a busy road from drop off area to access the school
- Not enough space provided for pupil drop-off and collection
- Parents who drop off and pick up their children at BHHS are already parking on the main road 'the dangerous hill' and avoid using the school car park, these already cause huge traffic backlogs and danger for other cars trying to pass
- There are currently issues with parking and access in Billingham Crescent, especially at school times
- Safety of children being dropped off on such as busy road

**Traffic Congestion**

- Concern regarding the road infrastructure not coping with the extra volume of traffic from three primary schools being added to BHHS
- How will the volume of traffic expected be addressed and minimise disruption to all road users?
- What about the extra air pollution?
- Sufficient provisions need to be made for the extra vehicles accessing the site and for school buses and parent drop-off / collection
- Already difficulty when some residents try to gain access and leave their property currently which will be exacerbated



- This issue will also be experienced by buses and parents trying to access/leave school site
- Traffic calming measures may lead to more traffic congestion at the start and end of the school day
- Is there a possibility for another access road or a second car park further away to reduce congestion on the single road?
- Is a pedestrian bridge a possibility as this would reduce traffic congestion, the risk to lives and accidents?
- When will the traffic impact assessment be available to the public?
- Can school opening/closing times be staggered for primary/secondary

### **Size of school buildings**

- It seems small for the amount of students that it is intended for and seems there will be over congested areas and a lot of shared use?
- Not enough outside space
- Will the Secondary building be large enough to hold the required number of pupils in a growing school
- Option A limits expansion, Option B provides more opportunity to expand and to alter the sports usage on the current upper BHHS site

### **Sports facilities**

- A lack of grass sports pitches
- Will there be enough sports pitches for both Secondary and Primary pupils to use simultaneously without being concerned about shared use and timetabling?

### **Design of building / site and use of space**

- How will the children in the Primary and Secondary schools be separated and how will safeguarding be ensured if there are shared spaces?
- Will all pupils enter via one entrance, or will there be different entrances for primary and secondary schools?
- What does the internal design look like, how has space been allocated?
- All primary age pupils should have access to the outdoors directly from their classroom
- Forest school should be given more prominence

### **Location/siting of school**

- Are there other options regarding the positioning and orientation of the school building itself?
- Residents should be given options regarding the positioning and orientation of the school building
- Loss of privacy experienced by residents due to close proximity of school backing on to properties and higher elevation of proposed site
- Increased security risk to residents as school would back on to gardens at the rear of properties
- Risk of anti-social behaviour from pupils e.g. throwing objects into gardens and littering near residential properties

### **Site Security / Safeguarding**

- Concern regarding safety and security of site as some of the lanes around the current area of land have been used for drugs, car racing and other high risk and dangerous activity

### **Ground Investigations**

- Is building on former landfill areas safe for residents? There have been issues for people's health when such land has been disturbed historically
- Stability of ground as a former landfill site and the impact removal of natural vegetation will have on the ground and drainage due to water run-off from the site to Billingham Crescent.
- Has the risk of landslide and property subsidence been considered?

### **School Transport / Safe routes to school**

- How will transport work for younger children?
- Will there be direct safe access from the Gurnos for students i.e. to avoid having to walk around and up dangerous hill?

### **Alternative Options**

- Why can't the existing buildings school buildings be upgraded?
- Potential to be explored of 21st century schools, S106 and / or CIL monies to improve existing right of way across Greenie and improvements to existing play area, drainage on upper playing field and the existing MUGA.

38% of responses were unfavourable to option A. The majority of these responses came from residents who consider that they will be directly impacted by the proposals. Overall, 58% of residents provided unfavourable comments although a small number of the school community (19%) and two out of the five Other respondents also provided unfavourable feedback.

Some of the concerns/questions noted above have come from generally unfavourable feedback but other specific unfavourable feedback to draw out from the responses not included above has been detailed below

- ✖ Noise and disruption for residents caused by the building work and the ongoing use of the site during the school day and community use in the evenings; including from use of Macadam, All Weather facility and impact of floodlights.
- ✖ Negative impacts to local wildlife
- ✖ Concern regarding property value for properties that will be surrounded by the school or directly impacted by its positioning
- ✖ Not supportive of the school merger – existing schools should be maintained
- ✖ Do not support the loss of green playing field space and common land
- ✖ Think new school should be built on current BHHS sites
- ✖ Not making any use of any of current BHHS site loses historic connection to school history

### **Q5. What is your view of the alternative option B?**

### **Q6. Do you have any questions, concerns or suggestions you wish to make about this option?**

53% of responses were generally favourable to Option B.

The majority of these responses came from the school community 70% although 42% of residents also provided favourable comments as did 2 out of 5 of the Other respondents.

There many positive responses included;

- ✓ This is the better option as has extra outdoor space
- ✓ Provides more green space for all pupils
- ✓ Avoids surfaces such as Macadam
- ✓ Extra grass pitches for the primary school pupils
- ✓ More outside space for primary pupils that is away from secondary pupils is a positive
- ✓ I think this option makes more sense due to the size and potential scope for further expansion
- ✓ I like that they may use some of the upper BHHS site as it keeps some tradition of the current schools
- ✓ Better outdoor space and grass pitches but safety measures for pupils moving between two sites requires careful consideration

There were also many suggestions, questions and concerns noted. The majority of these have been captured above as they apply to both options, however matters raised that specifically relate to Option B and not option A have been captured below.

### **Traffic Congestion/Road Safety**

- use of these grass pitches across the road will lead to additional traffic congestion
- the siting of the grass pitches is a concern with respect to safety of pupils accessing facility across a busy road

### **Sports facilities**

- Sports facilities should all be located on the same site
- Extra grass pitches should be incorporated as well as the Macadam not instead of
- What sports facilities would be proposed on the grass pitches?

### **Design of building / site and use of space**

- The current BHHS site should have a better use than just playing fields, more facilities could be located here to further improve the school

### **Disruption**

- Having to demolish existing buildings and facilities to complete project increases chance of encountering problems
- More potential for current BHHS pupils to be disrupted during project

### **Alternative Options**

- Why can't the Bishop Hedley lower site be used?

47% of responses were unfavourable to option B. As with Option A the majority of these responses came from residents who consider that they will be directly impacted by the proposals. Again, 58% of residents provided unfavourable comments for Option B although a larger proportion of the school community (30%) and three out of the five Other respondents also provided unfavourable feedback.

Some specific unfavourable feedback regarding option B that has not been drawn out in earlier analysis has been provided below

- ✖ The upper BHHS site should be developed as a green area / common land to replace those that are being taken for the new school
- ✖ The school site shouldn't be either side of a busy main road
- ✖ Not appropriate to progress site option on safety / safeguarding grounds
- ✖ Don't support school being built as the children are all happy where they are
- ✖ No preference for A or B – neither option is preferred

### **Q7. What is your preferred option A or B?**

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Neither*</b>
Resident	31%	19%	50%
School community	56%	33%	11%
Other	60%	20%	20%
<b>All</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>29%</b>

\*the survey only gave options A or B, however some responses indicated that they did not support either option and so this has been reflected in the analysis.

Option A is the preferred choice of the respondents with 45% selecting this site, 26% selecting Option B and 29% selecting Neither. 56% of the school community selected Option A with 33% choosing Option B and 11% selecting neither option; either because they do not support the school merger or because they consider the existing BHHS sites appropriate for a 3-16 school build.

50% of residents selected neither option expressing a view that the school should not be built on the land south of the Greenie, west of Galon Uchaf Road. The other 50% who supported the proposals, favoured Option A 31% to Option B 19%.

Option A is preferred to Option B by each category of respondent.

**Q8. What is your view of enhancing one of the community pitches with an all-weather facility for shared community and school use?**

	Positive	Negative	No response
Resident	54%	35%	12%
School community	81%	4%	15%
Other	80%	20%	0%
<b>All</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>12%</b>

The views expressed with respect to the all-weather facility with shared community use are positive overall with 69% of responses favourable, 19% negative and 12% no view provided. The vast majority of the school community 81% favour the proposed facility with only one response disagreeing. The majority of residents 54% support the proposal but 35% are not in favour.

The many positive responses include;

**Positive comments**

- ✓ Great idea would benefit mental and physical health of community
- ✓ Positive opportunity for the health & wellbeing of children and young people
- ✓ Excellent idea. Community and school should be in partnership.
- ✓ Good idea as it allows the community to benefit from the new facilities
- ✓ This is a great idea, as long as it is maintained.
- ✓ Good idea and will include benefits for others as a community approach is always well received.
- ✓ This is a great idea and the community needs to be involved to make it a success
- ✓ Great idea, potential to bring in extra revenue to the school
- ✓ Positive depending on the conditions surrounding it such as maintenance and timetabling.
- ✓ May help the school generate more income by renting out the pitches
- ✓ The local community should absolutely benefit from the new school.
- ✓ Considering the climate- all weather pitch would be an asset as would sharing with the community.
- ✓ This is an excellent facility and would provide the children with excellent opportunities
- ✓ Community assets will offer significant positive outcomes for the school, the communities they serve and a wide range of other stakeholders.

There were also many suggestions, questions and concerns noted. These have been summarised and grouped under common themes below

### **Management of facility**

- Will the community use of the All-Weather pitch cause problems for the school to manage?
- Concerns that Merthyr's Leisure Trust will not be able to operate the community asset successfully
- Sharing the space with the community would be beneficial provided the guidelines of responsibility are clear from the start.
- A community use agreement with clear charging policy should be put in place asap
- What will the cost be to hire the facilities?
- Will this provide an income that the school would benefit from?

### **Maintenance and safety**

- The shared use is a slight concern as it will have to be thoroughly checked daily if being used by the public as well as pupils of the school
- These areas are currently used for illegal activities and drug use who will maintain these to ensure pupils and other community users are safe?
- Concern of sharing this for community use would be that the facility would have to be checked thoroughly daily to ensure that the whole area is safe for the pupils

### **Scheduling / Timetabling**

- How will community access to the new All Weather pitch be managed? Will it be available 24x7 for anyone to play on as it currently is?
- This is ok as long as the school gets priority of its use
- What hours of access will the community have?
- It is important that the community has access to the facilities to encourage physical activities to take place so that local children and young people have opportunities available to them to improve their health and wellbeing

### **Site Security and safety**

- Will the school get vandals breaking windows, graffiti, and leaving litter?
- Will the site be supervised or locked to ensure it is not damaged, vandalised and dangerous for children?

### **Traffic/Parking**

- Parking is a major issue when the current pitch is used as cars are parked dangerously on the bend during evenings and weekends
- This also causes issues for some residents reversing out of their drives
- Where are people going to park when they go there?
- What impact will the additional traffic have on residents on evenings and weekends?
- Would it be possible to provide parking spaces along the north-west side of the pitches?

### **Disturbance**

- This shouldn't be a place for youngsters to hang out with no monitoring
- There are very elderly residents nearby and they should be considered very carefully
- Concerned that extra use from the school renting out facilities will increase disturbance for residents on evenings and weekends
- This would increase access & disturbance to nearby dwellings, including the risk of anti-social behaviour
- Concerns regarding disturbance from floodlights, noise and bad language and anti-social behaviour

**Loss of open space**

- The community loss of the playing field must be suitably compensated by negotiated community use and local sport club access to school facilities as part of a community use agreement.

**Value for money**

- Current facilities are not well used so unsure of level of demand

**Alternative Options**

- Why couldn't this be done on the Greenie anyway without the need for the rest of the school?

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Zoe Thomas / Chris Long
Service Area	Community Regeneration
Committee Division	Cabinet
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non-Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Transforming Towns Programme Funding for Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Placemaking Plan was endorsed by Full Council at the Council Committee Meeting on the 12th September 2020.
- 1.2 In January 2020, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn announced the Transforming Towns package.
- 1.3 The Transforming Towns package has provided Merthyr Tydfil CBC with the opportunity to secure funding for the delivery of projects linked to the Placemaking Plan.
- 1.4 A series of applications will be submitted as and when projects are developed in line with the aims and objectives of the Placemaking Plan, and the funding secured to date outlined in this report, is for the 'phase 1' of the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Programme
- 1.5 The application into Welsh Government for the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 included a funding request for the re-development of the former Howfields Building, the re-development of Marsh House and for a Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Programmes Manager.
- 1.6 Development funding has also been secured for Theatre Royal and JOLS.

- 1.7 There are no financial implications for the local authority in relation to the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 The award of funding for Transforming Towns Programme for Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 be approved.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Merthyr Tydfil Strategic Valley Hub: Placemaking Plan 2019 - 2035 was commissioned by Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales. It provides a plan for Merthyr Tydfil that is based on a shared ambition for the town and its role within the Capital City Region.
- 3.2 The Placemaking Plan was endorsed by Full Council at the Council Committee Meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- 3.3 In January 2020, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn announced the Transforming Towns package 'including measures to increase footfall by making sure the public sector locate services in Town Centre locations, tackle empty buildings and land to help bring them back into use, and greening our Town Centres'.
- 3.4 It was announced 'to help breathe new life into Town Centres, the Welsh Government is unveiling a new 'Town Centre First' approach. To support this new approach, the Welsh Government is announcing a £90 million investment to transform Wales' Town Centres'.
- 3.5 Part of this investment included £36 million for Town Centre regeneration projects, extending Welsh Government's current capital programme for a further year and bringing in an anticipated total investment of almost £58 million.
- 3.6 The Transforming Towns package has provided Merthyr Tydfil CBC with the opportunity to secure funding for the delivery of projects linked to the Placemaking Plan.
- 3.7 A series of applications will be submitted as and when projects are developed in line with the aims and objectives of the Placemaking Plan, and the funding secured to date outlined in this report, is for the 'phase 1' of the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Programme.

## **4.0 MERTHYR TYDFIL TRANSFORMING TOWNS PHASE 1.**

- 4.1 The application into Welsh Government for the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 included a funding request for the re-development of the former Howfields Building, the re-development of Marsh House and for a Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Programmes Manager.

- 4.2 Total funding of £770k has been secured for the re-development of the former bakery site into a mixed-use building. Grant funding of £462,000 has been approved as well as loan finance to the value of £308k. The total project cost is £1,100,000. The match funding will be secured by RWP Properties who own the property and are leading on the re-development. The development will provide a new bistro / bar to ground floor. On the upper floors a boutique hotel and self-contained flats will be developed which will be finished to a high specification. The upper floor development will consist of one and two bedroom self-contained flats and serviced accommodation rooms.
- 4.3 Grant funding of £385k has been approved against a total project cost of £550k for the development of a new 'Park Lodge' for Bike Park Wales customers and other tourists and visitors to the area. The development will provide 50 guest bedrooms including services consisting of a bike storage area, workshop, communal lounges, breakfast area and reception. The match funding for the scheme will be secured by Bike Park Wales.
- 4.4 Grant funding of £102k has been approved for Merthyr Tydfil CBC to employ a dedicated project and programme manager resource to support the delivery and management of all Transforming Towns projects within Merthyr Tydfil.
- 4.5 Development funding has also been secured for Theatre Royal and JOLS.
- 4.6 The purpose of the development funding for the Theatre Royal is to support the delivery of a feasibility study to identify its long-term, sustainable use and to develop the business plan, design and costs. Funding of £25k has been secured against a total project cost of £50k. The match funding will be secured by the private owner of the property.
- 4.7 The purpose of the funding for JOLS is to support the delivery of a business plan and detailed designs / costs required to support the future development. Funding of £25k has been secured against a total project cost of £50k. The match funding will be secured by the private owner of the property.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for the local authority in relation to the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1.

## 6.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	3 of 4	0 of 4	1 of 4

<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	2 of 10	0 of 10	8 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
<b><u>Summary:</u></b>  <p>The main positive impacts are that the development and delivery of projects in the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 will support Well-being Objectives and Sustainable Development Principles through targeting economic growth, with a focus on the long-term sustainability of the Town Centre. The project will have a positive effect on the economy, socially and on heritage.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

**ALYN OWEN**  
**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**GERAINT THOMAS**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 **
Report Author	Anouska Beaumont
Service Area	Communities and Regeneration
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2020

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

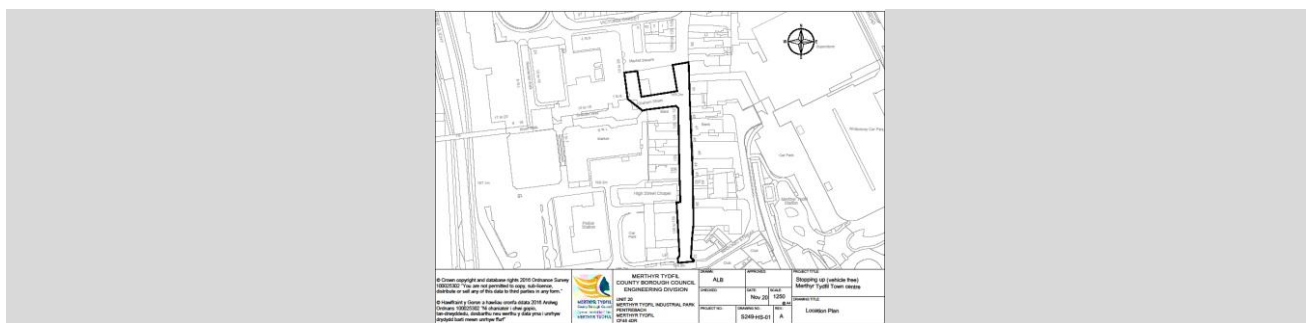
## **Amendment of Existing Order - Upper High Street, Merthyr Tydfil**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The section of Upper High Street, indicated on the plan below, was converted to a bridleway in 1975, under the Town and Country Planning Act. The existing order allows for exemptions for blue badge holders. In order to remove these exemptions and allow for a traffic free High street, MTCBC must apply to Welsh Government under Section 249 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This would complement the existing order on lower high street made in 1995, and allow for the main stretch within the town centre to be pedestrianised

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 The necessary consultations be undertaken with stakeholders and submission of an application under section 249 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to the Welsh Government to amend the Bridleway on Upper High Street as identified on the plan attached below. (Click to open in new window)



### 3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is looking to improve pedestrian safety on High Street, Merthyr Tydfil. To enable this, it is proposed to apply for an order under section 249 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1980 to amend the existing Bridleway.
- 3.2 This will allow access to the Council, emergency services and statutory bodies to undertake their duties. The exclusion of all other vehicles will ensure a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians, enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre and significantly improving the visual appearance and visitor experience of the area. It also promotes social inclusion and equality, by providing a safe and accessible environment, minimising transport emissions and promoting modal shift.
- 3.3 It will be necessary to initiate the process of the application which involves firstly consulting with Emergency Services and Utilities Companies to determine what apparatus exists in the area. This is followed by an application to the Welsh Government to obtain an Order under Section 249 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1980.

### 4.0 COVID-19 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND

- 4.1 WG awarded MTCBC £414k from the Covid-19 Sustainable Transport Fund, which enables the Council to ensure effective social distancing measures are in place, especially in main town centres.
- 4.2 There has been extensive consultation undertaken by the TC Team with the businesses on the High Street and Market Square about the traffic orders and the measures we will be implementing. There will be further consultation undertaken to inform businesses as work progresses.
- 4.3 Following approval from Cabinet the application will be made to Welsh Government. The minimum time taken to make an unopposed order – allowing for the statutory objection period of 28 days from the date of publication of Notice of the Welsh Ministers' proposal to make an order – is about 4 months from the date of receiving all the required information. If because of objections received and not resolved by the authority applying for the order it is necessary to hold a local inquiry, the period before a decision is taken on the order will be considerably larger.

- 4.4 If and when the Order is granted, the enforcement of the order will remain the responsibility of the Police.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as the proposal will utilise the Covid 19 allocation, 100% funded by Welsh Government.

## 6.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	3 of 4	0 of 4	1 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	9 of 10	0 of 10	1 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p><b><u>Summary:</u></b></p> <p>The removal of vehicles will ensure a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians, enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre and significantly improving the visual appearance and visitor experience of the area. It also promotes social inclusion and equality, by providing a safe and accessible environment, minimising transport emissions and promoting modal shift.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

**ALYN OWEN**  
**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COUNCILLOR GERAINT THOMAS**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**REGENERATION AND PUBLIC**  
**PROTECTION**



<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>			
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>	
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>			<b>No</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8AN

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[www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk)

## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Joanna Lewis/Anthony Lewis
Service Area	Learning Department
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **SCHOOL BALANCES 2019-2021**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update with respect to schools' balances at the financial year end 2019/20 and the financial risk and sustainability of school budgets following the setting of school budgets and indicative medium term financial plans 2020-2023.
- 1.2 Schools balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 were £1,549,491 which is 3.9% of formula funding, although this is projected to reduce to £847,570 (2.1%) by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- 1.3 Within this reduced balance are four schools that are planning deficit budgets in the current year and these have submitted licensed deficit recovery plans to bring their budgets back into balance over the medium term.
- 1.4 However, more schools are at risk of requiring a deficit budget in either 2021/22 or 2022/23 and the total number of schools categorised as either RED or AMBER for financial risk is currently eleven.
- 1.5 Next steps have been identified to continue to monitor, challenge and support schools with regards to their financial sustainability, with a particular focus on schools categorised RED and AMBER.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that**

- 2.1 The financial categorisation of schools, as shown in Appendix 1, be approved.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In response to the low level of school balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, circa £358k and £214k respectively, and the high number of schools ending those financial years in deficit (ten and then nine), the Schools' Financial Monitoring, Scrutiny and Intervention Policy was implemented to risk assess the financial sustainability of schools and to target appropriate local authority challenge and support.
- 3.2 At the same time, the Direction of Schools' Excess Balances and Clawback Policy was implemented. This policy allows the local authority to direct the use of (and if necessary, clawback) balances above stipulated thresholds for Primary/Secondary and Special schools. The policy enables the local authority to clawback the excess balances after three years and school are required to submit plans regarding intended use of balances in years one and two.
- 3.3 In accordance with the Schools Funding Regulations (Wales) 2010 any balances clawed back by the local authority must be spent on pupils in the same financial year as part of the local authority's overall spend on schools.
- 3.4 These policies were revised in July 2019 implementing new excess balance thresholds that reflect the relative size of schools alongside the monetary value of the regulatory thresholds. The new excess balance thresholds are:
- Primary – Greater of £50k or 5%
  - Secondary/Special – Greater of £100k or 4%
- 3.5 The local authority has a benchmark target for aggregate schools' balances held at the financial year end to be 3% of formula funding and also recommends that individual schools hold balances within the following ranges:
- Primary - between 2% and 4 %, and within the excess balance limits
  - Secondary/Special – between 2.5% and 3.5%, and within the excess balance limits
- 3.6 Good resource management in schools is the result of effective leadership and governance and Estyn describes 'Good' resource management in the following terms:
- Staffing and financial resources are managed and deployed effectively to support learning improvement.
  - The impact of resources on teaching and learning is kept under review and future needs are planned for.
  - The school's spending decisions relate well to priorities for improvement and the benefit of the pupils.
  - The Pupil Deprivation Grant is well spent.
  - The use of shared resources through efficient partnership work or federation provides good value for money because it contributes to improved and generally good outcomes for pupils in aspects which the school alone could not provide.

- 3.7 The key measures of success that the local authority uses to judge 'Good' resource management in schools are:
- no schools with an unplanned financial deficit;
  - all schools with a licensed deficit deliver against their recovery plan and balance their budget in line with their Medium-Term Financial Plan;
  - all schools with a surplus balance in excess of regulatory thresholds will successfully deliver their excess balances spending plan; and
  - no school will hold excess balances for three consecutive years requiring local authority clawback.

## 4.0 SCHOOLS FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2019/2020

- 4.1 The local authority's schools' balances held in reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 were £1,549,491 (3.9%) compared to £1,458,503 (3.8%) the previous year.
- 4.2 Ten schools had year end balances higher than the new excess balance thresholds. Further details are provided in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: Schools above Excess Balances Thresholds @ 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020*

*(Primary Greater of £50k / 5%, Secondary/Special Greater of £100k / 4%)*

School	2019/2020		Excess Balance £000s	Year
	Balance £000s	% Reserve		
Abercanaid	56	6.5%	6	1
Caedraw	57	5.7%	7	1
Dowlais	81	8.6%	31	1
Edwardsville	95	6.0%	16	1
Coed Y Dderwen	70	5.2%	20	3
Gellifaelog	55	8.6%	5	2
Trelewis	53	6.0%	3	2
Troedyrhiw	70	8.4%	20	1
Ynysowen	135	11.4%	76	1
Greenfield	243	7.5%	113	1

- 4.3 All schools with excess balances have provided excess balance plans to the local authority detailing the reasons for the balances being held and the planned use of those balances in the current financial year 2020/21. These plans have been approved by the Chief Officers for Learning and Finance.
- 4.4 Coed Y Dderwen are in the third year of excess balances but have commenced a series of planned maintenance projects during 2020/21 in order to use the excess balances to address priority work on the premises. £23k costs have been incurred to date on this work in the current financial year and a further £22k is planned before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- 4.5 Two schools ended with unplanned deficit balances in 2019/20. See Table 2 below for a summary of these details.

*Table 2: Schools with unplanned deficit budgets @ 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020*

School	2019/2020		Year
	Balance £000s	% Reserve	
Goetre	-18	-0.9%	1
Ysgol Y Graig	-24	-2.5%	1

- 4.6 Ysgol Y Graig Primary school has been granted a Planned Licensed Deficit in 2020/21 and have plans in place to recover a balanced budget in 2022/23.
- 4.7 Goetre Primary are expected to deliver a balanced budget in the current year and have developed sustainable budget proposals to balance over the medium term in order to avoid further deficit budgets in future years. These proposals will be submitted for further consideration and approval early in the Spring term.
- 4.8 Following the closure of the 2019/20 accounts in May 2020, all schools set their 2020/21 budgets by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 in line with statutory requirements.
- 4.9 Appendix 1 details schools' 2020/21 budgets and indicative three-year Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFP) 2020-2023 alongside their 2019-20 year end balances.
- 4.10 The aggregate level of school balances budgeted in 2020/21 is £839k which shows an estimated £711k reduction in balances year on year. This estimated year-end balance for schools is 2% of formula funding which is £400k lower than the benchmark local authority target of 3%.
- 4.11 The level of balances is currently projected to further reduce to £239k in 2021/22 and to be in an aggregate deficit position of £-261k in 2022/23. The main factor for the overall projected deficit is the financial position of Cyfarthfa High School that is currently projecting a deficit in 2022/23 of £-505k. The school is currently working towards a planned licensed deficit and is in the process of identifying significant reductions in staffing to bring their budget back into balance by 2024/25.
- 4.12 Following consideration of schools second budgets during the Autumn term, each school was categorised for financial risk and sustainability. See Table 3 below.

*Table 3: Financial Risk Categorisation 2019/20 and 2020/21*

Financial Risk Category	Judgement	No. of Schools		%
		2019/20	2020/21	
RED	HIGH RISK	0	5	19%
AMBER	MEDIUM TO HIGH	13	6	22%
YELLOW	LOW TO MEDIUM	8	10	37%
GREEN	LOW	6	6	22%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 4.13 The number of schools at high risk (RED) has increased from nil to five, with these schools submitting plans to recover a deficit budget over the medium term. These plans require schools to deliver sustainable proposals that recover the budget deficit over a three-to-four-year period and are subject to ongoing discussion and review.

- 4.14 Schools categorised at medium to high risk (AMBER) have decreased from thirteen in 2019/20 to six in 2020/21. Four of the schools changing went into a higher category of risk and three went into a lower category.

## 5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The local authority will continue to monitor schools' finances in accordance with the relevant financial monitoring policies and schools categorised RED and AMBER will be subject to additional scrutiny, challenge and support as required.
- 5.2 These schools will be required to attend financial monitoring meetings with the local authority and further work will be undertaken with all schools that are projecting a deficit budget position in either 2021/22 or 2022/23.
- 5.3 Schools will continue financial planning during the Spring term and upon receipt of the revised Formula Allocations 2021/22, and indicative figures to 2023/24, they will set annual budgets and updated MTFPs 2021-2024 by the statutory deadline 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## 7.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 No positive or negative impacts have been identified against the Well-being Objectives, the Sustainable Development Principles, the Protected Characteristics, Welsh Language or Biodiversity.

**SUE WALKER**  
**CHIEF OFFICER LEARNING**

**COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON**  
**PORTFOLIO MEMBER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Schools Balances 2018-2020 Cabinet Report	11th September 2019	Intranet
Schools Financial Monitoring, Scrutiny & Intervention Policy (v2.0)	July 2019	Learning Department
Direction of Schools Excess Balances & Clawback Policy (v2.0)	July 2019	Learning Department
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>N</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

	2019/2020 Outturn		2020/2021 Budget				2021/2022 MTFP		2022/2023 MTFP	
SCHOOL	Outturn	% of FA	Budget	% of FA	2nd Budget	Assessment of Risk	MTFP	% of FA	MTFP	% of FA
ABERCANAID COMMUNITY	£ 55,920	6.5%	£ 16,836	2.1%	£ 18,812		£ 11,889	1.5%	£ 830	0.1%
BEDLINOG COMMUNITY PRIMARY	£ 24,367	6.0%	£ 10,487	2.3%	£ 17,875		£ 4,614	1.0%	£ 1,500	0.3%
CAEDRAW PRIMARY	£ 56,919	5.7%	£ 25,441	2.5%	£ 65,355		£ 69,754	6.6%	£ 70,604	6.5%
CYFARTHFA PARK PRIMARY	£ 75,617	5.0%	£ 28,824	1.9%	£ 50,039		£ 55,057	3.6%	£ 57,728	3.7%
DOWLAIS PRIMARY	£ 80,833	8.6%	£ 21,563	2.4%	£ 29,470		-£ 16,963	-1.9%	-£ 97,718	-10.9%
EDWARDSVILLE PRIMARY	£ 95,179	6.0%	£ 70,548	4.5%	£ 20,344		£ 48,632	3.0%	£ 61,229	3.7%
YSGOL GYNRADD COED Y DDERWEN	£ 70,266	7.0%	£ 15,370	1.4%	£ 12,716		-£ 8,167	-0.7%	-£ 13,727	-1.2%
GELLIFAELOG PRIMARY	£ 54,750	5.8%	£ 45,907	4.6%	£ 68,128		£ 32,315	3.2%	-£ 19,191	-1.9%
GOETRE PRIMARY	-£ 18,397	-0.9%	£ 10,401	0.5%	£ 10,401		£ 13,228	0.6%	£ 21,868	1.0%
GWAUNFARREN PRIMARY	£ 26,192	2.7%	£ 14,515	1.4%	£ 21,549		-£ 19,372	-1.9%	-£ 31,992	-2.9%
HEOLGERRIG PRIMARY	£ 24,502	2.8%	£ 29,582	3.2%	£ 30,445		£ 17,473	1.8%	-£ 6,133	-0.6%
PANTYSGALLOG PRIMARY	£ 46,194	4.6%	£ 55,915	5.1%	£ 67,000		£ 40,882	3.7%	£ 32,516	2.8%
ST ALOYSIUS R.C. PRIMARY	£ 31,913	4.8%	-£ 43,815	-6.8%	-£ 38,841		-£ 48,894	-7.3%	-£ 72,143	-10.6%
ST ILLTYD'S R.C. PRIMARY	£ 24,975	3.8%	-£ 58,331	-9.6%	-£ 48,222		-£ 42,029	-6.7%	-£ 45,415	-7.2%
ST MARY'S R.C. PRIMARY	£ 30,482	3.7%	£ 14,471	1.9%	£ 21,215		£ 9,000	1.1%	-£ 31,000	-4.0%
TRELEWIS PRIMARY	£ 52,588	6.0%	£ 32,595	3.5%	£ 39,869		£ 40,286	4.3%	£ 49,186	5.1%
TROEDYRHIW PRIMARY	£ 70,219	8.4%	£ 44,271	4.9%	£ 47,856		£ 30,669	3.3%	£ 2,346	0.3%
TWYNYRODYN COMMUNITY	£ 51,680	4.3%	£ 21,112	1.6%	£ 68,980		£ 59,247	4.6%	£ 28,451	2.2%
YNYSSOWEN COMMUNITY	£ 135,360	11.4%	£ 64,532	5.6%	£ 64,532		£ 80,636	6.9%	£ 123,272	10.2%
YSGOL RHYD Y GRUG	£ 7,868	0.7%	£ 4,181	0.4%	£ 9,275		-£ 8,000	-0.7%	-£ 24,483	-2.0%
YSGOL SANTES TUDFUL	£ 67,152	4.2%	£ 70,820	4.2%	£ 59,000		£ 57,645	3.3%	£ 13,932	0.8%
YSGOL Y GRAIG PRIMARY	-£ 23,651	-2.5%	-£ 33,767	-3.6%	-£ 16,690		-£ 7,631	-0.8%	£ 22,902	2.3%
TOTALS	£ 1,040,927	4.5%	£ 461,458	2.0%	£ 619,109		£ 420,271	1.8%	£ 144,562	0.6%
AFON TAF HIGH	£ 88,428	2.8%	£ 74,809	2.2%	£ 62,139		£ 47,106	1.4%	£ 58,303	1.6%
BISHOP HEDLEY HIGH	£ 42,670	1.7%	£ 100,244	3.7%	£ 70,000		£ 58,847	2.1%	£ 9,630	0.3%
CYFARTHFA HIGH	£ 16,473	0.3%	-£ 129,110	-2.7%	-£ 99,514		-£ 324,698	-6.6%	-£ 505,025	-10.0%
PEN-Y-DRE HIGH	£ 118,262	3.7%	£ 257,885	7.1%	£ 150,440		£ 4,992	0.1%	-£ 12,382	-0.3%
TOTALS	£ 265,833	1.9%	£ 303,828	2.1%	£ 183,065		-£ 213,753	-1.4%	-£ 449,474	-2.9%
GREENFIELD SPECIAL	£ 242,731	7.5%	£ 52,036	1.6%	£ 45,396		£ 32,787	1.0%	£ 43,504	1.3%
TOTALS	£ 242,731	7.5%	£ 52,036	1.6%	£ 45,396		£ 32,787	1.0%	£ 43,504	1.3%
GRAND TOTALS	£ 1,549,491	3.87%	£ 817,322	2.0%	£ 847,570	2.1%	£ 239,305	0.6%	-£ 261,408	-0.6%



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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	26 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 *
Report Author	Martin Stark
Service Area	Engineering & Traffic
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Swan Street area - Proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the New Bus Station**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 For Councillors to authorise the intention to give Public Notice informing of the County Borough Council's intention to make a permanent Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for various roads near the Swan Street area associated with the new bus station and in the event of no objections, the Orders are made.
- 1.2 In the area surrounding the new bus station, a variety of parking restrictions currently exist to assist traffic movement along Swan Street, access to the town centre service yard adjacent to High Street Church and along to Masonic Street.
- 1.3 Buses will enter the bus station from a new access created on the A4054 Avenue De Clichy and return to the Avenue De Clichy via Swan Street.
- 1.4 In order for buses to exit the bus station without being delayed by on-street parking, further waiting and loading restrictions are required along Swan Street to its junction with the Avenue De Clichy.
- 1.5 Where traffic orders exist on roads which have been stopped up, these will require removal. Also, where new highway is created due to realignment of roads new orders will be required.

- 1.6 A summary of the new Traffic Regulation Orders are as follows:-
- a) Access into the new bus station for buses only.
  - b) To introduce waiting and loading restrictions on the new service yard entrance and exit adjacent to the A4054 Avenue De Clichy.
  - c) To introduce additional waiting and loading restrictions in Swan Street to accommodate the turning of buses out of the bus station. This requires removal of on-street disabled parking opposite the former police station. Additional parking will be created by changing the goods vehicle only restrictions in the layby outside Picton House to limited waiting parking. The existing disabled parking bays opposite will remain.
  - d) Removal of existing restrictions on the former access road to service yard (c) adjacent to the Avenue De Clichy, due to stopping up as part of the development.
  - e) To introduce new waiting and loading restrictions along the road between Swan Street and High Street Church, due to realignment of the road.
  - f) Introduce new restrictions in the service yard to the side of High Street Church.
  - g) To introduce e-taxi bays for the electric charging of taxis only in the area to the rear of no.s 137-139 High Street.
- 1.7 Full details of these Traffic regulation Orders are shown on the attached drawing (see Appendix 1) for information.
- 1.8 Legislation is available under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make the new Traffic Regulation Orders.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 The giving of Public Notice of the County Borough Council's intention to make a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the effect of which is detailed in the schedule at Appendix 2 be approved.
- 2.2 The making of the permanent order in the event of no objections being received, be approved.
- 2.3 The presentation of a report to the appropriate committee for consideration as soon as practicable if objections are received be approved.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 For Councillors to authorise the intention to give Public Notice informing of the County Borough Council's intention to make a permanent Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for various roads near the Swan Street

area associated with the new bus station and in the event of no objections, the Orders are made.

- 3.2 In the area surrounding the new bus station, a variety of parking restrictions currently exist to assist traffic movement along Swan Street, access to the town centre service yard adjacent to High Street Church and along to Masonic Street.
- 3.3 Buses will enter the bus station from a new access created on the A4054 Avenue De Clichy and return to the Avenue De Clichy via Swan Street.
- 3.4 In order for buses to exit the bus station without being delayed by on-street parking, further waiting and loading restrictions are required along Swan Street to its junction with the Avenue De Clichy.
- 3.5 Where traffic orders exist on roads which have been stopped up, these will require removal. Also where new highway is created due to realignment of roads new orders will be required.
- 3.6 A summary of the new Traffic Regulation Orders are as follows:-
  - a) Access into the new bus station for buses only.
  - b) To introduce waiting and loading restrictions on the new service yard entrance and exit adjacent to the A4054 Avenue De Clichy.
  - c) To introduce additional waiting and loading restrictions in Swan Street to accommodate the turning of buses out of the bus station. This requires removal of on-street disabled parking opposite the former police station. Additional parking will be created by changing the goods vehicle only restrictions in the layby outside Picton House to limited waiting parking. The existing disabled parking bays opposite will remain.
  - d) Removal of existing restrictions on the former access road to service yard (c) adjacent to the Avenue De Clichy, due to stopping up as part of the development.
  - e) To introduce new waiting and loading restrictions along the road between Swan Street and High Street Church, due to realignment of the road.
  - f) Introduce new restrictions in the service yard to the side of High Street Church.
  - g) To introduce e-taxi bays for the electric charging of taxis only in the area to the rear of nos 137-139 High Street.
- 3.7 Full details of these Traffic regulation Orders are shown on the attached drawing for information.
- 3.8 Legislation is available under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make the new Traffic Regulation Orders.

- 3.9 As part of Statutory Traffic Regulation Order procedure, consultation has been carried out with the emergency services and other representative users groups. No objections were received. The next stage of the Traffic Order process would be to give Public Notice of the Council's intention to make the Permanent Order including an objection period giving the opportunity for objections to be received from the general public. If no objections are received, the Order can be made. If objections are received a report would be presented to the appropriate Committee for consideration as soon as practicable.

## 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 4.1 There are administrative costs relating to the publishing of Traffic Regulation Order notices and traffic signs/roadmarkings which is to be met from the budget allocated to the bus station.

## 5.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	3 of 10	0 of 10	7 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1

### Summary:

The main positive impacts against:

- The **Well-being objectives** are that the proposals will make improvement to parking and traffic regulation to provide better health and well-being to children and young people.
- Improvements to parking and traffic regulation around the bus station will assist in developing the environment and safer communities, supporting people.
- The parking regulations will help protect, enhance and promote the environment and general area around the bus station. The proposal will allow better management of parking and traffic flow enhancing the environment.

- Also the improvements to traffic regulation will help people enjoy good physical health, promote healthy behaviours and increased levels of physical activity. The improvements will support people living independently where they feel safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.
- The **Sustainable Development Principles** are that the proposals will provide accessibility for buses leaving the bus station and also provide long term benefits and deliver the Council's Well-Being objectives. The parking restrictions are required for the operation of the bus station to allow buses to exit Swan Street.
- The Local Authority consulted on the bus station.
- The Engineering Department has collaborated with the Regeneration Department and Redstart.
- The **Protected Characteristics** and **Welsh Language** are that the proposals have been developed to assist the flow of buses leaving the bus station and provide a positive impact to traffic flow in the area. The improvement will provide better health and well-being to children, young people and older people.
- These improvements will help towards improved well-being
- The proposals will incorporate the Welsh language in signage and Public Notices.

No negative impacts have been identified against the Well-being Objectives, the Sustainable Development Principles, Protected Characteristics and Welsh Language and Biodiversity.

**JUDITH JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER PLANNING &**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

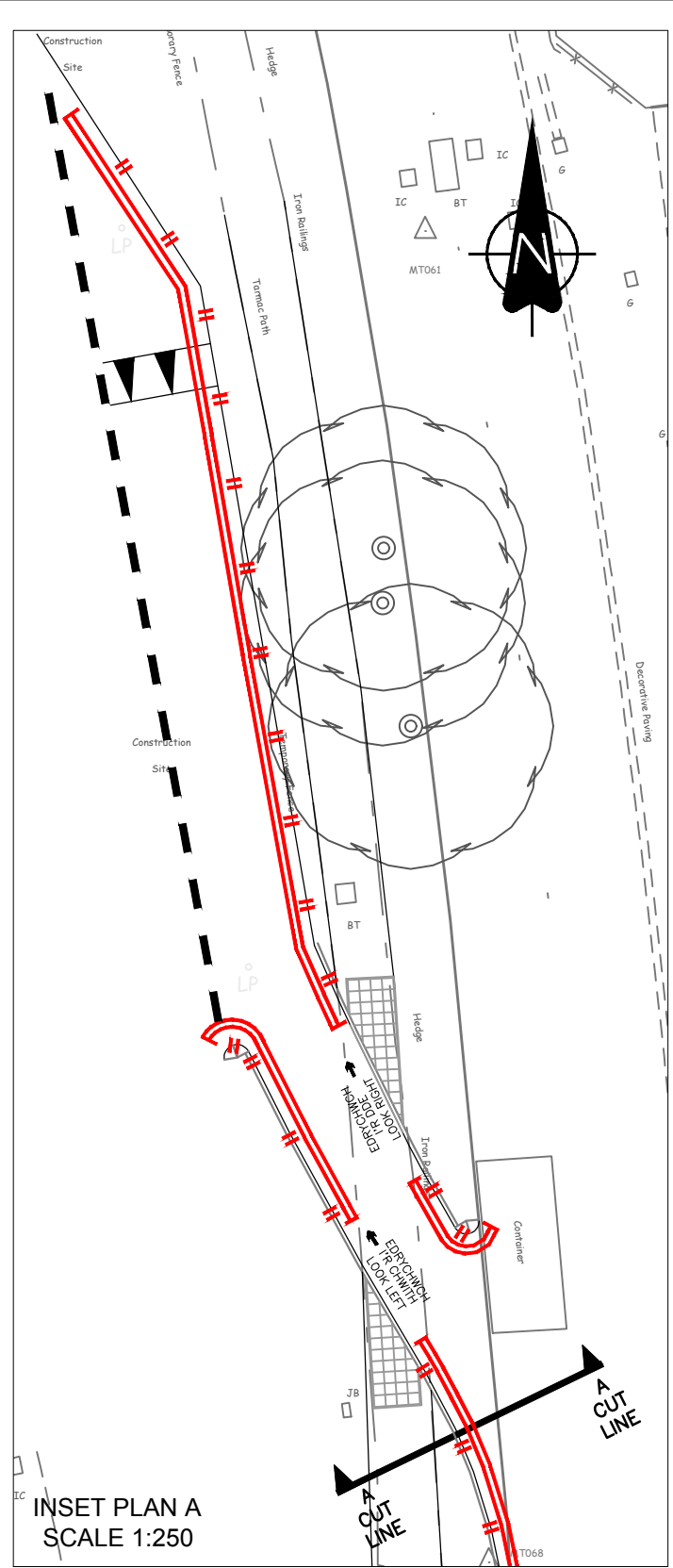
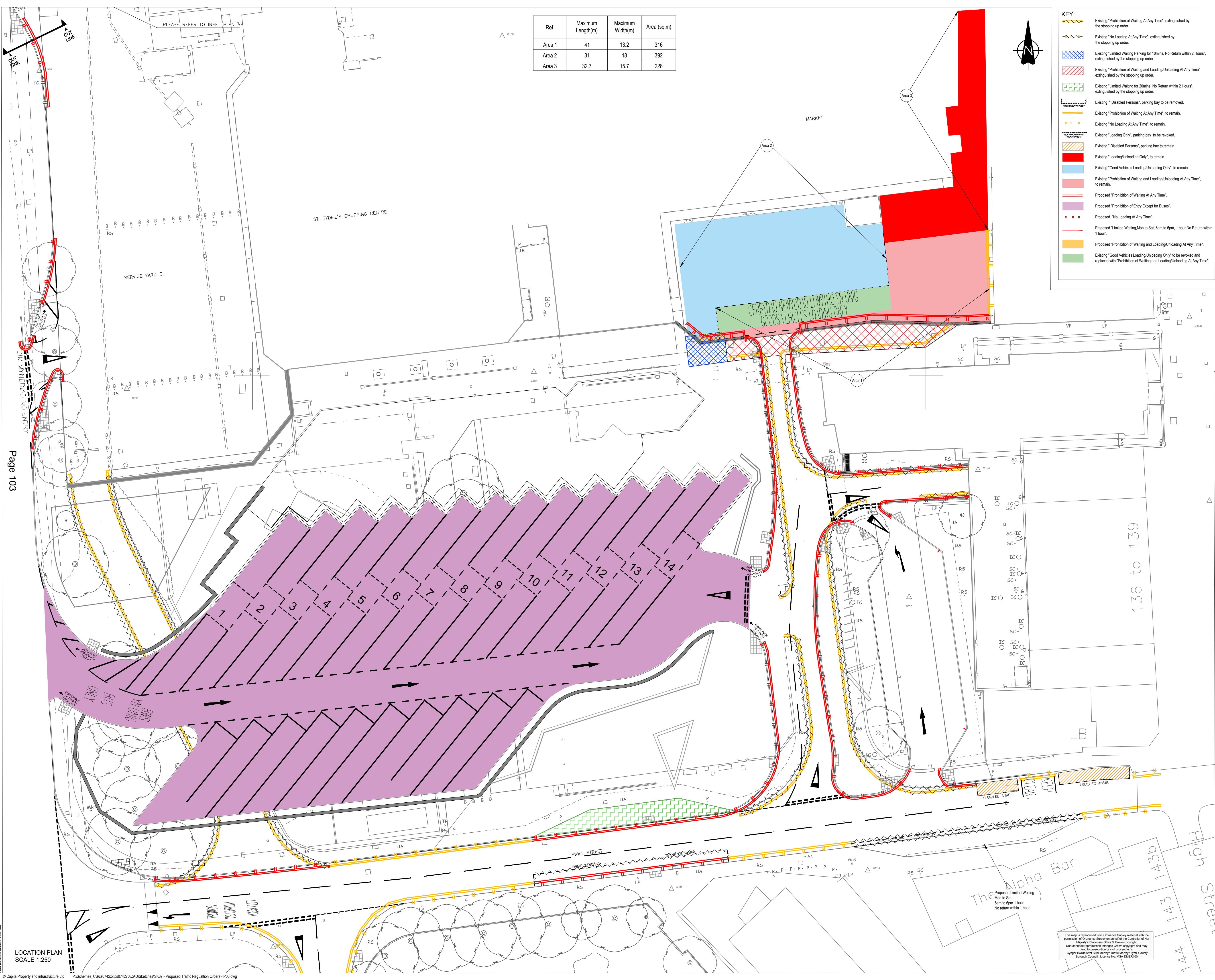
**COUNCILLOR DAVID HUGHES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING &**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
File ref. H10.0	Ongoing	Traffic Management Section, Engineering Department, Unit 5 Pentrebach
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION	
IN ADDITION TO THE HAZARD RISKS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE TYPES OF WORK DETAILED ON THIS DRAWING, NOTE THE FOLLOWING	
CONSTRUCTION	Working adjacent to live carriageway. Presence of statutory undertakers apparatus
MAINTENANCE	As above.
DEMOLITION	As above.
IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL WORKS WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY A COMPETENT CONTRACTOR WORKING, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO AN APPROVED METHOD STATEMENT	

P06	MJ	IP	IP	Area and dimensions added to the TRO's in the service area.	21/10/2020
P05	MJ	IP	IP	Traffic orders amended in accordance with MTGBC comments.	30/09/2020
P04	MJ	IP	IP	Traffic orders amended in accordance with MTGBC comments.	17/09/2020
P03	MJ	IP	IP	Traffic orders amended in accordance with MTGBC comments.	27/08/2020
P02	MJ	IP	IP	Traffic orders amended in accordance with MTGBC traffic order drawing.	12/02/2020
P01	MJ	IP	IP	First issue.	16/12/2019
Rev	Drawn	Chkd	Appd	Description	Date

Purpose of Issue  
Tender

Classification  
Commercial in Confidence

Client  
  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council  
Cynor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TYDFIL

Project  
Merthyr Bus Station

Drawing  
Proposed New Traffic Regulation Orders & Changes to Existing

Scale @ A1	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1:250	MAJ	IP	IP

Project No.	Date
CS/083694	18-NOV-2019

Drawing Identifier	BS1192 Compliant
Project - Originator - Zone - Level - File Type - Role - Number	revision
MBS-CAP-00-XX-DR-C-SK37	P06

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**SCHEDULE 1**  
**PROHIBITION OF WAITING AT ANY TIME**

1. Swan Street

Both sides from a point 13 metres east of its junction with A4054 Avenue De Clichy to its junction with High Street, except in the designated parking bays.

2. Unnamed Access Road leading from Swan Street to the Service Area at rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way and spur to the Service Area at rear of No's 136 to 139 High Street

- (i) East side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with Swan Street in a northerly direction to its junction with the south side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.
- (ii) East side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with the northern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street, in a northerly direction to the Service Area to the south and rear of Graham Way.
- (iii) West side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with Swan Street in a northerly direction to its junction with the southern side of the bus station exit.
- (iv) West side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with the northern side of the bus station exit in a northerly direction to the Service Area to the south and rear of Graham Way.
- (v) Both sides of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to the service area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.

3. In the service area to the south and rear of Graham Way, Merthyr Tydfil

An irregular shaped length of highway with a maximum length of 41 metres and maximum width of 13.2 metres given the reference 'Area 1'.

4. In the area to the rear of no.s 137-139 High Street

- (i) Both sides of the northern exit from its junction with the southern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street for a distance of 15 metres in a southerly direction.
- (ii) Both sides of the southern entrance from its junction with the northern side of Swan Street for a distance of 15 metres in a northerly direction.

SCHEDULE 2

PROHIBITION OF LOADING OR UNLOADING AT ANY TIME

1. Swan Street

Both sides from a point 13 metres east of its junction with A4054 Avenue De Clichy to its junction with High Street, except in the designated parking or loading bays.

2. Unnamed Access Road leading from Swan Street to the Service Area at rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way and spur to the Service Area at rear of No's 136 to 139 High Street

- (i) East side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with Swan Street in a northerly direction to its junction with the south side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.
- (ii) East side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with the northern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street, in a northerly direction to the Service Area to the south and rear of Graham Way.
- (iii) West side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with Swan Street in a northerly direction to its junction with the southern side of the bus station exit.
- (iv) West side of the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way from its junction with the northern side of the bus station exit in a northerly direction to the Service Area to the south and rear of Graham Way.
- (v) Both sides of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to the service area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.

3. In the service area to the south and rear of Graham Way, Merthyr Tydfil

An irregular shaped length of highway with a maximum length of 41 metres and maximum width of 13.2 metres given the reference 'Area 1'.

4. In the area to the rear of no.s 137-139 High Street

- (i) Both sides of the northern exit from its junction with the southern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street for a distance of 15 metres in a southerly direction.
- (ii) Both sides of the southern entrance from its junction with the northern side of Swan Street for a distance of 15 metres in a northerly direction.

SCHEDULE 3

LIMITED WAITING TO 10 MINUTES NO RETURN WITHIN 2 HOURS

In the area to the rear of no.s 137-139 High Street

The western side from a point 15 metres north of its junction with the northern side of Swan Street to a point 15 metres south of its junction with the southern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.

SCHEDULE 4

LIMITED WAITING TO 1 HOUR NO RETURN WITHIN 1 HOUR BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 0800 AND 1800 MONDAY TO SATURDAY (INCLUSIVE)

Swan Street

The purpose built lay-by on the southern side of Swan Street which extends from a point 12 metres, west of its junction with High Street, in a westerly direction for a distance of 35 metres.

SCHEDULE 5

NO STOPPING EXCEPT E-TAXIS RECHARGING ONLY WITH LIMITED WAITING TO 2 HOURS NO RETURN WITHIN 2 HOURS

In the area to the rear of no.s 137-139 High Street

The eastern side from a point 15 metres north of its junction with the northern side of Swan Street to a point 15 metres south of its junction with the southern side of the access link adjacent to High Street Chapel connecting to Service Area at rear of 136 to 139 High Street.

#### SCHEDULE 6

#### DESIGNATED LOADING AND UNLOADING AREA FOR GOODS VEHICLES AT ANYTIME

In the service area to the south and rear of Graham Way, Merthyr Tydfil.

An irregular shaped length of highway with a maximum length of 31 metres and maximum width of 18 metres given the reference 'Area 2'.

#### SCHEDULE 7

#### DESIGNATED LOADING AND UNLOADING AREA AT ANYTIME

In the service area to the rear of Nos. 127 to 133 High Street, Merthyr Tydfil.

An irregular shaped length of highway with a maximum length of 32.7 metres and maximum width of 15.7 metres given the reference 'Area 3'.

#### SCHEDULE 8

#### DISABLED PARKING ONLY

##### Swan Street

- (i) The northern side of Swan Street from a point 4.5 metres west of the western side of High Street for a distance of 11 metres in a westerly direction.
- (ii) The northern side of Swan Street from a point 22 metres west of the western side of High Street for a distance of 5.5 metres in a westerly direction.

#### SCHEDULE 9

#### PROHIBITION OF ENTRY EXCEPT BUSES

Into the bus station from the A4054 Avenue De Clichy.

#### SCHEDULE 10

#### PROHIBITION OF ENTRY

Into the bus station exit from the unnamed access road connecting Swan Street with the Service Area at the rear of No's 1 to 9 Graham Way.

SCHEDULE 11  
VARIATION OF EXISTING ORDERS

1. Vary the provisions of the “Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Various Roads within the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting) (Prohibition and Restriction of Loading/Unloading) (Limited Waiting) (Disabled Parking) (Goods Vehicles Loading and Unloading) (One-Way Traffic) (Clearway) (Bus Lane) (20 Mph Speed Limit) (Variation ) (Revocation) Order 2014” by the deletion of Schedule 1 item 8 and Schedule 3 item 7.
2. Vary the provisions of the “Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre South) (Prohibition of Waiting), (Prohibition of Loading and Unloading), (Designated Loading Bay), (Disabled Person’s Parking), (One Way Traffic), (Prohibition of Driving), (Prohibition of Right Turn), (Revocation) and (Variation), Order 2000” by the deletion of Schedule 1 items 2, 3(i) and 3(ii), Schedule 2, Schedule 5 items 2, 3(i), 3(ii) and Schedule 6 item 1(ii).
3. Vary the provisions of the “Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Various Roads within the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil (Variation) (Revocation) Order 2011” by the deletion of Schedule 7.

SCHEDULE 12  
REVOCATION OF EXISTING ORDERS

Revoke the “Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (Service area to the south and rear of Graham Way, Merthyr Tydfil) (Designated Loading and Unloading area for Goods Vehicles) (Designated Loading and Unloading Area) (Designated Limited Waiting Parking) (Designated Prohibition of Waiting and Loading/Unloading Area) (Variation) Order 2003”.

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 *
Report Author	Martin Stark
Service Area	Engineering
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Various Roads Twynyrodyn - Proposed one-way driving restriction and 20mph zone Traffic Regulation Order**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 For Councillors to authorise that subject to statutory consultation with the emergency services and other representative user groups, Public Notice be given of the County Borough Council's intention to make a Permanent one-way and 20 mph Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for various roads in Twynyrodyn and in the event of no objections, the Order be made.
- 1.2 In August 2019 a road safety consultation was carried out with the community following complaints about parking, traffic flow and congestion and to find out how the Council can improve road safety in Twynyrodyn. A consultation event at the Labour Club was also carried out.
- 1.3 Following this engagement the area was considered by Council Officers and Ward Councillors and a scheme developed to improve traffic conditions in the area.
- 1.4 In September 2020 further engagement was carried out and residents were asked whether they agreed with proposals as suggested by a number of those who provided feedback to the Council. The proposals included a one-way system and a 20 mph speed limit. In summary 347 people completed the survey. 65% agreed with the introduction of a one-way system and 82% agreed with the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit.



- 1.5 Further discussion was carried out between Council Officers and Ward Councillors. The finalised scheme is shown on the attached drawing for information in Appendix 1. This drawing shows the impact of the scheme in the Twynyrodyn area.
- 1.6 To introduce a one-way driving restriction and 20 mph zone requires the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order.
- 1.7 The Traffic Regulation Order can be made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 The giving of Public Notice subject to statutory consultation with the emergency services and other representative user groups, of the County Borough Council's intention to make a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the effect of which is detailed in the schedules at Appendix 2 be approved.
- 2.2 The making of the permanent order in the event of no objections being received, be approved.
- 2.3 If objections are received the presentation of a report to the appropriate Committee for consideration as soon as practicable be approved.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 For Councillors to authorise that subject to statutory consultation with the emergency services and other representative user groups, Public Notice be given of the County Borough Council's intention to make a Permanent one-way and 20 mph Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for various roads in Twynyrodyn and in the event of no objections, the Order be made.
- 3.2 In August 2019 a road safety consultation was carried out with the community following complaints about parking, traffic flow and congestion and to find out how the Council can improve road safety in Twynyrodyn. A consultation event at the Labour Club was also carried out.
- 3.3 Following this engagement the area was considered by Council Officers and Ward Councillors and a scheme developed to improve traffic conditions in the area.
- 3.4 In September 2020 further engagement was carried out and residents were asked whether they agreed with proposals as suggested by a number of those who provided feedback to the Council. The proposals included a one-way system and a 20 mph speed limit. In summary 347 people completed the survey. 65% agreed with the introduction of a one-way system and 82% agreed with the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit.

- 3.5 Further discussion was carried out between Council Officers and Ward Councillors. The finalised scheme is shown on the attached drawing for information in Appendix 1. This drawing shows the impact of the scheme in the Twynyrodyn area.
- 3.6 The effect of the proposed one-way restriction and 20 mph zone is to provide the following positive impacts:-
- Improve accessibility, traffic flow and manoeuvring in the narrow terrace streets with high demand for on-street parking.
  - Introduce a 20 mph zone with traffic signs indicating to motorists they are entering a speed reduced area.
  - Proposals will help towards better health and well-being.
  - Assist in developing the environment and safer communities and supporting people.
  - Enhancing the environment.
  - The improvements will support the community and people living independently where they feel safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.
- 3.7 To introduce a one-way driving restriction and 20 mph zone requires the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order.
- 3.8 The Traffic Regulation Order can be made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 3.9 Discussions also took place with Council Officers and Ward Councillors regarding parking on corners and occasional manoeuvring difficulties for refuse collection vehicles. In view of this the area will be monitored and feedback obtained from refuse collection teams. In addition, air quality was also discussed with a representative from the Environmental Health Department and it was considered the proposed one-way arrangement would assist traffic flow and should not affect air quality.
- 3.10 The next stage is to carry out statutory consultation with the emergency services and other representative user groups and following this, Public Notice be given of the County Borough Council's intention to make a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make a one-way Traffic Regulation and 20mph zone for various roads in the Twynyrodyn area and in the event of no objections, the Order be made. If objections are received a report would be presented to the appropriate Committee for consideration as soon as practicable.

## 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 4.1 There are administrative costs relating to the publishing of Traffic Regulation Order notices and introduction of the scheme. £20,000 is to be funded via the Capital programme for 'Highway Congestion Improvements'.

## 5.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics (including Welsh Language)	3 of 10	0 of 10	7 of 10
4. Biodiversity	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1

### Summary:

The main positive impacts against:

- The **Well-being objectives** are that the proposals will make improvement to traffic flow and traffic calming to provide better health and well-being to children and young people.
- Improvements to traffic flow will assist in developing the environment and safer communities, supporting people.
- The proposals will help protect, enhance and promote the environment and general area. The proposal will allow better traffic flow enhancing the environment.
- Also, the improvements to traffic flow will help people enjoy good physical health, promote healthy behaviours and increased levels of physical activity. The improvements will support people living independently where they feel safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.
- The **Sustainable Development Principles** are that the proposals will provide better traffic flow and also provide long term benefits and deliver the Council's Well-Being objectives. The proposals will assist traffic conditions.
- The Local Authority consulted on the proposals.
- The Council has collaborated with other departments.

- The **Protected Characteristics** and **Welsh Language** are that the proposals have been developed to assist the flow of traffic and provide a positive impact to traffic flow in the area. The improvement will provide better health and well-being to children, young people and older people.
- The improvements will help towards improved well-being
- The proposals will incorporate the Welsh language in signage and Public Notices.

No negative impacts have been identified against the Well-being Objectives, the Sustainable Development Principles, Protected Characteristics and Welsh Language and Biodiversity.

**JUDITH JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER PLANNING AND**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

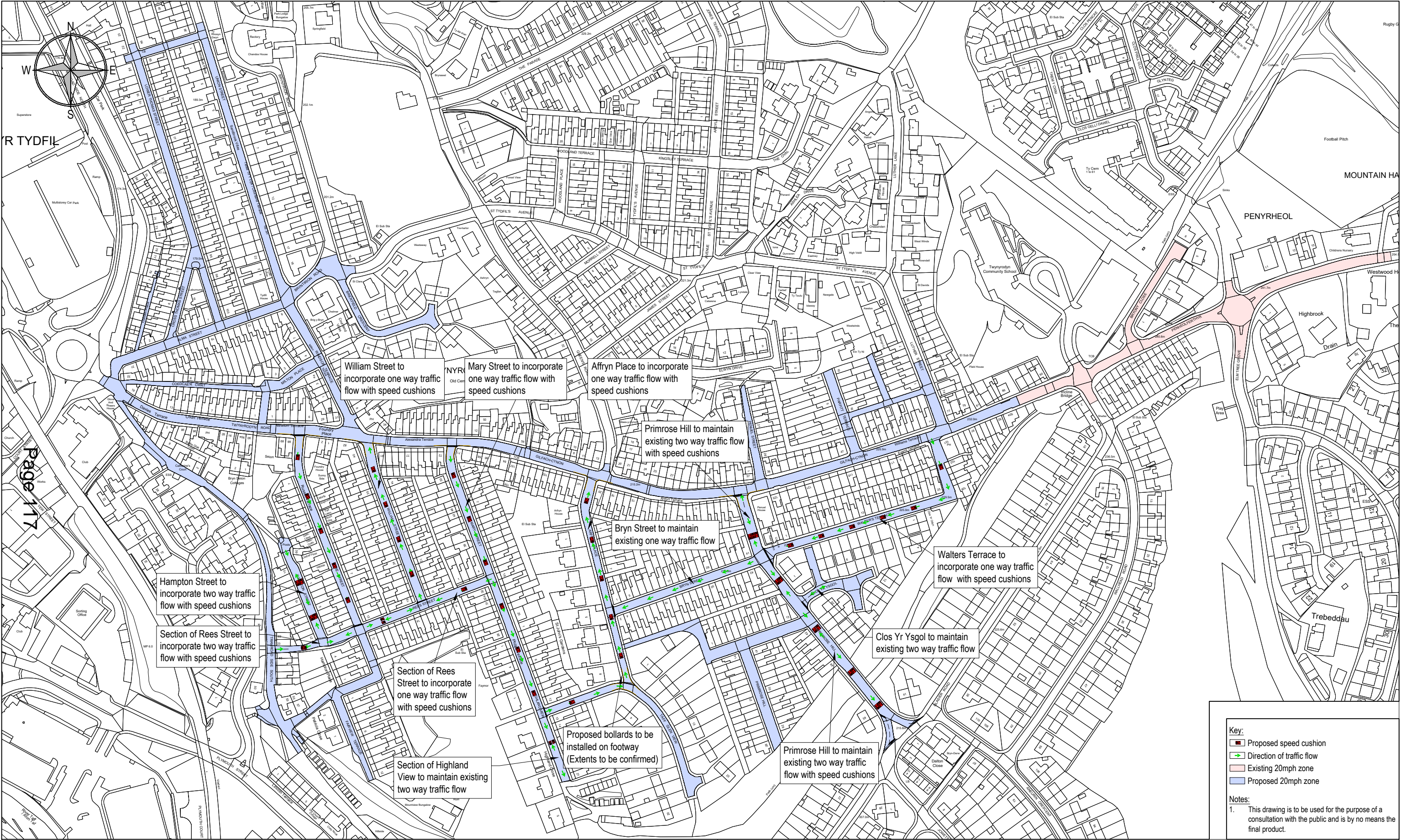
**COUNCILLOR DAVID HUGHES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>			
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>	
File ref. H10.0	Ongoing	Traffic Management Section, Engineering Department, Unit 5 Pentrebach	
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>			<b>No</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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- Key:
- Proposed speed cushion
  - Direction of traffic flow
  - Existing 20mph zone
  - Proposed 20mph zone

Notes:

1. This drawing is to be used for the purpose of a consultation with the public and is by no means the final product.

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MERTHYR TYDFIL  
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ENGINEERING DIVISION  
UNIT 5  
TRIANGLE BUSINESS PARK  
PENTREBACH  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
CF48 4TQ

DRAWN: LD	CHECKED: CM	APPROVED: CM	SCALE: NTS @ A3
PROJECT NO.: MT-000103	DATE: Sept 2020	REV.: P01	
DRAWING NO.: TRTC-MER-01-XX-DR-Z-0006			

PROJECT TITLE:  
Twynrodyn  
Traffic Congestion  
DRAWING TITLE:  
Twynrodyn Consultation

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**SCHEDULE 1**  
**ONE-WAY TRAFFIC**

**Column 1**  
**Road**

**Column 2**  
**In the direction**

That part of Dyke Street, Twynyrodyn between its junctions with Twynyrodyn Road and Rees Street.

North to south

William Street, Twynyrodyn between its junctions with Twynyrodyn Road and Rees Street.

South to north

That part of Rees Street, Twynyrodyn between its junctions with Mary Street and William Street

East to west

Mary Street, Twynyrodyn and continuing into Highland View from its junction with Twynyrodyn Road to its junction with Taff Glen View

North to south

That part of Taff Glen View between its junctions with Highland View and the junction outside no. 1 Taff Glen View.

West to east

Taff Glen View continuing into Arfryn Place between its junction outside no. 1 Taff Glen View and Gilfach-Cynon.

South to north

Walters Terrace, Twynyrodyn between its junction with Gilfach-Cynon and Primrose Hill

South then south-west

SCHEDULE 2  
20 MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMIT

1. That part of Lower Thomas Street from its junction with Lower Thomas Street access road (road linking Lower Thomas Street to Union Street) south to its junction with Alma Street.
2. Cross Thomas Street
3. That part of Union Street from its junction with Lower Thomas Street access road (road linking Lower Thomas Street to Union Street) to its junction with Bryntirion Road.
4. Alma Street
5. That part of Bryntirion Road between Brickfield Crescent and Union Street.
6. Brickfield Crescent
7. Windsor Terrace
8. Coedcaer Cwrt
9. Milton Place
10. Link Road off Twynyrodyn
11. Twynyrodyn Road/Gilfach Cynon between Twynyrodyn Road/Court Street roundabout extending east to a point 40 metres west of Wallhead Road
12. Penuel Street
13. Parfitt Terrace
14. Rear access to Luther Street/Parfitt Terrace
15. That part of Luther Street from the boundary of no.s 70/71 to its junction with Gilfach Cynon.
16. That part of Tramroad Side South from its junction with Twynyrodyn Road to a point 85 metres south of Rees Street.
17. Fairview Terrace
18. Hampton Street
19. Dyke Street
20. Rear access to Russell Terrace

21. William Street
22. Mary Street
23. Rees Street
24. Highland View
25. Taff Glen View
26. Arfryn Place
27. Bryn Street
28. Rear access to Bryn Street
29. Primrose Hill
30. Rear access to Primrose Hill
31. Clos Yr Ysgol
32. Walters Terrace
33. Access Primrose Hill to Gilfach Cynon

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Angela Edevane
Service Area	Adult Social Care
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

## **Winter Protection Plan 2020-21**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 There is a requirement that Merthyr Tydfil CBC contribute to the development of a Winter Protection Plan to support the increased pressures placed upon Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB during the winter period.
- 1.2 This report outlines the key area of responsibility placed on MTCBC to support this process.
- 1.3 The effectiveness of the plan will be monitored locally through planned monthly winter pressures and unscheduled care meetings.
- 1.4 It is recognised that this winter there will be additional pressures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that**

- 2.1 The content of the Winter Protection Plan be noted.
- 2.2 The Winter Protection Plan be endorsed.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) is required to prepare an annual winter preparedness plan in partnership with the Local Authorities of Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend CBC and the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST). The plan is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The winter preparedness plan predominantly focuses on the contingency plans that CTMUHB have in place to deal with periods of increased demand and inclement weather to ensure that they continue to deliver services during these periods.
- 3.3 There is a requirement that the winter preparedness plan be available to the public and is published annually.
- 3.4 There is an additional dimension to the pressures that will be experienced across the health & social care community due to the high volume of people who are in hospital due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **4.0 LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTION**

- 4.1 The Local Authority contribution to the plan is to deliver support to enable people to remain at home rather than be admitted to hospital and support for those who have been admitted being discharged from hospital safely. The support arrangements that are to be delivered by the Local Authority focus on the existing arrangements between MTCBC, RCTCBC, BCBC & CTMUHB that support the hospital discharge process.
- 4.2 The key element of the contribution from the Local authorities is that Cwm Taf Morgannwg, in partnership with both local authorities Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, have developed a multi-disciplinary Stay Well @home Team (SW@HT) based on the two acute hospital sites of royal Glamorgan and Prince Charles. The teams are primarily based at A&E but also support discharges from AMU and CDU additionally supporting all wards as capacity dictates. The aim of the service is to improve individual service user outcomes through enhanced communication and integration of health and social care services at the critical interface that occurs during presentation at A&E and hospital admission through to discharge.
- 4.3 The SW@HT undertake proportionate assessments and commission appropriate community services to support discharge home with the aim of supporting the individual at A&E to safely return home and avoid any unnecessary hospital admissions.
- 4.4 The SW@HT can commission a range of community responses such as Nursing @home including the IV service and social care community package of support within 4 hours, 7 days a week. To support these arrangements the capacity of community services has been enhanced and access arrangements and eligibility criteria have been revised.
- 4.5 The 2 Local Authorities community domiciliary care support @home service will support discharge through:

- Providing a 4-hour response to referrals from the SW@HT 7 days a week.
- Provide Intermediate Care and Reablement Services.

4.6 The success of the SW@H service has been built upon and has moved to the next phase of extending access to social care for professionals at evenings and weekends to provide community support to people to prevent the need for them to be admitted to hospital.

4.7 In addition the Local Authority continue to support the discharge arrangements through the core Social Services teams of Initial Support & Care Management services.

## 5.0 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 The position across Wales is monitored by Welsh Government via weekly conference calls for each Health Board. Previously this has not included Local Authority representation however Welsh Government has written to Directors of Social Services requesting that Local Authority views are represented as part of this process.

5.2 Locally the Winter Plan will be monitored via monthly planned joint Winter Pressures Meetings. However during periods of increased demand the frequency of these meetings will increase.

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The financial implications of potential increased demand are difficult to predict as they are influenced by the weather conditions and seasonal illnesses, however in previous years fluctuations in demand have been met from within established budgets. The position will continue to be monitored utilising existing budget monitoring arrangements and any significant budget changes will be reported.

## 7.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	1 of 4	0 of 4	3 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	4 of 5	0 of 5	1 of 5



<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	2 of 10	0 of 10	8 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1

**Summary:**

The main positive impacts are that the implementation of the plan ensures that the increased pressure of additional demand is managed as effectively as possible and services remain available to meet the requirements of the people of Merthyr Tydfil.

There are no negative impacts.

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Winter Protection Plan 2020-21		
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***



# WINTER PROTECTION PLAN 2020/21

Final Version

## Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION .....	3
2.0	AIMS OF THE 2020 WINTER PROTECTION PLAN .....	4
3.0	DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN .....	5
4.0	Initial Surge Response and Discharge to Recover and Assess .....	8
5.0	PREPARATIONS FOR A SECOND COVID SURGE .....	11
6.0	RAPID REVIEW OF POPULATION NEEDS .....	12
7.0	COVID IMPACT ASSESSMENT .....	13
8.0	SHIELDING .....	14
9.0	WORKFORCE MODELLING .....	15
10.0	PREVENTION AND RESPONSE .....	16
10.1	TEST, TRACE, PROTECT STRATEGY .....	16
10.2	PROTECT .....	17
10.3	Vaccination (Flu and COVID-19) .....	19
11.0	HEALTH INEQUALITIES .....	20
12.0	THIRD SECTOR PROVISION .....	21
13.0	Primary Care and Community .....	22
14.0	SOCIAL CARE .....	22
15.0	CARE HOMES .....	23
16.0	OLDER PEOPLES COMMISSIONER REPORT, LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND - ACTION FOR AN AGE-FRIENDLY RECOVERY .....	25
17.0	TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME .....	26
18.0	REHABILITATION .....	28
19.0	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE .....	29
20.0	MENTAL HEALTH .....	30
21.0	CONCLUSION .....	31

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Winter Protection Plan sets out the regions response to the Welsh Government Winter Protection Plan. The plan has been developed with input from all of the regional statutory and voluntary sector partners and builds to demonstrate an integrated regional plan and an approach that is deliverable and addresses the challenges associated with both the COVID pandemic and usual winter pressures across the region.

The plan builds on existing plans that focus on preventing four harms by;

- Remaining ready to provide the full range of services needed to prevent, diagnose, isolate and treat COVID-19 patients and
- Ensuring that we can continue to provide services that are essential at all times. This includes services that are urgent and life threatening or life impacting as well as services that without timely intervention could result in harm over the longer term such as maintaining vaccination programmes
- Reinstating routine services where it is operationally possible and safe to do so, with strict adherence to infection prevention and hygiene procedures and maximising the use of virtual consultations
- Health and Social care professionals working tirelessly to ensure people have been prioritised according to need and what matters to them.

The plan provides also looks to support and retain new ways of working adopted in the first COVID wave which supported integrated working between health, social care and third sector.

This means:

- A whole system approach where seamless support, care or treatment is provided as close to home as possible
- Services designed around the individual and around groups of people, based on their unique needs and what matters to them, as well as quality and safety outcomes
- People only going to a general hospital when it is essential, with hospital services designed to reduce the time spent in hospital
- A shift in resources to the community that enable hospital-based care, when needed to be accessed more quickly; using technology to support high quality services.

## 2.0 AIMS OF THE 2020 WINTER PROTECTION PLAN

The aim of the plan is to;

- Respond to the Welsh Government's 6 goals of urgent and emergency care
- Prevent unnecessary hospital admission
- Optimise digital technology
- Enhanced support for the frail and elderly at home , in care and within healthcare settings
- Minimise impact of COVID 19 resurgence and seasonal influenza
- Ensure that Care Homes are supported to deliver ongoing quality care for their residents
- Enhance the working arrangements and support from third sector partner agencies
- Maximise and enhance access and support via community therapy services
- Review patient and staff experience focusing on 'what matters'
- Ensure ongoing consideration and timely support to prioritise staff well-being

**A range of performance measures will be used to measure the impact of the Winter plan including;**

- Preventing hospital admission for specific conditions / complaints.
- Timeliness, quality and frequency of assessment in ED.
- Improving flow of patients through hospital to reduce risk of harm and delays in onward care.
- Focusing on timely transfer home to reduce risk of harm and improve outcomes.
- Discharge data.
- Delayed transfers of care.
- Flu rates.

The National Programme for unscheduled and the NHS delivery Unit will support evaluation and measurement in relation to Discharge to Recover and assess elements of the plan and there will be regular progress updates through the RPB governance structure and within sovereign bodies as required.

### 3.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

Our winter plan has been developed on a partnership basis with the Local Authorities, Third Sector and Health Board. The plan is in line with A Healthier Wales commitments and looks to ensure that the programme of work undertaken as part of the Transformation Programme in the Region is maximised. It follows those clear design principles of:

- A whole system approach where seamless support, care or treatment is provided as close to home as possible;
- Services designed around the individual, based on their unique needs and what matters to them;
- People will only go to a general hospital when it is essential, with hospital services designed to reduce the time spent in hospital;
- A shift in resources to the community that enable hospital-based care (when needed) to be accessed more quickly; and
- Using technology to support high quality services.
- Develop more meaningful measures and use feedback from patients and staff to measure what matters most to people.

It is anticipated that we will see an increase in pressure on health and social care services as the population contends with both the global pandemic of

COVID 19 as well as the usual seasonal activity. The impact upon health services in our DGH and Community Hospitals has for the first time been modelled by month and by Hospital and accounts for the bed capacity need to accommodate also our elective programme and the potential impact of the opening of the Grange Hospital with the consequent changes in flow from this.

In preparing for Winter 2020/21, the Health Board has considered numerous scenarios for the spread and impact of Covid-19 on health and care services. The scenario which has been used as the premise for our whole system planning during quarters 3 and 4 of 2020-21, from surveillance and the TTP programme to delivery of core elective services, is based on current community infections levels and accounting for the current 14 day national lock down.

In addition, the health board have also modelled the requirements to enable them to put in place the capacity to enable Wales to respond to the most serious of circumstances, as described in the letter from Welsh Government in June 2020. This requires the UHB to have an increased number of both acute and critical care available for Covid-19 patients, whilst also being able to continue to provide the anticipated levels of capacity to deliver non-elective and maternity services safely and have assumed that critical care demand over the winter is in addition to any typical winter demand. Further detail can be found in the Health Board Q3/Q4 Plan.

The 2020/21 winter plan is underpinned by reference to the 6 goals of urgent and emergency care recently published through Welsh Government and with a very clear emphasis on;

- Contact Ahead and introduction of 111
- Creation of a 24/7 urgent primary care model in at least one Cluster and the ongoing enhancement of our Out of hours urgent primary care across CTM



- Enhancing the capacity and capability of the AEC/SDEC offer in each of our ILGs
- Ensuring the delivery of the four discharge to recover then assess pathways

Over and above this the Health Board in conjunction with our Local Authority Partners has been delivering the Test Track and Protect service which is fundamental to managing the COVID pandemic in the community. Plans are also well advanced in regard to Mass Vaccination for COVID 19 as vaccine becomes available and finally there is both a comprehensive staff immunization programme for influenza as well as a robust primary care delivery set up to deal with the previous cohorts of patients as well as an increase in the spectrum to those over 50 as and when vaccine supply become available for such. Further details below.

The Health Board has required the newly formed ILGs to create multiagency plans at locality level, covering all aspects from community care, enhanced primary care, additionality in mental health services and enhanced capacity both in the Emergency Departments, Ambulatory Care settings and the wider community admissions avoidance and rapid discharge services.

These three integrated plans will along with TTP and Vaccination programmes incorporate the discharge to recovery pathways as well as a strong emphasis on supporting care homes. They have a very clear focus on work that we intend to fund from the Third sector on isolation, volunteering and building digital confidence. The proposals and schemes that fall within the ILG plans can be found at Annex 1 to 3 covering the whole of the region.

### **Annex 1 Rhondda and Taf Ely Winter Preparedness**

### **Annex 2 Merthyr & Cynon Winter Preparedness**

### **Annex 3 Bridgend Winter Preparedness**

In overall terms the Health Board and partners will look to deploy circa **£10.9m** towards winter protection excluding TTP and Mass Vaccination.

This will look to cover the following;

Enhanced Capacity and Capability on Ambulatory Care /	
Same Day Emergency Care	3.700m
Capacity and Capability in each ILG	3.050m
Discharge to Assess Pathways & Care Home support	2.000m
Community Resources and Third Sector Support	0.500m
Contact Ahead & NHS 111	0.750m
Primary Care Capacity	0.750m
24/7 Urgent Primary Care	0.150m

A submission outlining the AEC/SDEC proposals has been submitted to WG colleagues as required as has the Contact Ahead and Urgent Primary Care proposals. A summary of the proposal is contained for each of these three elements in Annex 1 to 3. The proposals in regard to D2RA and Community resources are contained in the ILG schemes by LA and are referred to in the section below. Also note the read across to the Health Board Q3/Q4 plan.

The Capacity and Capability at ILG level relates to a host of schemes that cover enhanced staffing in community hospitals and across our community services especially targeted at palliative care as well as District General Hospitals within wards and the Emergency Department.

They cover Mental Health service deployment around faster access to mental health assessment. In addition a range of schemes designed around the community respiratory hub, therapy services including the hub that operated in COVID first wave and in reached to care homes.

#### 4.0 Initial Surge Response and Discharge to Recover and Assess

On the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020 the Welsh Government announced £10m of financial support for Covid surge response. The purpose of the funding was to enable safe and accelerated discharge of patients from acute and community hospitals to community settings in line with the COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Requirements published by Welsh Government on 7th April 2020.

Note a further update on discharge requirements was made on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 which aligned the COVID-19 Discharge Guidance with the new approach to testing on discharge for people normally resident in care homes or potentially being discharged to a care home on Discharge to Recover then Assess Pathway 3 or 4.

The Discharge to Recover then Assess model is predicated on optimising recovery and reablement/rehabilitation. The Welsh Government is encouraging a new model where going home is the default pathway given most patients benefit from assessment in their normal place of residence with the ability to cope in familiar surroundings. The 'home first: discharge to recover and assess' pathway means patients are discharged home once they are medically fit and no longer need a hospital bed. Patients' immediate support needs will have been assessed prior to discharge and the necessary arrangements put in place. Ongoing assessment of patients' support needs can be safely continued at home by members of the appropriate community health and social care team. The approach means patients are not kept in a hospital bed longer than is necessary.

Intensive effort has been put into increasing Critical Care capacity in the three acute hospitals in Cwm Taf Morgannwg, including skilling up staff in other areas to provide a higher level of care than is typical in acute medical and surgical settings. As part of this process and utilising £1.3m surge funding, Gold Covid-19 members approved a proposal to operationalise a number of former Nursing Homes.

The community intermediate step down facilities operationalised were Abergarw Nursing Home (Bridgend) and Marsh House (Formerly Glan Yr Afon) in Merthyr Tydfil. These facilities formed a key part of the region's COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Pathway and an important intermediate step whilst onward discharge planning is progressed.

An initial transfer of patients took place with Abergarw Manor going live on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and Marsh House on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.

The Health Board are providing the staffing for the facilities, including Registered Nursing, therapies and Health Care Support Workers whilst contracting some support services through the Local Authorities such as Catering and Cleaning. The Health Board is responsible for all patients in the homes and has fitted out each of the homes to ensure the environment is as safe and appropriate as possible in the context of COVID and the timescales.

In addition to Local Authority partners and Health board, Age Connects have been a key Partner repurposing their existing contracts to provide direct support to patients which includes access to technology to engage with friends and family thus reducing the chances of depression and decline in mental health during isolation, daily activities to support mental and physical wellbeing and supporting discharge planning as required.

The welcome announcement of the funding for delivery of Discharge to Recover and Assess (D2RA) pathways received on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October has enabled further discussion and enhancement of models of care that prevent unnecessary admission to hospital and enable people to leave hospital when they are ready is essential in order to provide care closer to home and limit time in hospital unless essential, in line with key commitments of *a Healthier Wales*.

Planning for this element of the Winter Plan has been led by Local Authority Colleagues and complements the Locality Plans.

The plan whilst responding to emerging modelling also looks to ensure we adopt a cautious and flexible approach, building on new ways of working, more robust whole systems engagement and joint working, which was clearly evidenced during the first wave of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Full list of proposals can be found within the ILG Annex 1-3.

Proposals include;

- Additional capacity for support @home services (short term intervention) over winter period to facilitate hospital discharge or prevent admission.
- Additional capacity to support carers including crisis support to facilitate hospital discharge or prevent admission.
- Increased capacity for community equipment services, including delivery drivers and equipment provision.
- Increased support to ED and frailty teams and improved partnership working, Improved patient safety and experience.
- The provision of additional capacity across community services will support people to return home through the provision of packages of care and further assessment to be undertaken.

The breakdown of funding across the local authority areas is based on Social Services funding formula and is approximately;

- Rhondda Cynon Taf £1.2m
- Bridgend £0.61m
- Merthyr Tydfil £0.28m

These proposals will be submitted to Welsh Government approval alongside the winter plan.

## 5.0 PREPARATIONS FOR A SECOND COVID SURGE

For 2020/21 the Winter Plan needed not just to address the typical pressures of Winter but to deliver health and social care and support services through a second COVID surge. Throughout the year planning has been focused on preventing the following 4 harms:



The health board has worked to maintain essential services, reintroduce urgent and routine services and adapt to new ways of working, such as video and telephone consultations with patients via a number of virtual platforms. The HB will continue to work with partners in social care, care homes and via the Third sector to join up and deliver the services needed for our population ensuring more collaborative and joint whole system approaches.

Maintenance of essential services must be and will be the priority during the midst of the second COVID surge, initial discussion and a further military led planning exercise and strengthened our understanding that we will have to set in place specific phasing and trigger points for escalation and senior decision making for the potential to stand elements of service down. Whilst we will aim to attempt to review our ability to maintain more

routine services on an ongoing basis based on clinical risks associated and emerging guidance received.

## **6.0 RAPID REVIEW OF POPULATION NEEDS**

In light of the unprecedented scale and impact on population and services brought by the pandemic, RPBs and their partners are required to undertake a rapid review of their population needs assessments to understand the effect of the pandemic. This review focused on some of the most affected groups and how services may need to change in order to meet needs in the new landscape for the priority groups under the RPB;

- Children and young people with complex needs (ref new part 9 definition)
  - Unpaid carers
  - Older people, with specific reference to supporting people living with dementia
  - People with physical disabilities
  - People with learning disability/autism
  - People with poor mental health
  - Sensory impairment

The rapid review provided a summary of Population Needs assessment as compiled for original assessment (including additional information relating to Bridgend that was outside of the original scope), national survey information regarding the impact on specific priority groups and local intelligence including feedback from Strategic Sub Groups of the RPB where this was available.

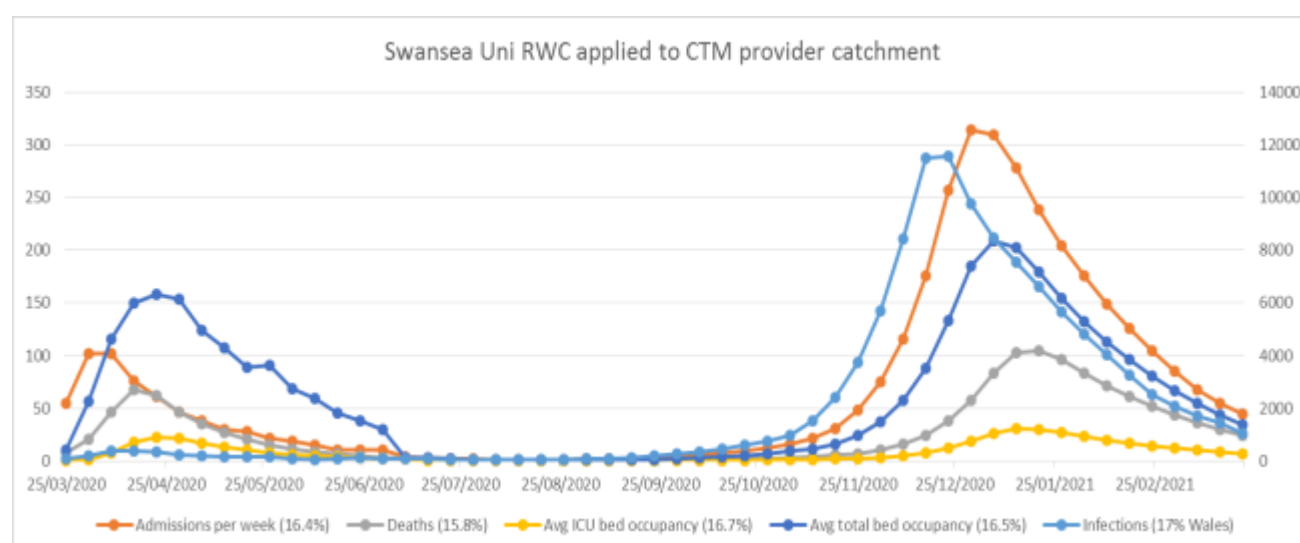
Local intelligence priorities were captured through the Citizen Engagement through Lockdown report. These priorities have been established following basic analysis of data collected by the Our Voice Matters project (ICF funded Project) in collaboration with citizens and partner organisations prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures through the

projects phase 1 activities, and the #CTMLockdownVoices campaign that has been running throughout the lockdown period.

The information will be used to inform Regional Partnership Boards planning and priorities and further support engagement and co-production with local communities.

## 7.0 COVID IMPACT ASSESSMENT

As a region we have reviewed the potential worst case scenarios for winter and bed modelling forecasts undertaken to inform further our winter planning discussions and COVID surge readiness. Modelling presumes that the reasonable worst case scenario in terms of COVID infections and admissions will be more severe than the first COVID wave experienced earlier in the year.



Therefore, taking all these assumptions and modelling into account, the health board are refocusing their winter plan and the proposals to needing to respond to a second COVID surge. With the added pressures that a usual winter pressures season bring with it, we have to react early to the clear facts presented to us, we are still in the midst of a pandemic, if we



are not prepared and ready to respond to the apparent next phase of the surge it could overwhelm everything we are aiming to do for our local communities.

## 8.0 SHIELDING

Based on the experience of the last 5 months and the impact this has had on residents that the areas that require resources to ensure that people previously shielding continue to get the support they need over the medium to longer term are:

- **Befriending services** which have been vital in helping to address loneliness and social isolation for many during Lockdown;
- Accessible information on the range and level of support available for people of all ages who need **mental health support**;
- Reduction in waiting times for **bereavement counselling** services so that people can access the support they need more swiftly;
- Expansion of **digital skills programmes and loaning of digital equipment** to enable more people to get online and maintain contact with relatives and friends as well as undertake a host of other activities that are reliant on being digitally included;
- Support for **volunteer training** to ensure that volunteers have the confidence and skills to provide appropriate support as the need arises;
- On-going **funding for local organisations and community groups** (on less than £1000 during lockdown, local organisations and community groups were able to deliver vital services within their area. They were quick to respond and individuals in the local area were appreciative of the comfort, entertainment and support they felt as a result of the intervention. Moving forward, this avenue needs to remain open to local groups responding to Covid 19.)

The above will be built into ongoing support to local communities.

## **9.0 WORKFORCE MODELLING**

Our workforce challenges are likely to be significant this winter applicable to all Partner agencies.

In addition to regular seasonal illness, we are expected to experience additional staff absence due to:

- COVID illness
- Winter pressures and normal recruitment risks
- Childcare
- Bereavement
- Self-isolation
- Shielding, if reintroduced
- Stress and anxiety
- Careful management of low level symptoms where staff would usually continue to work through (e.g. Coughs, colds etc) which will result in staff being off work due to being symptomatic

The health board is urgently reviewing workforce models and rotas from medical and nursing teams to include 7 day COVID rotas to inform our staffing modelling for the COVID / winter period. These workforce models and assumptions have been used in the Q3/Q4 submission made by the HB to WG on 23 October 2020

For Social Care staff the Regional CTM Social Care Workforce Strategic Governance Board oversees the strategic planning for social care.

## 10.0 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

### 10.1 TEST, TRACE, PROTECT STRATEGY

Welsh Government released their “Test, Trace, Protect” strategy on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020. This was based on Public Health Wales advice. It worked by:

- Identifying those who have COVID-19 symptoms, enabling them to be tested while self-isolating.
- Tracing people who have been in close contact with the symptomatic person, requiring them to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Providing advice and guidance, particularly where the symptomatic individual or their contacts are vulnerable or at greater risk.
- Ensuring that individuals and their contacts can get back to their normal routines as soon as possible.

The CTM response plan, referred to as the CTM TTP Programme, is being managed on a regional (CTM) footprint under the leadership of the Director of Public Health. A multi-agency Regional Oversight Group (RSOG) comprising of members of the Health Board, Local Public Health Team, Public Health Wales (PHW), the three Local Authorities and Regional Partnership Board Chair has been set up to operationalise the response plan within the CTM area.

The CTM plan is based on the three pillars of the PHW plan (sampling and testing, contact tracing and case management and population surveillance) underpinned by a risk communication and community engagement plan.

A further area, comprising of the ‘protect’ element of work was agreed by the UHB and LA Chief Executives, the role of the RPB is as outlined below.

Chaired by the Chair or the Regional Partnership Board, Rachel Rowlands and the work is overseen and driven through the RPB.

## 10.2 PROTECT

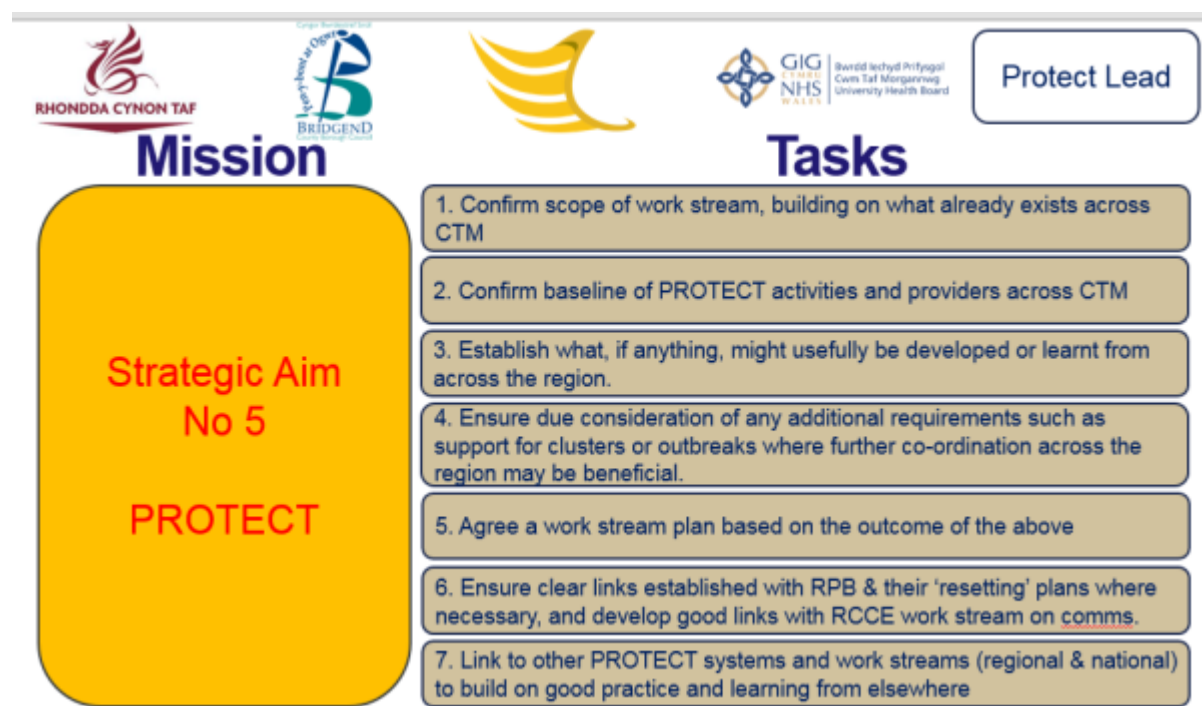
The strategic aim of the Protect work stream is to identify the support which may be required by some people to enable them to successfully self-isolate and ensure this support is provided openly and equitably across CTM.

Ensuring high levels of adherence to the need to self-isolate in response to symptoms, a positive test for COVID-19 or having been contact traced is fundamental to the success of the overall Test Trace Protect programme. It is recognised that people will face different challenges in successfully self-isolating, potentially on more than one occasion.

A range of support has been provided to individuals who have faced challenges during lockdown. Local Authorities, in partnership with the Third Sector and Volunteers, have helped people with shopping, collecting medicine, loneliness and isolation, emergency food and support and a very wide range of other support needs.

This current 'offer' provides a guide to the kind of support likely to continue to be relevant to support self-isolation as part of the CTM Test Trace Protect Programme, as well as the identification of additional developments, depending on how events with Covid-19 unfold.

The following sets out the agreed initial scope of the Protect work stream and was endorsed at the RSOG meeting held on 30 July:



In response to COVID-19 a range of support structures were established across the region to meet the needs of the shielding community. The work led by Wendy Edwards of the RCT Core Steering Group been held up as an exemplar by WLGA, WG and the third sector and similar support networks have been established across Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil.

It is important that as we move into COVID recovery planning that work plans and activities are routed within existing governance arrangements and structures. It will also provide opportunity to re-align pre-COVID multiagency work streams such as social prescribing and asset based community development and rehabilitation programme into a post COVID re-setting agenda.

A weekly 'Protect' task group, Chaired by Rachel Rowlands is set up. The group provide local intelligence and dissemination of key local messages and coordinate any gaps in service.

The RPB is firmly placed to provide the lead in the development and oversight delivery of the health and social care elements incorporating and recognizing the role of third sector service providers and community groups in providing the front line practical and emotional support needed to help protect those at risk.

### 10.3 Vaccination (Flu and COVID-19)

A sixth work stream under the CTM TTP programme has been added in order to help us to respond to the requirements in the recent Chief Medical Officer's letter – that of the COVID-19 mass vaccination work stream. This is closely linked in with our current arrangements for delivering the flu vaccination also this year.

The aim of this work stream is to deliver an end-to-end pathway for the delivery of a Covid-19 Mass Vaccination Programme within CTM ready for when required.

The objectives for the work stream are as follows:

	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>SMART Measures (further work required to make them measurable where possible)</b>
1.	Agree mass vaccination plan and test via a multi-agency table-top exercise, building in lessons learnt from elsewhere, including from mass testing arrangements.	Mass Vaccination Plan developed and tested via exercise and scenario planning, with local learning built in together with learning from elsewhere.
2	Ensure a blended delivery approach with flu vaccination programme	Blended delivery programme developed and tested as part of the above exercise testing.
3	Identify and put in place the necessary resources, including workforce, training, PPE,	All necessary resources in place including with contingency plans where required.

	vaccination supply and storage etc.	
4.	Provide vaccinations for designated priority groups across CTM, including health and care workers, shielding and vulnerable groups	Vaccinations delivered to priority groups with agreed target measures.
5.	Building on the above, provide vaccinations to remaining groups across CTM as required.	Vaccinations delivered to remaining groups with agreed target measures.
6.	Work with Surveillance work stream & others to establish agreed metrics and reporting, including vaccine uptake & links with disease surveillance.	Agreed metrics and reporting arrangements established.
7.	Work with the RCCE work stream & others to deliver an underpinning communication and engagement plan for staff and residents of CTM.	Clear, underpinning communication and engagement plan.

Seasonal flu immunisation has commenced. there is both a comprehensive staff immunisation programme for influenza as well as a robust primary care delivery set up to deal with the previous cohorts of patients and essential workers.

## 11.0 HEALTH INEQUALITIES

People from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, vulnerable groups and poorer communities are disproportionately affected by coronavirus. We are committed to reducing health inequalities across the region and remain focussed on equity and equity of access to the services individuals and communities need.

The all Wales COVID-19 Workforce Risk Assessment Tool addresses individual risk factors and has the potential to be used in a wider range of workplace settings for staff to assess their personal risks and support discussion with employers about appropriate protection.

## 12.0 THIRD SECTOR PROVISION

Third Sector organisations across CTM operate at all levels of in our communities and are best placed and often far more responsive to the daily and ongoing needs within and across our local communities.

They are able to make a significant – and rapidly increasing – contribution to the health and well-being of local communities across CTM and indeed Wales. It has been made every clear that charities and Third sector voluntary organisations would be expected to perform an increasing amount of the social and cultural functions which previously the public sector struggled to provide. Our attempt's and efforts to fully and truly engage with our Third sector colleagues has enabled us to refocus more of our health and social care services to the more clinical aspects across our communities releasing much resource within the Third sector across our communities, therefore maximising the excellent work undertaken and looking at how they influence and build on this work further.

The Third sector are currently playing a vital role in developing high-quality services the public rightly expects and helping direct existing and future pathways as they are developed and reviewed. They have particular strengths, such as reaching the most disaffected people, finding innovative solutions and offering a personal touch as well as really understanding the needs at a local level.

We are as a region benefitting from effective Third sector engagement and this plan looks to continue our approaches by further increasing the community resources and support mechanisms within a consistent community wide system of care and support.



Voluntary Sector proposals can be found in Annex 5 and focus on supporting discharge, hospital to home services, loneliness and isolation and supporting carers.

### 13.0 Primary Care and Community

Primary Care provides the essential and high value services including TTP, immunization, vaccination, screening, prevention services. The focus will be equally on prevention as it is on treatment and rehabilitation.

As in recent year within the region there will be increased investment in community and primary care services to meet demand and continue the care closer to home focus. This will include providing support to care homes to support vulnerable residents and specific areas of focus include an enhanced COVID and winter respiratory and palliative care hub and multidisciplinary response to prevent acute admission and support discharge. In addition to this central to the plans is increased support to the care home sector in line with the requirements of the revised Direct Enhanced Service and enhancing capacity on primary care out of hours to ensure this is 24/7. Flu is covered earlier but critical to the wider plan is the increased delivery in primary care this year and this is well underway through GP's and Community Pharmacies.

### 14.0 SOCIAL CARE

Key areas of focus remain;

- Protecting the rights of people who need care and support and carers who need support, including through developing a National Plan for Carers
- Supporting the workforce

- Stabilisation and reconstruction of the sector
- Continued focus on integration of health and social care, with regional partnership boards supporting the integrated delivery of winter plans.

Through the winter, there will be a continued focus on maintaining the resilience of the social care sector to support people's wellbeing in keeping with the principles of integration, prevention, collaboration and co-production.

## 15.0 CARE HOMES

In order to inform the Welsh Government Rapid Review of Care Homes Cwm Taf Morgannwg RPB were asked to;

- Provide a summary letter setting out the key actions led by the authority or health board and the issues undertaken in partnership with one another identifying successful achievements and actions that they wish to fulfil in the forward look towards the autumn.
- Participate in an individual discussion with Professor Bolton about the summary letter.
- Join a regional workshop to reflect on the partnership actions required, and
- Produce a regional action plan for care homes by early September 2020.

Building on a solid foundation of working in partnership across the health and social care system in Cwm Taf Morgannwg we were able to collaborate and shape a regional response from the outset of the COVID19 pandemic.

This platform has shaped our response, ensured we are consistent with government guidance and best practice across the region and to target and

deliver an enormous amount of support to these vital assets in our community.

This extends beyond the focus of residential and nursing care home market as we are providing daily communications on all relevant policy and practice to care providers.

### **Working in partnership across the health and social care system**

Our work, across partner agencies, to ensure care market resilience locally and regionally includes;

- General and bespoke advice on all areas, including infection control, PPE, testing and a range of support in response to individual care homes requests.
- Supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Surveillance and response to cases and outbreaks.
- Additional health and care support, as required.
- Dedicated regional Public Health Wales support and advice providing a valuable “golden thread” across health and social system.
- Testing of new admissions and symptomatic cases – and the rollout of testing to asymptomatic cases.
- Hospital discharge planning and in particular early regional response to step up/down accommodation and negative discharge testing.
- Set up of regional respiratory hub to support care homes.
- Responding to assurance from government on future funding, we acted swiftly to support financial pressures experienced by care providers.

Key actions of the Regional Care Home Action Plan are;

- Review the CTM Complex Care Group objectives and representation.
- Develop a Regional Support Structure / Escalation Process to assess Risk and provide appropriate support care homes who are experiencing difficulties.
- Operational Group to present options to the Complex Care Group how the region can support Care Homes to provide appropriate level of care, emotional and well-being support to all residents
- Operational Group to work with Care Homes across the region to develop robust Contingency Plans and Infection Prevention Plans.

A workshop will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020, with the current Cwm Taf Morgannwg Complex Care Group to consider appropriate timescales and implementation leads.

## **16.0 OLDER PEOPLES COMMISSIONER REPORT, LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND - ACTION FOR AN AGE-FRIENDLY RECOVERY**

### **The Commissioner's recommendations for immediate action are:**

Public bodies should take action to ensure that public health messaging is communicated more effectively to older people.

- Public bodies should undertake community-level audits of vulnerable older people who have been digitally excluded during the pandemic and provide user-friendly devices with access to the internet.

### **The Commissioner's recommendations for longer-term action are:**

- Establish a right to digital connectivity – viewing digital infrastructure as an essential service that the whole population needs affordable access to

- Introduce a social tariff for internet access and work towards the provision of free universal access to the internet.
- Place a duty on public bodies in Wales to demonstrate how they will engage with and serve citizens that are not online.
- Health boards and local authorities should establish outreach programmes to build digital confidence for older people to access digital public services, building upon the work being delivered by Digital Communities Wales.

The Commissioners report will be addressed via the strategic planning group under the RPB. Communication and engagement is being addressed under a sub group of the Test, Trace and Protect work streams and digital inclusion for older people to engage in online platforms of support has been picked up within planning for ongoing support.

## **17.0 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

Within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region the Transformation programme comprises 8 Work-streams supported by a Welsh Government grant under the national Transformation Programme to support the implementation of the A Healthier Wales plan.

The Work-streams are focused upon building up community-based services in order to both improve patient/service user/carer outcomes and to create greater efficiency within the health and social care system as a whole, reducing the reliance and pressure on in-patient services.

In Cwm Taf there are 5 Work-streams building on and scaling up existing services to improve support for people at risk in communities and to reduce pressures on acute services by:

- Scaling up the **Population Segmentation & Risk Stratification** pilot to tailor interventions to specific populations and to support targeted and anticipatory care.
- Building on the **Assistive Technology** service to include a mobile responder service that will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year responding to triggered alarms and establishing/deploying the most appropriate response.
- Scaling up cluster focused **MDTs with a 'virtual ward' approach** to reduce demand on general practice both in and **out of hours** and on A&E.
- Extending the **SW@H** hospital model to give community professionals an alternative to hospital care and support, providing access to social care, community equipment and @home nursing services 7 days a week, 8.30a.m. to 8.00p.m.
- Developing a service to deliver urgent primary care out-of-hours, with new roles and an MDT approach.

In Bridgend 3 Work-streams are concerned with accelerating the pace of change for its integrated services by:

- **Ambition 1:** Providing 7-day access to community health and social care services – *"Every Day Is Tuesday"*, delivering extended alternative service options to hospital and long-term care
- **Ambition 2:** Having a primary & community care MDT approach, delivering a one team approach around people, coordinating primary care and community services cluster responses.
- **Ambition 3:** Developing and delivering resilient coordinated communities; with key organisations, their partners and the communities they serve developing benefits, by working collaboratively to apply preventative approaches that enhance the wellbeing of the population of Bridgend.

All of the service-based projects were due to 'go live' between January and April 2020. Whilst there was disruption to implementation, with resources required to be diverted to meet urgent demands over the short term, the capacity and drive for delivering these services remains across the region and will provide additional support within local communities over the winter period.

## 18.0 REHABILITATION

The health board has allocated funding to ensure the capacity to deliver rehabilitation has been enhanced to respond to winter pressures and the additional Covid surge. Evidence suggests that timely assessment and a clear rehabilitation focus improves patient outcomes.

- Therapy staff have been deployed to Ysbyty Seren to sustain patient flow from acute services, to provide rehabilitation to those recovering from Covid-19 and to ensure timely discharge back to the patient's own home or locality.
- A Therapy hub has been developed which will provide a single point of access for both secondary and primary care to meet the rehabilitation needs of people recovering from or affected by Covid-19. This will be staffed by a multidisciplinary team of therapists who will facilitate immediate needs assessment, triage and signposting to appropriate community rehabilitation services or self-management resources.
- Therapy support to the three DGH's has been enhanced to ensure timely assessment, intervention and discharge planning to support patient flow.

## 19.0 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The CYP specific winter plan recognises the current pandemic crisis in addition to expected winter pressures. The plan makes proposals for additional pediatric staff to respond to the increase in activity arising from the combination of COVID 19 and bronchiolitis / influenza (usually November until March) the department are already seeing these expected pressures early during in September.

The impact of COVID on children and young people's mental health is well documented. The British Psychological Society (2020) explain children who have experienced care may be more vulnerable to the pandemic, having faced insecurity and stressful situations before or they may have had to be alert to danger, which can cause stress responses during lockdown, affecting their behaviour and emotions.

National Youth Advocacy Service (2020) found 50% of children in care and 4 in 5 care leavers felt lonely and anxious during lockdown. Voices from Care Cymru (2020) also found children felt more isolated and anxiety had increased, they claim isolation may impact mental health of children who have already experienced trauma, and those receiving mental health support may have found this disrupted.

The Regional Partnership Board is committed to engaging and responding to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing and there are a number of developments being driven by the PRB including development of therapeutic services for children looked after and finding innovative ways of engaging children and young people through the development of mobile phone application to improve communication between social work teams and young people.



## 20.0 MENTAL HEALTH

In a press release from the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2020), psychiatrists have reported a 43% increase in emergency appointments and a 45% reduction in routine appointments, they warn of a surge in mental health cases could be ahead. The report from NHS Confederation (2020) reflects this prediction, highlighting increased referral rates, higher than pre-lockdown. They are expecting further rises with; those with existing mental health issues, those relapsing and new patients. Statistics from the Office for National Statistics (2020) show depressive symptoms doubled during lockdown with 1 in 5 adults experiencing some form of depression and we know that the shorter daylight hours in winter will only make this worse. Mind (2020) reported 1 in 5 people in Wales were unable to access mental health support at the start of lockdown, they claim this can lead to people reaching crisis point and needing emergency care. Mind, also report increased access to their online services. With this in mind our focus for supporting people's mental health will focus on a number of areas. The first includes increased capacity led by the voluntary sector for Tier 0/1 interventions using the recently allocated Mental Health Covid Response Grant and the 6 priorities identified included people who are finding themselves socially isolated, particularly digitally excluded, people experiencing economic hardship, those with Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Misuse needs and carers who are providing support. In addition to this crisis services are being strengthened to ensure both timely responses to ensure no delays in hospitals but also to test the demand for a crisis community drop in facility.

A study from Mental Health Wales (2020) showed 1/3 of children experienced mental health issues during lockdown. Alfven (2020) also reported an increase in anxiety and depression amongst children and raised concerns about how; missing education, poverty, malnutrition and inequalities may exacerbate these problems. See Children and young people's section above.

## 21.0 CONCLUSION

Across Cwm Taf Morgannwg we will continue to work in partnership ensuring continuous learning and development through our plans as they are implemented, enabling reflection and collaborative approaches to service modelling into and throughout the winter period.

We will aim to ensure successful delivery of the six goals approach, transformational interventions and their underpinning operational plans will change the ways that individuals access services across our local communities and into our acute or nursing home / community resources, as set out in *A Healthier Wales* commitments and design principles.

This should result in both an improved experience and outcome for patients and reduced risk of nosocomial transmission. We will strive to ensure a more supportive and clear service model for our staff in order to maintain and enhance their well-being. Throughout this plan we will look to deliver greater efficiency and clinical effectiveness through treating individual's at the most appropriate care setting for them.

We will utilize any resources to support effective operational implementation of our winter plans and service remodeling across our community services and acute site, thus removing any barriers to services and ensuring patients are not caught between rigid inflexible service pathways.

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## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2020
Report Author	Gaynor Lewis
Service Area	Complaints Department
Committee Division	Portfolio
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non-exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Annual Report Social Services Complaints, Representations and Compliments 2019/20**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 Local Authorities are required by the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 to produce an Annual Report about the operation of their Social Services Complaints, Representations and Compliments policy and procedures.
- 1.2 This report highlights the key points contained in the Annual Social Services Complaints, Representations and Compliments report, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 1.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION that**

- 2.1 The contents of the report be noted.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Social Services provide support to the most vulnerable people in our community, often in very difficult situations, and routinely deliver effective services that make a real difference in people's lives. Sometimes, however for a variety of reasons, people will make a complaint about the service they have received.

- 3.2 Local Authorities are required by the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 to produce an Annual Report about the operation of their Social Services Complaints, Representations and Compliments policy and procedures.
- 3.3 The Annual Social Services Complaints, Representations and Compliments Report for 2019/20 sets out the Departments performance in relation to how it has dealt with the complaints, representations and compliments it has received.
- 3.4 The report details the number of complaints that were received and dealt with at all the available stages of the policy across both children's and adults' services.
- 3.5 The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 guidelines for complaints, representations and compliments by Local Authority Social Services were introduced in August 2014. The regulations introduced a new two stage process and brought the Social Services procedures in line with the Corporate "Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and Guidance".
- 3.6 The regulations aim to provide streamline complaints arrangements across the public sector and focus on an initial local resolution where the expectation is that the significant majority of complaints would be resolved.

## **4.0 WHERE WE WERE**

- 4.1 The annual report for 2018/19 showed that in total we received 98 complaints.
- 4.2 The table below details the complaints that were received in 2018/19 for Children's and Adult services across the two stages of the complaints process.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Adult Services	44	1	45
Children's Services	52	1	53
Total	96	2	98

## 5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 5.1 The annual report for 2019/20 showed that in total we received 108 complaints.
- 5.2 The table below details the complaints that were received in 2019/20 for Children's and Adult services across all stages of the complaints process.

Service Area	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Adult Services	35	2	37
Children's Services	68	3	71
Total	103	5	108

- 5.3 There was an increase of 10 in the total number of complaints received between 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- 5.4 For comparison purposes the number of complaints received over the last four years are as follows:

Service Area	2019/2020	2018/2019	2017/2018	2016/2017
Adult Services	37	45	34	29
Children's Services	71	53	44	39
Total	108	98	78	68

## 6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

- 6.1 For a variety of reasons, people will make a complaint about the service they have received. It is important that anyone who makes a complaint about our services has a right to be listened to properly with their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. In addition, it is important that Local Authorities learn from these complaints and where necessary use them to identify where services should be changed and improved.
- 6.2 Every effort is made to resolve matters at a local level with the emphasis on achieving successful resolution of complaints. At stage one the Local Authority usually offers to discuss (either face-to-face or by telephone) the matter with the complainant within ten working days to attempt to resolve matters. This approach allows for quick and successful resolution of most complaints.
- 6.3 Complaints received that are progressed to Stage 2 are normally more complex in nature and often contain several components of dissatisfaction that need to be independently investigated.

- 6.4 Our emphasis at all stages is focused on achieving satisfactory resolution of matters rather than upholding or not upholding complaints.
- 6.5 All complaints are unique in their own right and often contain several elements of dissatisfaction to be addressed. This is particularly relevant at the formal stage, hence the reason why the majority of stage two complaints are part upheld – some components being recognised, while others not agreed.
- 6.6 Communication issues including failure to respond within appropriate timescales to messages and failure to update customers on decision continued to be a theme through this reporting period.

## **7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 7.1 Social Services provide support to the most vulnerable people in our community, often in very difficult situations, and routinely deliver effective services that make a real difference in people's lives. Sometimes, however for a variety of reasons, people will make a complaint about the service they have received. It is important that anyone who makes a complaint about our services has a right to be listened to properly with their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. In addition, it is important that Local Authorities learn from these complaints and where necessary use them to identify where services should be changed and improved.
- 7.2 Whilst we do our very best and work hard to resolve complaints within the statutory timescales it is however acknowledged that some complaints can be complex, sensitive and difficult to resolve and that this is not possible on all occasions. It is important to note that an over emphasis on quick resolution within performance indicator timescales could detract from ensuring that full and proper consideration is given to complaints and that at times to achieve a successful resolution to the complaint it is necessary to take longer to investigate than the set timescales.
- 7.3 Timescales will be continued to be monitored to improve and promote adherence to statutory legislation and increase the timeliness of responses at stage one.
- 7.4 Social Services continue to adopt a positive attitude towards complaints, we continue to learn from complaints and view complaints as a valuable form of feedback, which assists in the development and improvement of services. While not all complaints are upheld they do, however, provide useful information in respect of the way services are delivered. They provide us with the opinions of our customers and also provide opportunities to learn lessons where a service has fallen short of expected standards.
- 7.5 Like all other Councils in Wales Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council are facing the need to reduce the amount of money we spend. However, despite the increasing challenges faced by public services, in general, the number of complaints received is relatively small in comparison to the nature of the services provided.

- 7.6 Social Services will continue to provide for the needs of the community, achieving the Council's vision and strategic aims for the future. The needs of the population are changing and we will continue to learn and develop from complaints. Services have continued to experience high levels of demand, reflecting the levels of disadvantage and the challenges faced by a significant number of families living in the County Borough. The Social Care Complaints Procedure provides citizens with an essential, effective way of communicating their concerns so that levels of customer satisfaction can be increased and our services continue to improve.

## 8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 This report contributes to all four of our well-being objectives (set out in the table below) by supporting the Council to address complaints and continuously improve how our services are delivered. This is particularly the case to the Best Start and Living Well objectives. This in turn supports how the Council delivers against regional and national goals.



Well-being Theme	Objective
<b>BS</b> 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.
<b>WL</b> 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.
<b>EW</b> Environmental Well-being	Communities protect, enhance, and promote our environment and countryside.
<b>LW</b> Living Well	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.

## 9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.



## 10.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	3 of 4	0 of 4	1 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	3 of 5	0 of 5	2 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	2 of 10	0 of 10	8 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p><b>Summary:</b>  The main positive impacts are Social Services continues to adopt a positive attitude towards complaints, we continue to learn from complaints and view complaints as a valuable form of feedback, which assists in the development and improvement of services. While not all complaints are upheld they do, however, provide useful information in respect of the way services are delivered. They provide us with the opinions of our customers and also provide opportunities to learn lessons where a service has fallen short of expected standards.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts.</p>			

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES**

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Social Services Complaints Policy	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Unit 5
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

# ANNUAL REPORT SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS, REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLIMENTS 2019 / 2020

Version 1.0



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

December 2020

Contents

Introduction & Background ..... 9

What does the data tell us? ..... 15

Complaint Outcomes ..... 18

Compliments ..... 20

Lessons Learnt..... 22

Conclusion..... 23

### Introduction & Background

Councils are required by to produce an Annual Report regarding the operation of their Social Services Complaint procedures. This report provides a summary of statistical information relating to complaints and representations dealt with during the period April 2019 to March 2020.

Social Services in Merthyr Tydfil adopts a positive attitude towards complaints and views them as a valuable form of feedback, which assists in the development and improvement of services. Complaints also provide an opportunity to learn lessons where a service has fallen short of an expected standard.

### Publicising the Procedure

The representation and complaints procedure is widely publicised generally and specifically to people that use our services. It provides them with an opportunity to:

- Voice their concerns when they are dissatisfied in order that the issue can be rectified to their satisfaction, wherever possible;
- Make compliments;
- Suggest improvements; and
- Challenge decisions.

### Aims

#### *The Aim of the Procedure*

The aim is for our representation and complaints procedure to secure a better service for all the people using social care services and it is underpinned by the following key principles:

- Commitment to providing quality services;
- Accessible and supportive to those with particular needs;
- Prompt and responsive with resolution at the earliest possible opportunity Strong problem solving element;
- Operated without prejudice or discrimination; and
- Adheres to the principle of equal opportunity.

The representation and complaints procedure also provides an opportunity for service users to address concerns in relation to independent sector providers where they remain dissatisfied following implementation of the agencies own internal complaints procedures.

### Our Team Aim

A key aim of the MTCBC Compliments and Complaints Team is limit the number of stage 1 complaints that escalate to stage 2. However, considering the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, we aim to support the service to prevent complaints happening in the first place.



### The Process

Receipt of all the complaints received are required to be acknowledged within the statutory timescale of two working days. In some cases, issues raised fall outside the responsibility of Social Services and in these instances, the Complaints Officer liaises with the appropriate Service Area or Agency.

The Social Services complaints process has two stages:

**Stage One: Local Resolution** – The emphasis at this stage of the process is to resolve the complaint by means of discussion and problem solving. The complainant will be offered a discussion about the issues they have raised and this can either be done by telephone or face to face in an attempt to resolve the issues. This must be done within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint. Following this discussion and any further investigation that is necessary, a written response will be provided within 5 working days.

**Stage Two: Formal Consideration** – If the complainant remains dissatisfied after completion of stage one, they may request that the complaint proceeds to stage two of the process. This involves a formal independent investigation of the complaint with a report being produced by the investigating officer appointed to the case. The timescale for dealing with this stage is 25 working days.

As stated in our **Complaints Policy**, a complaint will not escalate to formal investigation until both the Council and the complainant agree on what is to be investigated.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the stage two investigation, they may progress their complaint to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

## Categorisation

All Social Services complaints received are recorded into the following categories:

### ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK (ACRF) MODEL FOR CATEGORISATION OF COMPLAINTS

- 1. ACCESS**  
Lack of information; service delays; waiting lists; access to service; refusal of service.
- 2. ASSESSMENT**  
Decision delays; service costs; assessed needs; charging policies; delays in assessment
  - The council failing to do something which the customer thinks it should have been done, even if it was not actually asked to do it:
    - Failure to implement actions agreed in meetings.
    - Failure to carry out an agreed / requested assessment.
- 3. CARE MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW**  
Removal and reduction of service; child protection; change of staff.
  - The Council failing to do something which the Customer thinks it should have done, even if it was not actually asked to do it.
    - Failure to implement actions agreed in meetings.
    - Failure to carry out an agreed / requested assessment.
  - The Council doing something that the Customer did not want it to do.
    - The Council making a decision to do something that the Customer does want to happen in the future (e.g. planned placement changes, withdrawal of a payment facility).
- 4. RANGE OF SERVICES**  
Lack of service; identified needs not being met.
- 5. QUALITY OF SERVICE**  
Communication issues; not following through what was promised; continuity of care; not following procedure and policy; time keeping; failure to respond; breach of confidentiality; service quality; timescales; financial; late calls; medication; staff issues; conduct and attitude; standards.
  - The council has not achieved the standard it says it will provide.

## **ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK (ACRF) MODEL FOR CATEGORISATION OF COMPLAINTS**

- The Service has not been provided to the standard which the customer thinks is reasonable:
  - The Council is carrying out its duties in an unsatisfactory way.
  - Failure to follow Council procedures including delayed processing, adherence to timescales, agreed workflows and stages.
- Unacceptable behaviour by staff including rudeness, violence and aggression.
- Poor communication from the department to service user including:
  - Failure to respond in appropriate timescales to messages and correspondence – this could be specific identification of an individual member of staff or of the team / service in general.
  - Staff failure to update Customer with regard to changes to meetings, appointments etc.
- The Council failing to do something which it has been asked to do.
- The Council failing to do something which the Customer thinks it should have done, even if it was not actually asked to do it:
  - Failure to implement actions agreed in meetings.
  - Failure to implement actions following a previous complaint.
  - Failure to carry out an agreed / requested assessment.

### **6. PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

Discrimination; not being listened to.

It was **identified in the Scrutiny meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019** there was a requirement for more detailed information i.e. theme of complaints and service areas. We have created a new form for collating the complaints data in order to provide this more detailed information. Below is a list of the most common issues raised by complainants

We have expanded on the above categories in order to provide a more detailed report and insight of the themes within the complaints received.

Theme
Change in call times / Missed Calls (Homecare)
Failure to comply with policies
Failure to provide a service
Financial issues
Information Governance
Issues around adaptations
Lack of information/communication
Medication issues
Missed Calls
Outcome of Assessment
Quality of care
Quality of service
Request for assessment
Staff issues
Transport (Learning Disability)
Waiting for assessment



**STAGE 1****Children's Services**

Upheld	Partial	Not upheld	Inconclusive/withdrawn	To be addressed by Data Protection
10	6	43	8	1
<b>Total</b>				
<b>68</b>				

**Adults Services**

Upheld	Partial	Not upheld	Inconclusive/withdrawn
9	5	15	6
<b>Total</b>			
<b>35</b>			

**STAGE 2****Children's Services**

Upheld	Partial	Not upheld	Inconclusive/Withdrawn
	1	2	
<b>Total</b>			
<b>3</b>			

**Adults Services**

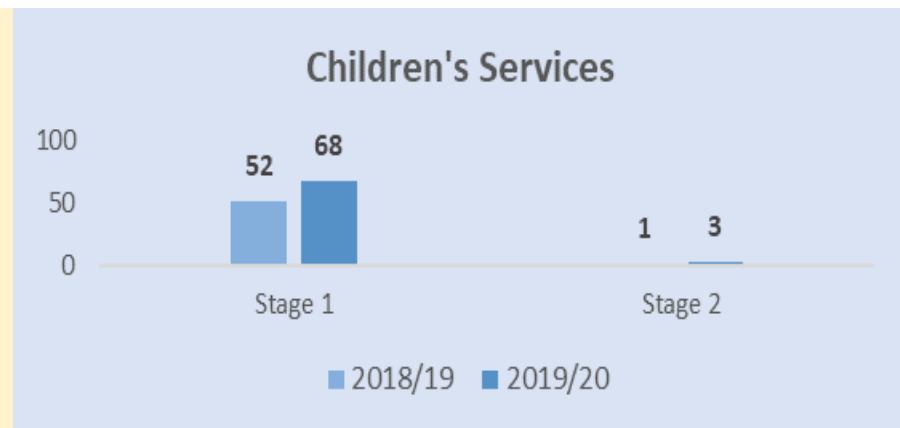
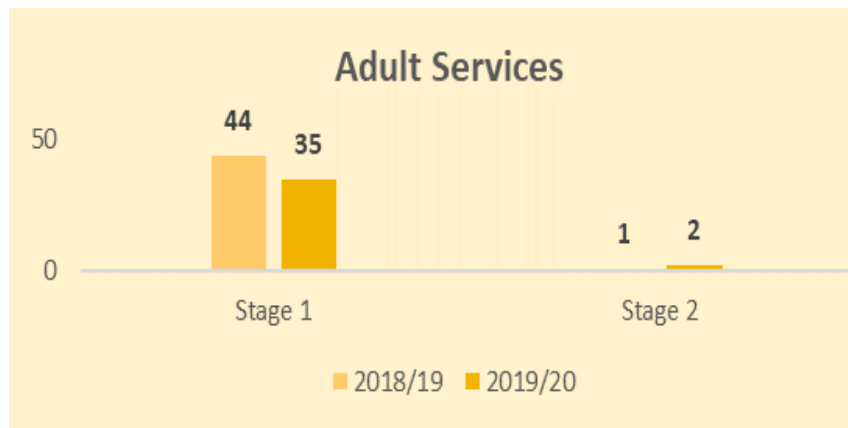
Upheld	Partial	Not upheld	Inconclusive/Withdrawn
		2	
<b>Total</b>			
<b>2</b>			

What does the data tell us?

**Zero complaints** were responded to outside the acknowledgement statutory timescale of two days in 2019/20.

**Table 1 – 2018/2019 - 2019/20 Data**

Year	Service Area	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
2018/19	Adult Services	44	1	45
2018/19	Children's Services	52	1	53
2019/20	Adult Services	35	2	37
2019/20	Children's Services	68	3	71
Total		199	7	206



The above table does not reflect the number of concerns received within the complaints department however if the matter is identified as case management and not a complaint we do not record these on our system but pass the concerns to the appropriate line manager.

### Stage One

In 2019/2020 there were **108 recorded complaints** made during the year compared with 98 in the previous year.

There was a **decrease in stage one complaints in Adult Services** (35 in 2019/20 compared to 44 in 2018/2019).

There was an **increase in stage one complaints in Children's Services** (68 in 2019/20 compared to 52 in 2017/2018).



The **new Complaints Regulations and Guidance** sets an expectation that complainants will be offered a face to face meeting wherever deemed appropriate as a means to resolving their complaint.

This has **continued to be effective** in resolving complaints at a local level and has resulted in **more positive outcomes** for complainants and their on-going relationship with the service.

The **stage one 'start date'** is governed by (a) the date of acknowledgement, (b) the date on which an advocate is appointed or (c) where a complaint is made by 'other persons', the date on which the Council decides that the person has sufficient interest to warrant consideration.

Over the past year the **Complaints Team has focused in supporting service areas by answering concerns and complaints at the first point of contact** with parents/guardians.

This has **successfully reduced the number of complaints** that have progressed to stage one of the complaints process.

### Stage Two

The formal complaints received are **more complex** in nature and often contain several components of dissatisfaction to be independently investigated. During this reporting period, we received 2 complaint for Adult Services and 3 complaint for Children's Services that have been dealt with at stage two. There continues to be a low ratio in complaints escalating from stage 1 to stage this is due in large part to the **complaints department being more pro-active in the management of the complaints process** through setting up meetings with the Line Manager and complainant within the stage one process.

2019/2020 there **were 5 stage two complaints**.

The number of **stage two complaints for Adult Services was 2 and for Children's Services 3**.

However, there was a **decrease of stage 2 with 3 compared to 4** in the previous year.

There was an **increase in stage two complaints for Children's Services** however the **percentage of complaints escalating remains very low**.

Of the 68 complaints received in Children's Services, **3 progressed to Stage two** complaints.

As stated in our **Complaints Policy**, a complaint will not escalate to formal investigation until both the Council and the complainant agree on what is to be investigated.

#### Continuous Improvement

It was **identified in the Scrutiny meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019** there was a requirement for more detailed information i.e. theme of complaints and service areas. We have created a new form for collating the complaints data in order to provide this more detailed information. Below is a list of the most common issues raised by complainants.

Adult Services	Theme	Children's Services
	Complaint Discontinued	4
	Change in call times / Missed Calls (Homecare)	
1	Failure to comply with policies	
14	Failure to provide a service	1
13	Financial issues	2
	Information Governance	1
1	Issues around adaptations	
1	Lack of information/communication	23
	Medication issues	
	Missed Calls	
	Outcome of Assessment	7
3	Quality of care	
	Quality of service	1
	Request for assessment	2
4	Staff issues	29
	Transport (Learning Disability)	
	Waiting for assessment	1
<b>37</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>

### Complexity

It should be noted however that the low number of stage two complaints does not reflect the significant time that they demand of the complaints department due to the complex and contentious nature of these complaints.

### Public Service Ombudsman for Wales

The Ombudsman now has an appointed person for the **Complaints Standards Authority**, each quarter the Complaints office provides the data to the Ombudsman which they collate and present in an **All Wales report**.

### Habitual / Vexatious Complaints

During 2019/2020, one individual was subject to restrictions under this policy as a result of their behaviour and persistence in pursuing a complaint where the Council's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and exhausted. We have also limited contact for individuals regarding the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils Complaints email address in order to reduce the demands that these individuals have placed on certain departments. Individual's continued inclusion under the Habitual/Vexatious Complaints Policy is reviewed every six months.

### Verbal/Written Abuse from Members of the Public

There has been a significant increase in the verbal and written abuse received from members of the public. The Council expects its employees to be treated with courtesy and respect. Verbal abuse or aggressive behaviour from members of the public by telephone, face-to-face situations, or in writing/email, will not be tolerated. In the case of written abuse, Managers should respond stating that written abuse is unacceptable and that more appropriate language should be used in any future written dealings with the Council and that we ask that they refrain from that as we would not want it to detract from the substance of the complaint itself.

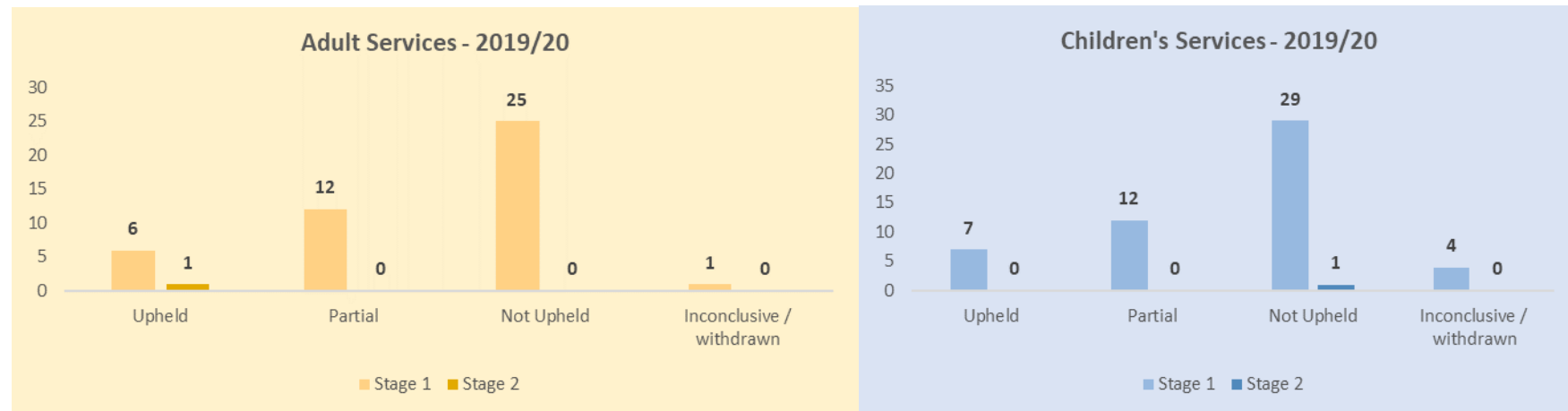
### Complaint Outcomes

The emphasis of the complaints process is focused on achieving a satisfactory resolution of matters rather than upholding or not upholding complaints.

All complaints are unique in their own right and often contain several elements of dissatisfaction to be addressed. This is particularly relevant at the formal stage, hence the reason why the majority of stage two complaints are part upheld – some components being agreed while others not supported.

**Table 3 Adult Services Complaints Outcomes 2018/2019-2019/2020**

Service Area & Year	Stage	Upheld	Partial	Not Upheld	Inconclusive / withdrawn	Total
Adult Services - 2018/19	Stage 1	6	12	25	1	44
Adult Services - 2018/19	Stage 2	1	0	0	0	1
Adult Services - 2019/20	Stage 1	9	5	15	6	35
Adult Services - 2019/20	Stage 2	0	0	2	0	2
Children's Services - 2018/19	Stage 1	7	12	29	4	52
Children's Services - 2018/19	Stage 2	0	0	1	0	1
Children's Services - 2019/20	Stage 1	10	7	43	8	68
Children's Services - 2019/20	Stage 2	0	1	2	0	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>206</b>



## Compliments

It is always **important to also hear when people are happy** with what we have done.

A total of **25 compliments and positive comments** were formally recorded during 2019/2020.



This is an **increase of 11** on the previous year.

The Complaints Officer held a meeting with Children's Services staff to advise them of the Complaints process and also **encourage staff to cascade compliments** received on to the Complaints Department.

Compliments received are an equal reflection of **individual and team efforts** therefore it is imperative that staff and managers pass all compliments received to the complaints department in order that they can be recorded.

It is has been encouraging to note there has been an increase in compliments received as they provide valuable information regarding the **quality of services** and identifies where they are **working well** they also give a balanced reflection of members of the **public's perception of our services and staff**.

**Examples of compliments received** during 2019/2020:

### Social Services Compliments 2019-2020

*I have just met with XXX School who praised your recent work on the XXX and XXX cases. Particular reference was made to the quality of the case chronologies.*

*Lovely to hear your hard work being recognised.*

---

*I have received a text message from XXX Gran.*

*"I would just like to thank you for all you are doing for XXX. I can honestly say it's only you we have had to help us, and we really appreciate all your hard work and help."*

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*Getting in touch to say how impressed I am with your work.*

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## Social Services Compliments 2019-2020

*Your skills, professionalism and commitment to families shines through and we are very lucky to have you in our team.*

*I was in a meeting with Dr Munoz recently who was praising your work and described you as 'exceptional', and I have to say I agree.*

---

*Wanted to let you know that parents told me prior to conference that they had a bad experience with social worker in XXX who they felt was judgmental but they said you had restored their faith in social workers as you have been respectful and courteous to them which they really appreciated*

---

*Our Barrister and the CG and her solicitor have all separately commented on what an impressive witness you were – they say your evidence was entirely measured and fair but that you were very clear and covered all of the issues that needed to be put before the court. No one could believe that was your first time so well done you!*

---

*A social worker called XXX came to see my mother today. My mother doesn't need carers but she needs to ensure her home is safe and appropriate to prevent the need for her having to move. XXX was great and a real credit to MTCBC. XXX fitted in with me, was able to communicate with my mother and get her engaged, was very knowledgeable, had excellent ideas and strategies for keeping independent and had the art of persuasion (so necessary with older people ! )*

---

*Just had a verbal thank you for everything from XXX daughter who is as we speak on route to XXX Care Home.*

---

*Compliment phone call message was from XXX in relation to her father XXX currently on ward at YCC.*

---



## Lessons Learnt

It is crucial that there is learning from complaints at all stages of the procedure, resulting in improved services and service delivery, wherever possible. Complaints provide useful information in respect of the way that services are delivered.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Social Services adopts a positive attitude towards complaints, we continue to learn from complaints and view complaints as a valuable form of feedback, which assists in the development and improvement of services. While not all complaints are upheld they do, however, provide useful information in respect of the way services are delivered. They provided us with the opinions of our customers and also provide opportunities to learn lessons where a service has fallen short of expected standards.

Some examples of actions arising from outcomes of investigations of complaints are summarised:

- A common theme reported is a lack of information and communication from Social Services including failure to respond within appropriate timescales to messages and failure to update customers on decisions, delays in assessments, failure to implement agreed actions, and not following through what was promised. Examples also include staff failure to update customers with regard to changes to meetings, appointments etc.
- When the complaint is highly complex the Local Authority needs to ensure that they respond to 'scattergun' complainants with one voice which will prevent the local authority being perceived as unable to communicate across departments
- For managers to support staff members who are subjected to inappropriate; abusive and aggressive behaviour from their clients and families.
- The Complaints Department will continue to deliver a training programme to both Adults and Children's Social Services in order that as a Local Authority we utilise the correct complaints process. In addition the Ombudsman Complaints Standards Authority are going to provide additional training.
- Since the Local Authority has adopted the Welsh Government guidance on handling Complaints and Representations by Local Authority Social Services the Complaints department has within stage 1 of the procedure arranged meetings between the complainants and the managers of the relevant departments. This has significantly reduced the number of complaints escalating to stage 2.

Examples of actions taken on issues raised as a result of a complaint, the Complaints Department have:

- When the complaint is identified as being complex and includes a number of departments, meetings are held with the Managers of the relevant departments in order to formulate one response.

- The Social Workers have a long history of looking out for others but not necessarily claiming the success. Managers are now recognising praise received which will support and encourage the Social Worker within their role.
- Social Workers are being involved with the complaint from the onset in order to obtain vital knowledge of why the individual felt the need to make a complaint, this has proved to be a far more positive outcome which has improved continual relationships between the client and the Social Worker.
- Complaints Department are currently in discussion with children services to provide general email addresses to provide to members of the public in order to reduce the high volume of telephone calls to the departments.
- The Complaints Department has continued to provide support and advice to managers on complaints handling including writing appropriate complaints responses.

The Complaints Team are continue to be in discussion with Children's Services to consider the option of each team having their own email address as this would offer an alternative method of communication for parents with the hope that this would reduce the number of telephone calls to the departments.

## Conclusion

The Social Care Complaints Procedure provides service users and their advocates with an effective way of communicating their concerns so that levels of customer satisfaction can be increased and our services continue to improve.

Like all other Councils in Wales we are facing the need to reduce the amount of money we spend. However, despite the increasing challenges faced by public services, in general, the number of complaints received is relatively small in comparison to the nature of the services provided. Overall, 96 of all complaints were resolved at stage one.

Social Services continue to provide for the needs of the community, achieving the Council's vision and strategic aims for the future. The needs of the population are changing and we will continue to learn and develop from complaints. On average, users of our services recognise the support and good practice afforded to them and the number of complaints recorded continues to be a very low percentage of the total number of people and children of Merthyr Tydfil who are provided with services.

The pressure on social services continues to increase with the numbers of older people rising and becoming a larger proportion of the overall population. This will inevitably result in an increase in demand for social services. Likewise, the demand for services continues to increase for Children's Services.

Services have continued to experience high levels of demand, reflecting the levels of disadvantage and the challenges faced by a significant number of families living in the County Borough. The Social Care Complaints Procedure provides citizens with an essential, effective way of communicating their concerns so that levels of customer satisfaction can be increased, and our services continue to improve. With the Implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act in April 2016 the expectations of the people we serve has increased, this will also be in the context of continued austerity. We are therefore likely to continue to see an increase in complaints whilst services develop to meet the new level of expectation and austerity measures are absorbed.



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## **CABINET - INFORMATION REPORT**

Date Written	November 2020
Report Author	Taryn Stephens
Service Area	Children's Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Adoption Collaborative Annual Report for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The VVC Adoption Annual Report, which is attached at Appendix 1, provides information about the business of the Regional Adoption Service during 2019-20.

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) is the largest of the five regional collaboratives which forms part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS). It provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The service is hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 2.2 The service functions include:
- Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters.
  - Adoption Panel.
  - Family Finding.
  - Adoption Support.
  - Transitions and Life Journey Work support.

### **3.0 WHERE WE WERE**

- 3.1 During the year 2019-20, the regional adoption service responded to our high demand of business as usual in relation to the adoption process.

### **4.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW**

- 4.1 The Regional Adoption Management Board meets monthly and receives updates in relation to the work of the business plan, performance reporting, the budget and other challenges and developments. The Portfolio Councillor for Social Services is a member of the Regional Adoption Committee that meets bi-annually and approves the budget for the Regional Adoption Collaborative.
- 4.2 The organisational and managerial structure of the service has remained the same as previous years during 2019-20 with service delivery structured around three functional teams. A managerial vacancy within the service was filled in September 2019 by the appointment of a new Adoption Support Manager.
- 4.3 In April 2019, as part of the Welsh Government award of £2.3M to improve adoption services in Wales, the region received a substantial investment of new monies which has enabled a number of new posts to be recruited across the service.

### **5.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

- 5.1 We are making plans for all Merthyr Tydfil looked after young people to achieve safe and successful lives and our commitment to the Adoption Service is key to that objective for children with a plan for adoption.
- 5.2 The COVID pandemic has naturally had an impact on the VVC Adoption Collaborative. Just prior to the end of the reporting period for 2019-20 the impact of the pandemic and national lockdown was beginning to take effect with VVC staff working from home and key services temporarily halted. The service however adapted quickly to the challenges presented and has been able to deliver its core business partly on a virtual basis or via risk assessed face to face contact. The VVC and Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services have worked in collaboration to enable the key functions of the VVC Adoption Collaborative to continue to be delivered. Going forward both services will continue to work in partnership to evaluate the effect upon services and develop plans to mitigate the overall impact upon service delivery of the pandemic.

### **6.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 6.1 Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services will continue to support the developing work of the Regional Adoption Collaborative in pursuit of ensuring successful permanent outcomes for younger looked after children with a plan for adoption.

## 7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report as the business is delivered within existing budgetary limits.

## 8.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<b>Summary:</b> The main positive impacts are the development and improvement of services for children and young people.  There are no negative impacts.			

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES**  
CABINET MEMBER FOR  
SOCIAL SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Vale, Valleys And Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) Annual Report for 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	October 2020	
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No

**Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.**

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## **VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE (VVC)**

### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

**1.1.** Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) as part of the National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS), provides a regional adoption service to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cardiff Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

**1.2.** This is VVC's fifth annual report and covers the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. This report seeks to combine the reporting requirements set out in regulation and the governance arrangements for the region in one report.

**1.3.** The report has the following Appendices:

**Appendix 1** sets out key performance data in respect of children by quarter and local authority.

**Appendix 2** provides information in respect of adopter enquiries and recruitment of adopters.

**Appendix 3** provides information in respect of Adoption Support.

**Appendix 4 provides** information in respect of Adoption Panel activity.

#### **2. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

**2.1** The organisational and managerial structure of the service has remained the same during this period with service delivery structured around three functional teams. A managerial vacancy within the service was filled in September 2019 by the appointment of a new Adoption Support Manager. The existing postholder transferred to manage the Family Finding Team.



- 2.2** In April 2019, as part of the Welsh Government award of £2.3M to improve adoption services in Wales, the region received a substantial investment of new monies which has enabled a number of new posts to be recruited across the service. The grant was allocated to national and regional services to support key priorities for improvement which were utilised by VVC Management Board in determining the distribution of the grant. As a result of these monies, VVC has been able to recruit two full time Social Workers to specialise in Transitions and Life Journey Work and a part time Social Worker to support birth parents. These posts were recruited from experienced staff within the service. VVC was however able to successfully recruit to the vacancies created by these appointments enabling the service to be fully staffed by the end of the reporting period.
- 2.3** The service has also recruited two new unqualified posts, a Children and Young People Co-ordinator to support adopted children and young people and a TESSA (Therapeutic Education Support Service in Adoption) Co-ordinator to support adoptive families. Both posts are linked to the national programmes being delivered by Adoption UK; the Connected service which supports young adoptees and the TESSA programme which supports adoptive families.
- 2.4** In addition to the posts located within the Collaborative, 10.5 practitioner posts have been created from the grant to support the provision of life journey work for children with a plan of adoption. These posts are distributed across the four partner authorities and link to the Life Journey Co-ordinator within VVC. All these posts had been successfully recruited to at year end with the exception of one authority. Contingency arrangements were however put in place within that authority to cover the work, pending the appointments being made.
- 2.5** As part of the deployment of the grant an Implementation Plan was developed by Welsh Government requiring reports to be submitted monitoring spend against the grant and the areas of improvement in service delivery as a result of the investment. The Regional Adoption Manager co-ordinated the response on behalf of the region and submitted monitoring reports to Welsh Government in October, December 2019 and at year end to secure continuation of the funding. The National Adoption Service (NAS) will, on behalf of regions, prepare the bid for the grant in

2020-1 and take over the monitoring function in conjunction with Welsh Government requiring regions to report upon progress to NAS. All posts created as part of the grant within the region are permanent positions.

- 2.6** Temporary arrangements have been put in place to cover a vacancy within our Business Support Team created during the first quarter of the year. This will enable a review of the structure of team roles to be undertaken to ensure that the service can continue to adapt to business need. VVC's office within the Dock Offices underwent refurbishment in the Autumn of 2019 to create some individual and meeting room space.
- 2.7** Following the revisions to the Legal Agreement agreed in April 2019, VVC's Management Board has continued to meet on a quarterly basis. The composition of the Board has remained the same although a new Medical Adviser was appointed following the retirement of the other representative. The Board has continued to be chaired by the Director of Social Services for Cardiff Council. The Vale of Glamorgan Director will take up this post in October 2020. This is in advance of the planned rotational change due to the departure of the current Director in Cardiff. In order to improve business continuity, the four partner authorities have agreed to change the rotation of the chair from an annual basis to a three-yearly cycle with the transfer taking effect at the end of the first quarter of the fourth year.
- 2.8** The overall remit and accountability of the Management Board is prescribed within regulation and the Legal Agreement underpinning the Collaborative. VVC's Management Board continues to play a key role in monitoring the performance and business plan of the regional service highlighting areas for improvement.
- 2.9** The second tier of governance within the Collaborative is via the Operational Group which comprises of senior managers from each of the four local authorities and regional managers from VVC. This group meets on a quarterly basis with meetings being scheduled a couple of weeks following Management Board to enable any matters remitted by Management Board to be considered. The Operational Group

provides a further mechanism for monitoring the performance of the region and is a vehicle for raising standards and improving practice consistency across the region. The Operational Group in conjunction with Independent Reviewing Officers across the region have developed a revised format and process for conducting reviews of adoption placements which is being piloted across the region.

- 2.10** The overall governance of the region remains via a Joint Committee which meets twice a year. Meetings were held in July and December 2019 as per requirements to approve the annual accounts, the annual budget and annual plan for the Collaborative. This structure is unique in Wales for adoption services but has been supported by NAS as the preferred model for regional governance.
- 2.11** The budget for the Collaborative is managed by the Vale of Glamorgan and is monitored closely by the Management Board and Joint Committee. The end of year position reported an underspend in the budget for 2019 -20 partly created by grant slippage monies and staff vacancies. A proposal to retain the underspend within VVC has been agreed by Management Board and Joint Committee. These monies will be used to upgrade IT equipment for staff to enable more agile working across the region, improve support systems for adoptive families by facilitating specialist training and provide additional staff resource to undertake additional work as may be required due to COVID-19 .
- 2.12** VVC's financial and governance arrangements are subject to an annual audit by Bridgend and Vale Internal Audit Shared Service. This audit was conducted remotely at the end of the reporting period and concluded that the "effectiveness of the internal control environment within the service was sound and Substantial Assurance could be placed upon the management of risks".
- 2.14** VVC is required to report to the National Adoption Service on a range of performance measures which are collected on a quarterly and annual basis under the NAS Performance Framework. VVC has complied with all reporting requirements during the period and has continued to develop more comprehensive

mechanisms to capture the measures, which have increased each year. Data Cymru have been commissioned by NAS to develop the Framework and each region is required to upload data onto this new system each quarter enabling performance data against specific measures for each regional service to be visible across Wales.

- 2.15** The National Adoption Service provide the region with mid-year and end of year reports. The draft report for 2019-20 was delayed due to COVID restrictions and the meeting with the Director of Operations and VVC to discuss the report and our mid-year position had to be rescheduled to early November 2020.

### **3. SERVICE FUNCTIONS**

- 3.1.** Performance against each of the service functions is outlined under the following sections of the report alongside areas of development.

### **4. FAMILY FINDING**

- 4.1** Family Finding and its' associated activities remains a key area of activity for the region and the ability to place children effectively and promptly underpins all other activities. As the largest regional Collaborative, the level of demand placed upon this area and our ability to meet the needs identified remains challenging.
- 4.2** The number of children referred for adoption totalled **143** which marks a 34% decrease on the previous year. There has been a continued downward trend in referrals which has also been observed across Wales. The reasons for this are likely to be varied and will reflect the work being undertaken by local authorities with the Welsh Government to reduce numbers of children looked after in Wales.
- 4.3** A similar pattern of withdrawn referrals was seen with **41%** withdrawn within the period (compared with 43% in 2018-19). There remains a commitment to develop alternative permanency plans for children and positively **88%** of those children who were withdrawn from adoption had the option of either a positive parenting or positive

connected person's assessment. Just 12% of those referrals (7 children) had a change of care plan to long-term fostering based on an assessment of their individual needs or sibling attachment relationship. Withdrawn referrals in many instances do not equate to a decrease in workload for the service as a lot of work has been undertaken to progress the adoption plan prior to it being discontinued.

- 4.4** The number of 'Should be Adopted' decisions made in respect of children reduced in 2019-20 by **34%** from the previous year. This is to be expected as the number of SBA decisions made will reflect the referrals made during that year and the previous year, as the number of referrals declines so will the number of SBA decisions. All but 1 region within Wales also experienced a downturn in SBA decisions during 2019-20.
- 4.5** The region has recorded **71** Placement Orders being made within the year, a 30% reduction from the previous year and again can be viewed in the context of a reduction in referrals over the past couple of years.
- 4.6** VVC placed **101** children for adoption during the year, a 1% increase on the previous year. This is particularly pleasing when considering the reduction in the number of Placement Orders over recent years. Continuing to place a high number of children reflects our continued commitment to securing permanence for children through adoption where this is the best outcome for the child. This includes successfully identifying adopters for children who have been waiting for a considerable length of time. The number of children waiting less than 6 months between Placement Order and matching for adoption is **24%** in VVC compared with **36%** across Wales as a whole and we have seen the average waiting time in VVC increase by 1 month since the previous year to **11.9 months**. It is important to note that this *mean* average time includes some high outliers of children waiting a significantly higher period of time than others with some 8 children waiting between 6-15 months longer than any other child, somewhat skewing the picture. A *median* average instead shows closer to **9.8 months** waiting time.

- 4.7** It has been very positive to see the increase in the number of children being able to be placed within the region (**72%** up from 65% last year) and this is a clear benefit from the increased recruitment of adopters within VVC. There is also a slight increase in placements made elsewhere in Wales (**10%** up from 9%) and a reduction in the placements made outside of Wales (**18%** down from 26%).
- 4.8** At the end of the year there were **73** children on Placement Orders awaiting an adoptive placement which is a reduction of **22%** from the previous year. A further 13 children had a very strong link proceeding but not yet matched as at the end of March 2020 and another child was awaiting a Placement Order revocation and so the number actually waiting was **59**. Of these as may be expected a significant proportion (40%) have additional factors i.e. aged 4 plus, BME, complex needs or a part of a sibling group which makes being able to secure appropriate matches more challenging.
- 4.9** There were **82** Adoption Orders granted during the year which is on a par with the previous year (83).
- 4.10** The level of placement breakdown continues to be low with two placement disruptions during the year, one of a 5-year-old girl who was placed for 9 months and the adopters felt that they could not continue with the placement. The second breakdown was a sibling group of two girls (aged 4 and 6) where again adopters advised that they could not continue with the placement.
- 4.11** The number of birth parents referred to the service for counselling fell during the year to **139**. **63%** of parents took up the service from VVC during this year which is significantly higher than the Welsh average of **25%**. This reflects the work of the Family Finding Team in offering this service to parents of children referred to us.
- 4.12** Performance in relation to the provision of Life Journey Material for children being placed for adoption has improved considerably over this past year although remains short of the 100% target as is the case across Wales. **84%** of VVC children (up from

44% in 2018-19) had life journey materials available at matching panel. This is the second highest in Wales and higher than the average of 59% across Wales. **60%** of VVC children (up from 46% in 2018-19) had finalised life journey materials available at the 2<sup>nd</sup> adoption review. This is the highest in Wales and higher than the average of 57% across Wales. There remain issues with ensuring that these figures are being accurately captured within the local authorities and we are seeking opportunities to work with them to ensure a robust system for data capture is in place. The increase in performance can clearly be linked to the additional Welsh Government funding which has enabled us to recruit a full time Life Journey Work Co-Ordinator from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and the provision of life journey work practitioner posts within the local authorities which has been rolled out over 2019-20 and into 2020-21. As of September 2020, all practitioner posts have now been filled.

- 4.13** The Life Journey Work Co-ordinator offers regular support, advice and guidance to the life journey work practitioners and in addition has offered workshops/briefings to local authority teams and was integral in the recruitment panels for the practitioner posts. Further work is being undertaken to develop training opportunities within this role as well.
- 4.14** As previously outlined the additional investment from Welsh Government has enabled the creation of a Transitions Worker post within the Family Finding Team as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. **31** children were referred to this service within the first 6 months of operation. For **22** of these children, direct work was provided to support their transition to an adoptive family, with an 'Understanding the Child' day being provided for several of these children to enable the adoptive parents to be provided with a detailed history of the child's early experiences. For **6** children these were younger children where work was being completed with the older children within the adoptive family to support the transition running smoothly and for a further **3** children work was being offered directly to the foster carer on a 1:1 basis to support them in their understanding of the child's needs. In addition, training has been developed for foster carers as well as ad hoc advice and support to other practitioners. This role has been of incredible value to the region in terms of the service we are able to offer to children



and to improve the overall transitions experience. There are many opportunities to further develop this role over the coming year.

- 4.15** VVC has continued to embrace the use of all available family finding methods over this year. The team liaises closely with the Adoption Register Wales (ARW)/LinkMaker team to ensure information is updated and monitored in a timely manner. We have also made use of the national Exchange Day event in October 2019 and the Welsh Adoption Activity Day in March 2020, each of which produced matches for children.
- 4.16** St David's Adoption Agency and Barnardo Cymru developed a new family finding service in 2018, Adopting Together. Adopting Together focuses upon the recruitment of adopters for children with additional needs who have been waiting for adoptive placements over six months. The scheme targets recruitment for specific children and provides ongoing specialist support to those children for a year following placement. The Vale of Glamorgan, as host authority has entered into a service level agreement with Adopting Together on behalf of our regional partners. As at March 2020, VVC has referred **27** children to the scheme since its' inception; **6** children were placed initially with a further **1** being placed last year. The Regional Adoption Manager and Family Finding Manager presented an overview of VVC's experience of working with the service at a national conference on Adopting Together held in March 2020. The Regional Adoption Manager is also a member of the Steering Group which oversees the development of the service.

## **5. RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1.** VVC's Marketing and Recruitment Strategy has been further developed during the year and much progress has been seen in furthering its goal of raising the profile of the Collaborative with the wider public and in doing so increasing the number of enquiries received. The Recruitment and Marketing Officer's role has continued to prove crucial in creating the content and activity associated with the Strategy ensuring that this is co-ordinated with NAS' Marketing Strategy to increase the



number of adoptive families. The Marketing Officer has closely liaised with 'Cowshed', the marketing company commissioned by NAS to undertake national campaigns and represents the region on a national workgroup to promote activity. Links have also been established with local Comms Departments across the region to ensure that adoption features as part of their local advertising features. The Marketing Officer's role was made permanent in December 2019.

- 5.2. Whilst also benefitting from the NAS' co-ordinated marketing campaign, VVC has also focused efforts in connecting with members of the public in our local areas. This has involved having both a physical and online presence. During 2019/20 VVC attended a variety of community events including Cardiff Pride, Barry Pride, Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Show, the Big Wedding Show , Vegan Winterfest, St Donat's Craft Fair as well as attending a variety of faith settings in order to discuss adoption. We have enjoyed positive engagement at these events which have all contributed to raising the profile of the service.
- 5.3. VVC has also developed its' online marketing and it now has a well-established presence on two social media platforms – Facebook and Instagram. These profiles are coordinated and managed by the Marketing Officer and these tools are useful in order to target a wider yet purposeful audience. These platforms are also used to promote the post adoption support services. Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising has been used to promote adoption and raise the awareness of our information events. Whilst the cost implications for PPC are relatively small, the audience we are able to reach, and the data captured to inform future advertising is significant. The social media presence is beginning to show dividends in terms of actual enquiries as we specifically capture where an enquirer heard about us. A pleasing and growing number of people are referencing the fact that they saw our profile or advert online, and this led them to read more about our service and adoption more widely.
- 5.4. The recruitment activity has had a specific goal to increase the number of enquiries the agency receives. 2019/20 saw a significant and sustained increase in the number of enquiries – **340** in total compared to **259** received during 2018/19. This is a

pleasing outcome and our ability to provide a professional and structured approach to receiving, recording and tracking enquiries has led to this important increase in performance. The national marketing work in conjunction with regional input is also having a positive impact in providing a consistent and coherent message to the wider public.

- 5.5. 2019/20 saw the Collaborative hosting six Information Evenings for prospective applicants. These events have always been well attended and feedback has continued to be positive.
- 5.6. VVC's three day 'Preparation to Adopt' training course continues to be provided by an Independent Social Worker. Questionnaires have been developed by the Vale of Glamorgan's Participation Officer and are distributed at the end of training to gather views of the process from enquiry through to training. These questionnaires are collated and the feedback in respect of the training from participants is unanimous in its praise and appreciation for what they learn. In 2019/20 **six** courses were held. **51** households attended the course. Out of those **51** households **four** did not go onto submit applications to progress onwards to an assessment. These potential applicants have been followed up. Three households' feedback that they wished to take more time to consider their future plans and one household has not responded to follow up enquiries.
- 5.7. During 2019/20 a total of **75** adopter approvals were presented to VVC's Adoption Panel and positive recommendations were made. **69** of these approvals were ratified within the reporting year. The approvals are broken down as follows: **RCT – 18, Cardiff – 29, Vale of Glamorgan – 14, Merthyr Tydfil – 1 and Other (Newport, Caerphilly and Kent) – 7**. This represented a pleasing increase of **35%** when compared to 2018/19's approval performance. In comparison to other Welsh regions who reported experiencing increases ranging from **8%** to **44%**, meaning VVC was one of the higher performing services.

- 5.8.** A total of **5** assessments were commenced and concluded with the applicants withdrawing / being counselled out. The level of work involved even where assessments don't conclude is considerable. This is not reflected in the performance figures but evidences the robustness of the decision-making process which supports this work.
- 5.9.** Out of the **69** ratified approvals achieved in 2019/20, **5** were foster carers assessed to adopt a specific child, **8** were second time adopters and **56** were first time adopters.
- 5.10.** **3** approved adopters have since withdrawn following approval for family reasons.
- 5.11.** The majority of the applicants approved during 2019/20 have gone onto be matched with children from within VVC. One has had a child placed from outside of our region from SEWAS. A further two are in the matching process of adopting non VVC children (a second child from SEWAS and a child from Scotland).

## **6. ADOPTION SUPPORT**

- 6.1.** Referrals into the service for adoption support services had remained at a consistent rate for the past couple of years. However, the increased funding and support injected into adoption support services at a national and local level has in turn created an increase of adopters coming forward earlier for services following the making of Adoption Order.
- 6.2.** VVC does not manage a budget for the provision of adoption support services although undertakes assessments of support needs which may recommend an adoption support package to the respective authority where the adoptive family resides. The budgets to support such provision is held in the respective local authority. The total expenditure on adoption support services for the reporting year was **£207,470.6**. This is showing a rise in spending, however when this is consistent with the increase in the number of referrals into the service. The average spend per child is reduced and is only **£992.68** although this varies across LA the costs for

services are higher in Cardiff and the Vale compared to providers in RCT and Merthyr. On average **40%** of children referred from the region go on to receive funding requests, meaning **60%** are managed with in-house support such as direct work, training, and TESSA support. The emphasis of the service has been to continue to develop the skills of practitioners within the Adoption Support Team to be able to manage families by way of inhouse support without the need to rely on external input. The provision of external funding is monitored via the Operational Group and individual decision making arrangements have been agreed between the respective Operational Manager and the Adoption Support Manager. Discussion has taken place to further progress joint working across the region with the development of a preferred provider list.

- 6.3.** The largest funding costs are for attachment-based therapeutic work, complex emotional and behavioural therapeutic work and therapeutic life story work. These are the most frequently commissioned service and are in line with the types of need children present with. We anticipate that although the need for therapeutic life story work remains high at present, over the coming years with the investment in life journey work across the region this demand will reduce as the quality of the support being provided at an earlier stage improves. The spend on Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) training has reduced as VVC are now able to offer this training in-house and an NVR was provided during the year. A Nurturing and Attachment course was also facilitated in-house reducing the reliance on an external service provider and significant costs.
- 6.4.** **54** referrals for Access to Birth Records for adopted adults were received during the reporting period showing a small increase. **36** referrals for Intermediary Services have been received which are comparable to the previous year. There are two part time Social Workers aligned to this work which is by its very nature time consuming and requires dedication in being able to search and access information from historical records and a range of sources.

- 6.5.** Waiting lists for these services and allocation times have been managed so that applicants do not wait longer than two months for a service. The provision of an intermediary service is a power not a duty and therefore the service is not provided in all areas. It remains a significant strength of our service that intermediary requests are being supported and allows a natural follow on once the letterbox exchange ceases at the age of 18 and reaches out to support young adopted adults with understanding their identity post 18.
- 6.6.** The Birth Parent Advisor is a new role within the Adoption Support Team with the postholder taking up the position from November 2019. A referral process and information leaflet for Social Work colleagues across the region and an information leaflet for birth parents has been developed and disseminated. Nine referrals for individual birth parent support have been received and supported. The post is of benefit to parents post Adoption Order supporting them with a range of issues, contact matters and writing letterbox reports. It is hoped that some support to birth parents can be offered on a group basis going forward and that the role will continue to be promoted across the region.
- 6.7.** The TESSA Co-ordinator was also appointed in November 2019 shortly after the national launch of the service by Adoption UK. The aim of the service is to provide support services prior to adoptive families reaching crisis point. The Co-ordinator undertakes assessments of need and processes referrals of families who may be eligible. 17 referrals had been made to TESSA at year end by VVC.
- 6.8.** The Children and Young People Co-ordinator also took up post at the same time and since this time has been directly involved in running Connected groups on a Saturday once a month with staff from the Connected service. The service caters for children and young people 7 upwards and so the Saturday groups are into three groups according to age. During 2019-20 the service catered for 42 children from VVC. The aim of the service is to reach more young people who might benefit from such support and so the Co-ordinator's role is key to promoting the service across the region. In addition the postholder has provided direct support sessions to 11 children from the

region and has also supported a number of direct contact sessions for adopted children. Both Co-ordinators have taken over the running of the monthly toddler group for adoptive families which consistently supports eight families at a time.

- 6.9.** Evaluation forms have been developed within the team during the year to evaluate the service pre and post provision of therapeutic support and in terms of the new areas of service provision. The team also ask participants to evaluate the training which has been provided. The main objective is to ascertain the benefits of the service provided and to needs within families which may not have been addressed. It is however hoped going forward that the findings can be collated in a more systematic way to enable the feedback to be used constructively to improve service delivery.

## **7. ADOPTION PANEL**

- 7.1.** The Collaborative has continued to operate a joint regional Panel from two sittings held on a fortnightly Monday and Wednesday basis. Work has continued in merging the central list to service both sittings and to spread Panel activity to enable the Panel to operate on a more equitable, unified basis.
- 7.2.** Panel business has remained at a high level during the year with 43 Panel meetings being held and 149 cases being heard. Two scheduled meetings were cancelled due to quoracy. Appendix 4 to the report provides a breakdown of the work of Panel.
- 7.3.** Maintenance of the central list of Panel members continues to pose challenges in terms of maintaining a sufficient number of Social Work members and a range of independent members. Ten new Panel members have been successfully recruited during the period and one Panel member resigned due to personal reasons.
- 7.4.** A programme of reviews of Panel members was developed at the beginning of 2020 and six reviews were conducted by the end of the reporting period.

- 7.5.** Panel training was provided for Panel members in March 2020 focusing upon the role and function of Panel and the requirements of the new regulations governing the approval of adopters due to be implemented in April 2020.

## **8. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

- 8.1** VVC has received three complaints during the period. Each complaint has been investigated by the Regional Adoption Manager and two were resolved at Stage 1 of the Vale of Glamorgan Social Services Complaint process. The third complaint has been referred to Stage 2 of the process and a stage 2 investigation has been commissioned.

Regional staff have continued to receive positive feedback on the range of services they provide from a range of sources; service users, local authority colleagues, other agencies and the adoption Panel. Staff are encouraged to collate this information, share it for recording as part of the Collaborative's record, as contribution to their own personal development plans, and to promote the service more generally.

## **9. 9. CONCLUSION AND 2020-21 PRIORITIES**

- 9.1** The priorities for VVC, alongside other regional Collaboratives stem year on year from our core business. The need to continue to recruit more adoptive parents to meet the needs of children requiring placements will remain constant features of the service we provide. Considerable improvement in both these areas was achieved during the reporting period which hopefully can be built upon year on year.
- 9.2** Significant progress has also been made in raising the profile of the region as a result of a consistent marketing strategy and this has produced results in attracting more enquiries from prospective adopters. The ongoing challenge for the service is being able to convert more of those enquiries into applications to ensure that we continue to build on our existing pool of adopters and to improve placement choice.

- 9.3** The other area where positive improvements have been seen is in the area of adoption support. The investment received from Welsh Government has been a significant, positive development for the service as a whole. VVC has during this time successfully recruited to all the specialist roles and there is already evidence of the benefits these posts have had on the service. These posts will continue to be evaluated in terms of service improvement and therefore will need to be further embedded across the region to ensure that performance targets are met. This is particularly important in respect of the provision of life journey work for the region due to the large amount of the investment secured for this work.
- 9.4** Just prior to the end of the reporting period the impact of the pandemic and national lockdown was beginning to take effect with staff working from home and key services temporarily halted. The service however adapted quickly to the challenges presented and has been able to deliver its core business partly on a virtual basis or via risk assessed face to face contact. This has enabled key functions to continue to be delivered although it is too early to assess the impact upon overall performance during this year. Going forward the service will need to continue to evaluate the effect upon services and develop plans to mitigate the overall impact upon service delivery.

**Angela Harris**  
**Regional Adoption Manager**  
**October 2020**

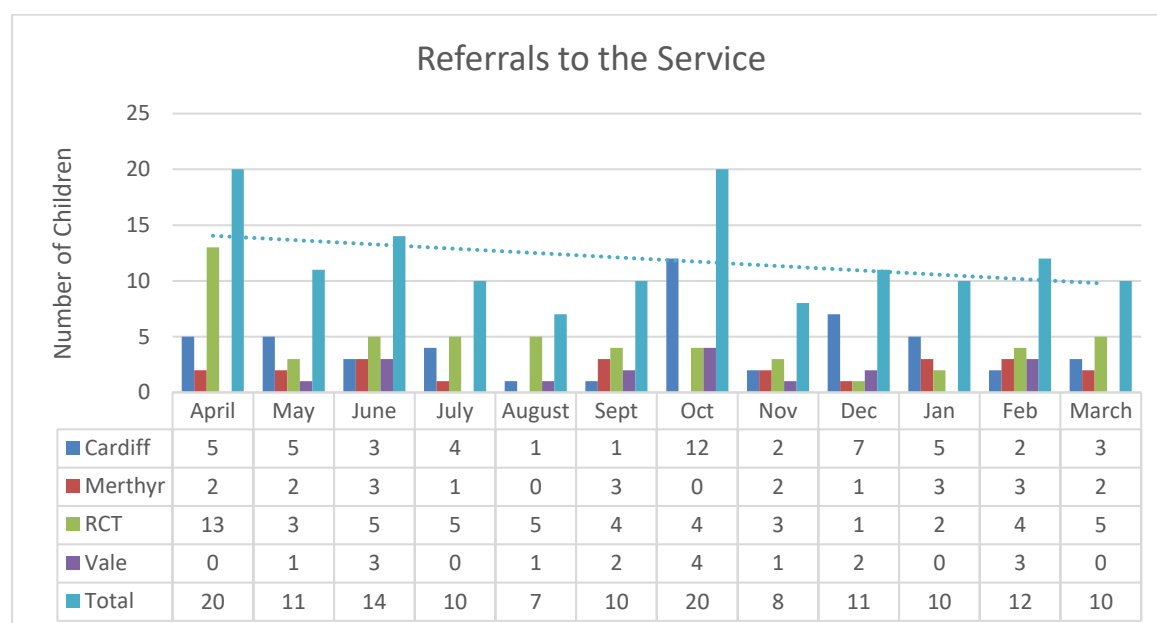


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## Appendix 1 – Family Finding

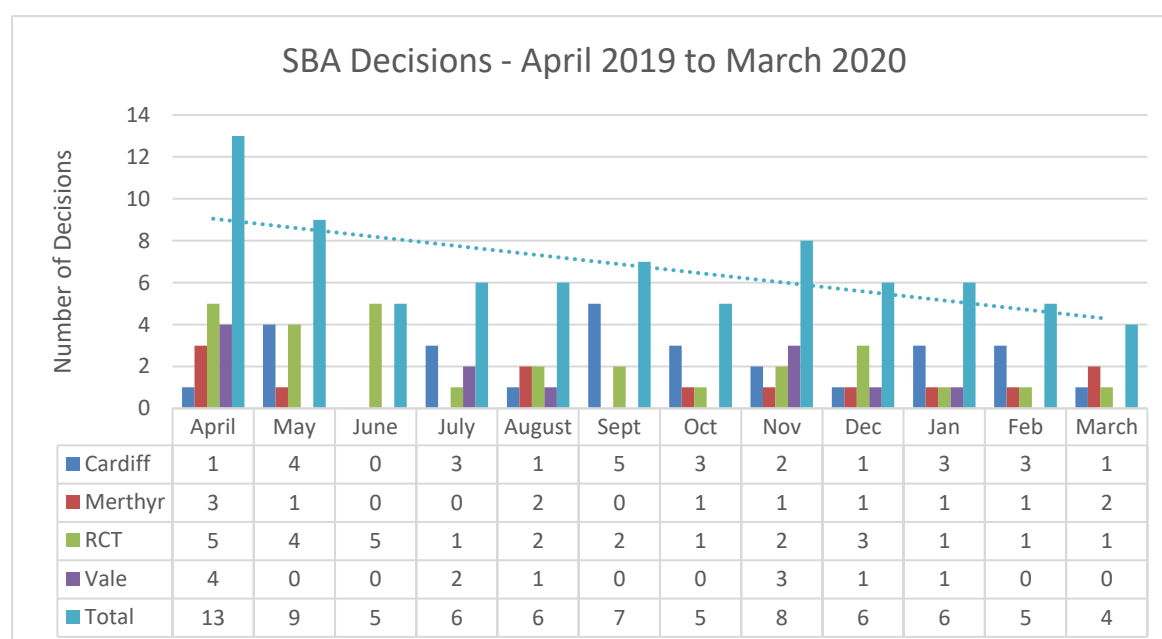
### Children Referrals

143 children were referred to VVC during the reporting period. On average 12 referrals were received each month with 38% and 35% of referrals received from RCT and Cardiff respectively. 15% of referrals were received from Merthyr and 12% from the Vale.



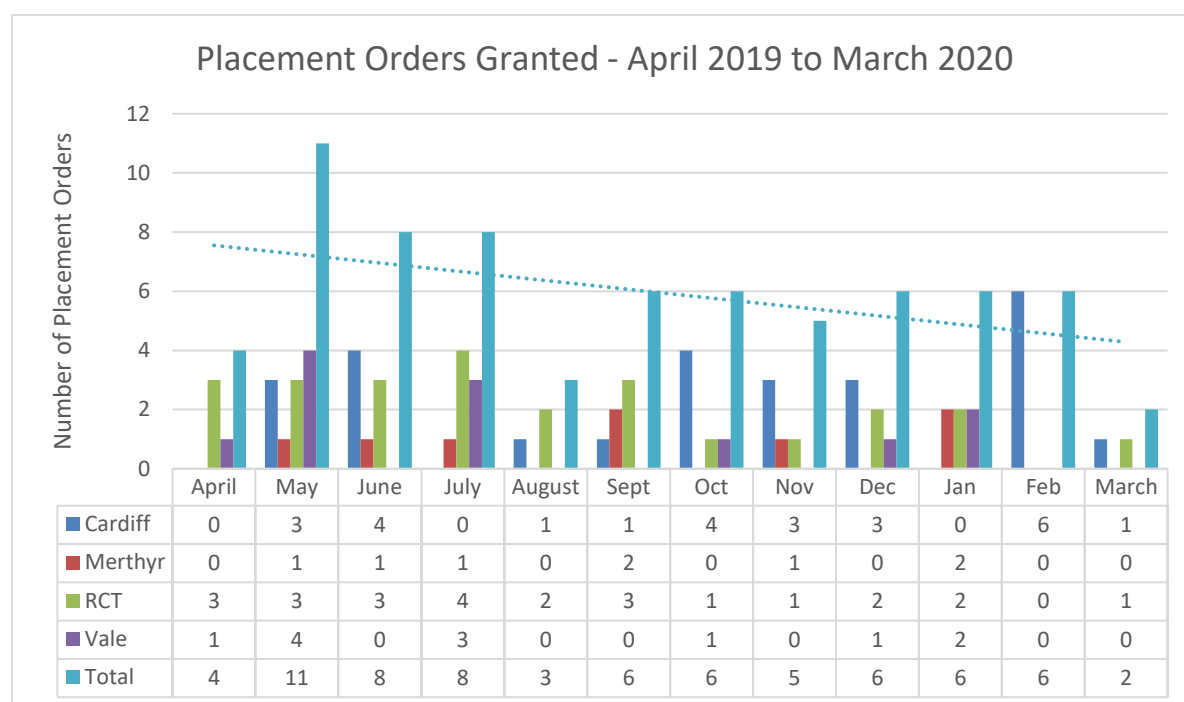
### ‘Should be placed for Adoption’ decisions

80 SBA decisions were made during the reporting period.



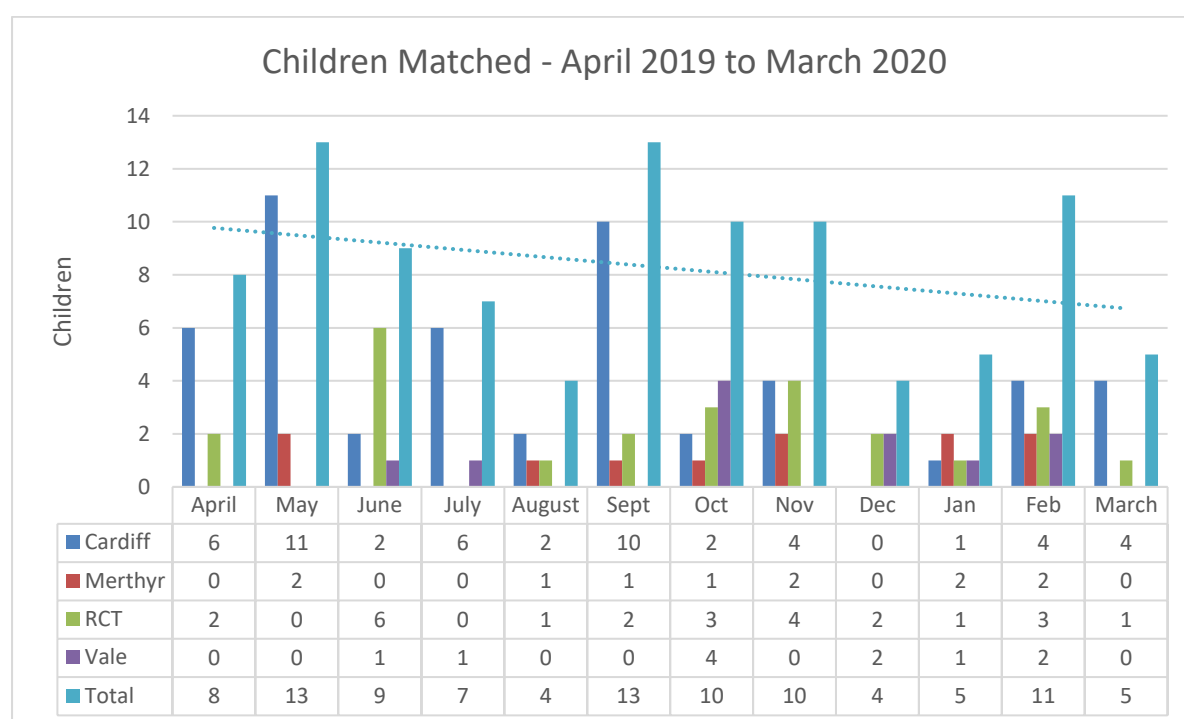
## Placement Orders granted

71 Placement Orders were granted during the reporting period with an average of 6 Placement Orders granted each month.



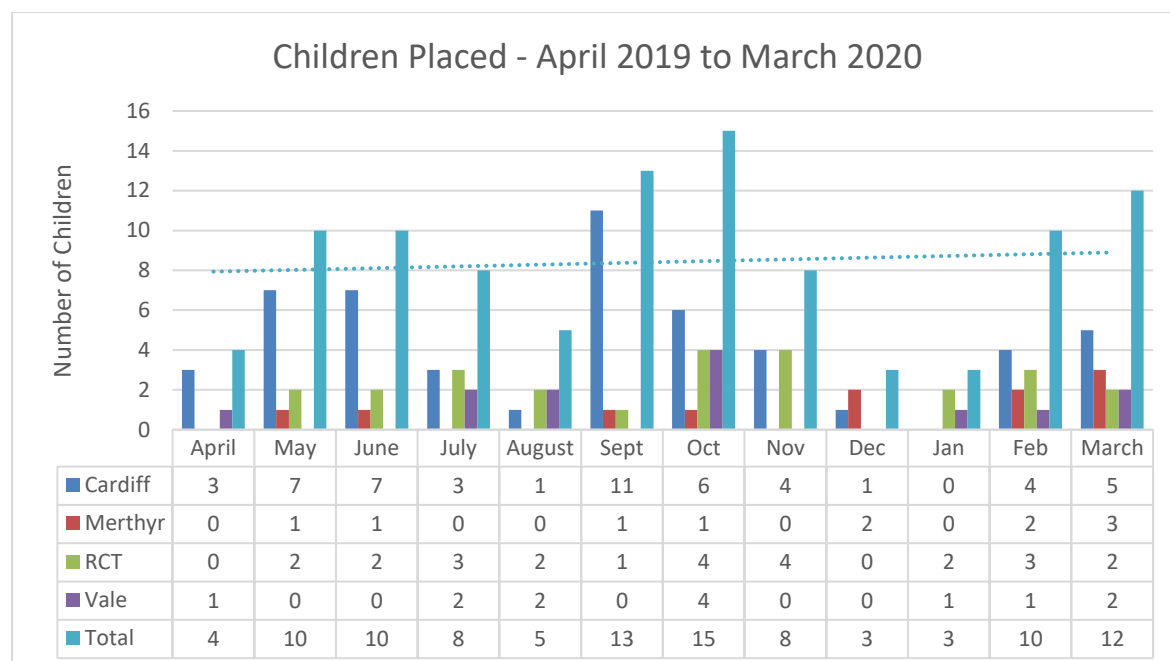
## Children matched

98 children were matched with adopters during the period.



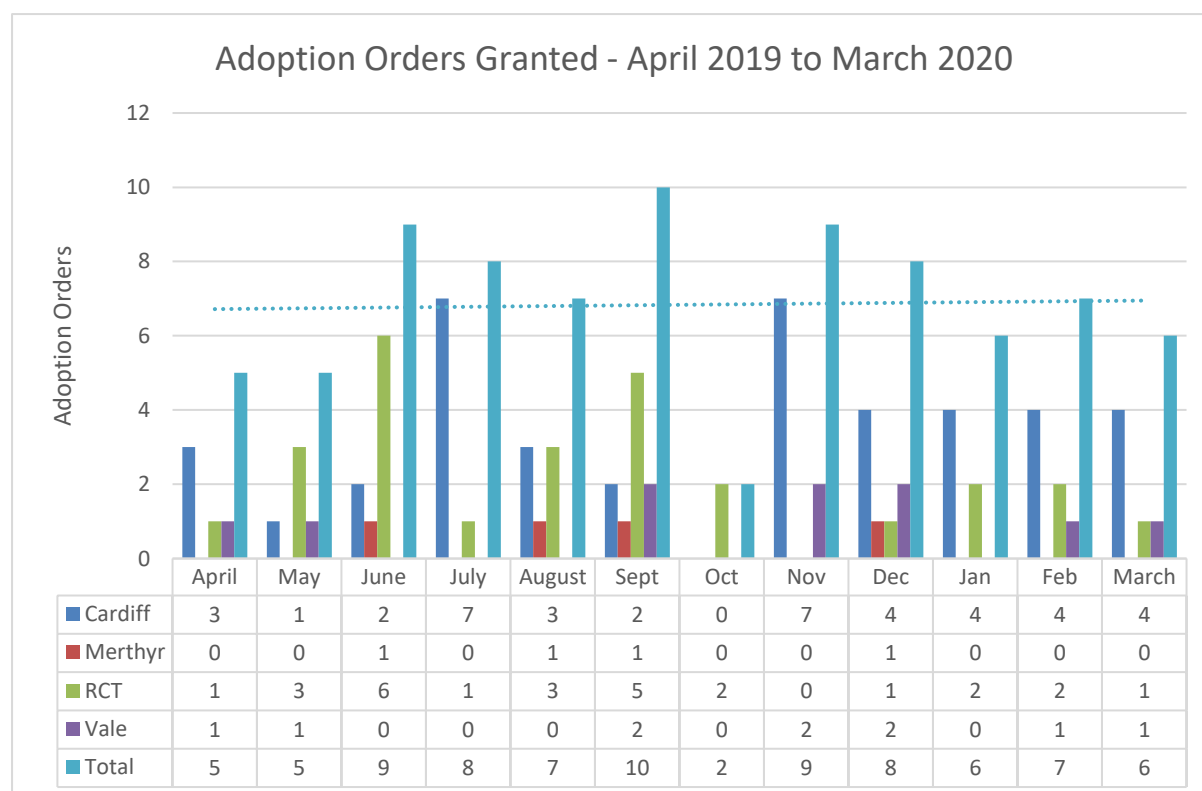
## Children placed for Adoption

101 children were placed in adoption during the reporting period.



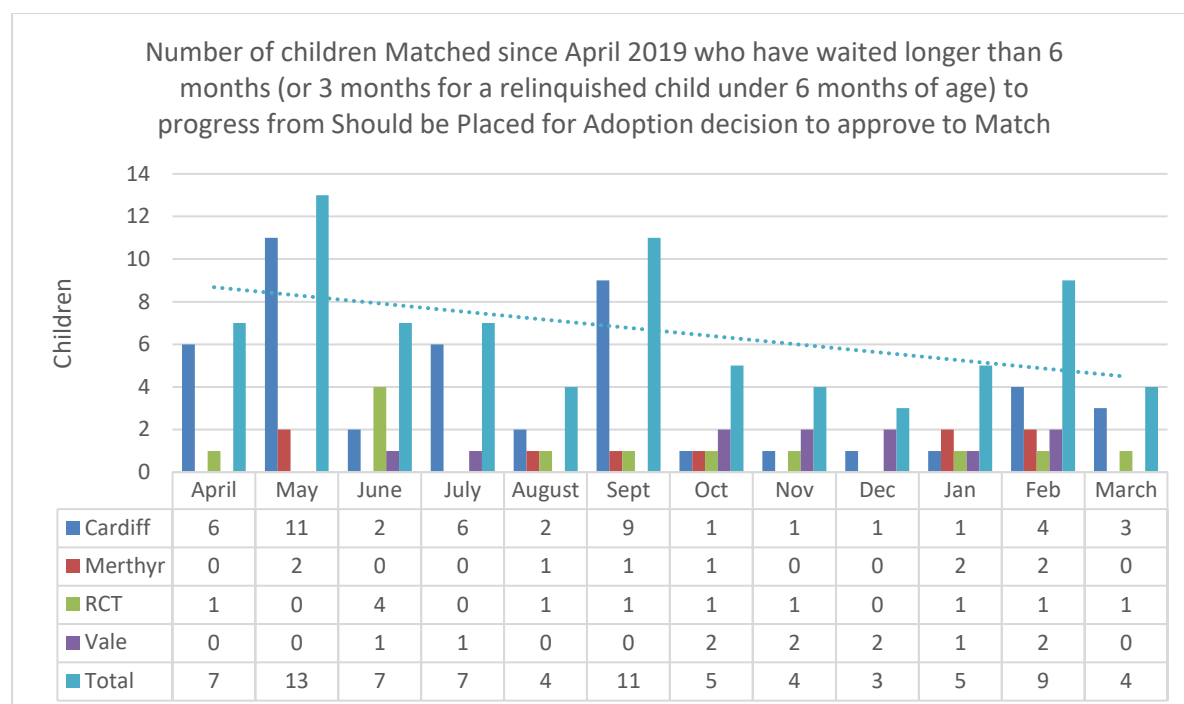
## Adoption Orders

82 Adoption Orders were granted during the reporting period.

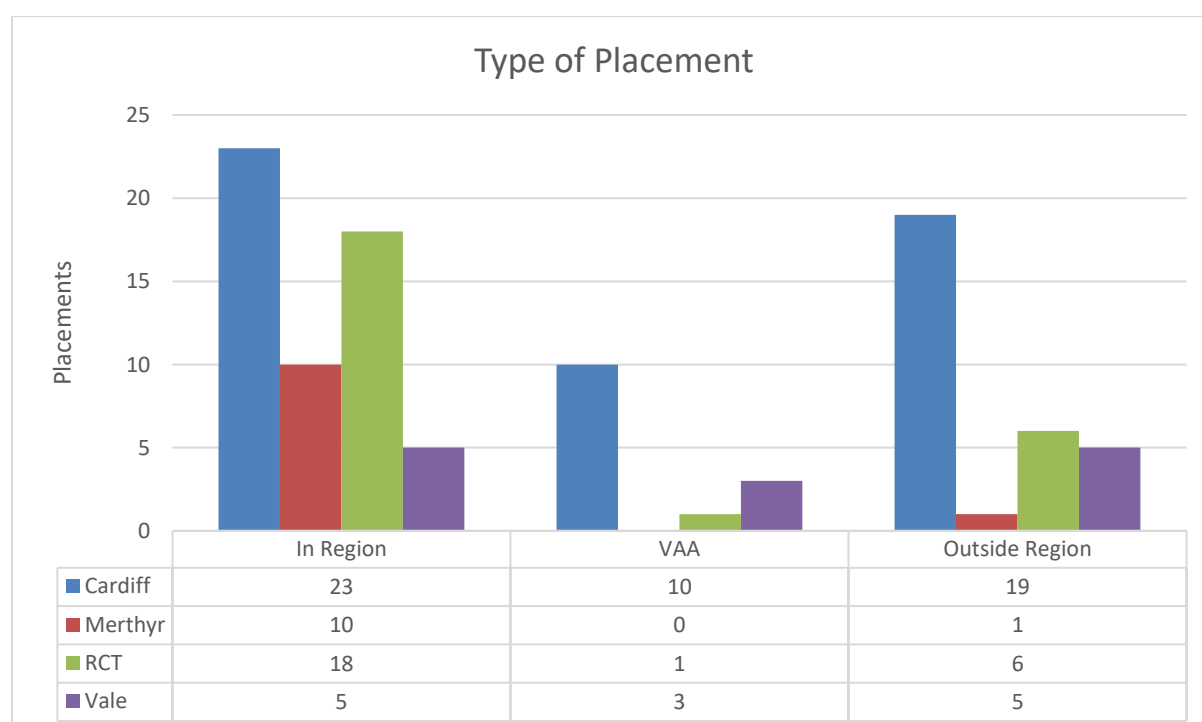


## Number of children Matched since April 2019 who have waited longer than 6 months (or 3 months for a relinquished child under 6 months of age) to progress from Should be Placed for Adoption decision to approve to Match

79 of the 98 children matched had waited longer than 6 months to progress from a 'Should be placed for Adoption' decision to 'Approve to Match'.



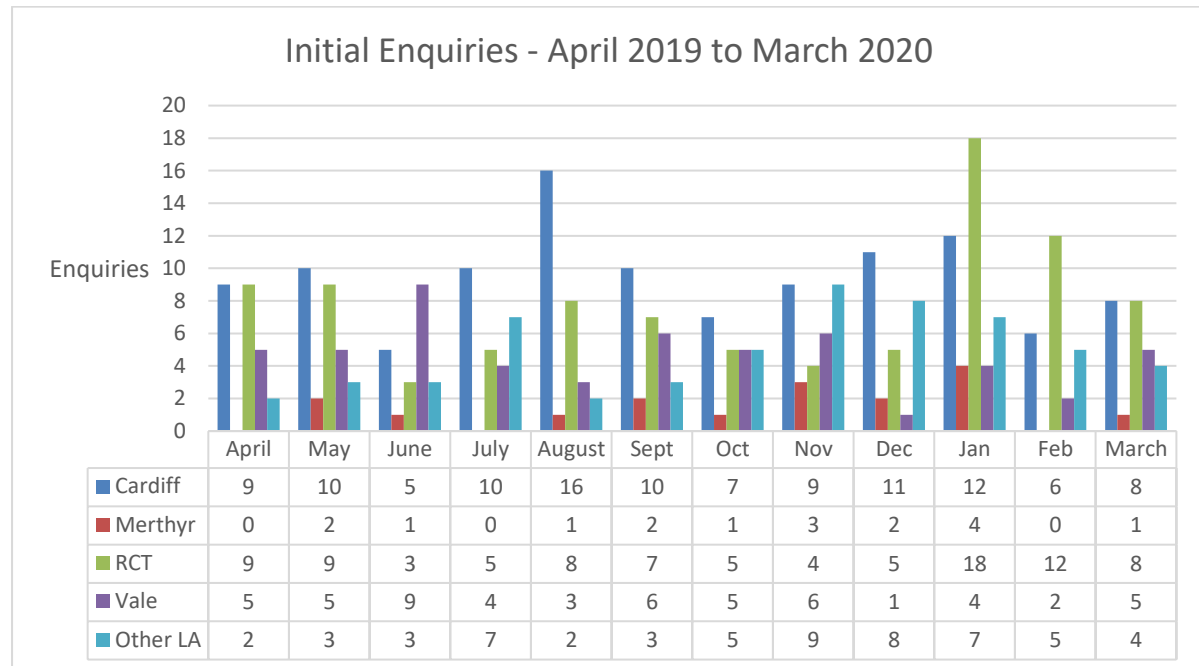
## Type of Placement



## Appendix 2 – Recruitment and Assessment

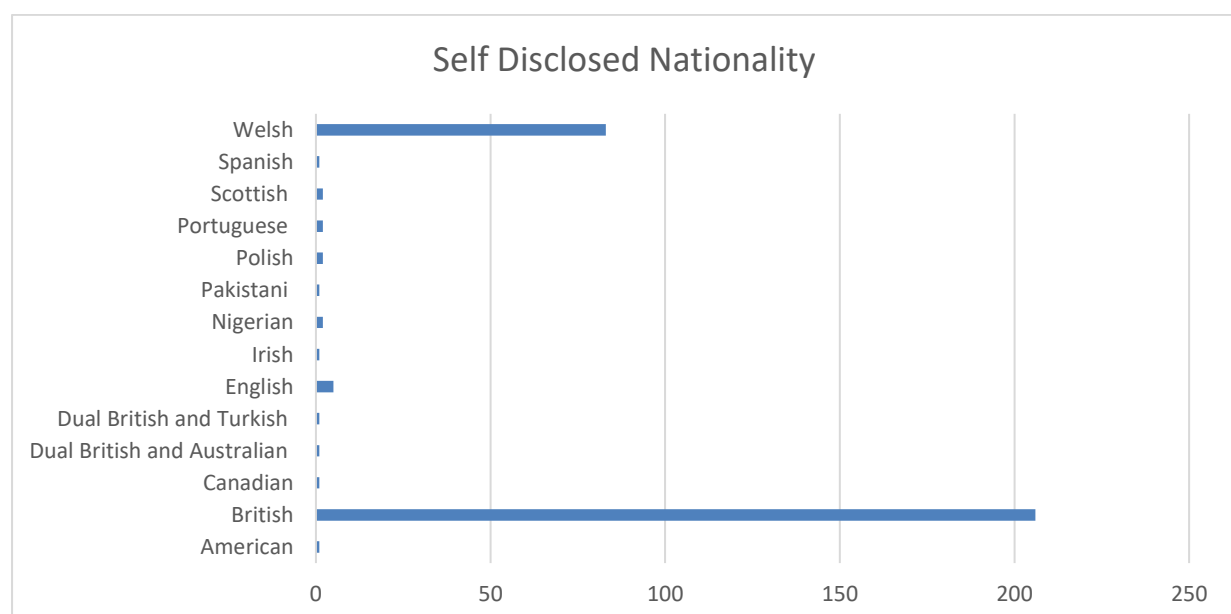
### Initial Enquiries

278 enquiries were received from people living within our region. In addition, 58 enquiries were received from people living outside our area. There was a total of 336 enquiries.

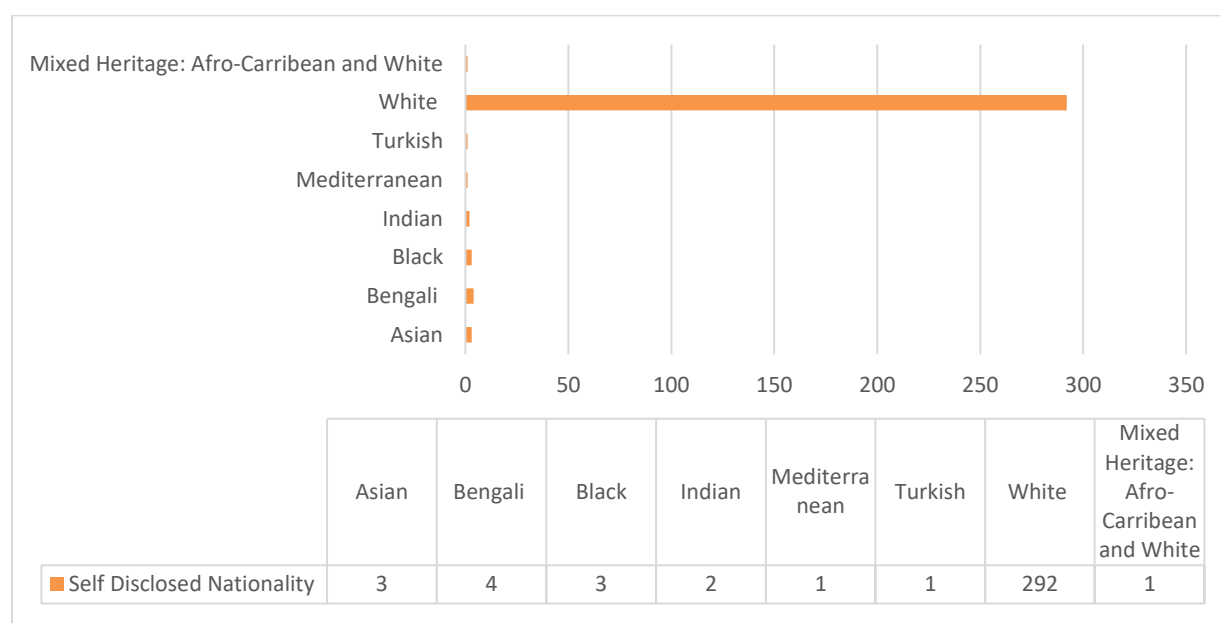


### Demographics of Initial Enquiries

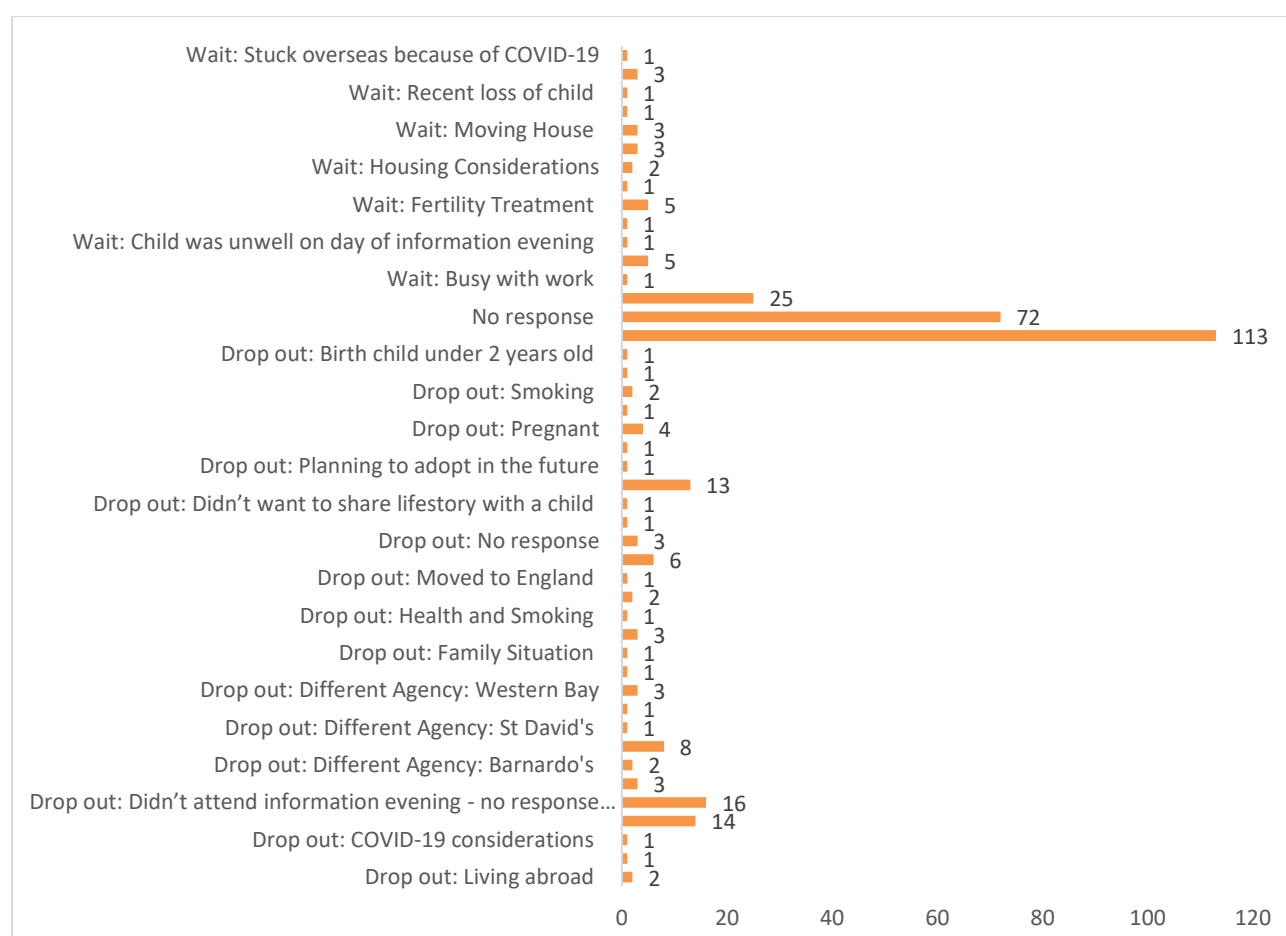
#### Self-disclosed Nationality



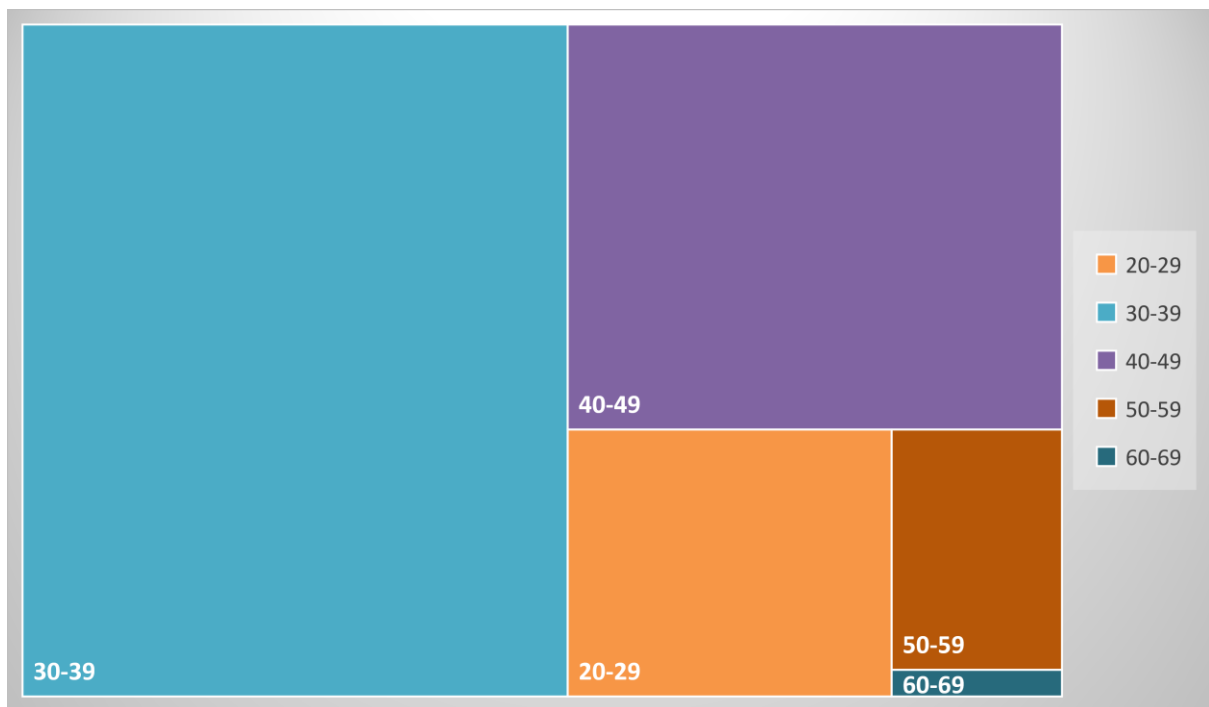
## Self-disclosed ethnicity



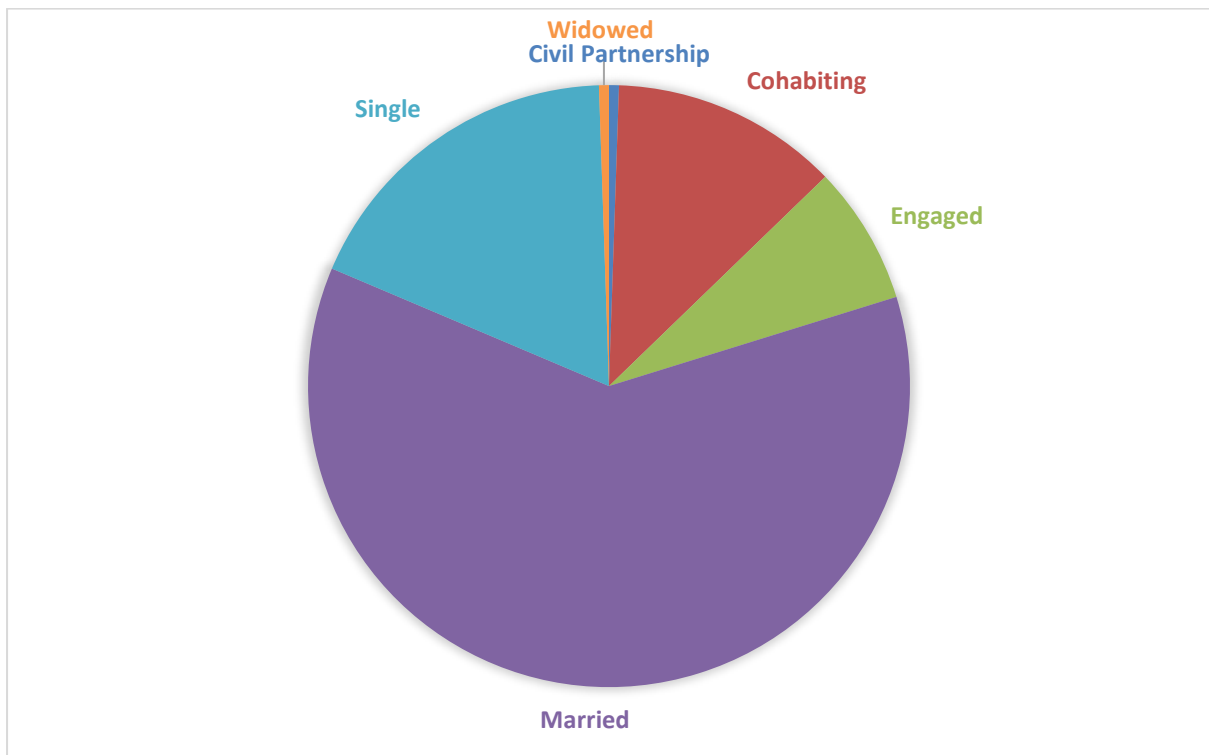
## Self-disclosed Follow up - reasons for delay or withdrawal from adoption process before Information Evening



## Age

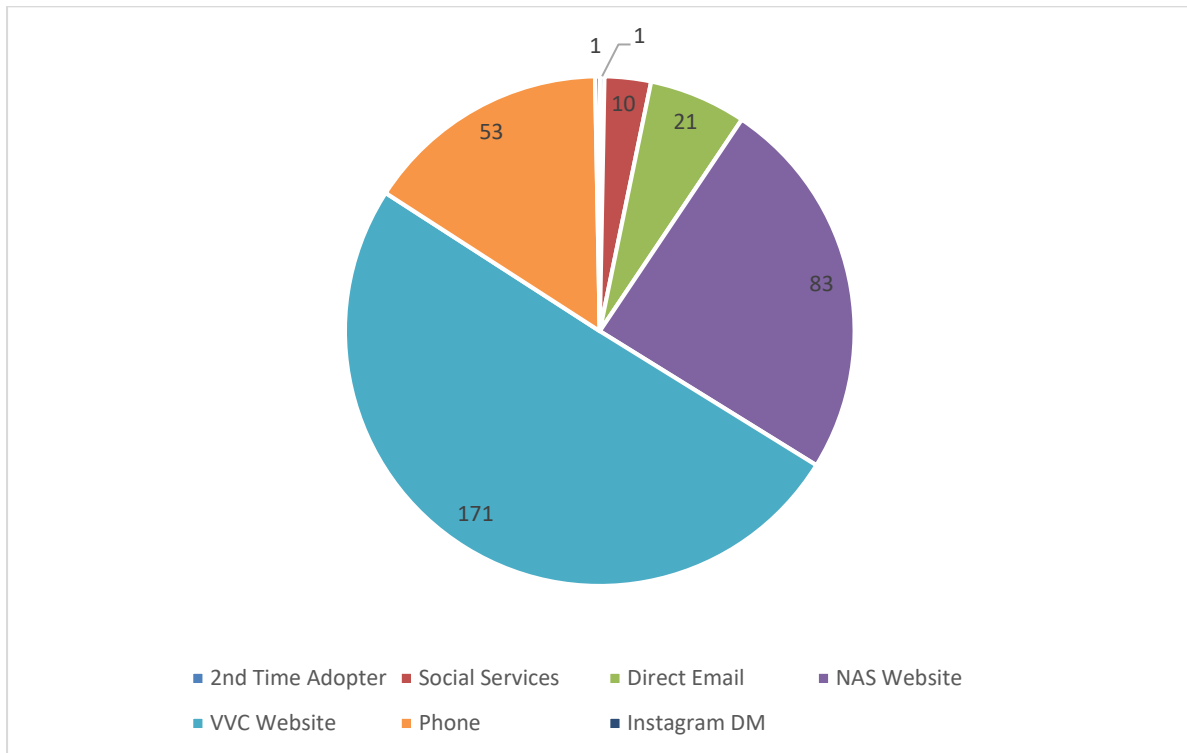


## Relationship Status

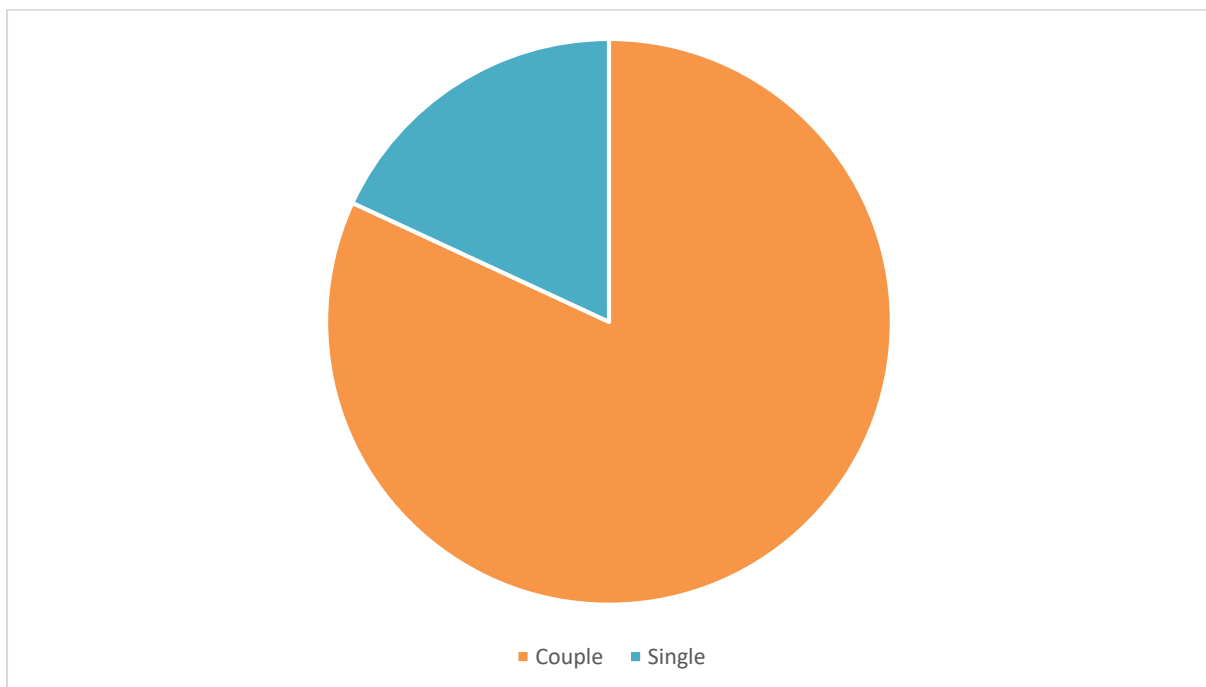




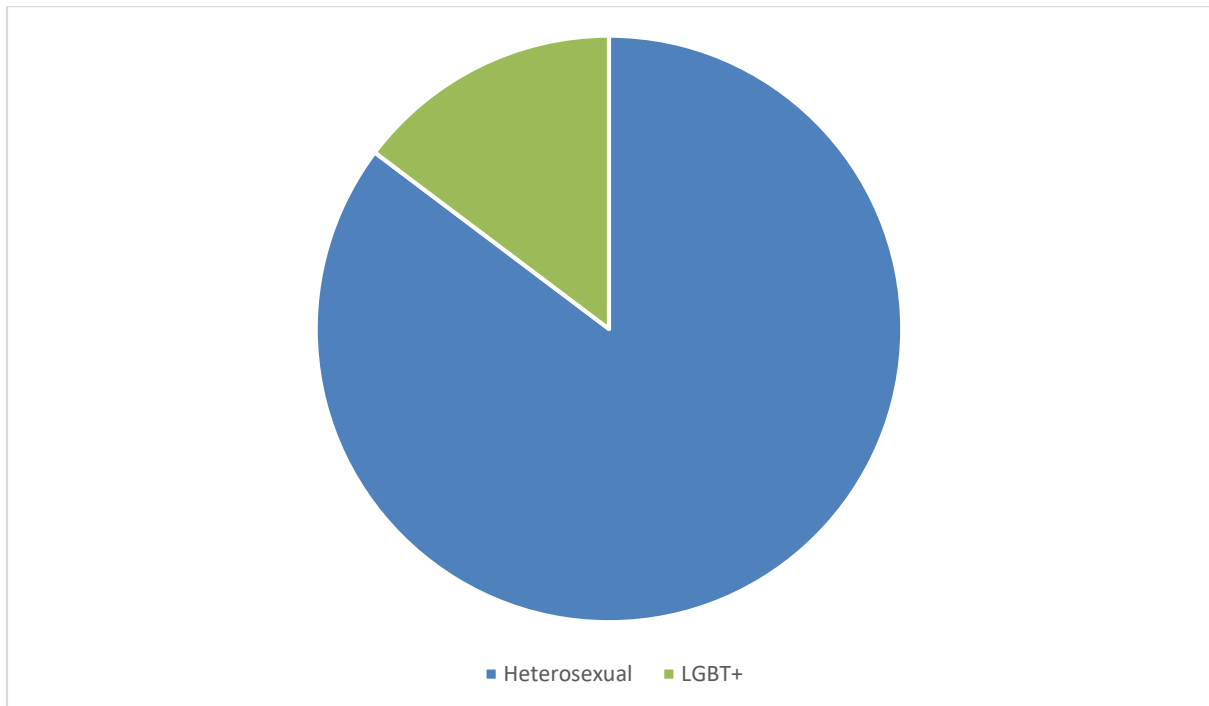
## How they contacted us



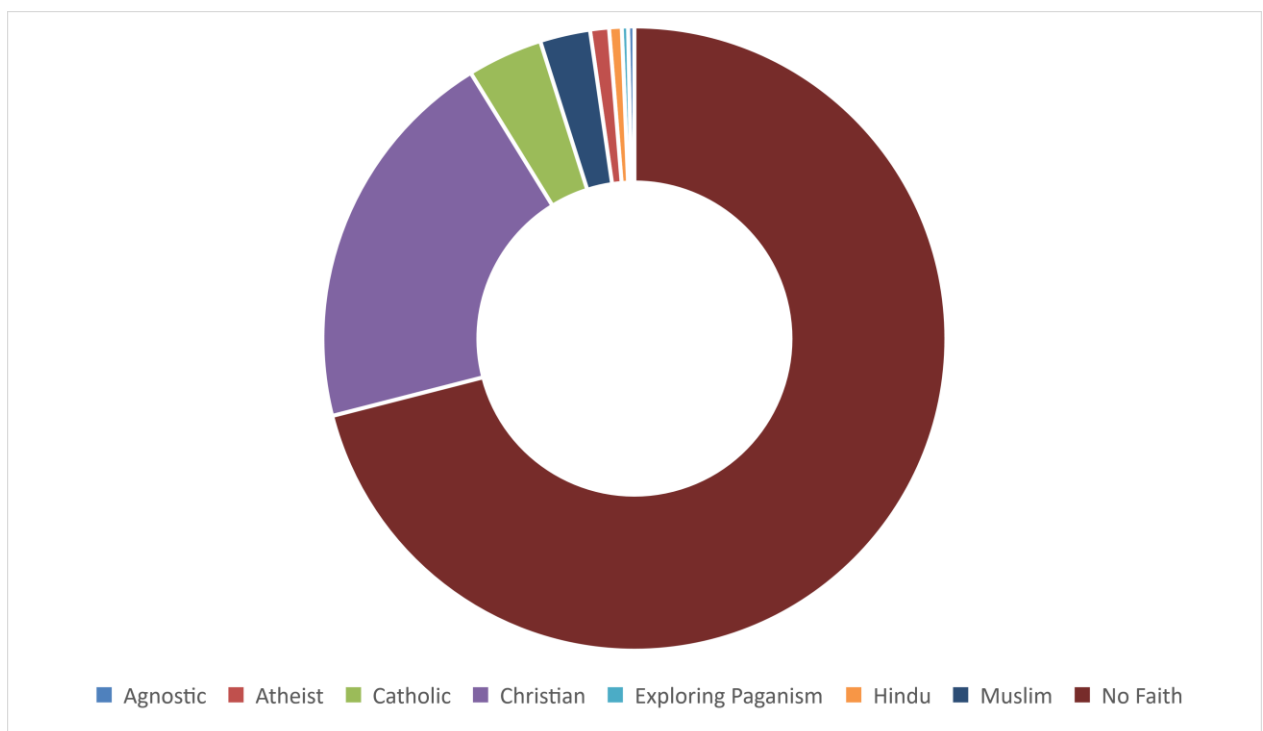
## Couples and Singles



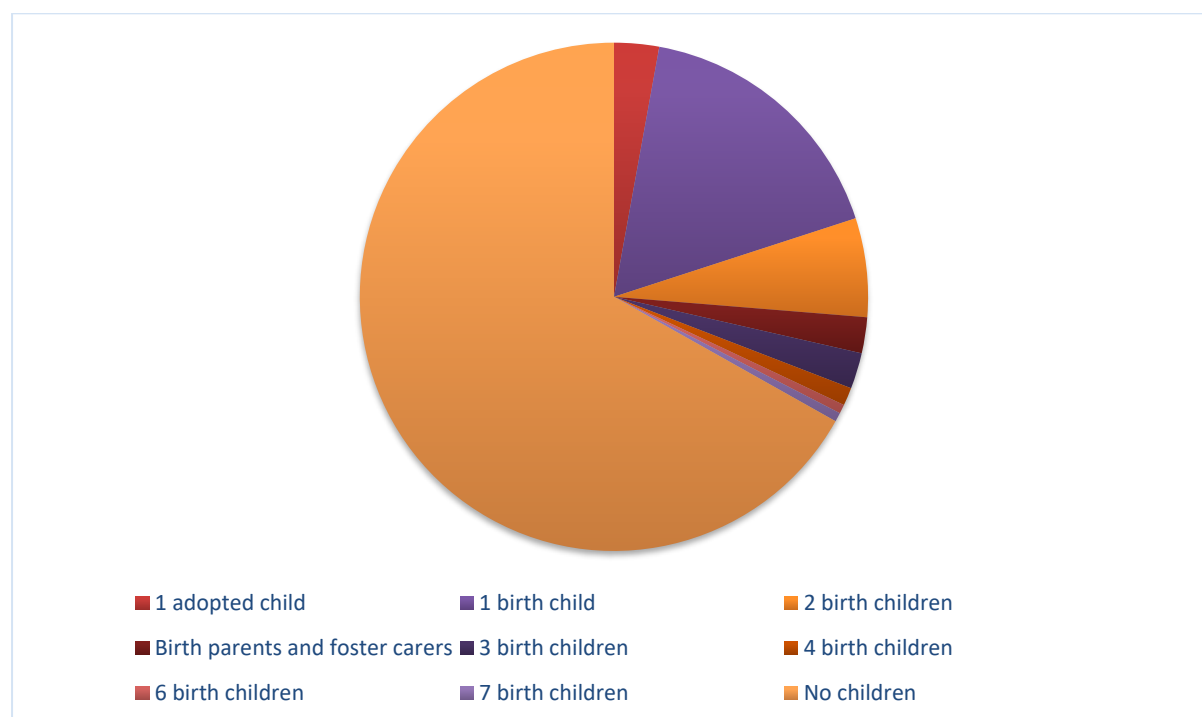
### Couples: self-reported LGBT+ and Heterosexual



### Self-reported Faith

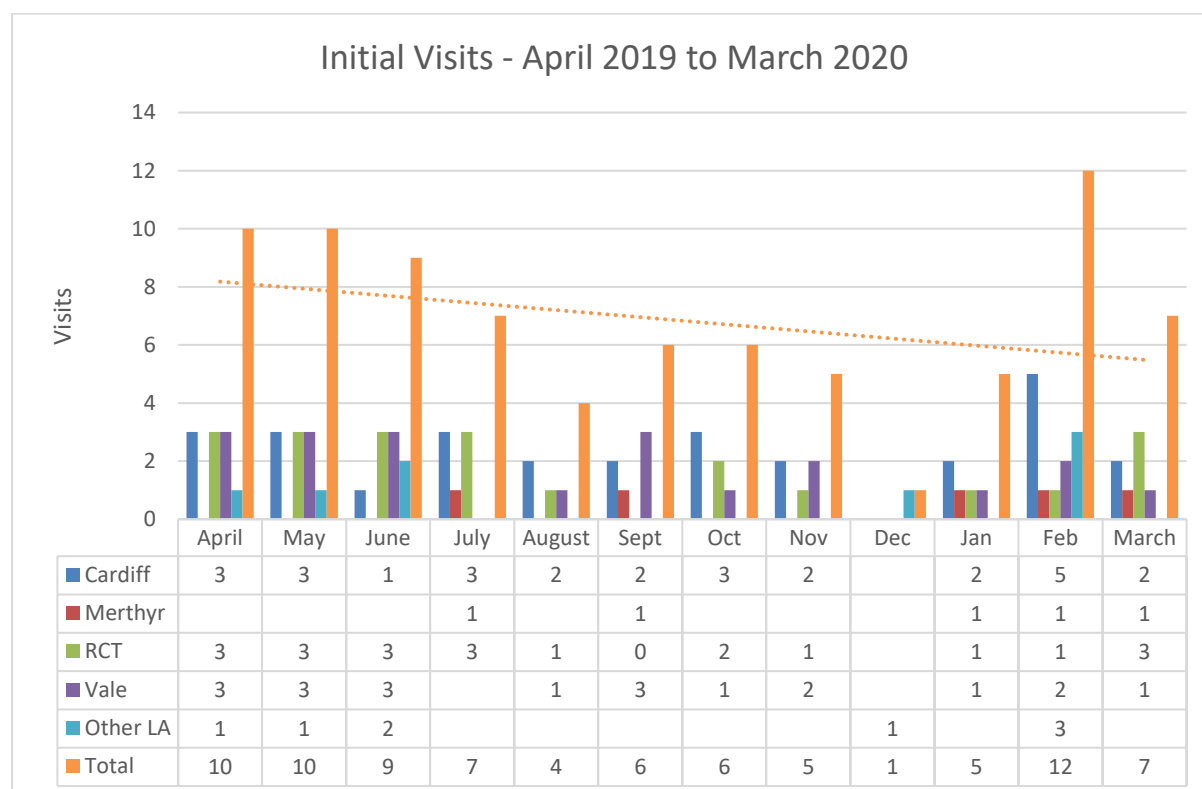


## Adopting with children already in the household



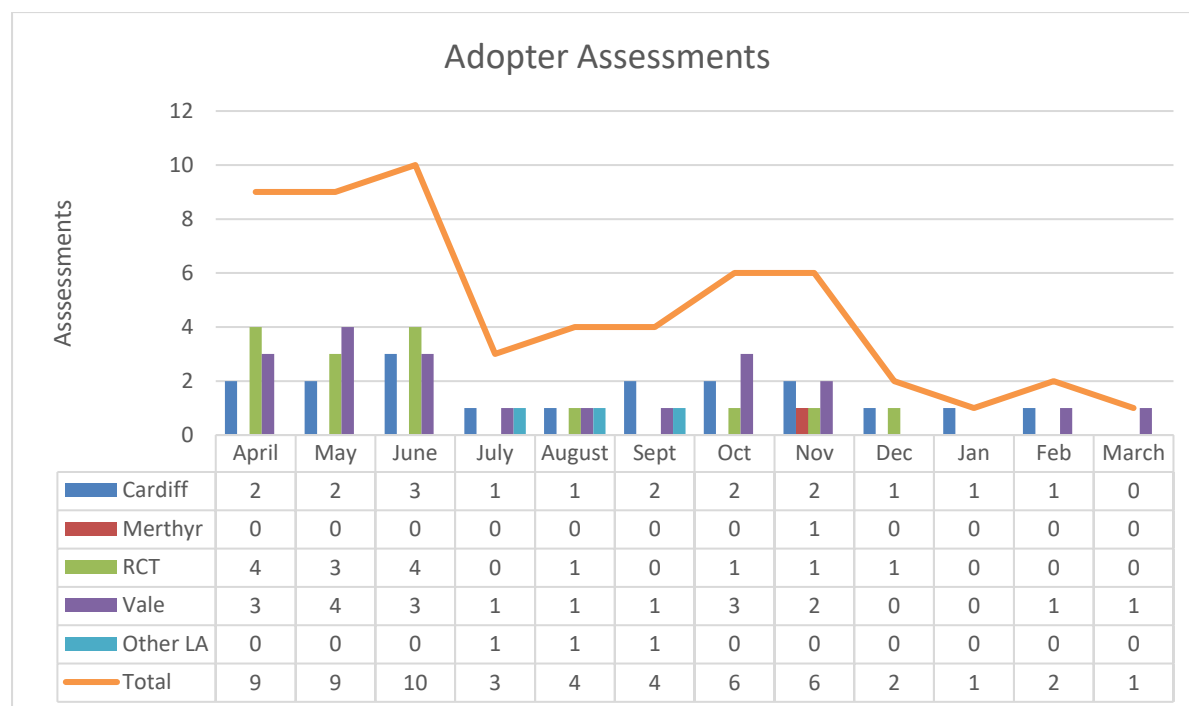
## Initial Visits

82 initial enquiries took place during the reporting period.



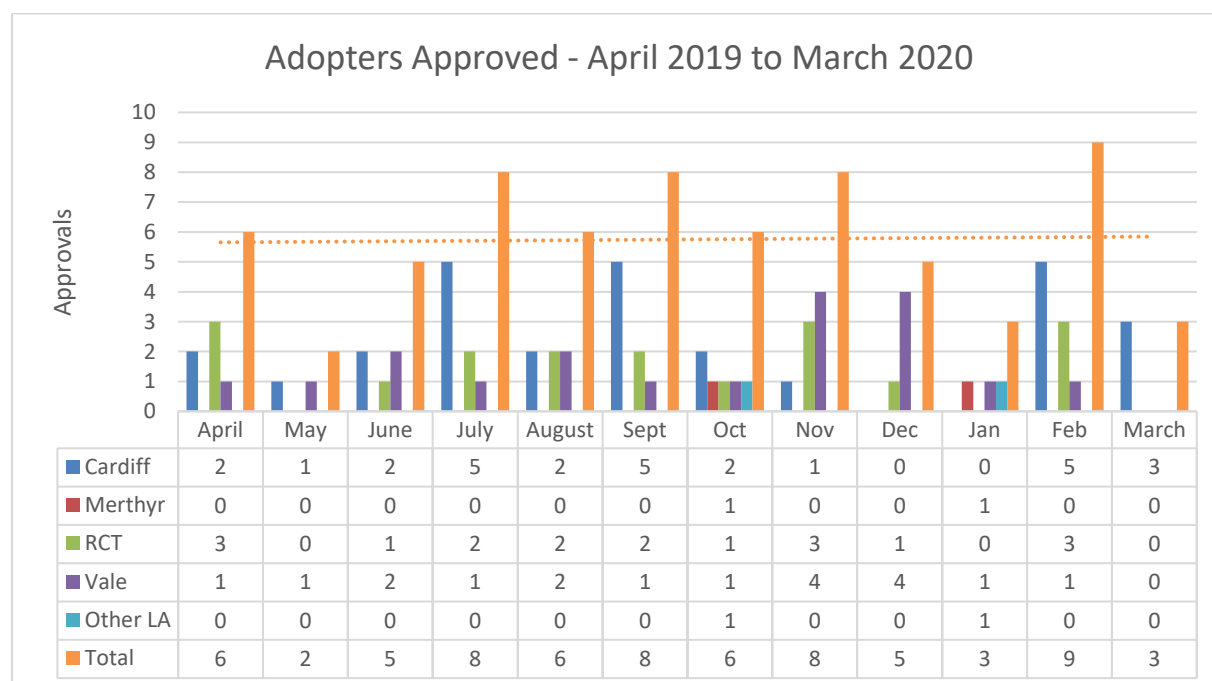
## Adopter Assessments

57 adopter assessments were carried out during the reporting period



## Adopter Approvals

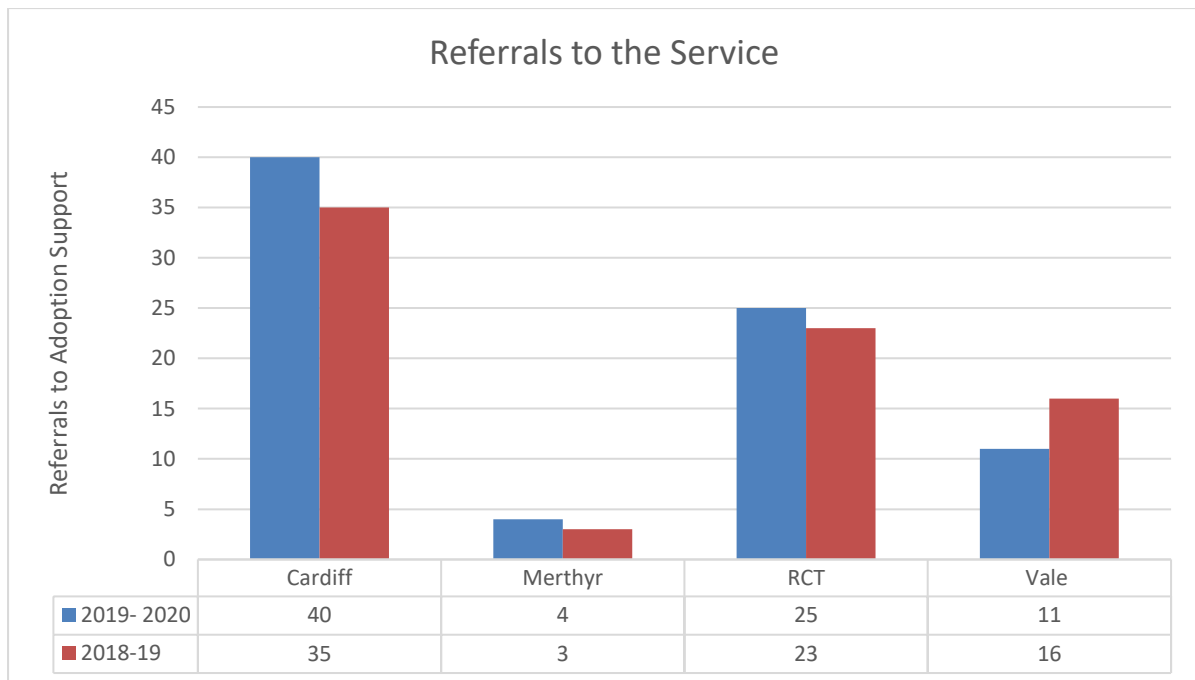
75 adopter approvals were presented to the adoption panel, of these 69 adopter approvals were ratified during the reporting period.



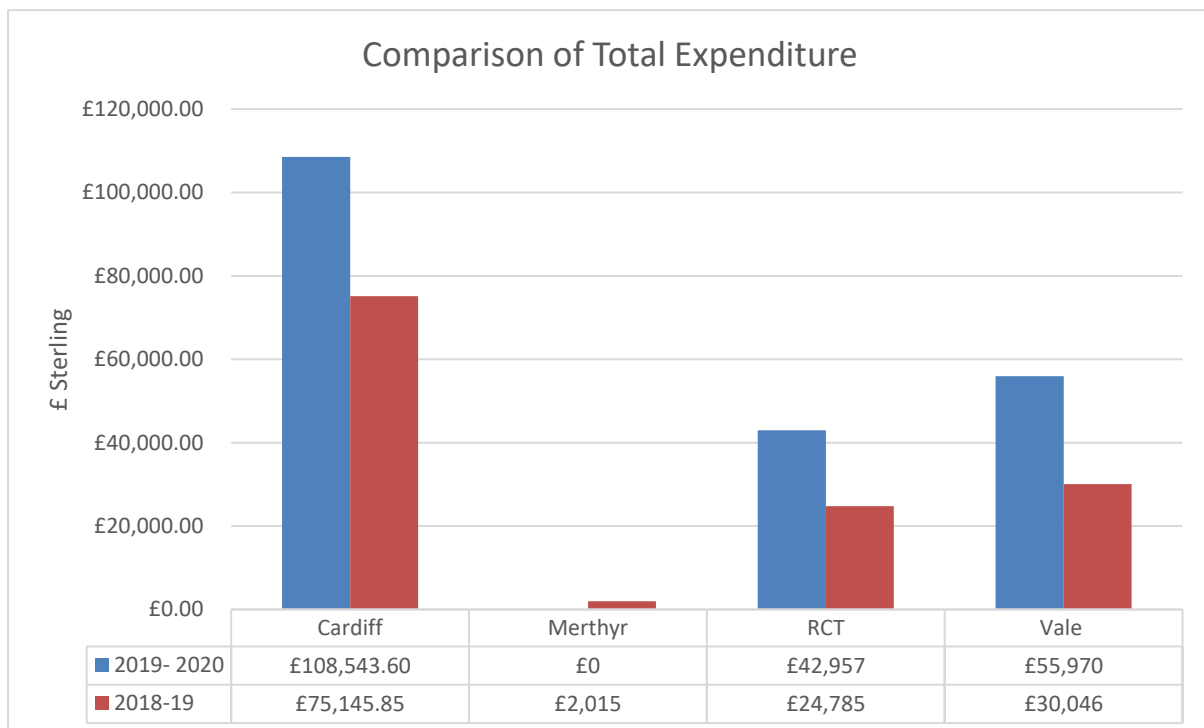
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## Appendix 3 – Adoption Support

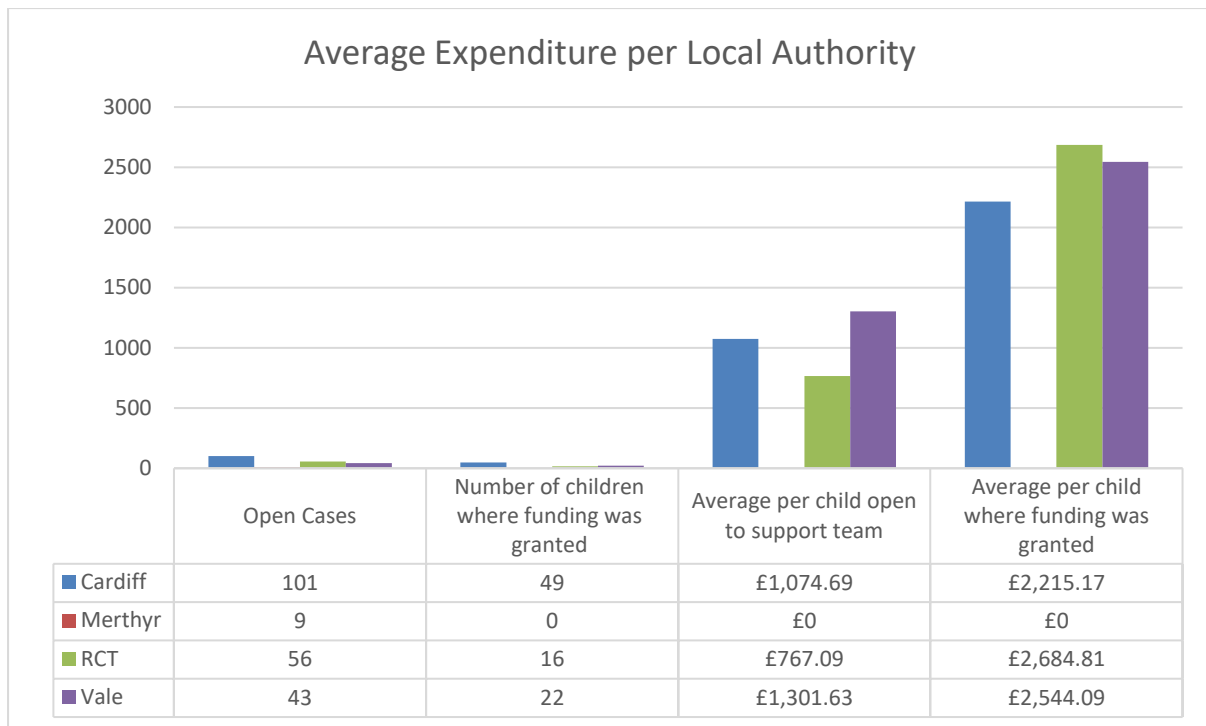
### Referrals



### Expenditure per Local Authority

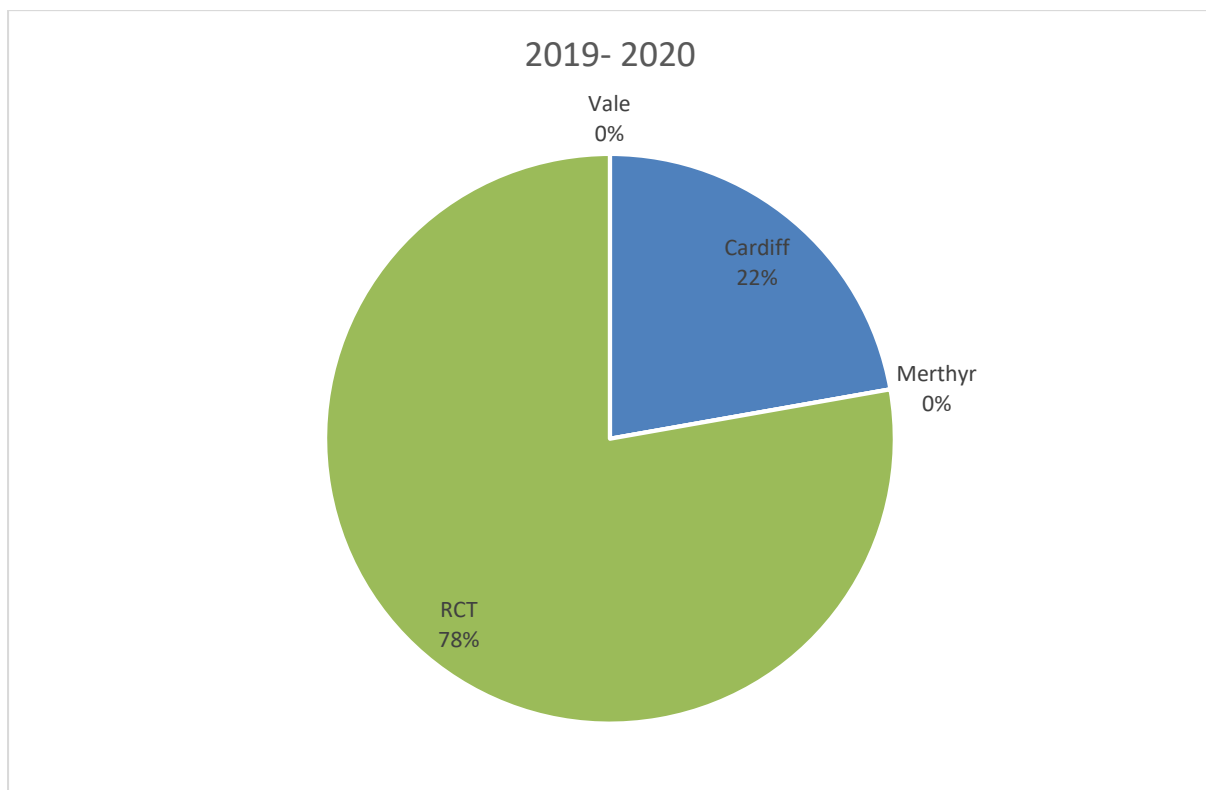


## Average Expenditure per Local Authority

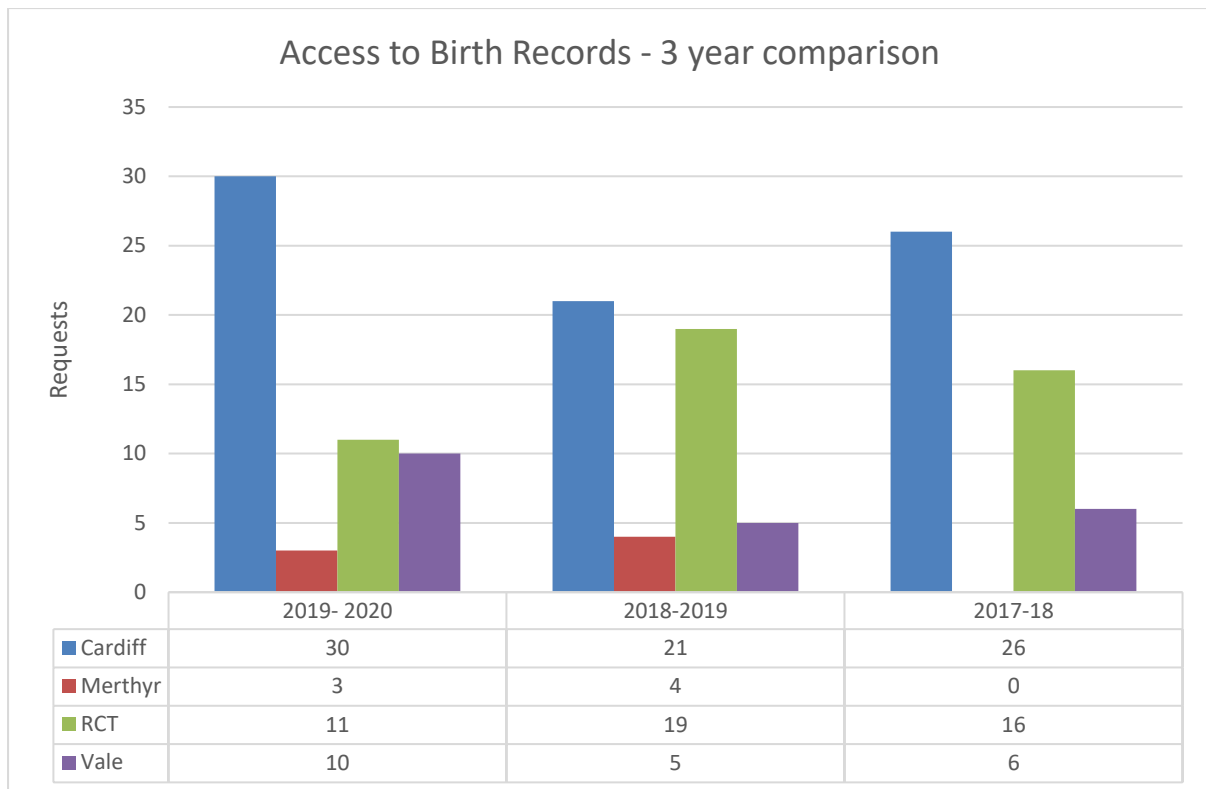


## Other Services

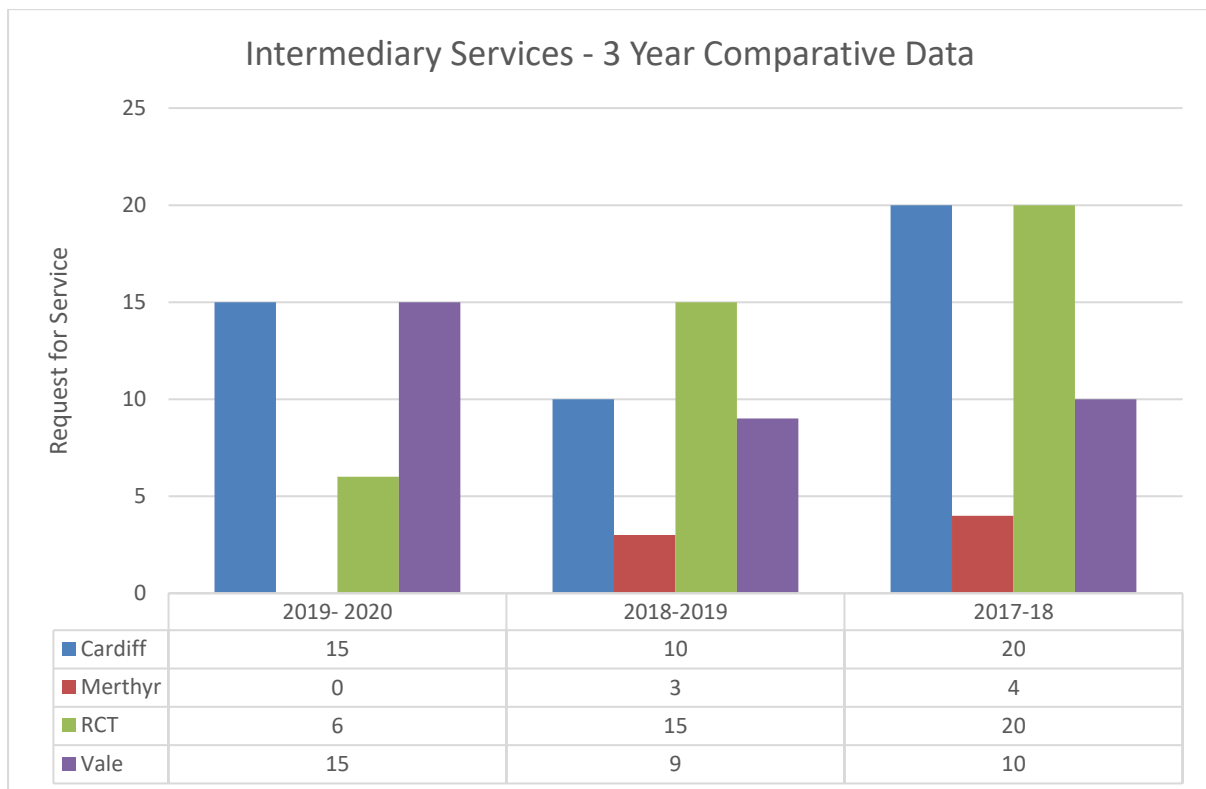
### Birth Parent Support



## Access to Birth Records

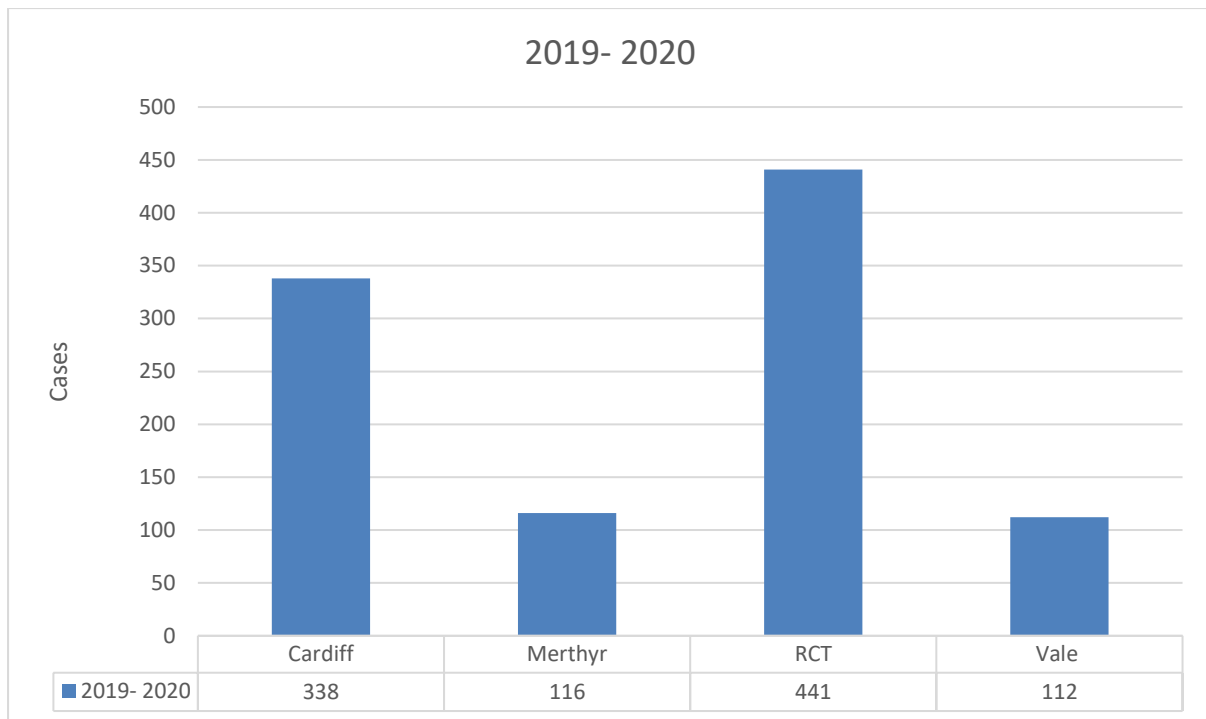


## Intermediary Services

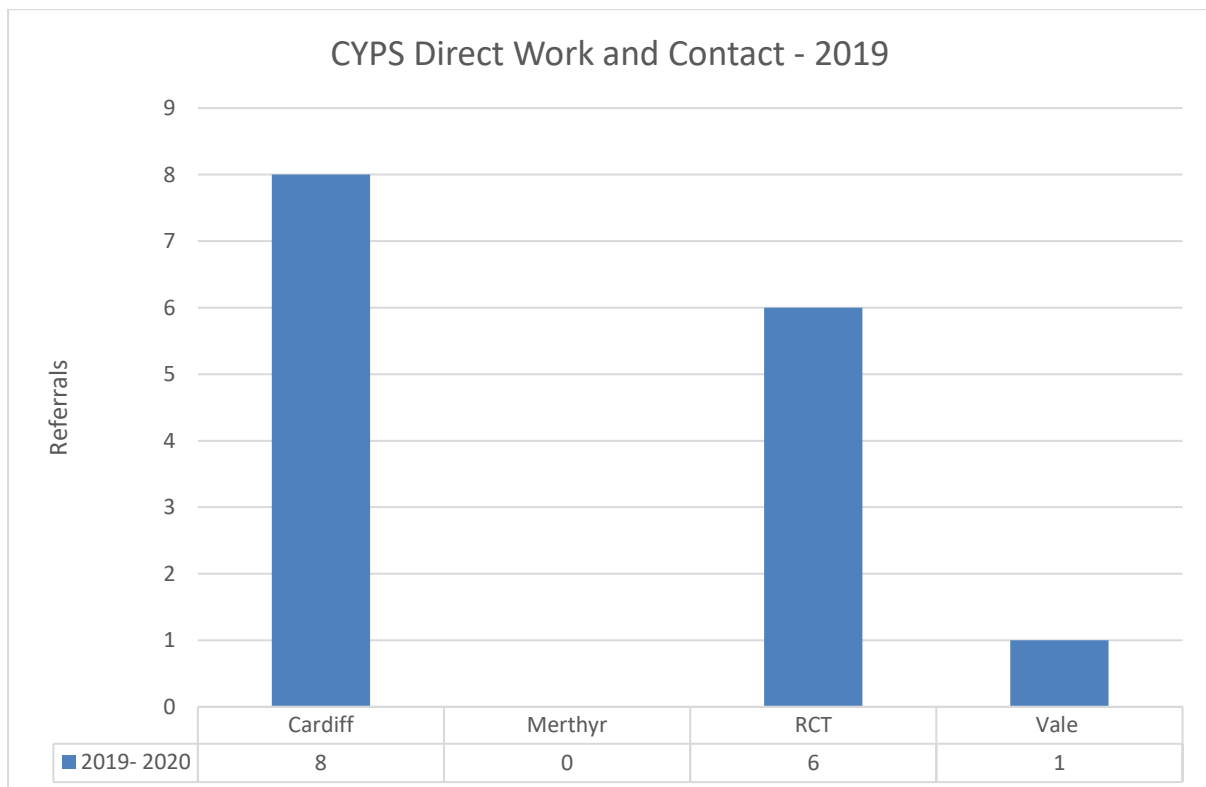




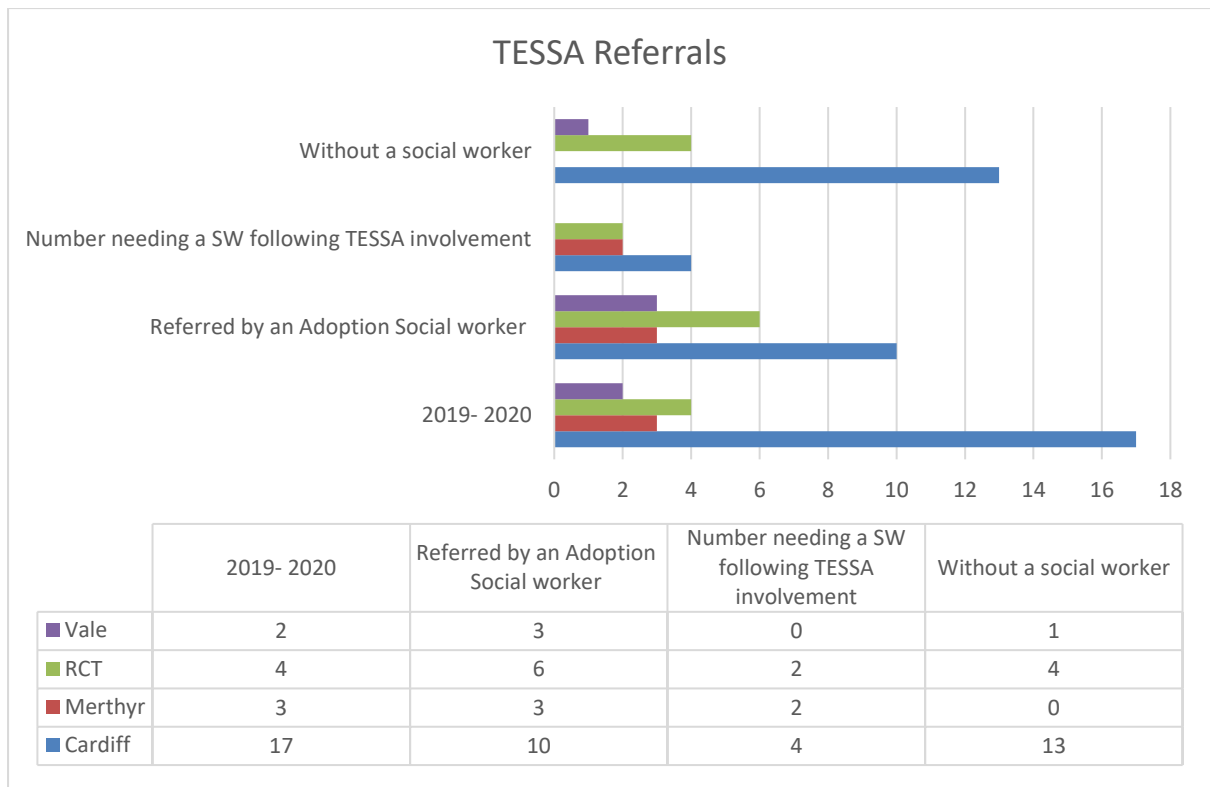
## Letterbox



## Children and Young People's Service



## TESSA



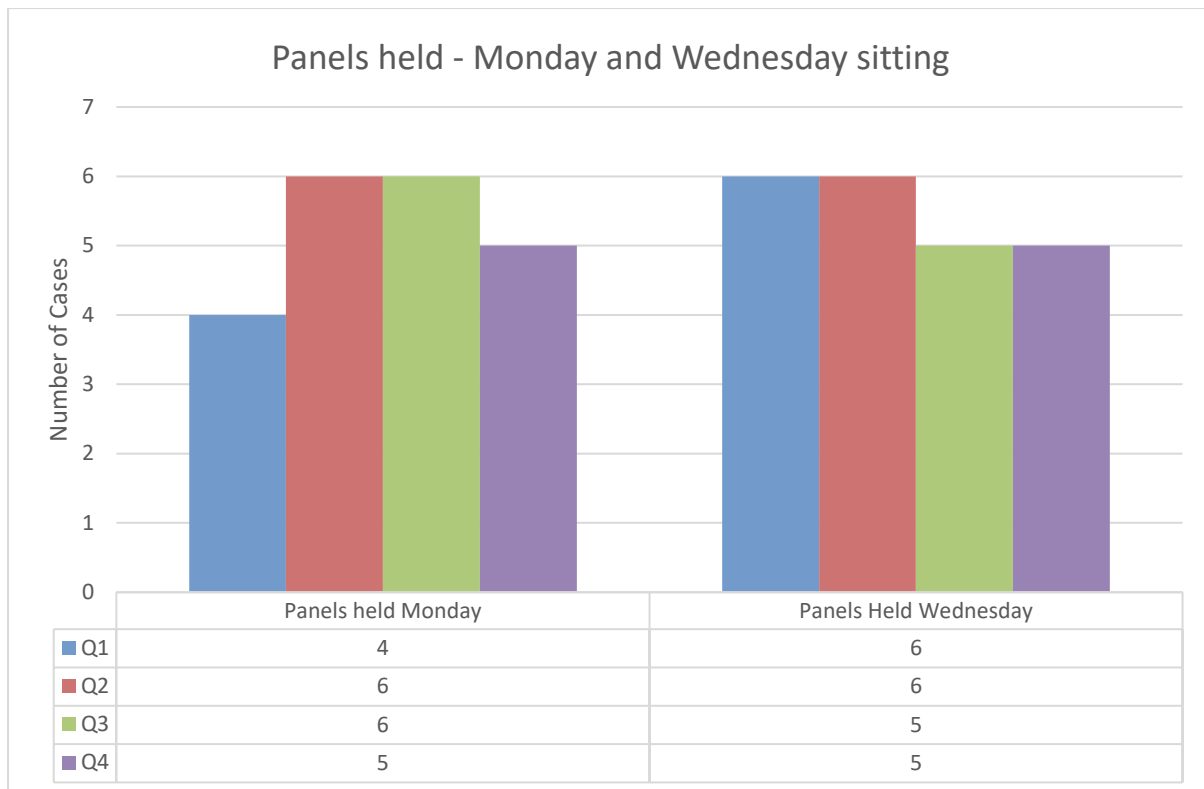
## Training



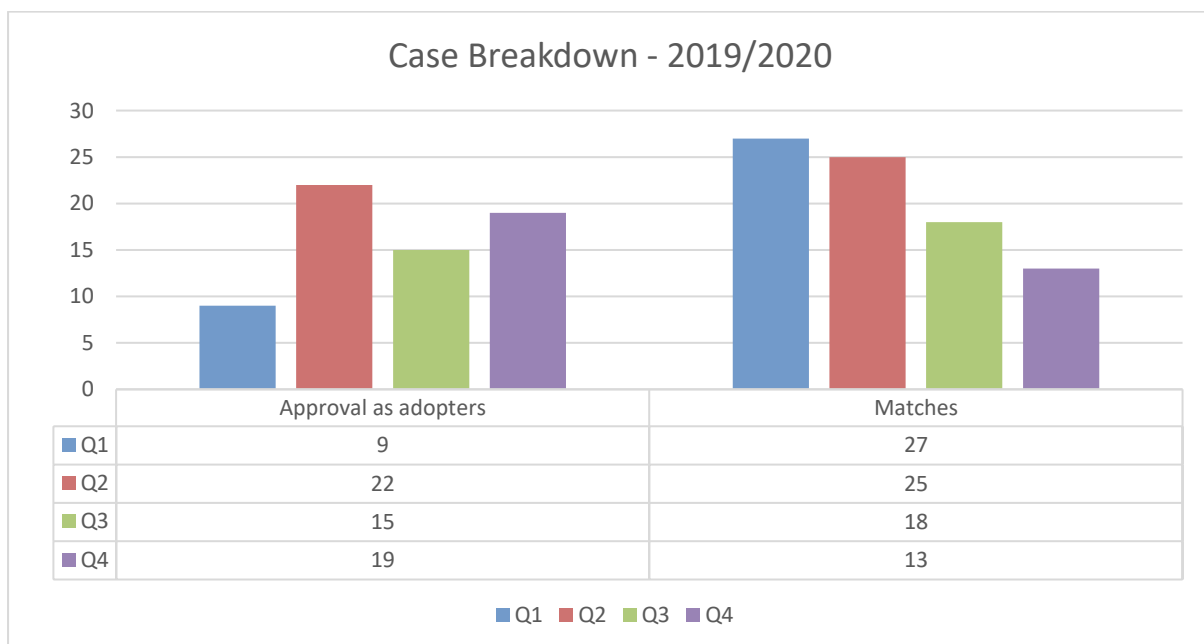
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## Appendix 4 – Adoption Panel

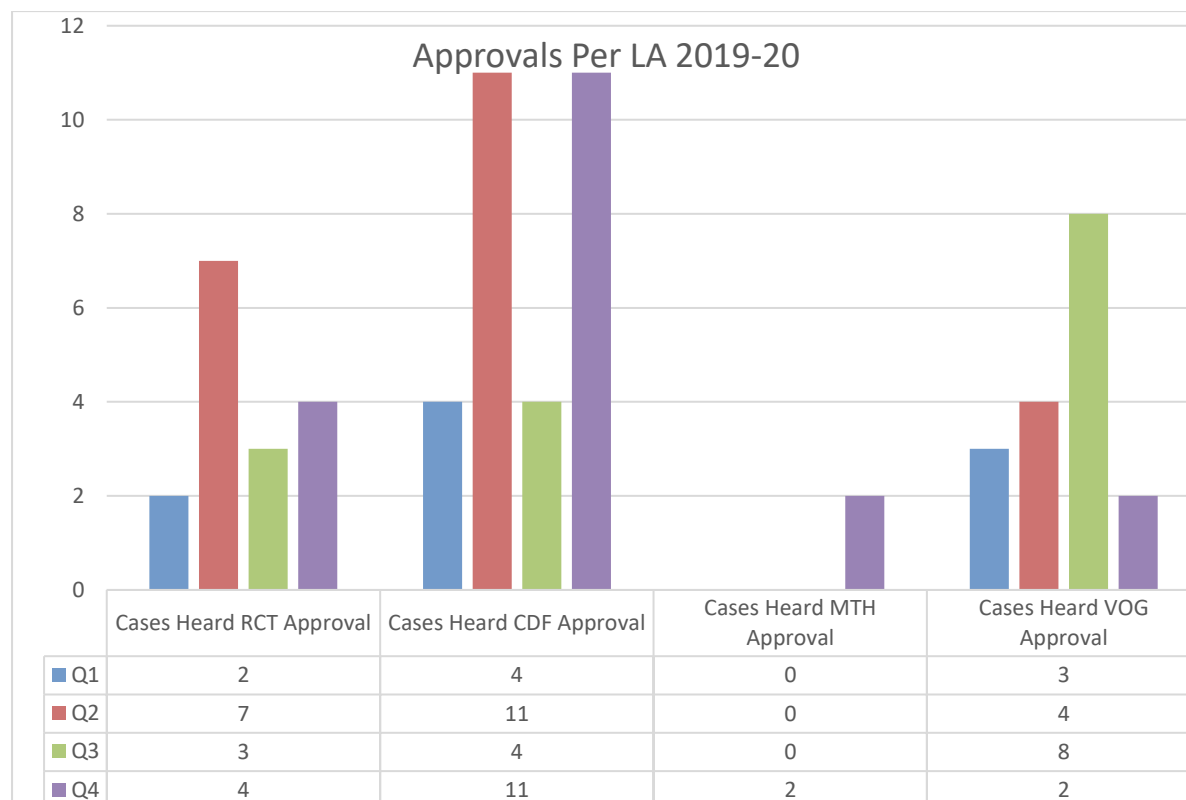
### Panels convened



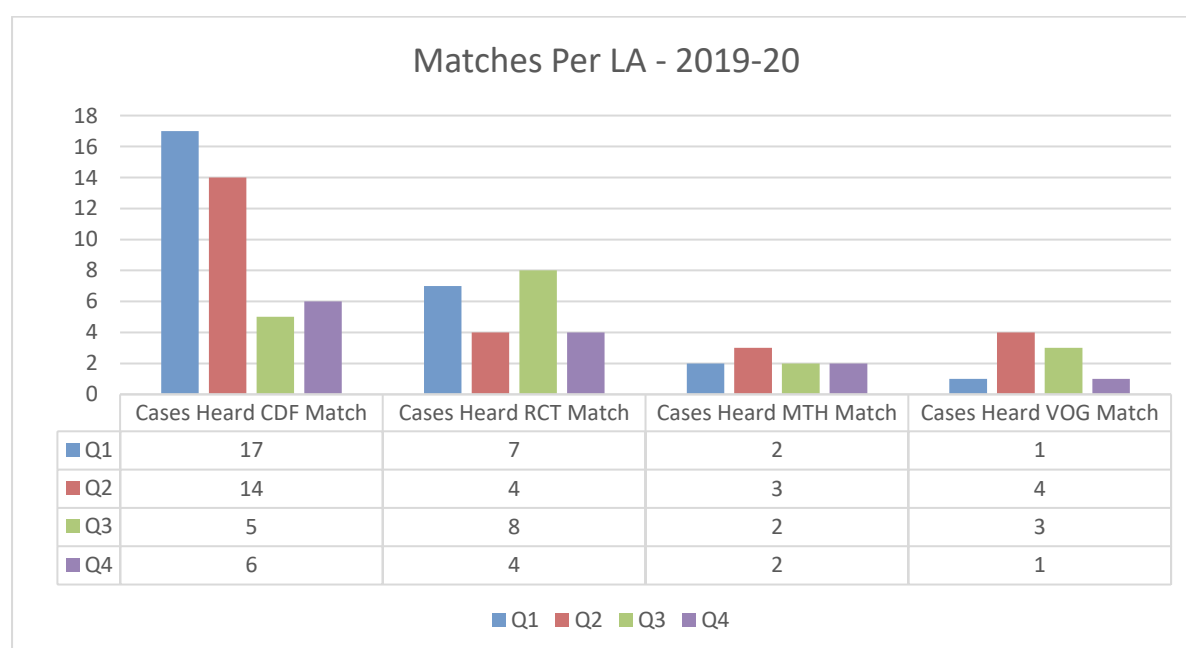
### Case distribution



## Approvals per Local Authority



## Matches per Local Authority





Civic Centre, Castle Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8AN

Main Tel: 01685 725000

[www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk)

## **CABINET - INFORMATION REPORT**

Date Written	November 2020
Report Author	Taryn Stephens
Service Area	Children's Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Foster Care Incentives**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

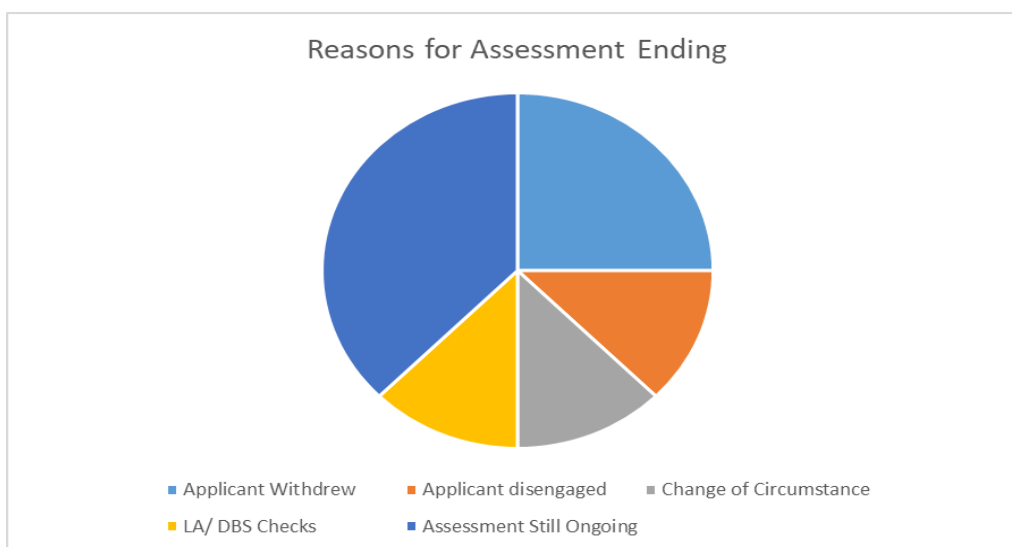
- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the incentives available to Merthyr Tydfil mainstream foster carers.
- 1.2 The report will provide an overview of the incentives available and update Cabinet on the impact of the council tax incentive agreed by the Local Authority in November 2019.

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Local Authorities have a legislative duty to under Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 (Wales) to ensure that they are able to provide looked after children with accommodation that is within the Local Authority's area and that meets children's needs.
- 2.2 Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, we have been working in collaboration with RCTCBC to operate a Regional Front Door for fostering recruitment. The team consists of a Regional Development Manager, Regional Recruitment Officer and Regional Communications and Marketing Officer. This footprint is being expanding to include Bridgend in 2021.
- 2.3 Merthyr Tydfil's fostering service has seen an increase in the numbers of children looked after (CLA) being placed over the last three consecutive years, in line with increasing children looked after numbers. During this period, we have seen a small decrease in our overall approved mainstream foster carer population combined with a number of longstanding foster carers retiring. The primary objective of fostering

recruitment activity in 2019/20 was to increase the amount of approved mainstream foster carers for the Local Authority, aiming to increase the number of CLA being placed with our own foster carers and reduce the need to use external fostering agencies. However, during 2019/20, whilst the number of enquires in relation to becoming a foster carer increased from the public, there was not an increase in the number of fostering assessments progressing to approval.

#### 2.4 Below highlights the reasons for an Assessment ending:



2.5 In Line with Children's Services commitment to improving our local sufficiency of suitable placements, Children's Services have developed a Placement Commissioning Strategy. The action plan linked to this strategy includes work that is under way to increase the supply of Merthyr Tydfil foster carers.

2.6 Difficulties in recruiting in-house foster carers has led to a reliance on independent fostering agencies and out of county placements. Whilst it is acknowledged that young people placed within independent foster placements have achieved positive outcomes, reliance on independent fostering agencies (IFAs) at the current rate is unsatisfactory in terms of both placement location and cost to the Council.

### 3.0 WHERE WE WERE

3.1 In order to continually increase the number of Local Authority foster carers and to compete with the IFAs, Children's Services in partnership with the Regional Fostering Service have developed our offer for our potential and current foster carers. Whilst experience has demonstrated that we cannot compete with IFA financial rates, there are things that we as a Local Authority can offer, that they simply cannot provide and it is these areas that we need to explore in order to set our offer apart from other agencies.

3.2 In June 2019 we consulted with our mainstream foster carers. The responses highlighted what carers would like to see included in any future offer to foster carers and overwhelmingly a reduction in council tax came out as the highest response rate in addition to discount cards, uniform subsidy, increased allowances and free car

parking in town centres. In November 2019 Cabinet agreed the proposal that the Council's offer to mainstream foster carers living in Merthyr Tydfil would receive a 50% reduction in Council tax, and a detriment payment to Merthyr Tydfil mainstream foster carers living outside of the Local Authority.

## **4.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW**

4.1 The Fostering Service is an area of continual development for Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services in order to support placement sufficiency and the stability of placements for our children who are looked after.

4.2 MTCBC's current foster carer offer includes the following benefits:

- Weekly financial allowances for both the foster carer and the child they have placed with them.
- Comprehensive training programme, including the 'Skills to Foster' course and access to a wide range of professional qualifications and development opportunities.
- A social worker specifically allocated to the foster carer that will visit regularly.
- Foster carer pioneers offering professional and social support, including mentoring and coffee mornings.
- Out of hours support from the Emergency Duty Team.
- Placement support from the Supporting Change Outreach Service.
- Membership of the Fostering Network, which is a national network of foster carers and the children they support.
- Free leisure membership for the foster carer, a partner (or friend) and the children.
- Free discount card to get exclusive discounts in local shops, restaurants and on days out.
- 50% incentive payment towards council tax.
- Paid time off for MTCBC staff who foster for MTCBC (days during assessment and 5 days per year following approval).
- Support groups and consultation events.
- Activities including sessional parties.

4.3 On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 the number of children placed with IFA carers sat at 45, by comparison as of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 the number of children placed with IFA carers was 39. This is a reduction of six IFA placements. The business case that was placed before Cabinet in November 2019 demonstrated that a reduction of two IFA placements was required to meet the additional costs incurred by the Local Authority of the council tax incentive.

4.4 In Merthyr Tydfil, Local Authority foster carers are on average paid fees and allowances of £342 per week (approximately £17,784 per annum). In comparison the average cost of an IFA placement is £754.60 per week (approximately £39,239 per annum). This constitutes a difference of £21,455 per annum per child placed. To date the council tax incentive has been accessed by 26 foster care placements and has cost £21,640.



- 4.5 The Fostering Pioneers have been a new development in 2020, the purpose is to formulise a clear pathway of support for foster carers with experienced foster carers. The development of these roles has supported foster carers having clear input into the development of Children's Services to ensure we understand their support needs in order to create placement stability for our young people. Placement stability within a safe and nurturing environment is a key component for our children who are looked after meeting their potential.
- 4.6 Foster carers have taken part during quarter 3 2020/21 in a scoping exercise to understand the out of hours support available to carers and our young people. This has developed rich information on how we can develop the Outreach Service based as part of the Supporting Change Team to best support the placements of our children looked after. The service has been fundamental in supporting children to safety remaining at home and there is clear transferability in the resource to support our children looked after with complex needs during crisis periods. This is a resource that IFAs cannot offer with the same intensity and range of support.
- 4.7 A comprehensive marketing plan was developed for 2020/21 whilst this has progressed with targeted marketing it is important to acknowledge that the COVID pandemic has been a barrier to many of the fostering events we would normally undertake. Awareness raising of the council tax incentive coincided with announcements of Stay at Home requirements in March 2020. There is a plan to ensure there is a marketing drive to ensure this offer is well circulated in the form of a relaunch.

## **5.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

- 5.1 In terms of where we want to be Merthyr Tydfil Children's Services has a clear vision of development in its mainstream placement sufficiency. We currently have six fostering assessments in progress in comparison with three full fostering assessments undertaken in 2019/20.
- 5.2 As the supply of Merthyr Tydfil foster carers increases, the Council will need to review the staffing establishment in the fostering team to ensure that high quality support can be stepped up in line with the increase in foster carers. The reduction in demand from IFAs will facilitate investment in fostering retention should the increase in Merthyr Tydfil foster carers require this. Work is under way to understand the tipping point for the cost benefit in order to ensure that there is no uncontrolled growth. We are making plans for all Merthyr Tydfil looked after young people to achieve safe and successful lives.

## **6.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 6.1 Ensuring our offer for mainstream foster carers is fit for purpose is a priority, as such this is an area of business for Children's Services that will need to be subject to ongoing review and development. Placement sufficiency and stability will promote us supporting our children looked after meeting their potential.

## 6.2 Key steps for the service include:

- Increasing the awareness and knowledge within the general public of the foster carer incentives that Merthyr Tydfil Council offer.
- Continuing with our currently timely and prompt response to enquiries.
- Ensuring there is a stable pool of assessors available to undertake foster assessments in a timely manner.
- Building upon the Learning and Development Framework for foster carers.
- Increase the offer to our foster carers from the Supporting Change Service.
- Scoping models of support for our foster care placements, such as developing robust respite arrangements. This is also a component of our edge of care planning to support family resilience to allow children to safely remaining within their family home.
- Engaging in National Fostering Framework developments.
- Continuing to listen to our foster carers and children looked after to understand what good support looks like for them.

## 7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report as the business is delivered.

## 8.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long term</li><li>• Prevention</li><li>• Integration</li><li>• Collaboration</li><li>• Involvement</li></ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1

**Summary:**

The main positive impacts are the development and improvement of services for children and young people.

There are no negative impacts.

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>			
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>	
Previous Foster Carer Incentives cabinet report	November 2019		
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>			No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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